DIVIDED DREAMWORLDS?

THE CULTURAL COLD WAR IN EAST AND WEST

Edited by
Peter Romijn
Giles Scott-Smith
Joes Segal

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Divided Dreamworlds?

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Preface

The present volume is the result of a conference held in Utrecht on 26-27 September 2008. The aim of the conference was to investigate the cultural interchange across the East-West border during the Cold War, as a counterbalance to the more traditional academic approaches that study the two power blocs *exclusively* in the light of their antagonistic power interests or political ideals. The impressive response to our call for papers suggested positively that we had addressed a topical issue. From the many proposals we received we had to select a limited number for the conference, and for the present volume we then had to make a second selection in order to strengthen the book's coherence around three sections: 'Arts and Science Between the Blocs', 'Modernity East and West', and 'Post-1989 Perspectives on the Cultural Cold War'. This by no means implies any negative qualitative judgment on the papers we had to leave out.

The conference, an initiative of its three editors, was supported by our academic institutions: the Roosevelt Study Center in Middelburg, the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD) in Amsterdam and the Research Institute for History and Culture (OGC) in Utrecht, all of which generously contributed both in terms of organisation and financial support. We are very grateful that the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (KNAW) sponsored our conference as part of its 200th anniversary celebrations. Without the enthusiastic and resourceful support of our student interns Helen Grevers, Maaike Hensing and Lieke de Jong, the conference would never have been the success it turned out to be. We also would like to thank our special guests who made important contributions to the conference: keynote speakers David Caute and Ruud van Dijk, Sarah Wilson of the Courtauld Institute who participated in our concluding panel of experts, and Thomas Lindenberger, who chaired one of our sections. A special word of gratitude is due to Thomas Lindenberger and Annette Vowinckel, who generously shared with us their experiences from organising the conference 'European Cold War Cultures? Societies, Media and Cold War Experiences in East and West (1947-1990)' held at the Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung (ZZF) in Potsdam on 26-28 April 2007. Their conference was an important inspiration for us and we were happy that some of its participants could also contribute to our project. The Potsdam conference resulted in a publication that will appear almost simultaneously with the present

volume.[1] Together, these two books present a valuable insight into the latest trends in cultural Cold War research.

Finally we would like to thank the Netherlands Organisation for War Documentation (NIOD) for supporting the publication of this volume and making it part of their publication series, and Amsterdam University Press, especially Jeroen Sondervan and Chantal Nicolaes, for their assistance in preparing the manuscript and willingness to publish the book.

Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith and Joes Segal

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1   Annette Vowinckel, Markus M. Payk and Thomas Lindenberger (eds.), *Cold War Cultures. Perspectives on Eastern and Western European Societies* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012).

Introduction

Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West

» *Giles Scott-Smith & Joes Segal*

The Cold War, which started in the aftermath of World War II and ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, was more than a confrontation of economic systems and political convictions backed with military power and technological rivalries: it was a clash between cultures and ideologies. Both the communist East and the capitalist West cultivated their interpretations of the world, including the promise of a definitive break with the human tragedies of the past and exclusive access to universal happiness, social harmony, equality and freedom in the future. However, these collective interpretations were constantly challenged, not only by the opposing camp but also from within. Despite the evident overall differences between political systems and everyday experiences, both power blocs had a lot in common and were less secluded than one might think. The 'dreamworlds' of East and West were never completely divided.[1]

We all have dreams, and our dreams inspire us to organise our lives. It is through stories, beliefs and fantasies that we as individuals give meaning to the world around us, creating 'dreamworlds' to help us translate the apparent chaos of everyday life into a meaningful and purposeful order. However, unlike their nocturnal counterparts, these 'daydreams' can shape our everyday life. Daydreams are limited and directed by our environments, as we form our thoughts, hopes, fears and desires in relation to what we experience as living reality. At the same time, our daydreams motivate our responses and actions, and therefore have tangible real-world consequences. Individual lives were shaped by the realities of Cold War cultures and societies in East and West, but these cultures and societies were no less shaped by the thoughts, feelings and actions of their inhabitants.

The concept of 'dreamworlds' is illuminating in the context of Cold War cultures as it suggests that power is never uncontested or self-evident. Capitalism and communism can be seen as collective dream projects, as thought systems or

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1   Our use of Walter Benjamin's term 'dreamworld' is inspired by Susan Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000).

ideologies supported by 'dream communities' which share a common interpretation of the world. But individuals, minorities or at times even majorities might not feel at home within these dreamworlds, creating instead their own alternatives. Traditionally, the history of the Cold War has often been described in terms of strict control: two antagonistic power blocs defining their own interpretation of the world, contesting each other's utopian claims as dystopian designs, and manufacturing consent by a combination of soft power (co-option, attraction, seduction) and hard power (coercion, intimidation, punishment) in the interest of collective security and identity. However, there are good reasons to qualify this rather one-dimensional view. First of all, as suggested above, the collective dreamworlds of the Cold War were not all-encompassing. Both in the East and the West people experienced gaps between ideological promises and everyday reality. Their individual dreams did not necessarily coincide with the official collective ones. Even if they were forced to conform to political pressures, individual dreams remained ultimately outside the realm of enforcement. This was demonstrated not only in the shape of political dissent but also by the relative autonomy of cultural expressions. Although both power blocs claimed 'their' artistic and intellectual output to be an inalienable expression of their respective systems, and in spite of a well-developed system of censorship in the East, many cultural manifestations actually ran counter to dogmatic interpretations of capitalist or communist reality. In other words: culture could 'escape' the political straitjacket that was desired by those in authority. Alternative dreams could also be developed into counter-forces. However huge the differences between East European dissidents and the 'generation of 1968' in the West, both aimed at a free space, a radical alternative to a reality that, it was felt, failed to live up to its own promises.

Secondly, the Cold War years were characterised by political, social and cultural developments, changes and ruptures that make it somewhat misleading to treat Eastern and Western cultural identities in a static and essentialist way. Taking the factor of time into account may lead us to a more nuanced view that not only focuses on the differences but also on the similarities between East and West, for instance with regard to comparable responses to the challenges and possibilities of modernity, varying from surveillance technologies to modern media and from theories of artistic progress to modern housing-construction techniques.

Finally, apart from these parallel developments and reactions, it is important to note that the respective dreamworlds of the East and the West were not strictly divided. This was due in part to cross-border collaborations and cross-cultural exchange, especially in times of (relative) détente. But it was also due to the fact that the power blocs were not immune to each other's cultural forms and academic findings. These were spread by means of literature that was either available or smuggled into (or out of) the country, by cross-bloc media targeting (Radio Free Europe, East and West German television) or, less conspicuous but extremely

effective, by individual people crossing the borders between East and West and bringing home their experiences, often transforming cultural or intellectual practices.

Taking up these elements of parallel developments, responses to modernity and cross-bloc cultural influences, this volume moves beyond the traditional definition of the Cold War as a narrative of binary East-West oppositions. In doing so, it highly profits from, and expands upon, new trends and insights with regard to the study of Cold War culture. As the Cold War recedes further into the past, new perspectives, drawing profitably from the broader fields of social, intellectual, anthropological and cultural history, are enriching our view of the period. The narrative of absolute Cold War antagonism is looking increasingly misleading and disingenuous, to be replaced by a more differentiated and intellectually compelling interpretation.

The first steps on the way to differentiate Cold War history from an exclusive focus on the divisions of power politics date back to the 1960s, when economic historians, political scientists and sociologists started to question the actual social ramifications of the Cold War divide. Going through a revisionism of their own, some US historians started to ask critical questions about the ideological underpinnings of international politics and the justification for Western behaviour.[2] During the 1980s and 1990s Cold War culture and social realities became established research fields as historians and social theorists turned their attention not just to the impact of rhetoric and imagery but also, more fundamentally, to the importance of values, thoughts, and fantasies that shaped, appropriated and contested the everyday worlds of East and West. There now exists a significant body of work on the various ways cultural expressions and activities played a role in shaping the meta-narratives inside both blocs, either actively by those who consciously engaged their art or intellectual output with the political environment, or passively through the co-optation of cultural forms for political purposes. The export of 'official culture' – both overtly and covertly – through exchange programmes, international festivals, intellectual symposia, trade exhibitions, orchestra and ballet tours, and world expo displays, prime examples of both cultural diplomacy and cultural propaganda, has also been the subject of extensive research.[3] The impact of the

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2   See Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, 'Shame on US? Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War – A Critical Review', *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 3 (Summer 2000), p. 465-494.

3   See for instance Robert Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty: Exhibiting American Culture Abroad during the 1950s* (Washington DC: Smithsonian, 1997); Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999); Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War* (University Park, University of Pennsylvania, 2003); David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht and Frank Schumacher (eds.), *Culture and International History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003); Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer.*

Cold War on cultural life, especially in the West, has been covered from dance to theatre,[4] from film to television,[5] from music to the visual arts,[6] from poetry to the novel,[7] and from architecture to design.[8] Cold War encyclopaedias and reference books take the role of culture into account.[9] The Cultural Cold War is clearly an established research area.

With its specific focus on the various ways in which culture contributed to the blurring of ideological boundaries between the East and the West, the current volume is well positioned at the cutting edge of Cold War studies. Pioneering studies that emphasise the social meaning and intellectual impact of informal cross-bloc cultural connections have so far covered linkages in high culture, literature and the visual arts in both Germanies,[10] and the influence of popular culture, popular

How The CIA *Played America* (Cambridge, MA/London: 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); Giles Scott-Smith, *Networks of Empire: The US State Department's Foreign Leader Program in the Netherlands, France and Britain 1950-1970* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2008); Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way.* U.S. *Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Jack Masey & Conway Morgan, *Cold War Confrontations: US Exhibitions and their Role in the Cultural Cold War* (Baden: Lars Muller, 2008).

4   Naomi Prevots, *Dance for Export. Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Hanover: 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).

5   Tony Shaw, *Hollywood's Cold War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007); Michael Kackman, *Citizen Spy: Television, Espionage, and Cold War Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); James Schwoch, *Global TV: New Media and the Cold War, 1946-69* (Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

6   Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); 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); Michael L. Krenn, *Fall-Out Shelters for the Human Spirit. American Art and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Robert Genter, *Late Modernism: Art, Culture, and Politics in Cold War America* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2010).

7   Edward Brunner, *Cold War Poetry* (Champaign IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004); David Caute, *Politics and the Novel during the Cold War* (Piscataway NJ: Transaction, 2009).

8   Annabel Jane Wharton, *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); David Crowley and Jane Pavitt (eds.), *Cold War Modern: Design 1945-1970* (London: V&A Publishing, 2008); Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); David Crowley and Susan Reid (eds.), *Pleasure in Socialism. Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc* (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 2010).

9   Ruud van Dijk (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3 vol. See also John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005).

10 Stephanie Barron and Sabine Eckmann (eds.), *Art of Two Germanys: Cold War Cultures* (New York: Abrams, 2009); Eckhart Gillen, *Feindliche Brüder? Der Kalte Krieg und die deutsche Kunst, 1945-1990* (Berlin: Nicolai, 2009).

media and cultural artefacts.[11] The essays presented here push these investigations further by contrasting East-West similarities, influences and references across a range of cultural activities. Several questions motivate this endeavour: How can we interpret the Soviet reception of Western culture and science, taking into account the very different socio-political environments? Did cultural phenomena arise in parallel or as interlinked networks, as images, ideas and individuals crossed and recrossed the dividing line? Ultimately, could we conceive of a single Cold War culture that transversed East and West?

In order to explore the complex ways in which individual and collective dreams on both sides of the 'Iron Curtain' were interrelated, the book is divided into three parts: cultural and intellectual exchange establishing forms of mutual (mis)understanding across the ideological divide; modernity as an ideological force that transcended the East-West division; and post-1989 perspectives on the (re)interpretation of Cold War cultures. Part one, 'Arts and Science Between the Blocs', deals with issues of cross-bloc interpretation and cultural and intellectual exchange. Nathan Abrams traces how the American playwright Arthur Miller became embroiled in the Cultural Cold War. Internationally his plays had helped to create a certain respect for American culture, showing that there were also dissenting and critical voices to be heard. In this way Miller became an unofficial cultural ambassador for the United States. Yet back home his plays were accused of being communist propaganda and were consequently banned and withdrawn. On the Soviet side, meanwhile, Miller's works were often favourably received for their condemnation of capitalism, until changes in the political climate during the 1960s once again caused his plays to fall out of favour. Paradoxically, Miller's work could thus both be utilised as propaganda and dismissed by both camps.

That these shifting contexts of appropriation and refusal in East and West were also found in the natural sciences is shown by William DeJong-Lambert's essay on Soviet biologist Trofim Lysenko. Although the 'Lysenko affair' ranks as one of the most important scientific controversies of the Cold War, until recently few historians considered the response of biologists to Lysenkoism outside the Soviet Union. This essay focuses on the United States and Great Britain, showing how

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11   Patrick Major & Rana Mitta, *Across the Blocs: Exploring Comparative Cold War Cultural and Social History* (London: Frank Cass, 2004); Sebastian M. Hermann et al. (eds.), *Ambivalent Americanizations: Popular and Consumer Culture in Central and Eastern Europe* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2008); Annette Vowinckel, Marcus M. Payk and Thomas Lindenberger (eds.), *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives in Eastern and Western European Societies* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012); Sari Autio-Sarasmo & Katalin Miklossy (eds.), *Reassessing Cold War Europe* (London: Routledge, 2010); Sari Autio-Sarasmo & Brendan Humphreys (eds.), *Winter Kept Us Warm: Cold War Interactions Reconsidered* (Helsinki: Kikimora, 2010); Poul Villaume and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *Perforating the Iron Curtain. European Détente, Transatlantic Relations, and the Cold War* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2010).

the Lysenko affair was the product of developments in the scientific community on both sides of the political divide. Many of the sources for Lysenkoism, such as the hope of using biology to 'transform' nature, were as common to the United States and Great Britain as they were to the Soviet Union. Moreover, the reactions to Lysenko in the West contain many elements that resemble Lysenko's own campaign against genetics in the Soviet Union. By analysing the Lysenko affair as a controversy with implications beyond the realm of Soviet science, DeJong-Lambert shows how Lysenko's theories reflected hopes for realising biological utopias in both the East and the West during the Cold War.

Jill Bugajski moves the focus to the realm of the arts in discussing the public reception of the pioneer of Polish avant-garde painting and theatre, Tadeusz Kantor. Bugajski shows that it was possible for Eastern European artists to move between East and West as participants in the international art world. Defying the widespread belief that cross-bloc cultural communication had been closed down, Kantor participated in intellectual exchanges via a multinational network that transgressed geographic, cultural and political divisions. Following the 'thaw' of 1956, Kantor was a prime beneficiary of American curiosity for artworks produced by Eastern-bloc artists. The American desire to exhibit and acquire Polish art culminated in the Museum of Modern Art's 1961 exhibition *Fifteen Polish Painters*, which crafted an image, both cultural and political, of what the Polish avant-garde stood for in American eyes. Kantor then reaped the rewards with a Ford Foundation-sponsored cultural exchange trip to the United States in 1964. Bugajski demonstrates convincingly that Kantor's international travel had an impact on his work after his return to Poland in ways that undermine simple value-laden questions concerning influence or appropriation.

In the last chapter of this section Marsha Siefert further explores the idea of cultural exchange by researching initiatives for co-produced movies. This is all the more interesting considering how films, more than other art forms, were closely associated with the respective utopian dreamworlds of both power blocs. Siefert focuses on the context and specifics of co-produced films, with special attention for Soviet cinematic co-productions with the West. She explores how co-producing films fit into the practice of cultural exchange and diplomacy during the Cold War, examining Soviet motives and intentions – both economic and political – for such ventures into 'filming with the enemy' during the 1960s.

The second part of this volume, 'Modernity East and West', investigates similarities and differences in how modernity was understood and experienced on both sides of the Cold War divide. Yugoslavia is a special case in this context, defining itself as it did as a politically and culturally non-aligned nation, integrating elements of both systems along the way. Needless to say, post-World War II Yugoslavia sits uneasily with the implicit East-West divide that underpins traditional Cold War

historiography. As Sabina Mihelj shows in her essay, Yugoslav cultural production and policies had a hybrid character. Following the abolition of the Departments of Agitprop and Propaganda in 1952, socialist realism was no longer treated as the only ideologically acceptable paradigm, and Yugoslavia's museums, cinemas, concert halls and bookshops opened their doors to cultural imports from the West. However, this did not mean that Yugoslav culture became thoroughly 'Westernised'. Instead of merely replicating Western formats, Yugoslav cultural producers and policymakers were trying to establish a 'third way' between state-controlled models of cultural production followed in the East, and the market-led approach favoured in the West. In this sense, for the Yugoslavs there were clear structural similarities between East and West, and the cultural confrontation of the Cold War should be understood as a broad framework of reference that allowed a range of local and regional variations and alternatives.

Dean Vuletic continues this focus on Yugoslavia by examining the role of popular music. After its break with Moscow in 1948, Yugoslavia started to develop an independent line of socialism, courting Western economic and military support and opening up to Western cultural influences. From 1956, popular music was used as a form of 'soft power' in Yugoslavia's foreign relations in order to assert the state's cultural and political distinctiveness vis-à-vis the rest of Eastern Europe. Yugoslavia now began to play a Westernising role in the East through the export of its home-made, Western-style cultural products. In discussing the production and reception of Western-style popular music in Yugoslavia, Vuletic, like Mihelj, further tempers an analytical dependence on the supposedly all-encompassing role of the superpowers. Furthermore, he argues that the Cultural Cold War relied on hierarchies, relations and stereotypes that existed before the Cold War started, and which were constantly renegotiated throughout its duration.

Another aspect of modernity in which parallel developments can be traced in East and West, modern housing, is the main topic of the next two essays. In her contribution, Christine Varga-Harris argues that in the midst of the Cold War, the symbolic meanings of 'home' across the East-West divide converged in several aspects. For one, the household encapsulated the union of domesticity with the technological wonders of the atomic age. What American historians have demonstrated for the United States holds true also for the Soviet Union: the household was ideologically charged, be it with socialist utopia or capitalist abundance. Set within the context of the massive campaign launched by Nikita Khrushchev to resolve the Soviet housing crisis, the essay of Varga-Harris analyses the published narratives surrounding this policy initiative. She argues that the Soviet regime bestowed upon the family occasion of moving into a new flat the 'public' function of demonstrating progress toward the realisation of revolutionary promises for daily life. The Soviet Union would catch up and overtake the West, even in modern consumer appliances.

Natalie Scholz and Milena Veenis continue the housing theme with a comparative analysis of post-war modernist interior design, focusing on the striking similarities in the ways modernism was appropriated in West Germany and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). These similarities and surprising resemblances can even be followed in discussions on the topic as published in East- and West-German journals and magazines. In both countries, albeit a little later in the GDR than in West Germany, professionals in the field of housing and interior decoration highlighted the advantages of a home furnished with relatively unadorned objects, clear lines and an abundance of light and space. Exposés and discussions on home decoration in popular magazines tried to re-educate both sets of Germans toward a more progressive outlook and way of life. While in *both* Germanies discussions about the modern home were conspicuously politicised, the different ideological interpretations were fit into a comparable effort to reconstruct a collective identity. Thus not only did the German roots of the modernist design movement lend themselves to underline *German* cultural accomplishments, but modernism also offered an alternative for national socialist-tainted or otherwise outdated bourgeois *kitsch*, and was promoted as promising a modern future that would help to distance the country from darker times in the past. Cold War culture thus emerges as both a dividing *and* unifying field.

The final chapter in this section looks at how technological competition also materialised in the field of civil aviation during the Cold War. As Annette Vowinckel points out, aviation brought another quite extreme form of cross-border 'exchange' in the form of skyjacking. The first wave of skyjacking occurred in relation to Cuba, with individuals either trying to flee their country or return home due to the lack of a regular flight connection between Cuba and the United States after 1959. In the 1970s skyjacking also became a way of escaping Eastern Europe. Vowinckel investigates the cultural history of skyjacking in the context of the Cold War, focusing as much on the events as on the dreams connected to flying as a form of escape. The airplane was not only a means to reach a better life but also a symbol of desire for freedom and independence on both sides of the Wall – although, of course, this dream in the West came under severe pressure as skyjacking became a form of terrorist action.

The third and final part of this volume deals with post-1989 perspectives on the Cultural Cold War. Justinian Jampol analyses the role of museums in presenting and interpreting the past of socialism in Eastern Europe, especially the GDR. He argues that 'commodities' – material culture from the Cold War era – serve a double purpose as historical sources and as political instruments. On the one hand their availability helps support scholarship and research to create a deepened understanding of culture and daily life in socialist societies, yet on the other hand the way these objects are presented in museums and exhibitions (or delib-

erately excluded from the public realm) tends to serve the political goal of a one-dimensional interpretation of history – the celebration of victory by the liberal-democratic way of life over totalitarianism. As Jampol argues, museum displays can never be 'objective' since they always, even if only implicitly, structure the way we experience and interpret the cultural and material heritage of the past.

In the final essay of this volume, Harm Langenkamp discusses a remarkable instance of continuity between us cultural diplomacy before and after the Cold War. In the aftermath of 9/11 the Bush administration revived a form of cultural diplomacy that originated in the 1950s. The State Department's investment in the 2002 Silk Road Folklife Festival in many ways recalled the cultural diplomacy tactics devised by the Eisenhower administration for the purpose of 'containing' the Soviet Union. The 'Silk Road', as a metaphor for intercultural integration, was a 'dreamworld' representing a fully interconnected global community predicated on the liberal values of freedom, tolerance and mutual understanding. Both the Cold War and post-Cold War versions illustrate what Fredric Jameson has described as 'symbolic enactments of collective unity', whereby a hegemonic power can claim to promote benevolent global integration and thereby silence those who do not comply with its vision.

Collectively these essays demonstrate the vitality and value of taking cross-bloc cultural relations as a starting point for analysis. They illuminate some of the striking paradoxes involved in the production and reception of culture and science in East and West, analyse the fundamental differences and similarities in framing modernity and show how the cultural politics of the Cold War period remain alive in contemporary debates on inclusion and exclusion, memory and remembrance, identity and power. The volume as a whole strengthens the counter-narrative to the dominant paradigm of Cold War antagonism and lays the basis for further explorations: the everyday experience of modernity and consumerism in the East, the dynamics of modern and popular culture in their relation to cultural and political opposition and dissent in the East and West, and the various ways in which culture not only helped to define the Cold War, but also contributed to its ultimate disintegration on both sides of the political divide. The image of two monolithic blocs facing each other in a zero-sum game is increasingly – in more ways than one – being consigned to the past.

Arts and Sciences Between the Blocs

An Unofficial Cultural Ambassador

Arthur Miller and the Cultural Cold War[1]

» *Nathan Abrams*

Introduction

Andrew Ross remarked that the Cold War was a 'profoundly hegemonic moment' in American history.[2] I have argued elsewhere that the onset of the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union from March 1947 onwards produced an anticommunist hegemony which, in doing so, co-opted willingly the group known as the New York Intellectuals since such intellectuals were vital to its development, extension and maintenance.[3] In contrast, in the following chapter I shall present a case study of an intellectual who attempted to resist this hegemony, Arthur Miller. In doing so, however, he was ultimately co-opted and rejected by both the United States and the Soviet Union.

Miller was explicitly unwilling to assist the anticommunist hegemony in America. While acknowledging the totalitarian nature of the Soviet regime, he did not think that America represented a better alternative. He wrote: 'the work of art in which we really examine ourselves, or which is critical of society, is not what this government regards as good propaganda.'[4] 'This attitude toward culture,' he felt, 'is a disservice to us all' because it rendered the country 'open to extremely dangerous suspicions which can spread and stain' its whole effort. What is more, its attitudes towards culture 'have often made it possible for Russian propaganda to raise

2 Andrew Ross, *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture* (London/New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 56.

3 Nathan Abrams, '"A Profoundly Hegemonic Moment": De-Mythologizing the Cold War New York Jewish Intellectuals', *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, 21 (Spring 2003), p. 64-89.

4 Arthur Miller, '1956 and All This', in Robert A. Martin (ed.), *The Theatre Essays of Arthur Miller* (London: Methuen, 1994), p. 99. (This essay was originally published as 'The Playwright and the Atomic World', *Colorado Quarterly* 5 [Autumn 1956], p. 117-137.)

fear of us in foreign peoples.'[5] Miller was not prepared, therefore, to disseminate pro-American propaganda during the Cold War. He would never 'genuflect' before anybody.[6] His belief in the universality of art repelled any notion of its specific or contingent mobilisation: 'I am making a claim for art as a communion of the human spirit and therefore by definition something [which] cannot be nationalistically confined or even used politically, for both political and national concepts are concepts of exclusion, devices for the wielding of worldly power.'[7]

Furthermore, Miller implicitly criticised those writers, artists, poets and intellectuals who lent their services to the American effort. 'I believe that once we assent to the idea that high policy alone is sacred, and that every other value can easily be sacrificed to it, we shall have abdicated our independence as writers and citizens.'[8] Those who did so sacrificed their critical autonomy in the service of the state for 'the mission of the written word is not to buttress high policy but to proclaim the truth, the truth for whose lack we must surely die.'[9] Yet, he also felt that those who were silent were guilty too: 'we have by silence given this consent, and by silence helped to raise the state to a kind of a power over all of us.'[10] Overall, he believed that 'freedom to write, to create unmolested and unblackguarded by government is at least equal to the sanctity of high policy.'[11]

Miller thus attempted to fulfil the function of that type of intellectual who, in his own words, 'takes on the task of correcting power and defending the truth against it (...) of speaking truth to power.'[12] In addition to his theatrical production, Miller constantly contributed articles to newspapers, as well as political and intellectual journals throughout his life. Miller was not just content to write plays or to write about his plays, he also commented on contemporary affairs where he could. He used his plays, articles, speeches and novels as vehicles to resist what he perceived to be the deleterious effects of the Cold War on American domestic freedoms, as well as the Soviet treatment of its intellectuals, writers and Jewish citizens. An unforeseen result of this activity, however, was that, whether through choice or otherwise, Miller became embroiled in the Cultural Cold War and, in

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5   Ibid., p. 96, 97.
6   Arthur Miller, letter to Honorable Nathan Kaplan, Chairman, NYC Youth Board, 28 Nov. 1955, p. 5, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin (hereafter HRC).
7   Arthur Miller, letter to ACCF and the American Committee for the Liberation From Bolshevism and the Union of Soviet Writers, 7 Feb. 1956, Box 14, Folder 11, Arthur Miller/ACCF relations, American Committee for Cultural Freedom Papers, Tamiment Library, New York University, New York (hereafter ACCF), p. 3.
8   Arthur Miller, 'Speech Before the Author's League,' unpublished manuscript, 14 May 1957, Box 64, Smaller Works, S, HRC, p. 3-4.
9   Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid., p. 4-5.
12 Arthur Miller, quoted in Louise Sweeney, 'Arthur Miller: The artist as white knight', *Christian Science Monitor*, 8 August 1977, p. 30.

a sense, was used by both sides to further their ends. He became what I call an 'unofficial cultural ambassador.'

On the American Front

Almost from the moment that Arthur Miller hit the public consciousness, his works, most notably *All My Sons* (1947) and *Death of a Salesman* (1949) were identified as Marxist critiques of American capitalism and war conduct.[13] The FBI described the former as 'party line propaganda' and the latter as 'a negative delineation of American life' which struck 'a shrewd blow' against American values. Several weeks after his play *All My Sons* opened, a letter to the *New York Times* accused it of being communist propaganda. It certainly did not help Miller that left-wing organs in both the United States and the Soviet Union (see below) interpreted the play as an attack on American materialism and hence viewed it favourably.[14] The *Daily Worker*, for example, praised *All My Sons*, predicting its candour would lead to its closure (but then removed its backing when the opposite occurred), and approved of how *Salesman* 'clearly and passionately presents a social picture of a man who has struggled all of his materialist life, thoroughly indoctrinated with the American (capitalist) dream.'[15] Jack Warner then informed the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) that Miller 'practised some sort of subversion' and Louis Budenz testified that Miller was a 'concealed communist.'[16] Miller's refusal to alter for the screen his screenplay *The Hook* because it was originally rejected as being too pro-communist confirmed for many the belief that he was a subversive. Harry Cohn, President of Columbia Pictures, sent him a telegram which stated: 'IT'S INTERESTING HOW THE MINUTE WE TRY TO MAKE THE SCRIPT PRO-AMERICAN YOU PULL OUT.'[17]

The belief that Miller was a communist was further confirmed for many by the expression of his oppositional Cold War stance through his signing a multiplicity of petitions and statements, which supported various communist causes and criticised government policy. Miller affirmed the legality of the Communist Party and opposed what he saw as its unlawful repression.[18] He protested against

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13 Robins, *Alien Ink*, p. 311, 312. See Miller, *Timebends*, p. 237-8.

14 *New Masses*, 18 February 1947, p. 28; PM, 31 January 1947, p. 16; *Daily Worker*, 31 January 1947; *New Masses*, 18 February 1947, p. 28.

15 *Daily Worker*, 1 March 1949, p. 12; David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy During the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 205.

16 Jack Warner, quoted in Elia Kazan, *Kazan: A Life* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1988); Louis Budenz, quoted in Robins, *Alien Ink*, p. 312.

17 Miller, *Timebends*, p. 308.

18 *Daily Worker*, 16 April 1947. See also *Investigation of the Unauthorized Use of United States Passports*, p. 4664.

the 'shameful persecution' of the German anti-Fascist refugee, Gerhart Eisler.[19] He joined in the call for the abolition of HUAC.[20] He was listed as a sponsor of the World Youth Festival of 1947 in Prague that was organised by the communist World Federation of Democratic Youth.[21] He attempted and failed to obtain financial assistance from the State Department in order to send his play, *All My Sons* (1947) to the festival.[22] He did, however, donate the rights of this play to the Polish League of Women in Poland, which was identified as a communist organisation.[23] In June 1949, he participated in a call for a bill of rights conference to be held in the Henry Hudson Hotel, New York City.[24] According to HUAC, Miller also sponsored the World Congress for Peace held in Paris, although he denied this.[25] In May, he sponsored the Far East Spotlight for Friendship with New China and its 'China Welfare Appeal,' a relief drive to send aid and assistance to the Chinese people.[26] He supported the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee in that year, too.[27] When the American Legion threatened to picket the planned New York production of Sean O'Casey's *Cock-a-doodle Dandy*, Miller proposed to mobilise other playwrights to form a counter-demonstration in support of the freedom of the theatre.[28]

But the key moment of Miller's initial resistance to the anti-communist hegemony was his attendance at the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace of 1949.[29] The Waldorf Conference, as it became known, was proposed by the fellow-travelling National Council for the Arts, Sciences and Professions (NCASP), to discuss cultural and scientific links with the Soviet Union. The NCASP, which sponsored the conference, was very much located within the Soviet Union's peace campaign: it had supported the call for the 1948 peace conference in Wroclaw, Poland; it demanded clemency for all the convicted members of the Joint Anti-

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19   Ibid., p. 4665-4666.
20   Ibid., p. 4668.
21   Ibid., p. 4662; *New York Times*, 25 May 1947; see also J. Schleuter and J.K. Flanagan, *Arthur Miller* (New York: Ungar, 1987), p. 6, 146.
22   *New York Times*, 11 June 1947, p. 33.
23   *Daily Worker*, 29 September 1947. See also *Investigation of the Unauthorized Use of United States Passports*, p. 4683.
24   *New York Times*, 18 July 1949. See also *Investigation of the Unauthorized Use of United States Passports*, p. 4676.
25   Ibid., p. 4679.
26   Ibid., p. 4680-4681.
27   Ibid., p. 4681.
28   Miller, *Timebends*, p. 322.
29   For a more detailed account of the Waldorf Conference, see William Barrett, 'Culture Conference at the Waldorf: The Artful Dove', *Commentary*, 7 (1949), pp. 487-494; Robbie Lieberman, 'Communism, Peace Activism, and Civil Liberties: From the Waldorf Conference to the Peekskill Riot', *Journal of American Culture*, 18 (Fall 1995), pp. 59-65; John P. Rossi, 'Farewell to Fellow Traveling: The Waldorf Peace Conference of March 1949', *Continuity* 10 (1985), pp. 1-31; Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta, 1999), p. 45-56.

Fascist Refugee Committee who refused to testify before HUAC; it joined in the calls for the dismantling of HUAC and for Truman to negotiate peacefully during the Berlin blockade. After Wallace's defeat in 1948, the NCASP switched its focus towards advocating world peace. The conference was described as 'the last major effort of the Stalinists to win and neutralize radical opinion among American intellectuals.'[30] Miller described it as 'a kind of crossroads'[31] because thereafter an irrevocable split between the anti-communists and the anti-anticommunists appeared.

The effects of these actions soon surfaced as Miller came under attack in his homeland. He recalled in 1959 that, 'I was already under attack, politically. And since I was famous now, I was fair game for columnists and calumnists, and such people, who could get their names in the paper by attacking me.'[32] For several weeks the *World-Telegram*, the *Journal-American*, Walter Winchell and Ed Sullivan in his column for the *Daily News* had been patriotically assaulting Miller's background.[33] Indeed, Miller's FBI file revealed that Winchell's attacks were motivated by J. Edgar Hoover himself.[34]

Consequently, Miller suffered from unofficial blacklisting in film, television and radio. In January 1947, as *All My Sons* was about to transfer to Broadway, the Catholic Church intervened but this was probably more on religious than political grounds.[35] Nevertheless, the combined complaints of the Catholic War Veterans, the fiercely anti-communist journal *The New Leader*, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the blacklisting publication *Counterattack*, set up in May 1947 by three ex-FBI agents, led to the cancellation of its presentation to the US soldiers in occupied Germany and Austria in August of that year. *Counterattack* stated that its production in Germany would 'help Stalin in his efforts to convince the German that the US is controlled by heartless plutocrats.' The Veterans' leader, Max Sorenson, had defined it as a 'Party Line propaganda vehicle.'[36] This was echoed by the fiercely anti-communist *New Leader*.[37]

As Miller was researching for a script on juvenile delinquency for the New York City Youth Board, HUAC warned the Board that Miller was under investigation

30 Julian Silverman, 'What Price Freedom?' *Tempo* 57 (2003), p. 69.

31 Arthur Miller, quoted in Griffin Fariello, *Red Scare. Memories of the American Inquisition: An Oral History* (New York: Avon Books, 1995), p. 340.

32 Miller, Columbia Oral History Project, Oral History Research Office, Columbia University, p. 944.

33 Miller, *Timebends*, p. 250-251.

34 Robins, *Alien Ink*, p. 313.

35 David Caute points out that this was most likely due to Miller's refusal to cut the line 'A man can't be Jesus in the world.' Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, p. 205.

36 Sorenson, quoted in Miller, *Timebends*, p. 238.

37 Ibid.

as a possible communist.[38] After protests by the Catholic War Veterans and the American Legion the city eventually withdrew its assistance and the project died.[39] The Legion also threatened to boycott Columbia Pictures' production of *Death of a Salesman* since Miller had refused to issue an anti-communist statement in the press.[40] The Legion had already succeeded in shutting the road production.[41]

In the American-occupied territories of Germany and Austria the US Army implemented performance bans on pieces that were either openly directed against the politics of the United States or were antimilitary. Although the director of the US Information Services Branch's Theatre and Music Section, Ernest Lothar, wanted to stage Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* in Vienna, he could not change the opinion of the US Office of Military Government in Germany (OMGUS-Berlin), which cabled the Civil Affairs Division of the State Department to state: 'Play's theme regarded as harmful to Reorientation Program. Request *no* further consideration be given its use.'[42] Richard Wagnleitner observed: 'This ban naturally had nothing to do with the quality of Miller's work, which had been especially praised in New York as the best drama of the year. The contents of the play, offering an extremely critical, yet realistic, portrayal of American war profiteers, had been the true grounds for disqualification.'[43] Again, matters were not helped by the staging of the play at the Vakhtangov Theatre in Moscow.[44]

Yet, in 1949-1950, *Salesman* opened in Düsseldorf and Munich simultaneously, at the very moment when the United States pointed to West Germany as a symbol of American freedom at the beginning of the Cultural Cold War.[45] The staging of Miller's plays in West Germany, therefore, functioned as devices in the Cultural Cold War struggle. As Edward W. Barrett, former Assistant Secretary of State and the coordinator of the Campaign of Truth under President Truman, wrote, 'extraordinary American performances abroad somehow enhance respect for America and the desire to cooperate with America.'[46] Indeed, the visit of Miller to Munich where he was invited to give a reading from *The Crucible* was considered so important by the officials there that the local government cancelled, in the city-owned Kammerspiele Theater, one of the largest in Munich, a complete

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38   Robins, *Alien Ink*, p. 251.

39   For a more detailed account of this episode see Walter Goodman, 'How Not to Produce a Film', *The New Republic* 133 (26 December 1955), p. 12-13.

40   Miller, *Timebends*, p. 315.

41   Ibid., p. 322.

42   Richard Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War*. Trans. Diana M. Wolf (Chapel Hill/London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), p. 188; Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, p. 206.

43   Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War*, p. 188.

44   Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, p. 206.

45   *New York Times*, 28 April 1950, p. 25.

46   Edward W. Barrett, *Truth Is Our Weapon* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1953), p. 283.

performance on 31 March, in order to vacate it for his reading.[47] Caute points out how *Salesman* occupied second place among American plays on the West-German stage during those years, even if Miller believed that the play, along with everything else he wrote, had been removed from the US Army's repertoire in Europe.[48]

Three years later, however, the US Information Services Branch listed Miller as an 'inappropriate' author and his works were banned from appearing in the America Houses abroad. Between February and April 1953, the State Department issued a series of directives prohibiting the use of materials written by 'controversial persons, Communists, fellow travellers, and so forth.' This included those who took the Fifth Amendment before congressional committees and anyone who was perceived to be too left-wing, too critical of America, or whose material was 'detrimental to US objectives.' As Miller recognised at the time: 'The State Department has interfered with the circulation of American books abroad, American music and musicians, and American painting.'[49] Because he fell into one or more of these categories Miller's books were removed from State Department and overseas libraries. The logic of such a policy was deeply flawed for, as Ramón Espejo Romero has pointed out, Miller's 'plays helped to create a certain respect for American culture, showing that within it there also were dissenting and critical voices.'[50] Writing in Mexico, following a production of *Death of a Salesman*, Vane C. Dalton commented that 'to acquaint the Mexican audience with a great play by one of America's most distinguished contemporary authors is of undeniable cultural importance: it is a very effective means of promoting in this country a sound appreciation of North America's values which extend beyond technology or purely material advantages and comforts.'[51] Cynthia P. Schneider also noted that Miller's work, like jazz and rock 'n' roll, 'enabled people living under repressive regimes to experience moments of freedom.'[52] Indeed, during the 1940s and 1950s his plays were produced around the world including, as we shall see below, the Soviet Union, often to critical acclaim, and undoubtedly they helped to sell

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47 Hugo M. Weichlein to Arthur Miller, 9 March 1961, Box 64, Folder: Speech – Munich, Germany 3/31/62 CORRESP., HRC.

48 Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, p. 206.

49 Miller, Speech to the National Assembly of the Authors League of America, 14 May 1957, HRC.

50 Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War*, p. 138, 172; Ramón Espejo Romero, 'Some Notes about Arthur Miller's Drama in Francoist Spain: Towards a European History of Miller', *Journal of American Studies* 39 (2005), p. 488. See also Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997); Gary E. Kraske, *Missionaries of the Book: The American Library Profession and the Origins of United States Cultural Diplomacy* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 249-250; Edmund Wilson, *Letters on Literature and Politics 1912-1972* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1975), p. 540.

51 Vane C. Dalton, 'Death of a Salesman', *Mexican Life*, 6 (June 1953).

52 Cynthia P. Schneider, 'Culture Communicates: US Diplomacy that Works', *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy* 94 (September 2004), p. 9.

America's image. It was surely, then, for this reason that at the same time as Miller was being banned by the American authorities abroad, the US government adopted the seemingly contradictory policy of allowing Miller to participate in person in its cultural exchange programmes. Shortly after Stalin's death in 1953, for example, Miller met his Soviet counterparts to discuss their work and the context in which it was formed.[53]

Nevertheless, in 1954, in yet another conflicting manoeuvre, Miller was denied a passport by the State Department to attend the opening of *The Crucible* in Brussels. The American Legion had been pressing the FBI to act upon Miller's 'red ties' and, although there is no direct link between the Legion's demands, Miller's passport was revoked. Natalie Robins concluded that 'an accumulation of many pressures led to the [passport] denial.'[54] This prompted protests from the playwright Tennessee Williams and, somewhat ironically, the liberal anti-communist group the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF). The ACCF opposed the State Department's action in withholding Miller's passport on the grounds that such a move was counterproductive in the propaganda war against the Soviet Union since it would 'serve to make him a martyr in the view of our European Allies.'[55] Likewise, the ACCF attacked the American Legion's plan to protest the Glenwood Players of New York's production of *Salesman* as 'a threat to cultural freedom in this country' because it would mirror the Soviet Union's banning of artistic endeavour simply because of the author's political views.[56] However, the ACCF could do little when the leading man, Thomas E. Paradine, a past national vice-commander of the American Legion, quit during the middle of rehearsals when he learned about Miller's left-wing connections.[57]

Although the State Department claimed the reason for the denial of his passport was that it was not given sufficient time to check on allegations that Miller had been associated with communist causes, his passport was surely revoked in order to restrict his movements in Europe. Based upon the sort of thought that motivated NSC 68's assertion that 'dissent among us can become a vulnerability,' Miller was surely deemed a harmful threat to the hegemony's careful attempt to woo the hearts and minds of European intellectuals during the Cultural Cold War.[58] Indeed, it has been remarked that the FBI, the CIA and the office of the Attorney General were 'vigilant to the point of obsession regarding the travels of those thought to be dangerous to the national interest by virtue of past Commu-

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53 Ibid., p. 6.
54 Robins, *Alien Ink*, p. 312.
55 Telegram from Sol Stein (executive director of the ACCF) to The Glen Players, 12 November 1954, telegram from Sol Stein to Thomas E. Paradine (of the American Legion), 12 November 1954, Box 14, Folder 11, ACCF.
56 ACCF Press Release, 31 March 1954, Box 14, Folder 11, Arthur Miller/ACCF relations, ACCF.
57 *New York Post*, 10 December 1954, p. 6.
58 *NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security*, 14 April 1950, p. 43.

nist sympathy.'[59] The government feared that intellectuals would be used by the Soviets 'to prevent them from serving our ends, and thus to make them sources of confusion in our economy, our culture and our body politic.'[60] Miller recognised this: 'That I am opposed to much of what passes for American domestic and foreign policy is certainly true. However, in this particular instance the issue would seem to be whether, in the struggle for men's minds, the presence on foreign soil of one Arthur Miller is likely to damage the prestige of the US.'[61]

Ultimately, Miller's absence in Belgium probably did more harm than good for the United States. Representatives of the Belgian government, its monarch, as well as a host of Belgian intellectuals, were in attendance and a sensation was caused when the US ambassador stood up and took a bow in Miller's place without explaining why the playwright was not there in person. As Miller said of the denial of his passport: 'It didn't harm me, it harmed the country; I didn't need any foreign relations'.[62] Realising the potential damage of such attacks as counterproductive to their cultural and intellectual efforts in Europe, the State Department quietly ordered the Passport Division to issue Miller his passport two years later.

Miller's impact as a cultural ambassador was also demonstrated by his clash with the ACCF. The ACCF represented a community of anticommunist intellectuals whose self-perceived function was to protect free culture. It was a key ally in the anticommunist hegemony's propagation of the Cultural Cold War. Thus the dispute with the Committee brought Miller into direct conflict with some of the most prominent individuals who were cooperating with the anticommunist hegemony. The ACCF 'deplored' Miller's political views and took every opportunity of reiterating this claim publicly, as well as repeating the refrain of its private communiqués.[63] Indeed, at times, it seemed the ACCF expended more energy into trying to destroy Miller's reputation than it did decrying Stalinism and protesting the Soviet Union's censorship of intellectuals. Michael Harrington observed: 'When Irving Kristol was Executive Secretary of the ACCF, one learned to expect from him silence on those issues that were agitating the whole intellectual and academic world, and enraged communiqués on the outrages performed by people like Arthur Miller… in exaggerating the danger to civil liberties in the US.'[64] Kristol attacked Miller in 1952 for 'expressing absurdities with such an earnest solemnity that they even pass

59 Donald Spoto, *Marilyn Monroe: The Biography* (London: Arrow, 1994), p. 370.
60 *NSC 68*, p. 52.
61 Miller, quoted in *New York Post*, 12 July 1956.
62 Arthur Miller, quoted in *Newsweek*, 3 February 1964, p. 52.
63 See Press Release from ACCF, 31 March 1954; Telegram from Sol Stein to The Glen Players, 12 Nov. 1954; Telegram from Sol Stein to Thomas E. Paradine (of the American Legion), 12 Nov. 1954, Box 14, Folder 11, Arthur Miller/ACCF relations, ACCF.
64 Michael Harrington, 'The Committee for Cultural Freedom', *Dissent*, 2 (Spring 1955), p. 116.

for plausible discourse.'[65] In the following year, the ACCF proposed and agreed to disseminate as many copies as possible of Robert Warshow's highly critical article, 'The Liberal Conscience in *The Crucible*,' which vehemently assailed Miller and his play.[66] Some two years later, the ACCF's executive director, Sol Stein, offered the Committee's support to the critic and ACCF member Eric Bentley in a threatened libel action by Miller and Tennessee Williams over passages in his book *The Dramatic Event*.[67] The pretext of Stein's offer was that the libel suit 'constitutes a matter affecting cultural freedom' since it 'might be seen as highly inappropriate to a free society.' He concluded his letter with the observation: 'In any case, I have never felt that Arthur Miller, at least, is particularly enamoured of a free society.'[68]

At no time was this clearer than in 1956. During January and February of that year Miller claimed that he had received invitations from the ACCF, the American Committee for Liberation from Bolshevism, and the Union of Soviet Writers to issue a statement on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the death of Dostoevsky.[69] In his reply to these organisations Miller attacked the Soviet Union for 'cultural barbarism.' At the same time, however, he denounced the United States for not only depriving him of his freedom, but also for the lack of protest from other writers at this suppression.[70] In effect, Miller equated the United States and the Soviet Union for their respective lack of artistic freedoms.[71] In reply, the ACCF denied inviting Miller. It then congratulated Miller's attack on the Soviet Union and regretted that he did not articulate such a stance back in 1949. The crux of the ACCF's response, however, was its outrage at Miller's 'near equation of these episodic violations of the tradition of political and cultural freedom in the United States with the *official* governmental policy of the Soviet Union...'[72] The ACCF's response to Miller clearly brings into focus their differing discourses of freedom. Since Miller believed freedom was absolute, the effects of suppression in both countries were indistinguishable, only the process differed. From its position of hegemonic co-operation the ACCF, on the other hand, found equations between the

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65 Irving Kristol, letter to *New York Times*, 10 August 1952, Box 3, Folder 1, Correspondence A, ACCF, p. 1.

66 Minutes of the Executive Committee, 16 March 1953, Box 7, Folder 4, Minutes: Membership, Executive and Administrative Committees: Planning Conference; Board of Directors – 195-57, ACCF, p. 2; Robert Warshow, 'The Liberal Conscience in *The Crucible*: Arthur Miller and his Audience', *Commentary*, 15 (March 1953), p. 265-271.

67 Sol Stein, letter to Eric Bentley, 4 January 1955; Edward E. Colton, letter to Eric Bentley and Horizon Press, n.d., Box 3, Folder 4, Correspondence B, ACCF.

68 Ibid.

69 Miller, letter to ACCF, American Committee for Liberation from Bolshevism, and Union of Soviet Writers, 7 February 1956, Box 14, Folder 11, Arthur Miller/ACCF relations, ACCF, p. 1.

70 Ibid., p. 1-2.

71 Ibid., p. 3.

72 ACCF Press Release, 13 February 1956, Box 14, Folder 11, Arthur Miller/ACCF relations, ACCF. See also, Statement by ACCF on Arthur Miller Letter, 14 February 1956.

United States and the Soviet Union inconceivable. Within its particular discourse, America typified freedom and if it was abused it was done in an unintentional fashion; in the Soviet Union, on the other hand, artistic suppression was systematic. Freedom in these contexts clearly did not signify the same thing and the ACCF vigorously fought to privilege and naturalise its discourse whilst striving to contain Miller's counter-discourse. To this end a flurry of activity occurred. The committee requested Radio Liberation to broadcast their statement and James Farrell (a member of the executive committee) wrote to the *New York Times* accusing Miller of 'gratuitous exageration [sic].'[73]

In 1956, Miller was rewarded for his efforts by honorary membership of the American Center on Theater Arts in Rome.[74] The Center was a public library for consultation and research covering American music, dance, art and folklore, supported by the American National Theater Academy (ANTA), which was in turn financed by the State Department.[75] Internationally, ANTA promoted artistic exchanges between the United States and Europe as well as entertainment for American troops serving abroad. It began in 1949, with a US tour of *Hamlet* throughout Europe, culminating in a performance at Elsinore Castle in Denmark, the actual setting of the play. During the 1950s, ANTA sponsored such projects as the American National Ballet Theatre's tour of Europe, and American participation in the Berlin Arts Festival in 1951. Productions showing different sides of life in America were played to European audiences including *Oklahoma* and *Porgy and Bess*.[76] Hence it functioned as an official site for the propagation of the Cultural Cold War. Was Miller aware of this connection? The letter announcing his award stated: 'I am sure you realize the importance of this Center here.'[77]

The View from the Soviet Union

Miller first received favourable attention in the Soviet Union in the late 1940s. His popularity initially stemmed from his resistance to HUAC. His plays, in written rather than performed form, were received in a similar fashion; for example, the 'liberally inclined literary journal'[78] *Novyj mir* introduced *Death of a Salesman*

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73 James Farrell, letter to Diana Trilling, 15 February 1956; James Farrell, letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 15 February 1956, p. 1, Box 14, Folder 11, Arthur Miller/ACCF relations, ACCF.

74 Ann d'Arbeloff Guerrieri to Arthur Miller, 14 December 1956; Arthur Miller, letter to Ann d'Arbeloff Guerrieri, 24 January 1956, Arthur Miller Papers, Box 55 A (cont.), HRC.

75 See Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War*, p. 192; Barrett, *Truth Is Our Weapon*, p. 283.

76 'American National Theater Academy (ANTA)', available at http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/anta.html (accessed 10 August 2007).

77 Guerrieri, letter to Miller.

78 William Thompson, *The Soviet Union Under Brezhnev* (London: Pearson, 2003), p. 99.

thus: 'The play depicts the tragedy of an average American family whose faith in the saving powers of "private enterprise" is crumbling.'[79] Eleven years later, the *Literary Encyclopaedia* echoed these sentiments: 'In the tragedy *Death of a Salesman* (1949, Russian translation 1956) Miller departs from conventional norms of the theatre in order to unearth the sources of illusions of American "success" and the crash of these illusions.'[80] A 1959 review in *Pravda* called it 'a profound social tragedy of present-day America. The salesman's tragic destiny is depicted in the play as a logical consequence of the inhuman laws of the capitalist world... At the same time, Miller's play mercilessly exposes one other side of present-day bourgeois ideology – its lack of ideals, and man's oppressive sensation of the absurdity of his existence.'[81]

Consequently, Miller's plays were translated into Russian not long after they came out in America and were subsequently widely performed in the Soviet Union: *All My Sons* appeared in Russian in 1948 and was staged by the Moscow Theatre of Drama in 1958; *The Crucible* was translated in 1955 and staged in 1962 by the Moscow Stanislavsky Theatre; *A View from the Bridge* and *A Memory of Two Mondays* were translated in 1957 and the former was produced by the Moscow Art Theatre in 1959; *Incident at Vichy* in 1965; and *The Price* in 1968. Strangely, and eloquently, however, it took until 1956 – seven years after it first appeared – for *Death of a Salesman* to be translated and another two for it to be staged by the Leningrad Pushkin Theatre of Drama in 1958 and the Moscow Art Theatre in 1960.[82] These plays 'appeared under the official rubric of critical commentary on the "limitations of the bourgeois state," in the mode typical of that period of Soviet ideology.'[83]

In terms of performances, Miller benefited from the 'thaw' following Stalin's death in 1953 during which time Soviet theatre witnessed a 'revival of vitality.' 'Greater boldness in the choice of repertoire was officially encouraged,' according to Nick Worall, 'and the bounds of what could be contained within the parameters of socialist realism became more flexible.' Consequently, the 'former hostility to the Western repertoire, which had existed under the aegis of Stalin's cultural commissar, Andrei Zhdanov, was replaced by a greater degree of openness to what was happening in the West. Here the way was led by Oleg Efremov at the Sovremen-

79 Maurice Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria: Western Literature in Post-Stalin Russia, 1954-64* (Bloomington/ London: Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 197. Incidentally, *Novyj mir* was at the centre of the literary circles' attempts to 'restore Leninist principles' in party life under Brezhnev. See Iain Elliot, 'Dissent, Opposition and Instability', in Martin McCauley (ed.), *The Soviet Union after Brezhnev* (London: Heinemann, 1983), p. 54.

80 Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*, p. 197.

81 *Pravda*, 29 July 1959.

82 Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*, p. 197.

83 Mikhail Shvydkoi and Elise Thoron, 'Nostalgia for Soviet Theatre: Is There Hope for the Future?' *Performing Arts Journal*, 15 (January 1993), p. 112.

nik, who staged seminal productions of important British and American plays' and the work of Miller began to establish itself as 'standard components of the Soviet repertoire.'[84]

From 1953 until the late 1960s, therefore, the attitude of the Soviet authorities to the plays and prose of Miller was initially very benevolent. They were favourable because they considered him to be a communist, an interpretation in line with, as we have seen, that of the American authorities, in particular the FBI. Miller was 'pure' because he never joined in with the popular anti-Soviet crusade of the 1950s, he had publicly opposed the Vietnam War from the outset, and he had led the campaign to establish PEN centres in the USSR. A performance of *The Crucible* in 1963, for example, received approving attention for its contemporary American references, particularly to 'Ethel and Julius Rosenberg and other victims of the disgraceful McCarthy era.'[85] And a 1964 volume of the *Theatrical Encyclopaedia* described him as 'a progressive playwright, conscious of social problems, and heir to the best traditions of American drama.'[86]

Yet, the Soviet authorities did not take any chances that there might be any slippage between their interpretation of Miller's works and the audience's. In violation of its own laws, Western literature was published and sometimes censored without the knowledge, let alone consent, of the authors, a common practice that lasted until 1973 in the Soviet Union.[87] Although Miller's plays (all in Russian translations), *All My Sons*, *Death of a Salesman* and *View from the Bridge*, were translated and regularly staged in Soviet theatres until the late 1960s and despite its sympathy towards the author and support for him during the McCarthy period, they were all altered and censored to varying degrees to suit whatever the prevailing Soviet view of the Cold War was at that time.

The Soviet translation of *Death of a Salesman* in the February 1956 issue of *Novyj mir* ingeniously altered the title to *Čelovek Korotromu tak vezlo*, 'The Man Who Had All the Luck.' By (perhaps confusingly) taking the name of another of his plays, one that had not been produced, the translator had 'heightened the play's

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84 Nick Worall, *Modernism to Realism on the Soviet Stage: Tairov-Vakhtangov-Okhlopkov* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 13.

85 *Izvestija*, 29 January 1953.

86 Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*, p. 197. Why was Miller chosen when there was a wide range of other possible choices that the Soviets could have selected? The answer lies in the fact that he was American. It is also possible that Miller's choice of formal structure for his plays and the adoption of a non-Brechtian realism appealed to both the authorities and the general public in Russia. I would like to thank Denise Youngblood and David Caute for pointing this out to me.

87 Miller recalled: 'No request was ever made to me from any Soviet source to make changes in my works produced or published there. As you doubtless know, they have not ordinarily asked permission to produce or publish foreign works either, and never did in my case.' Consequently, he was not always happy with the results. Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*, p. 21, 22.

ironic portrayal of American "success".'[88] Furthermore, a letter from Gala Ebin to Miller's agent, Kermit Bloomgarden, revealed other changes. Ebin referred to the 'distortion' and 'subtle paraphrasings in the translation [...] strengthening the Soviet interpretation of the play [...which] emerges as an outright condemnation of the capitalist system!' She continued to say that: 'The mood of the play is set with the act curtain – a loud, ugly painting of New York skyscrapers, threatening to crush the stage and the audience. In the course of the play Willy Loman's day-dreams and illusions are destroyed one by one by the faulty, inhuman American economic system.'[89] Official Soviet praise for the 1959 Leningrad production was thus fulsome. The review in *Pravda* praised it for mercilessly revealing 'another side of contemporary bourgeois society – the lack of ideals, the oppressive feeling of men's pointless existence.' It portrayed 'the legitimate result of the inhuman laws of the capitalist world. [...] Willy's consciousness is poisoned by false bour-geois propaganda that in America all people have equal opportunities. [...] Only at the price of his life does man buy his illusory "freedom" in the capitalist world.'[90] The critical reception was also positive and the Moscow journal *Teatr* called it 'poetic, concrete and profound.'[91] Audiences liked it too and the play was a hit in both Leningrad and Moscow.

Incident at Vichy was published in *Inostrannaja literatura* [*Foreign Literature*] in July 1965. Although Soviet literary journals avoided Jewish issues during the mid-1960s, it was most likely published because, in the words of Friedberg, it was viewed as 'an indictment of man's irrational inhumanity to man' and provided, in the release by the Nazis of an arrested Jewish businessman, evidence support-ing the Soviet claim that Nazi anti-Semitism was aimed only at working-class rather than bourgeois Jews.[92] The text was also altered: specifically, the removal of obscenity and direct references to 'penises' and 'cocks.'[93] Yet, precisely because the play touched on the topic of anti-Semitism and persecution of the Jews, a forbid-den theme at that time even when broached in connection with World War II and Nazi atrocities, the play was never actually produced despite being translated into and published in Russian. In 1966, the Sovremennik Theatre rehearsed the play and even gave several 'full dress run-throughs' but, as with plays of similar ilk, it was banned and the general public never got to see it.[94]

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88 Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*, p. 21.

89 Gala Ebin, letter to Kermit Bloomgarden, 8 September 1959, Box 24, Folder: Death of a Salesman – Foreign Productions 1953-1962, hrc.

90 *Pravda*, 29 July 1959.

91 This review was excerpted in a letter to Arthur Miller, 17 June 1960, Box 24, Folder: Death of a Salesman – Foreign Productions 1953-1962, hrc.

92 Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*, p. 32, 33.

93 Ibid., p. 32.

94 Anna Tamarchenko, 'Theatre censorship', *Index on Censorship*, 9 (August 1980), p. 27.

Strangely, one might say in light of its anti-McCarthy message, *The Crucible*, as Friedberg notes, was 'one of the most heavily censored [texts] to appear in the USSR in the first post-Stalin decade.'[95] Miller commented in retrospect that *The Crucible* was often presented either when 'a dictator is about to arise and take over, or he has just been overthrown' and consequently it 'was one of the first foreign works to be done after Stalin's death.'[96] The play was so heavily altered, particularly in the denuding of Miller's own authorial comments, that it 'was reduced to little more than a costume drama.'[97] The reasons for this were the play's equal relevance to 1950s America and the Soviet Union, a point which Miller made in his preamble to the play. In particular, Friedberg shows how two long passages from the first act, in which Miller sets the context of the play in colonial America, were deleted because '[t]he applicability of Arthur Miller's remarks to the Soviet Union's own history, specifically, to the degeneration of Lenin's authoritarianism of the early revolutionary years into the reign of terror of the Stalin era, was far too transparent. The profoundly subversive passage was not allowed to stand in the Soviet version of the play.'[98] Of course, then, 'Miller's explicit comments on the applicability of the experience of the Salem witch-hunts of the eighteenth century to the fate of nonconformists' in both Western and communist states, could not stand.[99] One wonders why it was they even bothered to translate it in the first place but obviously Miller's popularity, reputation, status and use were too much to ignore.

By 1969, however, Miller had fallen out of favour in the Soviet Union. Already in 1967 its praise had become more muted and Miller had been downgraded from a 'progressive playwright' to a 'liberal democrat.'[100] In part this was due to his two-fold activities protesting against the official treatment of dissident Soviet writers and intellectuals and of Soviet Jews. From 1965, Miller's protest against Soviet artistic repression was often conducted under the auspices of PEN. As its international president, he travelled to many countries, including those behind the Iron Curtain. As a consequence, Miller became an unofficial cultural ambassador for the West, particularly in his attempts to bring the Soviet Union into PEN, one of the conditions of his accepting its presidency.[101] PEN itself became a theatre for international diplomacy. In addition to official meetings between PEN and the Soviet Writers' Union, several unofficial Soviet emissaries showed up at PEN congresses. And during the mid-1960s, Frances Stonor Saunders tells us, 'the CIA made every

95   Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*.
96   Martin (ed.), *The Theatre Essays of Arthur Miller*, p. 295-6.
97   Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*, p. 49.
98   Ibid., p. 50.
99   Ibid.
100 Ibid., p. 197.
101 Arthur Miller, 'Wilder Strawberries', unpublished undated typescript, Box, 65, Folder: WILDER STRAWBERRIES short story unpub., HRC, p. 8.

effort to turn PEN into a vehicle for American government interests' and channelled funds to it through its various front organisations.[102] Miller did have 'a suspicion of being used and wondered suddenly whether our State Department or CIA' were behind his being approached to be president 'because they couldn't otherwise penetrate the Soviet Union, and they figured that travelling behind me could be their own people.'[103] In fact, his speculation was half-correct: his FBI file later revealed that he was chosen because he was acceptable to both sides.[104]

Nevertheless, despite his attempts to bring the USSR into the PEN fold, which were ultimately unsuccessful as the Soviets wanted to alter the PEN constitution, this did not prevent Miller from protesting the treatment of their writers. On 13 June 1966, for example, in a speech delivered before the Inaugural Session of the 34th International PEN Congress in New York, Miller addressed the session as its president. He used the occasion to speak out against the arrest of Soviet writers who were tried for the political implications of their works and sent to jail for long terms and the suppression of Yiddish literature in the USSR.[105] Four years later, again under PEN auspices, Miller spoke out against the 1965 Sinyavsky-Daniel trials which he saw as the Soviet analogue to McCarthyism.[106]

Furthermore, in 1969 Miller criticised the internal situation in the Soviet Union in general and in Soviet literature in particular. He also complained to Yekaterina Furtseva, then Soviet Minister of Culture, about the numerous and what he saw as crude changes that the Soviet translators had made to *A View from the Bridge*.[107] The publication of his book *In Russia* in 1969, even though it was not published in the Soviet Union, led to severe criticism and was taken as further provocation.[108] As Martin Gottfried points out, 'the simple use of *Russia* in the book title indicated Miller's changed attitude toward the Soviet Union and international communism' – from outright admiration to implicit condemnation.[109] Christopher Bigsby added: 'This was the country which thirty years earlier he had admired as a progressive force, a bastion against fascism and anti-Semitism. Now he went there in part to challenge its practices, *particularly* with respect to those writers who wished to lay claim to proscribed freedoms.'[110] Enough copies of the book had infiltrated into the country, and Radio Liberty broadcast the entire text of *In Russia*

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102 Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?*, p. 362; for details on the covert funding see p. 366.
103 Ibid., p. 364. Miller, *Timebends*, p. 567.
104 Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?*, p. 468 n. 14. See also Natalie Robins, *Alien Ink*, p. 314.
105 Arthur Miller, 'Address to PEN Congress, NY', Tmss with A revisions, June 1966, HRC, p. 2.
106 Arthur Miller, 'Message to the PEN Meeting in Defense of Soviet and Greek writers in Prison', 1970, Box, 64, Folder: Message to PEN Meeting in defense of Soviet and Greek writers in Prison 1970, HRC.
107 Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria,* p. 22; Arthur Miller, 'In Russia', *Harper's Magazine* (September 1969), p. 44.
108 Friedberg, *A Decade of Euphoria*, p. 197.
109 Martin Gottfried, *Arthur Miller: A Life* (London: Faber & Faber, 2003), p. 384.
110 Christopher Bigsby, *Arthur Miller: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 294.

in the USSR as part of its propaganda campagin, to cause the Soviet government to take notice of it. The result was official displeasure, particularly with his preface for the book, which was attacked as 'anti-Soviet.' After that in the newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Literature Newspaper) an article was published in which the Soviet writers fiercely condemned Miller and reminded him that he had forgotten how they defended him during the years of McCarthyism.[111] Miller commented: 'The irony is that many Americans who read a preface I wrote recently for my wife's book of photographs about Russia thought it was pro-Soviet.'[112]

Miller's other activity in the international arena was devoted to addressing the plight of Soviet Jewry. In October 1963, Miller participated in the Conference on the Status of Soviet Jews in New York and delivered a speech entitled 'I Am Bound to Protest.' In it, he expressed his 'reluctance to disturb the new climate of political *rapprochement* with the Soviets by such a protest' because 'I would hate to think that I had done anything, however slight, to damage the chances of peace.' Yet he stated it was his duty to speak out nonetheless and in the hope that it would advance 'American-Russian understanding.'[113] The Cultural Section of the Soviet Embassy questioned Miller as to why he wanted to participate in such a conference. In return Miller questioned the Soviet representative on the persecution and oppression of Jews in Russia. When this was reported in America, the *Morning Freiheit* – the Jewish section of the CPUSA with which Miller had had much in common during the 1940s having written for its paper *Jewish Life* – criticised Miller's inquiries into the state of Jewish life in the USSR. 'Everything demonstrated that the guest was not properly informed.'[114] Nonetheless, this did not prevent the paper from approvingly printing Miller's remark: 'Were it not for the Soviet Army, there would be no Jews in the world. This dare not be forgotten.'[115] Likewise, two days later, the Soviet Embassy issued an almost identical press release with the words: 'Were it not for the Soviet Army, there would be no Jews left on the globe today. This should not be forgotten.'[116] Evidently, the nature of the questions Miller had raised had antagonised the Soviet authorities for they felt moved to issue a press release refuting Miller's claims and explaining the true status of Soviet Jewry.

Paradoxically, at almost the same time in 1964, Miller contributed a piece to that very fiercely anti-communist journal which a decade and a half earlier had identified his *All My Sons* as CP propaganda, *The New Leader*. In it, he described 'a methodical campaign to discredit, degrade and, it would seem, to obliterate

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111   Ivanyan, *When the Muses Speak*, p. 298.
112   Graham Lord, 'The reason a Russian gave £2,000 to Arthur Miller', *The Sunday Express*, 27 December 1970.
113   Arthur Miller, 'I Am Bound to Protest', *Israel Horizons*, 11 (November 1963), p. 13.
114   S. Rabinovich, 'Arthur Miller visits *Sovietish Heimland* in Moscow', *Morning Freiheit*, 16 February 1965.
115   Ibid.
116   Press Release from the Embassy of the USSR, 'Jews in the Soviet Union', 18 February 1965, Box 68, Folder: Jews in Russia, HRC.

the Jew as Jew,' continuing to say: 'It is no good writing vile things in your press about Jews, and then go on and on denying that you are practicing anti-Semitism. An anti-Semite who cannot conceive he is an anti-Semite is nevertheless an anti-Semite if he does anti-Semitic things. [...] I feel it proper and necessary to protest.'[117] Following a request from Moshe Decter of Jewish Minorities Research, Miller subsequently wrote to the Soviet Prime Minister Andrei Kosygin to appeal on behalf of the Soviet Jewish writer Yosif Kerler who had applied for and been given an exit visa to emigrate to Israel but which was later arbitrarily withdrawn with no explanation provided.[118]

Miller's public criticism of the Soviet treatment of Alexander Solzhenitsyn and other writers was the final straw and his twenty years of popularity was reversed in a single stroke by the end of 1970. Miller was blacklisted, a television production of *The Price* cancelled, and his plays banned *in toto*. Such a ban was an extreme measure, even by Soviet standards, especially in light of Miller's previous status in the Soviet Union. Even more significant was the Soviet Union's explicit desire to *announce* the ban when the plays could simply have failed to appear on Soviet stages without any announcement whatsoever. Miller concluded from this: 'it is clear that I am personally the object of interdiction as a bad influence.' He concluded: 'The fact is inescapable that by attacking me personally the regime is warning Soviet writers that a new time has begun. Once again, in effect, you are either with us or against us. Either you serve as a publicist advertising the Party line or you cease to exist in stage or in print.'[119] Miller continued to protest nonetheless. In December 1973, he signed a letter (along with John Updike, John Cheever and Richard Wilbur) publicly deploring the harassment of Solzhenitsyn. He also protested the treatment of the writer Andrei Amalrik and requested clemency.[120] In 1974, in the *New York Times*, he berated Nixon's policy of silence in the face of continued Soviet repression as consent which was 'effectively strengthening the most illiberal elements in the Soviet Government.'[121]

The Soviet ban on Miller's work had little to do with literature and much to do with politics. With the arrest and trial of Andrei Siniavsky and Yuli Daniel in September 1965 – their 'crime' being the pseudonymous publication of literature critical of the Soviet Union abroad – the thaw of the 1950s and 1960s began to come to an end, and greater suppression of dissent was much in evidence. As Michael

117 Arthur Miller, 'On Obliterating the Jews', *The New Leader*, 16 March 1964, p. 6, 7, 8.

118 Moshe Decter to Arthur Miller, 23 December 1966; Box 68, Folder: Jews in Russia, HRC; Arthur Miller to Andrei Kosygin, 9 March 1966, Box 68, Folder: Jews in Russia, HRC.

119 Arthur Miller, 'On Being Banned in Russia', draft ms., HRC, Box 60, Folder: On Being Banned In Russia article NYT, December 1970, p. 2.

120 *American PEN Newsletter,* 10 (December 1973).

121 AM, 'Sakharov, Détente and Liberty', *New York Times*, 5 July 1974, Box 59, Folder: N.Y. TIMES – OP-ED 'Sakharov, Détente and Liberty,' HRC, p. 21.

Kort points out: 'These arrests sent out a shock wave, as these men were under attack simply for their writing, not for any overt act of defiance.'[122] The aftermath of the Prague Spring in 1968 saw the rise of the new branch of Communist dictatorship, creating what was called 'Brezhnev Stagnation' and 'supracensorship.'[123] It was the product of the victory of the old-line conservatives, the neo-Stalinists, over the more liberal minded within the Soviet bureaucracy. Brezhnev clearly seemed to be appeasing this bloc when, against his own policy of détente, his rule became increasingly heavy-handed and he permitted a series of trials against dissenters.[124] Miller himself felt he was banned for the Soviet Union to appear more revolutionary again in order to mollify the mood of the Third World and revolutionary youth movements, and also to bring its ideological face more in line with China now that rapprochement had been reached. Indeed, there was some validity to this last point for the Soviet reluctance to repudiate the whole process of de-Stalinisation had been one of the stumbling blocks to a full agreement with China.[125] But Miller's claim should be taken with a pinch of salt as the Soviet Union was banning many authors, Western and otherwise, at that time.[126]

Furthemore, it was part of a crackdown on dissent. The period saw a new campaign to liquidate internal ideological dissent and stop the infiltration of liberal ideas into literary and scientific thinking by keeping Soviet intellectuals in line. By taking such a high-profile playwright as Miller the Soviet Union was not only announcing its intentions to its own people, but it was also sending out a powerful message to the wider world, hence the need for its announcement. Miller himself felt, 'that they have chosen me to warn the others' as 'a token demonstration to show how far they [the Soviet authorities] are prepared to go.'[127] *Sunday Express* columnist Graham Lord commented, it is 'pretty ironical when you consider that some Americans are themselves highly doubtful about Mr Miller's politics, believing that if he is not exactly a Communist he is at least a fellow-traveller of impressive mileage.'[128] Where *All My Sons* had been attacked in the United States for being Marxist it was banned in the USSR because it suggested that capitalists could be ethical if they tried. *Salesman* was also banned on the grounds that it was anti-Soviet. Bigsby, however, suggests an alternative explanation for the ban: 'exception was taken by a minor functionary to what she believed to be an unflattering photograph of herself.'[129]

122 Michael Kort, *The Soviet Colossus: A History of the USSR*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 261.
123 Shvydkoi and Thoron, 'Nostalgia for Soviet Theatre', p. 112; Tamarchenko, 'Theatre censorship', p. 28.
124 Richard Sakwa, *Soviet Politics: An Introduction* (London/New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 88.
125 William Thompson, *The Soviet Union Under Brezhnev* (London: Pearson, 2003), p. 98.
126 I would like to thank Denise Youngblood for pointing this out to me.
127 Arthur Miller, 'Banned in Russia', *New York Times*, December 1970.
128 Graham Lord, 'The reason a Russian gave £2,000 to Arthur Miller', *The Sunday Express*, 27 December 1970.
129 Bigsby, *Arthur Miller*, p. 294.

Conclusion

Arthur Miller presents a fascinating study during the Cultural Cold War for the way in which he became almost a floating signifier for both the United States and the Soviet Union. The intended universality of his art was such that it lent itself so readily to (unintentional) ideological usage. Thus, during interlocking periods, Miller was co-opted or rejected by both sides and his plays were promoted, produced and banned, as each country took the same words and invested them with contrasting meanings at times. When he was officially unpopular in the United States, most notably the 1950s, he was at the height of his fame in the Soviet Union. Likewise, in the 1970s, when interest in Miller's past communist and/or fellow-travelling activities had declined, he was banned in the Soviet Union. As far back as 1957, Miller recognised what was going on when he wrote: 'I can say from my experience that plays and playwrights are also considered as bearing upon high policy, and are justified as being forbidden to go abroad, while within the country other arms of government are used to organize them out of circulation.'[130]

Both sides sustained interest in Miller from 1947 to 1965 clearly illustrated his importance within the Cultural Cold War. Wittingly or otherwise, Miller was mobilised as a key figure in the United States' struggle against the Soviet Union and vice versa. Although Miller did not position himself as a 'Cold Warrior,' hence his refusal to join the ACCF and similar organisations,[131] his conscious self-positioning was almost superfluous and he functioned as an unintentional Cold Warrior nonetheless. His position was such that his actions or those against him could be utilised as either pro/anti-American or pro/anti-Soviet propaganda. This was demonstrated by the controversies surrounding the withdrawal of his passport, the boycotts of his plays, and the Dostoevsky affair in the United States and the translation, staging and banning of his plays in the Soviet Union. As a consequence, Miller was mobilised as part of the United States and Soviet Union's respective Cultural Cold War campaigns without his direct consent. And yet, Miller was aware, *at the time*, that the State Department was involved in the spread of American books, music and painting overseas.[132] Thus, in the words of Jordi Cornella-Detrell, he may also have been guilty of 'playing the game.'[133]

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130 Arthur Miller, Speech to the National Assembly of the Authors League of America, 14 May 1957, Box 64, Folder: SPEECH – before AUTHORS LEAGUE 5/14/57 Excerpts in NY Times 5/15/57, HRC.

131 Letter to the author, 5 March 1997.

132 Miller, Speech to the National Assembly of the Authors League of America, 14 May 1957, HRC.

133 Jordi Cornella-Detrell, remark made during Shark Tank Seminar, Bangor University, 30 October 2008.

2   Biological Utopias East and West

Trofim D. Lysenko and His Critics

»   *William DeJong-Lambert*

The VASKHNIL Session

On 7 August 1948, at the end of a week-long session of the Lenin All-Union Academy of Agricultural Sciences (VASKHNIL) at the Academy of Sciences in Moscow, Trofim D. Lysenko delivered what has been described as 'the most chilling passage in all the literature of Twentieth Century science': 'The Central Committee of the Party has examined my report and approved it.'[1] Lysenko was a self-styled biologist who had come to prominence in the Soviet Union as the foremost proponent of Lamarckism as a scientific explanation for evolution.[2] His successful campaign against genetics was initially regarded in the West as the most disastrous example of the deleterious impact of Marxism upon natural sciences in the Soviet Union, and subsequently the rest of the Communist Bloc as well.[3] However, as I will show,

[1]   Stephen Jay Gould, *Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes* (New York: Norton, 1983), p. 135.

[2]   Jean Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) was a French naturalist who developed a widely influential theory of evolution in nature based upon the inheritance of acquired characteristics. Lamarck believed that biological characteristics are the result of direct adaptation to environmental conditions and species evolve as these adaptations are passed along to succeeding generations.

[3]   The literature on the Lysenko controversy is a case study in its own right. Early accounts, such as Conway Zirkle, *Death of a Science in Russia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), and Julian Huxley, *Heredity East and West: Lysenko and World Science* (New York: Henry Shuman, 1949), are chronicles deeply immersed in the politics of the period. The next wave of literature, David Joravsky's *The Lysenko Affair* and Zhores Medvedev's, *The Rise and Fall of T.D. Lysenko*, trans. I. Michael Lerner (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1971) is entirely different in that the former is a scholarly account, rather than a strategic response, and the latter was the first testimony of events from someone who had actually experienced them, founding a genre that would later include Valery Soyfer, *Lysenko and the Tragedy of Soviet Science* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994) and Raissa Berg, *Acquired Traits* (New York: Viking, 1988). The chapter on the Lysenko controversy in Loren Graham's, *Science and Philosophy in the Soviet Union* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), is also a frequently cited source from this period. For comprehensive accounts of the Lysenko affair, aside from the works by Joravsky and Soyfer cited above, see Medvedev, *The Rise and Fall of T.D. Lysenko*; Mark Adams, 'Genetics and the Soviet Scientific Community, 1948-1965' (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1972); Loren Graham, *Science and Philosophy in the Soviet Union* (New York: Knopf, 1972). More recent studies include Nikolai Krementsov, *Stalinist Science* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997) and Nils

the Lysenko affair is better understood as the product of hopes for the achievement of biological utopias in both the East and the West during the Cold War.

The proceedings of the VASKHNIL conference were translated into English and published in the West by the Foreign Language Publishing House in Moscow.[4] The text of the 'discussion' on the 'situation in biological science' displayed the central concepts of Lysenko's theories, as well as the style of rhetoric and argumentation favoured by Lysenko and his followers. The variety of methods Lysenko formulated to transform nature and increase agricultural production in the Soviet Union were dubbed 'Michurinism'. Ivan Michurin was a plant breeder who had been celebrated by the Bolsheviks as a model peasant scientist, tirelessly devoted to the production of improved varieties of agricultural products. Though during his lifetime Michurin had rejected Lysenko's attempts to meet with him, Lysenko claimed to be Michurin's heir and enlisted the term 'Michurin science' against geneticists to set up a dichotomy between the achievement of practical results, versus the pursuit of answers to theoretical questions. For example, the fact that the fruit fly, *Drosophila melanogaster*, had been the focus of genetic research inspired the accusation that geneticists were 'fly lovers and people haters' – bourgeois elitists who refused to acknowledge that science must serve the state.[5]

Genetics was described as a 'racist', 'fascist', 'science of imperialism', intended to justify colonisation and the subjugation of the working class. It was primarily referred to in combination with the names Gregor Mendel, August Weismann and T.H. Morgan, e.g. 'Mendelism, Weismannism, Morganism'. This enabled Lysenko

Roll-Hansen, *The Lysenko Effect: The Politics of Science* (New York: Humanity Books, 2005). In 'Lysenkoism in Europe: Export-Import of the Soviet Model', in Michael David-Fox and Gyorgy Peteri (eds.), *Academia in Upheaval: Origins, Transfers, and Transformations of the Communist Academic Regime in Russia and East Central Europe* (New York: Garland Publishing Group, 2000), 179-202, Nikolai Krementsov referred to the fact that very little research had yet been done on Lysenkoism beyond the borders of the Soviet Union. Publications on Lysenkoism in other countries include Dominique Lecourt, *Proletarian Science? The Case of Lysenko*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: NLB, 1977); Joël and Dan Kotek, *L'affaire Lyssenko* (Bruxelles: Editions Complexe, 1986); Ekkehard & Höxtermann. '*Klassenbiologen* und *Formalgenetiker*: Zur Rezeption Lyssenkos unter den Biologen in der DDR', in Wieland Berg, Sybille Gerstengarbe, Andreas Kleinert and Benno Parthier (eds.), *Vorträge und Abhandlungen zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte 1999/2000* (Halle a.d. Saale: Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina, 2); Laurence Schneider, *Biology and Revolution in Twentieth-Century China* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005); Francesco Cassatta, *Le Due Scienze: Il 'caso Lysenko' in Italia* (Turin, Italy: Bollati Boringhieri, 2008). During 4-5 December 2009 I organised the International Workshop on Lysenkoism. Some presentations from the workshop can be viewed online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oDQSmVtSzI; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37ck9UPiJc8; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct3kA_0jgHs&feature= channel; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WVovS-pNnEk&feature=channel; http://www.youtube.com/wat ch?v=3SPkuK3HMXI&feature=channel; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8pH_tF5hiI&feature=related; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZGKoGzCe_0&feature=channel. Selected papers were also revised and published in a special issue of the *Journal of the History of Biology* 45, no. 1 (2012).

4   *The Situation in Biological Science: Proceedings of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Session: July 31-August 7, 1948, Verbatim Report* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1949).

5   See, for example, the description of N.P. Dubinin's work in *The Situation in Biological Science*, p. 31-33.

and his supporters to choose details from the biographies of some of the most important figures in the history of genetics to portray it however they wished. For example, the fact that Mendel had been a Catholic priest allowed them to insist that genetics was formulated to produce the same helplessness in response to natural forces as implied by the Christian Bible. The brutal details of August Weissman's experiments, cutting off the tails of mice in order to disprove Lamarckism, were also repeatedly emphasised. Meanwhile, genetic advances such as Herman J. Muller's success using x-rays to produce mutations in *Drosophilae* were described as the 'queerest means of changing the hereditary nature', which resulted in nothing more significant than the production of 'unusual offspring'.[6] Genetics was irredeemably associated with the discarded belief in 'strict inheritance', i.e. that the environment plays no role in evolution – and the technique of genetic selection to produce new varieties was portrayed as a crude approximation of Michurinism. As one of Lysenko's followers declared at the vaskhnil conference: '…variability may be of different kinds: you can kill an organism with a stick, the organism will suffer a change, but there will be no development…'[7]

The outcome of the vaskhnil conference had a devastating impact upon biological sciences in the Soviet Union. As Zhores Medvedev later recounted in *The Rise and Fall of T.D. Lysenko*:

> (…) under the din of this loud campaign and the noise of unchecked cackling, the 'creators of the new biology', throwing off all restraint, distributed among themselves responsible posts and took over key positions in ministries, academies, institutes, and universities, and on editorial boards and executive boards of party and government organizations. Lysenko followers and closest collaborators, who up to that time had played second- and third-string roles in the sciences, went out for the spoils. They greedily grabbed ranks, posts, scientific degrees, honorary titles, prizes, salaries, medals, orders, honorifics, honoraria, apartments, summer houses, personal cars. They did not just await bounties from nature. (…)
>
> Lysenko's cult in these years was blown up to fabulous proportions. He is apparently the only biologist in history to whom the epithet 'great' was applied in his lifetime. His portraits hung in all scientific institutions. Art stores sold busts and bas-reliefs of Lysenko (…) In some cities monuments were erected to him. The State Chorus had in its repertory a hymn honoring Lysenko. (…)
>
> The harmful thesis of the existence of two biologies spread into other branches of science in subsequent years.[8]

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6   Vadim Andreevich Safonov, *Land in Bloom* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1951), p. 126-129.
7   Ibid.
8   Medvedev, *The Rise and Fall of T.D. Lysenko*, p. 126, 130-131.

Medvedev also decried the fact that during this time period biological concepts were 'discredited merely on the grounds that they had been developed in the United States.'[9] He thus affirmed the classic interpretation of the Lysenko affair as an instance of the Soviet Union rejecting Western biology and replacing it with an unscientific doctrine, promoted by a demagogue whose credentials amounted to no more than backing from Stalin and the Central Committee. As I will show, however, not only were the reactions of biologists in the West to Lysenko strikingly similar to the tenor and rhetoric used by Lysenko and his followers, but an examination of the origins and development of 'Michurin science' demonstrates it as a product of ideas influencing biological science in the West as well. Moreover, the exigencies of the Cold War produced a situation where the consequences of ideological incorrectness could be severe for scientists in both the East and the West.

Response to the VASKHNIL Conference in the United States and Great Britain

Six days after the conclusion of the VASKHNIL conference a headline appeared in *The New York Times* reading, '*Pravda* Hits Trend of Soviet Biologists'. The details of the story were vague, and informed readers of little more than that Trofim Lysenko, President of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Science, claimed he could change heredity by altering the environment.[10] A headline six days later was more specific – 'Lysenko Crushes Geneticists in Russia; Gets Party Backing for His Theories.' The story also informed readers that genetics was now banned from Russian laboratories, textbooks and university courses.[11]

Other sources covering the story included the *Wall Street Journal*, *Hartford Courant*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Time* magazine.[12] In certain instances press coverage simply served to increase the circulation of certain rumours, such as that someone visiting one of Lysenko's greenhouses had pulled a giant tomato off a vine and discovered it was made of wax.[13] In general the tone was at best dismissive and at worst mocking. As a reporter for the *Hartford Courant* wrote – 'That whirring sound is Gregor Mendel stirring in his restless grave... what

9   Ibid., p. 132.
10   'Pravda Hits Trend of Soviet Biologists', *New York Times*, 13 August 1948, p. 4.
11   'Lysenko Crushes Geneticists in Russia', *New York Times*, 19 August 1948, p. 5.
12   See for example, '"True" Science', *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 August 1948, p. 4.; 'Repeal of Mendel', *The Hartford Courant*, 1 September 1948, p. 10.; 'The Mind of the Kremlin', *Washington Post*, 22 August 1948, p. B4.; 'Marxism as Applied to Growing Tomatoes', *Los Angeles Times*, 25 August 1948, p. A4.; *Time*, 6 September 1948, p. 66.
13   'Matter of Fact: Phony Tomato', *The Hartford Courant*, 23 August 1948, p. 5.; 'The Phony Tomato', *The Washington Post*, 26 August 1948, p. 10.; 'Marxism as Applied to Growing Tomatoes', *Los Angeles Times*, 25 August 1948, p. A4.

can there be of intellectual freedom when a Soviet stooge can become a Joshua and order the sun of scientific progress to stand still?'[14]

Though derisive coverage in the popular press may be unsurprising, this same approach was also evident in scientific publications – particularly a special issue of the *Journal of Heredity* devoted to the topic.[15] The issue, titled 'Lysenko's Wonderful Genetics: History and Orientation,' consisted of a single article written by the editor, Robert C. Cook. The article, 'Lysenko's Marxist Genetics: Science or Religion?' included official Soviet photographs of Lysenko which the *Journal of Heredity* had been allowed to reproduce on the condition that they not alter the caption.[16] The editors complied, but followed the captions with their own bracketed comments. One photograph showed Lysenko with two followers, one of whom had a large white beard and wore wire-rimmed glasses. The official caption read that Lysenko was 'measuring the growth of wheat.' The editors commented: 'It is noteworthy that Lysenko, who has interdicted experimental controls and the use of mathematics in biological research needs only eye-power and general impressions to "measure the growth of wheat." (...) The presence of that capitalist symbol, Santa Claus, in the centre of the picture is purely coincidental.'[17] Lysenko was also first compared to, then referred to in the text, as 'Savonarola'.[18]

Two articles published by Herman J. Muller in the *Saturday Review of Literature* – 'The Destruction of Science in the USSR' and 'Back to Barbarism Scientifically' – also evince a rhetorical style that would not have been out of place at the VASKHNIL conference.[19] In the former Muller wrote that Lysenko's work was 'drivel', intended to 'degrade rather than advance humanity,' which gave 'him no more claim to being a geneticist than does the treatment of dogs for worms.'[20] Of the six letters from readers responding to Muller's articles only one agreed with him. Readers accused Muller of being 'unscientific', 'emotional', 'vehement', and – worst of all – apparently unable to provide any conclusive, scientific evidence for why he disagreed with Lysenko. As one put it, Muller's work was perceived as no more than a 'political diatribe.'[21]

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14 'Repeal of Mendel', *The Hartford Courant*, 1 September 1948, p. 10.
15 *Journal of Heredity*, 40 no. 7 (1949).
16 Ibid., p. 203-208.
17 Ibid., p. 191.
18 Ibid., p. 176. Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) was a Dominican priest and leader in Florence famous for his anti-Renaissance stance and extremist views on religious reform.
19 H.J. Muller, 'The Destruction of Science in the USSR', *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 4 December 1948, p. 13-15, 63-65.; H.J. Muller, 'Back to Barbarism Scientifically', *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 11 December 1948, p. 8-10.
20 Ibid.
21 *Saturday Review of Literature*, 8 January 1948, p. 23-24.

The outcome was just as bad a year later when Muller engaged in a debate in the same publication with one of Lysenko's more prominent supporters, Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw.[22] Shaw's support for Lysenko was based on his belief that the state should assure that scientific research was directed towards the betterment of society, as well as his disagreement with the notion he believed genetics supported – inherent biological superiority.[23] For this reason, and because he was not a scientist, Shaw never touched on the biological issues – such as whether or not Lysenko's claims that acquired characteristics are inherited were backed up with experimental data. Muller made the mistake of also not sticking to biology, explaining that 'the public has not the patience to be bothered with the intricacies' of genetics.[24] Muller thus once again caused readers to assume Lysenko could not be refuted scientifically and opened himself up to charges of being 'unscientific'.

Once the letters to the editor were published a few weeks later it was clear that most readers sided with Shaw against Muller.[25] Muller was criticised for believing that the public could not 'be bothered with' an explanation of genetics. One reader claimed that if scientists were capable of producing atomic bombs and biological weapons then the public had a right to understand what they were doing. Muller's arguments against Lysenko seemed to readers to amount to little more than the contention that he must be wrong if the Soviet government supported him. Why, they asked, was Muller not 'dispassionate' – why did he not challenge Shaw and Lysenko with facts, rather than his own 'dogma'? Why had he 'become the fanatical advocate rather than the objective scientist?'[26] Muller expected readers to accept their own ignorance along with his authority: 'Is their curiosity about genetic research never to be even partially satisfied unless the sacred text of the geneticists' actual words is perused reverentially?'[27] Muller's arguments had only served to undermine his credibility and caused readers to question whether his criticism of Lysenko was any more valid than Lysenko's attacks on genetics.

Another response to Lysenko in the West that, in certain details, may be regarded as polemical was Conway Zirkle's *Death of a Science in Russia*.[28] Zirkle was a professor of botany and historian of science at the University of Pennsylvania, and the book was an edited collection of translations from the text of the vAskhNIL session with contributions by other Western biologists concerned about

22 George Bernard Shaw, 'Behind the Lysenko Controversy', and H.J. Muller, 'It Still Isn't a Science: A Reply to George Bernard Shaw', *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 16 April 1949, p. 10-11, 11-12, 61.

23 See George Bernard Shaw, 'The Lysenko Muddle', *The Labour Monthly* 31, no. 1 (1949), p. 18-20.

24 Ibid., 12.

25 *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 7 May 1949, p. 26.

26 Ibid., p. 27.

27 Ibid., p. 28.

28 Conway Zirkle, *Death of a Science in Russia* (Philadelphia, pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949).

the situation in Soviet biology. The occasionally strident tone of the work was due almost exclusively to Zirkle's ardent anticommunism and dismissive attitude towards Russian science. For example, in a talk Zirkle gave at the ballroom of the Philadelphia Municipal Auditorium on the topic of 'astrobotany' he declared:

> The astro-botanists claim to have discovered life on Mars. They also claim that the climate of Mars resembles that found in parts of Siberia, hence the flora of these regions are being studied so that the astro-botanists can learn what plant life is like on Mars. We really cannot exaggerate or parody this stuff.[29]

As Zirkle noted in the introduction to *Death of a Science in Russia* he was not using the official English transcript produced by the Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow. Instead, he worked with translators to produce his own version of the text in order to portray Lysenko and his followers as he believed they actually were – crude, unscientific and uneducated. As he wrote:

> Scholars consulted by the editor have agreed that Lysenko expresses himself in very bad Russian. We have tried to keep Lysenko's flavor (this side of incoherence) if mediocre English can ever be given the flavor of bad Russian. (...) Our version contains certain crude expressions used by Lysenko which are not in the official translation.[30]

For example, the official Soviet translation quoted Lysenko referring to Malthus' influence upon Darwin as: 'Many are still not clear about Darwin's error in transferring into his teaching Malthus' preposterous reactionary ideas on population.'[31] In Zirkle's version, on the other hand, Lysenko said: 'Darwin's error of transferring into his own doctrine the mad-brained reactionary Malthusian scheme on populations is up to the present not realized by many.'[32] There are many similar examples, including a section where Zirkle quoted Lewis Carroll's poem, *The Hunting of the Snark*, in order to mock Lysenko's repeated claims that geneticists still largely believed that the environment played no role in evolution:

> 'Just the place for a Snark! I have said it twice:
> That alone should encourage the crew.
> Just the place for a Snark! I have said it thrice:
> What I tell you three times is true.'[33]

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29   Ibid., p. 16.
30   Zirkle, *Death of a Science in Russia*, p. 98.
31   *The Situation in Biological Science*, p. 13.
32   Zirkle, *Death of a Science in Russia*, p. 100.
33   Ibid., p. 167.

Perhaps more disturbing than the fact that criticism of Lysenko by Western biologists was often rhetorically very similar to the angry assaults on genetics by Lysenko and his followers, is that some either expressed similar desires for official state support, or deliberately deceived the lay public on the facts of biological science. An instance of the former can be found in Julian Huxley's *Heredity East and West: Lysenko and World Science*, and the latter was displayed in the response of J.B.S. Haldane.[34] Huxley was the grandson of Thomas Henry Huxley, a well-known figure who had been the public defender of Darwin's theory of Natural Selection. Huxley was famous as an author of popular books and articles on scientific topics, and *Heredity East and West* was his attempt to explain the Lysenko affair to nonscientists and demonstrate why Lysenko's views on heredity were incorrect. Haldane was also a prominent British scientist with a talent for translating scientific advances into language the public could understand. However, unlike Huxley, Haldane supported Lysenko, and this sympathy provoked him into abusing his abilities to deceive his audience.

The most striking section of Huxley's analysis of the Lysenko affair came towards the end of the text. After writing that Lysenko and his followers 'move in a different world of ideas', Michurinism was mostly based on 'ancient superstitions', and Lysenko had a 'medieval mind', Huxley introduced the concept of 'evolutionary humanism'.[35] Evolutionary humanism was a term Huxley used to describe his belief that human societies, guided by scientific experts, had a duty to bring the 'general process of evolution to new heights.'[36] He also believed biology should replace religion as an ideological system of beliefs, with credibility offered by the fact that 'men of science' would 'provide the material basis for the heightened standards of living.'[37] Huxley believed that more serious than the fate of certain geneticists or the fate of Soviet genetics was the fact that Lysenko's triumph represented the successful infringement of the state upon scientific research.[38] The best way, he believed, to defend against this was for the state itself to become 'scientific'. Without the slightest irony he referred to Michurinism in the Soviet Union as an example of the influence, prestige and respect he wished for genetics and Natural Selection in the West.[39]

In the final section of the book Huxley questioned the motives and consistency of by far the most prominent biologist to defend Lysenko in the West – J.B.S. Haldane. Four months after the VASKHNIL conference Haldane had agreed to par-

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34   Huxley, *Heredity East and West*. In England the book was published under the title *Soviet Genetics and World Science: Lysenko and the Meaning of Heredity*, by Chatto and Windus.

35   Huxley, *Heredity East and West*, p. viii, 102-103, 196.

36   Ibid., p. 196.

37   Ibid., p. 196-197.

38   Ibid., p. 35-37.

39   Ibid., p. 205, ft.

ticipate in a 'debate' on the Lysenko affair for the BBC and subsequently published several articles in support of Lysenko in a leftist publication, the *Modern Quarterly*.[40] For the BBC broadcast the four participants were actually taped separately ahead of time, a precaution, according to one commentator, intended to prevent 'possible murder' should they meet on the stairs on their way into the studio.[41] Haldane began by saying that the discussion was 'odd' in part because as yet very little was known about the matter. Haldane said that he preferred to wait until a full translation of the VASKHNIL conference was available in English, even though he knew that it already was.[42] Haldane also – like Zirkle, though for totally different motives – cited Lewis Carroll: 'We are like the jury in *Alice in Wonderland*, considering our verdict before we have heard the evidence.'[43]

More disturbing than Haldane's deceptiveness concerning what one could or could not know about what had taken place in Moscow, were his distortions concerning the fate of Lysenko's primary opponent in the Soviet Union, the renowned geneticist Nikolai Vavilov. Haldane referred to a memorial of Vavilov published in *The Journal of Heredity* to imply Vavilov had died a natural death, when in fact he had been arrested, as Haldane knew, for political reasons – including his opposition to Lysenko.[44] Fortunately for Haldane, however, *The Journal of Heredity* was published in the United States, and the BBC was broadcast in the United Kingdom: those who were listening could not know better, and those who knew better were not listening. Haldane also defended Lysenko with empty non-sequiturs. He said he found it hard to believe the Soviet government would back Lysenko if Lysenko was wrong.[45]

Haldane's manipulations – more than his support for Lysenko – aroused the suspicion of his colleagues.[46] Geneticists began to complain when he cited their work – with slight alterations non-scientists would not notice – to give credibility to Lysenko's claims.[47] *Time* magazine called Haldane 'one of the biggest scientific fish in Communism's net, outside Russia.' His colleagues were said to be 'watching him closely to see if he would cling to the Party line, recently clamped around some very dubious genetics.'[48] Just as readers of *Saturday Review of Literature*

40 See for example, J.B.S. Haldane, 'Biology and Marxism', *The Modern Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (1949), p. 2-11.; J.B.S. Haldane, 'In Defense of Genetics', *The Modern Quarterly* 4, no. 3 (1949), p. 194-202.

41 John Langdon-Davies, *Russia Puts the Clock Back* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1949), p. 78.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., p. 88.

44 For an account of Vavilov's death see Mark Popovsky, *The Vavilov Affair* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1984).

45 Paul, 'A War on Two Fronts', p.13, 14, 19.

46 Clark, *JBS*, p. 200.

47 Paul, 'A War on Two Fronts', p. 19.

48 *Time*, 27 September 1948, p. 68-69.

believed that Muller's behaviour as a scientist was no better than Lysenko's, scientists believed that Haldane's actions were comparable to Lysenko's as well.

Disingenuousness, however, was not limited to Lysenko supporters like Haldane. In 1945, three years before the VASKHNIL conference, Columbia University geneticist Leslie Clarence Dunn and his colleague Theodosius Dobzhansky translated and published a work of Lysenko's, *Heredity and Its Variability*, and then organised reviews. Their purpose was, as Dobzhansky put it, to let Lysenko 'stand on his own two feet.'[49] Dobzhansky's referred to Lysenko's text as 'excrement', and said the author himself was a 'son-of-a-bitch'. He said: "Translating it has been one of the most unpleasant tasks I had in my whole life, and surely I would never undertake a thing like that for money – it can be done only for a "cause".'[50]

Their 'cause' in fact was to set Lysenko up to be portrayed in the scientific and popular press as a charlatan. The translation was published by King's Crown Press, a division of Columbia University Press, in 1946. Julian Huxley arranged reviews in England and Muller and Dunn contacted colleagues in the US. Reviews of *Heredity and Its Variability* appeared in all the major biology journals, including the *Journal of Heredity*, *American Naturalist*, *Chronica Botanika*, *Physiological Zoology*, *Nature* and *Discovery*.[51] Dunn wrote a letter to the editor of *Science* requesting to publish a review of the work; however, his letter gave no indication that he was in any way involved with the book's publication. Dunn also noted that since he was chairman of the American-Soviet Science Society he felt it was important that the work of Russian scientists be better known in the United States. Thus his criticism could not be 'attributed to animosity or prejudice' towards the USSR.[52] The review, unsurprisingly, was devastating.[53]

Shortly before the review was published Dunn received a letter from the science editor of the *New York Times*, Waldemar Kaempffert, asking about *Heredity and Its Variability*. Kaempffert wrote that he assumed the book would 'create some stir' and wondered if Dunn could give him any more information on the controversy.[54] Dunn obliged by referring Kaempffert to the reviews he was arranging.[55] Kaempffert responded gratefully, writing: 'Now that I have the opinions of my

49   B: D65 Dobzhansky, Theodosius. Reminiscences, Part 1: 321. The American Philosophical Society.

50   Correspondence, Th. Dobzhansky to L.C. Dunn, 31 July 1945. B: D917 L.C. Dunn Papers. Dobzhansky, Theodosius, 1943-5. The American Philosophical Society.

51   Krementsov, *Stalinist Science*, p. 122.

52   Correspondence, L.C. Dunn to Editor, *Science*, 1 January 1946. B: D917 L.C. Dunn Papers. Lysenko Controversy in the U.S. #2. The American Philosophical Society.

53   *Science* 103 (1946), p. 180-181.

54   Correspondence, Waldemar Kaempffert to L.C. Dunn, 29 January 1947. B: D917 L.C. Dunn Papers. Lysenko Controversy in the U.S. #2. The American Philosophical Society.

55   Correspondence, L.C. Dunn to Waldemar Kaempffert, 31 January 1946. B: D917 L.C. Dunn Papers. Lysenko Controversy in the U.S. #2. The American Philosophical Society.

betters in genetics before me I ought to be able to handle Lysenko adequately.'[56] Kaempffert's review was predictably dismissive. He wrote that Lysenko's theories were a product of the 'Marxian dispensation', and analogous to 'believing that elephants grew trunks because they yearned for trunks.' Lysenko's work, according to Kaempffert, read like the ravings of a 'crackpot'.[57]

The fact that the efforts of Dunn, Dobzhansky, Muller, Huxley et al. were not necessarily regarded as ethical by their colleagues is evidenced by the response of one biologist they solicited to write a review, L.J. Stadler at the University of Missouri. Stadler demurred and wrote to Dunn:

> I cannot find anything to say about the Lysenko job that seems to me worth printing. I am glad to have an opportunity to send it, and I think Dobzhansky has done a useful service in making it available. It is a useful example of unscientific methods, and I think I shall want a few copies to give to graduate students. But it doesn't seem to me that there is any place for an extended review of this sort of thing in a scientific journal, except as a text for some preaching on open-mindedness, objectivity and logic. I am no good at this. In any case, there are plenty of indigenous examples which could be used for this purpose, and I see no advantage to Russian-American relations in choosing one from Russia.
>
> I'm afraid I may have missed the point of your letter. If (...) anyone with an axe to grind (...) wants to use this for an attack on Soviet science (...) it seems to me that it can do so effectively only by quoting adverse criticism by qualified scientists. The application to Soviet science in general does not have to be included in the quoted article; that can be supplied by the journalist, with no need of authority. And if the review concerns itself with demonstrating that equally unscientific work is done outside of Russia, your axe-grinder doesn't have to quote that. It only serves to show that in the mind of the reviewer the application to Russian science in general is plausible enough to require refutation in advance. I don't think it is.[58]

56 Correspondence, Waldemar Kaempffert to L.C. Dunn, 1 February 1946. Correspondence, Waldemar Kaempffert to L.C. Dunn, 13 February 1946. B: D917 L.C. Dunn Papers. Lysenko Controversy in the u.s. #2. The American Philosophical Society.

57 Waldemar Kaempffert, 'Man and His Milieu', *New York Times*, 3 March 1946: BR4.

58 Correspondence, L.C. Dunn to Dr L.J. Stadler at University of Missouri, 22 December 1945. Dr L.J. Stadler to L.C. Dunn, 28 December 1945. B: D917 L.C. Dunn Papers. Lysenko Controversy in the u.s. #2. The American Philosophical Society. Ironically, three years later, the us Department of Agriculture would decline to renew Stadler's passport to allow him to attend the Eighth International Congress of Genetics in Stockholm, due to suspicions concerning his loyalty to the United States. The Congress was held during 7-14 July, ending approximately one week before the vaskhnil conference. [Finding Aid. Lewis John Stadler (1896-1954), papers, 1927-1955 (C2429). Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia. University of Missouri/State Historical Society of Missouri]. The State Department would decline to renew Dunn's passport, for similar reasons, in 1953. [Correspondence, Ruth Shipley to Leslie Clarence Dunn, 9 April 1953. B: D 917 L.C. Dunn Papers. Oral History Records. The American Philosophical Society].

From Stadler's perspective, the anti-Lysenkoist campaign amounted to a political attack which ignored the fact that 'unscientific work' was not a phenomenon exclusive to the Soviet Union.

It was not just the tone and conduct of the debate between Lysenko and his critics which were similarly 'unscientific'. Both sides also frequently repeated the same charges against one another. Chief among these was the accusation that genetics/Michurinism was a regressive, pre-Enlightenment doctrine hidebound by the same doctrinal orthodoxy as Christianity. For example, at the vaskhnil conference Lysenko's closest ally, I.I. Prezent, charged that genetics was based upon faith rather than fact and accused geneticists of making false analogies between the 'invisible atom' and the 'invisible gene'. 'Far closer,' he said, 'would be an analogy between the invisible gene and invisible spirit.'[59]

The accusation that Lysenko was a Lamarckist was turned into an attribute and Lysenko's followers highlighted the political context of Lamarck's career.

> As is known, Lamarck's theory arose in connection with the ideas of the French encyclopaedists and the French materialists. It reflected the revolutionary epoch of that time. (...) The reaction against the French Revolution also caused a strong reaction against the ideas of Lamarck...[60]

If Lamarck could be successfully identified with the French Revolution then geneticists were, by implication, associated with the reactionary forces who opposed it. Genetics was formulated to keep science mystical, unknowable – a body of truths which must be accepted like scripture.

This same theme was reflected in the arguments of J.B.S. Haldane. In 'Biology and Marxism,' an article he published in the *Modern Quarterly* shortly after the vaskhnil conference, Haldane insisted that religion and capitalism, as social forces, were wary of the revolutionary potential of biological science. A Marxist science of biology would mean that the average individual would benefit from scientific advances in ways that were not possible in the structure of capitalist society. Haldane believed that biology had an even greater role to play in transforming contemporary society than physics or chemistry had had during the Industrial Revolution.[61]

As is clear from the title of Robert C. Cook's article – 'Lysenko's Marxist Genetics: Science or Religion?' – cited above, geneticists also used religion as a line

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59   *The Situation in Biological Science*, p. 602.
60   Ibid., p. 273.
61   J.B.S. Haldane, 'Biology and Marxism', *The Modern Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (1949), p. 2-11.

of attack against Lysenko.[62] This was also obvious by the repeated references to Lysenko as 'Savonarola' and portrayals of Marxism as Christian gospel:

> As far as perhaps 95 percent of the population of the world is concerned, what geneticists think about Lysenko is not crucially important. If enough people can be 'sold' on the Gospel of St Marx as revealed by Apostle Trofim, Friar Bacon's hard discipline of rigidly experimental science may be swallowed up in the dialectics of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Lysenkoism. (...)
>
> There are in the aggregate a very large number of people in the world, even in the United States, who still harbor the illusion that genetics is tainted with racism and somehow represents most of the worst features of Presbyterian predestination.[63]

Similarly, L.C. Dunn, in his review of *Heredity and Its Variability*, wrote that Lysenko was a 'biological fundamentalist' whose scriptures were written in the 19th century. He also made an analogy between Lysenkoism and the Scopes Trial:

> It seems an anachronism somewhat like the denial of the facts of evolution over large areas of a country as progressive as the USA. In both cases the causes of such attitudes seem to those outside the country to be obscure and puzzling.[64]

The Scopes Trial was a popular point of reference for Lysenko's Western critics, reflecting a self-consciousness that mistrust of, and the desire to, interfere with biological science was not a phenomenon unique to the Soviet Union. The US Assistant Secretary of State, George V. Allen, also cited Scopes in his assessment of Lysenko, saying the closest thing to the VASKHNIL conference in the US was the attempt to outlaw the teaching of Darwinian evolution in Tennessee. 'It is hoped,' Allen said, 'there will be not more such monkeyshines.'[65] It is clear that for both Lysenkoists and geneticists there was nothing more damning than being associated with religion.

The Lysenko Affair East and West

In addition to recognising that the response to Lysenkoism of scientists and lay commentators in the West often consisted of a rhetoric of recrimination and accusation

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62   Ibid., p. 203-208.
63   Ibid., p. 201.
64   *Science* 103 (1946), p. 181.
65   'No Walls Between Students', *New York Times*, 12 September 1948, p. E8.

that scholars usually associate with Lysenko and his followers, it is also important to acknowledge that the sources of Lysenko's success and the belief in transforming nature were also common to both the East and the West. Prominent Lysenko critic Theodosius Dobzhansky noted that the support given to Michurin was the result of Lenin's fascination with the American plant breeder, Luther Burbank:

> The years of Revolution and civil war in Russia were times of acute food shortage and of downright starvation. The food problem was on everyone's mind. An American popular book describing the wonders allegedly wrought by Luther Burbank with plants in California caught the imagination of I.V. Lenin. A Russian translation of this book was published in a very large number of copies; Lenin commissioned N.I. Vavilov to organize his great institute of Genetics and Plant Breeding; and somebody (rumor had it that it was Timiriazev) told Lenin that a man named I.V. Michurin, a Russian Burbank and a communist sympathizer to boot, is working on fruit trees in a provincial town in central Russia.[66]

As Dobzhansky and David Joravsky have described, Michurin had previously laboured in obscurity as his repeated requests for state support were ignored by tsarist authorities.[67] Dobzhansky also indicated that Michurin had been inclined to blame his frustrations on geneticists.[68]

Luther Burbank also came to prominence in the United States in context with the early development of the science of genetics. Burbank's work was focused on creating unusual hybrids by grafting and cross-pollinating numerous varieties of fruits, vegetables and flowers. Burbank was gifted at the art of self-promotion and some of his creations sold for thousands of dollars, despite the fact that his methods were impractical for implementing on a large scale, and contributed little to the goal of increasing agricultural output. Burbank's success, like Michurin's, came despite the fact that biologists (including Nikolai Vavilov who visited from the Soviet Union), were dismissive of his work. In the special issue of the *Journal of Heredity* on the Lysenko affair, Robert C. Cook wrote of Burbank:

> In this country his name has become a symbol in the popular mind of the great plant wizard, an estimate which is not shared by competent specialists. His contributions to knowledge of plant breeding and genetics are practically nil, and many of his sweeping claims were manifestly absurd.[69]

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66 B: Z67 Conway Zirkle Papers, T. Dobzhansky, End of Genetics in the Soviet Union, p. 5. The American Philosophical Society.
67 Joravsky, *The Lysenko Affair*, p. 40-50.
68 Dobzhansky, End of Genetics in the Soviet Union, p. 5.
69 Ibid., p. 178.

The public at large however perceived Burbank to be not just a great scientist, but an important geneticist.[70] In fact Burbank was the only 'geneticist' to ever appear on a postage stamp until Barbara McClintock was honoured by the us postal service 65 years later.[71]

Burbank's success – like Michurin and Lysenko's – was the product of the public's desire for science to produce wonders, to transform nature. This same expectation is evident in the international success of Viennese zoologist Paul Kammerer during the same time period. Kammerer achieved fame for his experiments 'proving' that acquired characteristics are inherited. His most well-known work was conducted on midwife toads. Midwife toads get their name from the fact that after mating the males carry the eggs. Since they mate on land, the male toads do not possess the dark pigmented thumb pads that other frogs and toads have for copulating underwater. Kammerer claimed he caused the midwife toads to mate underwater by heating their aquariums. They then acquired dark thumb pads and the next generation of toads had them as well. This example of the inheritance of acquired characteristics provoked tremendous interest in the us, Western Europe and the Soviet Union.

In 1923, Kammerer embarked on a series of tremendously successful lecture tours. According to *The New York Times*, Kammerer's experimental results made him Darwin's heir.[72] A key component in Kammerer's success was clearly the possibilities that Lamarckism implied for the development of human society. Kammerer made utopian claims such as that future generations will learn more easily and accomplish with minimal effort tasks that are at present formidable, and even develop greater capacity for survival. Moreover, if the present policy of prohibiting alcohol in the United States were continued, Kammerer claimed, us citizens would be 'born without any desire for liquor'. The transmission of attributes acquired through our experiences meant that our successors would be better than us and would not repeat our mistakes.[73]

The Bolsheviks were as taken with Kammerer's experiments as the American public and offered him a professorship. Meanwhile Kammerer repeatedly

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70   For a biography of Burbank see Peter Dreyer, *A Gardener Touched With Genius: The Life of Luther Burbank* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985). Dreyer also touches on the Burbank-Michurin-Lysenko connection: 'Decades later Burbank's name was appropriated by T.D. Lysenko and his followers, then engaged in ruthlessly dismantling the entire structure of Russian genetic science. (…) None of this had anything to do with Burbank. But he had been branded "unscientific" and adopted into the bargain in Russia as a Lysenkoist totem to set beside the canonized Michurin. Accordingly, in Western eyes, he became a kind of Lysenkoist by posthumous association.' Dreyer, *A Gardener Touched With Genius*, p. 221-223.

71   The Burbank stamp was issued in 1940 and McClintock's in 2005.

72   'Kammerer Gives Proof of Theories', *New York Times*, 20 December 1923.

73   'Scientist Tells of Success Where Darwin Met Failure', *New York Times*, 3 June 1923; 'Biologist to Tell How Species Alter', *New York Times*, 28 November 1923.

refused requests to have his claims verified, however, as his fame grew the pressure mounted. Finally, as he was preparing to take on his new post in the Soviet Union, his toad specimens were examined and revealed to be fraudulent. It turned out his midwife toads' dark thumb pads were no more than injections of India ink. Kammerer was so distraught and humiliated that he committed suicide. In a note found in Kammerer's pocket he requested that his body be dissected so his colleagues might discover in his brain a trace of the qualities they found absent when he was alive.[74]

The eugenics movement, probably more than any other detail in the history of biology, clearly demonstrates the popular desire to use science to improve human society. Eugenicists in the US tended to favour negative measures, such as involuntary sterilisation laws. Supporters in Great Britain were more attracted to positive measures, such as issuing 'eugenic stripes' to meritoriously wounded World War I veterans to indicate their biological worth and make them more attractive to women (and more likely to reproduce) despite whatever horrific injuries they had suffered.[75] In both cases arguments for the regulation of reproduction were clearly linked with state ideology. In England, Karl Pearson gloomily cited the dysgenic impact of the fact that the lower classes tended to reproduce at a far higher rate than the upper classes.[76] Meanwhile, American eugenicists cautioned that belief in democracy must not be confused with faith in equality. The director of the American Museum of Natural History, Henry Fairfield Osborn, proclaimed that 'the true spirit of American democracy that all men are born with equal rights and duties has been confused with the political sophistry that all men are born with equal character and ability to govern themselves and others, and with the educational sophistry that education and environment will offset the handicap of heredity.'[77]

The eugenics movement in the Soviet Union was established somewhat later than its counterparts in the West. However, the leading Russian eugenicists Nikolai Kol'tsov and Iurii Filipchenko were also conscious of the need to describe

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74 Paul Kammerer Papers. B: K128. The American Philosophical Society; For a defense of Kammerer from a Marxist perspective see Arthur Koestler. *The Case of the Midwife Toad* (Boston: Random House, 1973), and for a recent reassessment of Kammerer's work see Sander Gliboff, 'The Case of Paul Kammerer', *Journal of the History of Biology* 39 (2006), p. 525-563.

75 Ibid., p. 91. Additional comprehensive accounts of the eugenics movement include Mark Adams (ed.), *The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil and Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Elof Axel Carlson, *The Unfit: A History of a Bad Idea* (Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 2001); Stefan Kuhl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). For an account of the response of geneticists to eugenics in the 1920s and 1930s see Bentley Glass and Curt Stern, 'Geneticists Embattled: Their Stand Against Rampant Eugenics and Racism in America During the 1920s and 1930s', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 130 no. 1 (1986), p. 130-154.

76 Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, p. 33.

77 Ibid., p. 76.

their 'science' in terms that reflected political and economic ideology.[78] Leftist Soviet sympathisers in the West, such as Paul Kammerer and H.J. Muller, argued that socialism was a far better system than capitalism to implement a eugenics policy to improve the human stock. Kammerer wrote:

> (...) the theory of Natural Selection is not unsocialistic, for its war-cry, 'let the best man win', eliminates the prerogatives of birth and money, of internal and external inheritance. Class struggle is a veritable struggle for existence: a race with mental weapons, without violence, a bloodless and a positive selection – the survival of the fittest.[79]

Meanwhile, shortly before he briefly emigrated to the Soviet Union, Muller provoked a sensation by proclaiming at a eugenics conference that it was the unplanned economy in the US, rather than the individuals who suffered from it, which should be blamed for negative social attributes.[80]

Muller's experiences in the Soviet Union – particularly Stalin's rejection of eugenic beliefs and his encounters with Lysenko – would turn him entirely in the opposite direction by the time of the VASKHNIL conference. He became, as his biographer Elof Axel Carlson put it: 'Better dead than red.'[81] Muller also supported the purging of communist sympathisers from academia in the US once the Cold War got underway. Ten months after the VASKHNIL conference the American Association of University Professors reported a record number of instances in which academics lost their jobs for reasons related to political loyalty.[82] Muller also agreed with the decision of Oregon State University president August L. Strand to dismiss a chemistry professor, Ralph Spitzer, due to his public stance in favour of Lysenko. Muller's experiences with the climate of intellectual intolerance in the Soviet Union during the 1930s did not motivate him to work in opposition to analogous efforts in the United States. Rather, as he said: 'These people have blood on their hands; they stink; and there is no use in letting them get away with their pretence that they are representatives of science and culture.'[83]

It is also sadly ironic that the academic career of one of Lysenko's primary critics in the US, L.C. Dunn, would be essentially ruined by his involvement in

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78 Adams, *Wellborn Science*, p. 177, 179. See also Loren Graham, *Between Science and Values* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), p. 217-256.

79 Kammerer, *The Inheritance of Acquired Characteristics*, p. 263-264.

80 'Holds Capitalism Bars Eugenic Goal', *New York Times*, 24 Aug 1932, p. 8.

81 Elof Axel Carlson, Lecture, New York, NY, 10 June 2005; Muller's FBI files contain numerous documents emphasising that by the 1950s he believed the Soviet Union was even a greater threat to 'civilization' than atomic warfare.

82 'Charges of Freedom Curbs Rising in Nation's Colleges', *New York Times*, 29 May 1949, p. 1.

83 Ibid., p. 375.

political and social causes. Dunn's interest in the Soviet Union was sparked by a trip sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1927. He later became a founding member of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship and president of the American-Soviet Science Society.[84] Once the Lysenko affair was underway, Dunn combated attempts to portray 'Lysenkoism' as characteristic of the situation in Soviet science. He also came to regret his involvement with Zirkle's *Death of a Science in Russia*. As Dunn said, Zirkle's antagonistic attitude towards Lysenko had more to do with his own anticommunism, than the content of Lysenko's theories – and that was the problem.[85]

In 1950, the State Department declined to renew Dunn's passport due to 'direction', 'domination' and 'control' they believed was exercised over him by the Communist Party.[86] In his response, Dunn noted that among the evidence collected against him was a review of a book by J.B.S. Haldane, wherein Dunn had made 'unfavorable references to the author's confusion of Marxism with natural science.'[87] Clearly political authorities in the US were little better than their Soviet counterparts in differentiating sympathy from subversive activity. However, Dunn was not just ostracised by the US government. His opinions also made him so unpopular with his colleagues at Columbia that when he retired there was no formal acknowledgement of his service or career.

Dunn was also sympathetic to Lamarckism for numerous reasons, including resentment towards popular belief in genetic determinism. This was probably related to the fact that his eldest son Stephen was born with cerebral palsy.[88] Dunn also believed that Lysenko's ideas had not necessarily been so far out of the mainstream of biological science at the time he presented them, and some of his criticism of genetics 'struck home'.[89] Describing the participants in an International Eugenics Congress at the Museum of Natural History in New York City he attended in 1921, Dunn commented: 'There were queer ducks of a variety of kinds (...) people who wanted to change the world.'[90] Dunn also identified with his Soviet counterparts in terms of the political pressures they faced. When he was being investigated by the State Department he realised that as far as the US

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84   See Melina Gormley. *Geneticist L.C. Dunn: Politics, Activism and Community* (Ph.D. Dissertation. Oregon State, 2006).

85   Ibid.

86   Correspondence, Ruth Shipley to Leslie Clarence Dunn, 9 April 1953. B: D 917 L.C. Dunn Papers. Oral History Records. The American Philosophical Society.

87   B: D 65 Dobzhansky Papers. Dunn, Leslie Clarence #1.; The Reminiscences of L.C. Dunn, 1145-1164. Oral History Research Office. Columbia University, 1961.

88   Gormley. *Geneticist L.C. Dunn*, p. 476.

89   The Reminiscences of L.C. Dunn, p. 690, 693, 780, 784-785.

90   The Reminiscences of L.C. Dunn, p. 165-166.

government was concerned a scientist's place was in the lab, not 'messing around' with foreigners.[91]

Dunn also did not view the United States and the Soviet Union as opposites, but rather as two societies pursuing alternate paths to achieving the same goals. What fascinated him about the Bolshevik Revolution was that 'political developments eventually spread round the world in one form or another, and what happens in one place at one time may stand a good chance of happening in another place at another time.'[92] For Dunn, the USSR provided a natural experiment for observing how modernity might otherwise be.

Conclusion

Leslie Clarence Dunn once commented that 'One should no more view the whole of Russian science through the lens of Lysenko than one should view American science through fundamentalist writings on evolution.'[93] However, the early Cold War was not a time when many were willing to listen to liberal-minded comparisons between the US and Soviet science, and Dunn clearly suffered for his empathy. The Lysenko affair is an important case study for examining whether the division between East and West was actual, or more an idea to be enlisted for the political convenience of enforcing loyalty. From Dunn's perspective Lysenko was reacting to errors and exaggerations that had been features of biological science worldwide during the time period. Though Lysenko's success was ultimately the product of support from Stalin and the desire to differentiate Soviet from Western science, Dunn's assessment is correct. The desire to improve nature and transform mankind was not limited to one side of the 'iron curtain'.

Among the adjectives most often attached to Lysenko is 'charlatan', i.e. someone who convinces by deceiving.[94] Though one cannot defend Lysenko in terms of the circumstances surrounding his career in the Soviet Union, it is equally mistaken to interpret the Lysenko affair as a case study in 'totalitarian science', where a 'pseudo-scientist' was given authority for political reasons. Though the celebration of Michurin as a great Soviet scientist was ultimately a feature of the need to provide native, nationalist heroes, he had been initially recognised thanks to Lenin's interest in Burbank. Kammerer's renown also exemplifies the degree to which the Lamarckian ideal of transforming nature was common to both the East

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91   The Reminiscences of L.C. Dunn, p. 797-798.
92   Ibid., p. 797.
93   'Letters to the Editor: Lysenko, Pro and Con', *Saturday Review of Literature* 30 March 1946, p. 30.
94   E.G. Zirkle, *Death of a Science in Russia*, p. 307-309; 'Oregon Teacher Out as Lysenko Backer', *New York Times*, 24 February 1949, p. 1.

and the West. Moreover, the degree to which us and British scientists, operating in democratic societies, found themselves attracted to demagoguery, belief in technocracy, and the necessity of rejecting science with appeals to emotion and fear, raises the question of whether any side could lay claim to rational faith in scientific progress. The Lysenko affair, taking into account the response of Western biologists, demonstrates that the attraction to biological utopia transcended geographic and ideological borders.

3   Tadeusz Kantor's Publics

Warsaw – New York

»   *Jill Bugajski*

In April 1959 the American magazine *Time* published a photograph of Polish artist Tadeusz Kantor (April 6, 1915-December 8, 1990) posed against his 1958 abstract painting *Alalaha*. This image, in its content and context, begins to reveal the construction of a political and cultural identity of non-objective Polish painters in the New York art world during the years of Nikita Khrushchev's 'thaw'. In this photograph, Kantor poses informally alongside *Alalaha*. The painting fills the frame, nearly swallowing up the contemplative figure beneath. His brows quizzically raised and cigarette poised, the artist's demeanour captures the nonchalance of 1950s cool. The unfitted jacket he wears calls to mind both an artist's painting smock, and also the drab khaki overcoats that characterised communist menswear in the 1950s. Absorbed by the work, Kantor's body fills the negative space in the lower left quadrant of the painting, framing the burst in the upper register with his shoulder, and the central concentration of paint with the front of his torso. The article this photograph accompanied addressed the surge of abstract painting in Poland following the loosening of cultural restrictions that marked the 'thaw' in the Eastern Bloc. Calling these paintings 'contorted, explosive, extreme, radical, vicious and brooding,' the author contrasted them against the 'tanks and tractors' mandated under the tenets of Soviet Socialist Realism. *Alalaha* displays the abstract skeins and splashes characteristic of post-war Abstract Expressionism or French *informel* painting. However, instead of an all-over drip technique as the famed American artist Jackson Pollock practised, the splatters of *Alalaha* in shades of blue, black and beige, radiate from a central zone of impact and descend in a dramatic vertical sweep down the centre of the canvas.

Though Kantor was but one of a dozen Polish artists painting in this style, he became the central figure for the American interpretation of Polish cultural resistance in the late 1950s, 'Poland's Kantor' – as the caption read. Monitored from the onset of the 'thaw', early press such as 'Poland Abandons Red Dogma in Art' pronounced Kantor one of the 'most talented painters to emerge from the artistic, literary and political revolt against Stalinism and its by-product Socialist Realism'

POLAND'S KANTOR

Tadeusz Kantor and Alalaha, Time Magazine, *Monday, April 6, 1959.*

– an assertion published in the United States merely months after Nikita Khrushchev's 'secret speech' of 1956.[1]

The nature of Kantor's reception reveals that the triumph of abstract painting had become a cultural cipher for American-style values of democracy and freedom by the mid-1950s. Polish 'individualism' and resistance to oppression were values artificially conflated in both political and cultural spheres, and widely normalised through these assertions: 'Polish artists have burst irrepressibly from their cellars in an outpouring of expressionist and abstract canvases just as if a dozen years of Nazi and Stalinist suppression had never been.'[2] Specific case studies of production and reception surrounding Kantor's work expose the limitations and occlusions of this rhetoric, and reveal the complexity of the cultural relationship between the United States and Poland that these assertions masked.

Though a promising period of openness, the 'thaw' was neither stable, homogeneous nor impartial. The 'thaw', a term appropriated from Russian author Ilya Ehrenburg's 1954 novel *Ottepel*, refers to the period of reforms initiated by Khrushchev following his 'secret speech' denouncing the crimes of Stalin at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party in February of 1956. After this, fitful waves of reform interspersed by degrees of conservative backlash created a continual disequilibrium in most realms of everyday experience in the Eastern Bloc, the effects of which varied unpredictably by country and year. In recognition of this, Art Historian Valerie Hillings, demarcating the 'thaw' to 1956 through 1963, has proposed to rechristen the remainder of the 1960s the 'chill'. After 1962, Khrushchev began to re-tighten regulations on artistic expression, a counteraction to the leniency that stood as a hallmark of this era.[3] This reminder of the 'thaw' era's capriciousness is valuable given that in the United States the 1960s are often perceived as a time of liberalism and radicalism. In fact, these years were marked by fluctuating political, bureaucratic and institutional power struggles that unevenly impacted cultural policy, permissiveness and enforcement, both at home and abroad.

International cultural exchange is one of the most contested spaces of East-West relations during the 'thaw'. The presumption that Cold War politics foreclosed cultural transmission between New York and the Eastern Bloc was largely accurate between 1949-1956, however after 1956 many new channels were, if

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1   'Poland Abandons Red Dogma in Art', *New York Times*, 31 December 1956. Indicative of how Polish abstraction held a fad-like status in New York, press coverage falls sharply after 1965 only to pick up again in the 1980s.
2   Ibid.
3   Valerie Hillings, 'Official Exchanges/Unofficial Representations: The Politics of Contemporary Art in the Soviet Union and the United States, 1956-1977', in *Russia! Nine Hundred Years of Masterpieces and Master Collections* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2005), p. 355.

haltingly, opened. American institutions, philanthropic and government agencies embraced this opportunity, and by 1957 many fledgling programmes fostering exchange opportunities were initiated. These exchanges impacted cultural development and dissemination widely.

This essay examines both sides of the equation. Firstly, it will address the cultural and political image engendered for Polish abstract painters in the United States, and Kantor's arbitration of his transnational correspondences – institutionally and stylistically. His agency in crafting his image and experiences abroad complicate the view that Kantor served as either ambassador or victim of competing ideologies. Focusing on his role as a cultural mediator, not merely an intermediary, this analysis seeks to recuperate how Polish artists, and their advocates, fit into the international artistic landscape of the Cold War both as agents who were active participants, and also as symbols burdened with overstated cultural and political investments. The international repercussions of American-born Abstract Expressionism between 1947-1956 have been a target of much revisionist scholarship; however, the consequences of these interchanges in the following period of the 'thaw' remain less examined. Addressing the discourse surrounding the Museum of Modern Art in New York's exhibition *Fifteen Polish Painters*, Kantor's Ford Foundation-sponsored sojourn in the United States, and the transmission of the American practice of 'happenings' back to Poland, will reframe a time period, 1956-1965, less frequently analysed in regard to its Cold War past. Questioning the terms by which avant-garde ideas are internationally transmitted, as well as the stakes of refashioning painting practice into broader performative, participatory and public approaches in the 1960s, I hope to bring to light the transformation of abstract painting's political relevance, and its impact on local and global public spheres during the 'thaw'.

Fifteen Polish Painters, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

> It may well be that there are a few jokers in the pack of *Fifteen Polish Painters*, my guess is that in trying to find enough abstract painters to substantiate the ever welcome thesis that there is a revolution underway behind the Iron Curtain, the Modern Museum has merely eaten too close to the rind.
> — *Villager*, 17 August 1961, New York

Kantor's painting *Alalaha* appeared again in *Time*, 4 August 1961. Two and a half years after its first publication in *Time*, Kantor's most frequently reproduced painting of the period appears hung on the white gallery wall, alongside Museum of Modern Art curator Peter Selz. With his right hand, Selz firmly supports a second painting – a heavy and precariously poised work by Polish artist Jan Lebenstein

SELZ WITH A LEBENSTEIN (LEFT) & A KANTOR: A PASSION KEPT ALIVE
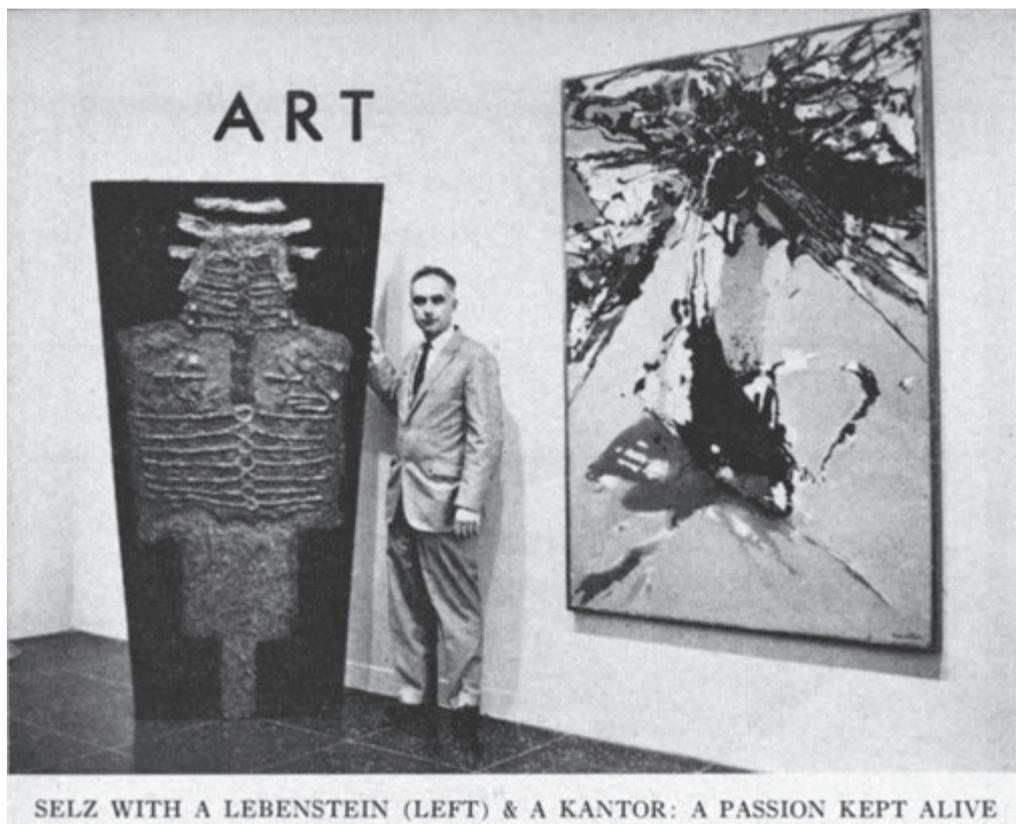
MOMA curator Peter Selz with Alalaha and Jan Lebenstein's Axial Figure Number 110, Time Magazine, *August 4, 1961.*

(1930-1999), the 1961 *Axial Figure Number 110.*[4] These works dwarf Selz in size (at 200 and 216 centimetres tall respectively) though they do not overwhelm him, his hold augers that he is in the process of heaving these mammoth works up onto the gallery wall single-handedly. The distinct spatial separation, institutional setting and Selz's physical grip indicate that he, though small, is the arbiter of these paintings. Heroically responsible for their display, his steady gaze at the camera and fine suit reinforce the power relation. The caption reads: 'A passion kept alive' – ambiguously referring to either the underground persistence of Polish abstract painting under Stalinism, or to Selz's trophy-like pursuit of these works in defiance of prevailing bureaucratic obstacles.

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4   In the American press, and in MOMA's correspondence, Jan Lebensztejn's name had been anglicised to Lebenstein, while in a French publication of 1960 written by Juliusz Starzyński it is spelled Lebensztein. Most current Polish publications adhere to the anglicised spelling of his name, which is the model I follow here.

The surge of Polish art exhibitions in Europe and in the United States between 1958 and 1968, with a sharp decline thereafter, indicates that the political situation of the 'thaw' fuelled popular curiosity and a spirited sympathy which brought exposure to Polish painters who were willing to position themselves favourably. Group exhibitions such as *Junge Generation Polnische Kunstausstellung. Malerei, Bildhauerei, Plastik* (Berlin, 1956) and *Dix peintres Polonais* (Brussels, 1956) served to draw early attention to Polish artists. However, Polish abstract paintings first created an international stir at the exhibition *Art of Socialist Countries* held in Moscow in 1958-1959. Crafted as the socialist response to the commercial biennials of the West, Poland stood out as the lone country of the Soviet empire to defy the realist imperative in their government-sponsored art display.[5] Although, as Piotr Piotrowski observes, the Polish section of *Art of Socialist Countries* was not dominated by modes of post-war abstraction, but by works influenced by pre-war styles of colourism and post-impressionism. Regardless of their point of reference all of the works were viewed as *modernist* and thus *formalist*, and 'incompatible with the doctrines of socialist realism.'[6] This exhibition, coupled with pavilions of non-objective painting governmentally sanctioned for the Venice Biennial, Sao Paolo Biennial, and Documenta in Germany, launched the Polish painters of the 'thaw' to world attention.

The premiere of the new Polish avant-garde in the United States occurred at the Guggenheim International Award Exhibition in 1958, featuring Tadeusz Dominik and Lebenstein (in 1960 it featured Tadeusz Brzozowski and Jerzy Nowosielski). Aleksander Kobzdej exhibited solo at French & Co. Gallery in New York and at the Gres Gallery in Washington D.C. in 1960 – which in the following year mounted a group exhibition featuring Kobzdej, Peter Potworowski, Bogdan Urbanowicz, Rajmund Ziemski and Alina Szapocznikow. A one-man exhibition of Tadeusz Kantor at Saidenberg Gallery in New York was among the exhibitions. Several solo shows, and more group exhibitions at galleries, followed for Brzozowski, Dominik and Lebenstein in New York, Washington D.C., Chicago and Los Angeles through 1962. Works were also shown by: Henryk Stażewski, Jonasz Stern, Bronisław Kierzkowski, Stephan Gierowski, Jerzy Tchórzewski, Jerzy Nowosielski, Teresa Pągowska, Marian Warzecha and Teresa Rudowicz. Many of these would feature in MOMA's *Fifteen Polish Painters*.

5   For background on Poland's participation in the *Art of Socialist Countries* exhibition, see Susan Reid, 'The Exhibition *Art of Socialist Countries*, Moscow 1958-9, and the Contemporary Style of Painting' in *Style and Socialism* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2000).

6   Piotr Piotrowski, 'Modernism and Socialist Culture: Polish art in the Late 1950s', *Style and Socialism* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2000), p. 135. The artists who participated in this exhibition were: Jan Cybis, Eugeniusz Eibisch, Wacław Taranczewski, Xawery Dunikowski, Tadeusz Kulisiewicz, Halina Chrostowska, Jerzy Paneka, Adam Marczyński.

Western fetishism alone did not precipitate the international proliferation of Polish non-objective painting after 1956. Key cultural figures in the Polish art world dedicated themselves to the promotion of non-socialist realist style Polish painting in this period. Juliusz Starzyński, who would later assist the Museum of Modern Art on its project for *Fifteen Polish Painters*, headed the selection committee for *Art of Socialist Countries* in Moscow as well as for the Polish Pavilion of the Venice Biennial for 1954, 1956 and 1958.[7] A professor at the University of Warsaw and then Director of the National Institute of Fine Art in Warsaw (Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie), Starzyński wielded influence over the style and substance of many exhibitions abroad. Mobilising a heightened awareness of Poland's position in the international artistic landscape, Starzyński published catalogues such as *De la Jeune Pologne à nos jours* (National Museum, Warsaw, 1959) and French articles in international periodicals in order to gain access to a wider audience. Alongside Starzyński, Stanisław Lorentz, the Director of the National Museum in Warsaw, assisted with MOMA's show and a sister exhibition *Douze peintres polonais modernes* at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris 1961.[8] Like Kantor, Lorentz was eventually a recipient of a Ford Foundation fellowship to travel in the United States in the mid-1960s.

Despite the enthusiasm reflected in the gallery scene at the end of the 1950s, the Museum of Modern Art, the largest and most 'official' of the American venues swept up in the frenzy for Polish art, struggled over what would become *Fifteen Polish Painters*, the first exhibition of Polish post-war art at a major American museum in 1961. Curators Peter Selz and Porter McCray, Director of the International Council for the Museum of Modern Art, began planning for the show in 1957.[9] However, MOMA's size and stature proved to be a bureaucratic impediment, begetting obstacles not suffered by smaller American galleries operating in

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7   The 1954 pavilion showcased Xawery Dunikowski, Tadeusz Kulisiewicz, Aleksander Kobzdej, Helena Bukowska, Eleonora Plutyńska and Anna Śledziewska. In 1956, Jerzy Nowosielski, Zbigniew Pronaszko, Marek Włodarski, Antoni Kenar, Tadeusz Dominik and Adam Marczyński were selected. 1958 featured the work of Maria Jarema, Artur Nacht-Samborski and Wacław Taranczewski. Kantor was included in the 1959 Documenta exhibition in Germany (as was Lebenstein) and featured in a special exhibition at Venice in 1960.

8   This exhibition featured Tadeusz Brzozowski, Jan Cybis, Tytus Czyżewski, Eugeniusz Eibisch, Stefan Gierowski, Aleksander Kobzdej, Jan Lebenstein, Tadeusz Makowski, Piotr Potworowski, Wacław Taranczewski, Sygmunt Waliszewski and Andrzej Wróblewski.

9   In preparation, Selz and McCray each visited Poland twice in 1959-1960. Told that they were the first museum professionals from the United States outside of the Monuments officers during the war to visit Poland since 1939, the whirlwind tours included visits with the Minister of Culture in Warsaw, with Juliusz Starzyński, and multiple institutions in Warsaw, Krakow, Gdansk and Sopot (where Piotr Potworowski lived). McCray met with the American Ambassador Jacob Beam and the American Public Affairs Officer James West. He was also assisted by the Chief of the Cultural Relations office Professor Zienkiemcz, Art History professor Bohdan Urbanowicz, Professor Jan Białostocki and Helena Blum of the National Museum in Warsaw, and Zdzisław Kępiński of the National Museum in Poznań.

less official commercial circuits. Under pressure from officials loyal to the Soviet cultural line, the Polish government in 1959 enacted a restriction that no more than 15% of artworks shown in public exhibitions in Poland could be abstract. This caused some difficulty for the museum, as a 1960 memo written by McCray laments: 'the Polish government had taken strong steps to curtail their previous enlightened policy of encouraging the showing abroad of Modern Polish art frequently of an abstract character.'[10] Desiring a comprehensive retrospective, the Polish Ministry of Culture mandated that MOMA represent a wide cross-section of twentieth century Polish painting, including the realist tradition. The curators bristled at this, wanting full control over the artist roster and pushing to show only 'younger' artists with an emphasis on the 'most recent developments in abstract art.' Additionally, unbeknownst to MOMA at the time, the United States Information Agency (USIA) was also seeking to host the preeminent Polish show on American shores. Drawn by the appeal of an official governmental exhibition, the Ministry of Culture stalled negotiations with the museum in order to foster the USIA exhibition that never materialised.[11] A stalemate through 1960, MOMA resolved to circumvent the government restrictions by having three American galleries manage the purchase and import of the desired paintings.[12] With the Polish government generally amenable to exporting paintings (or any goods) via commercial channels to bring in revenue, the gallery network became a viable and wily international facilitator, bypassing ideological stumbling blocks with commerce. Tadeusz Kantor's seven paintings, all dated between 1957 and 1960, were listed in the catalogue as being drawn from collections in Pittsburgh, New York, London and Montreal.[13]

Selecting the two most important lineages of pre-World War II abstract painting in Poland, MOMA curators historically framed the exhibition within networks

10   Internal memo, Porter McCray to Rene d'Harnoncourt, 26 October 1960, Rene d'Harnoncourt Papers, IV, 204, The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York (hereafter MOMA).

11   Letter, Julius Starzyński to Porter McCray, 21 December 1959, Rene d'Harnoncourt Papers, IV, 204, MOMA.

12   Oral history of Peter Selz, p. 59-61, MOMA. *Fifteen Polish Painters* was shown in New York from June through October of 1961, after which it travelled to the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa (2-30 November 1961); Minneapolis Institute of Art (2-30 January 1962); Washington University in St. Louis (16 February-16 March 1962); Munson Williams Proctor Institute in Utica, NY (1 July-1 August 1962); and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (4 November-2 December 1962). The galleries instrumental in the final presentation of the works were: Gres Gallery (Mrs. Hart Perry), Washington D.C.; Contemporary Art Gallery (Kazimierz Karpuszko) in Chicago; Galerie Chalette (Lejwa family) of New York; the Saidenberg Gallery, New York and Felix Landau Gallery in Los Angeles.

13   For a list of lenders, see the catalogue *Fifteen Polish Painters* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1961). Kantor's seven paintings were as follows: *Mumbo Jumbo*, 1957; *Untitled*, 1957; *Rori*, 1957; *Alalaha*, 1958; *Number 5*, 1959; *Untitled*, 1959, and 1960. The rest of the 75 paintings in the exhibition were all absorbed by American galleries and collectors. Due to the short-lived popularity of Polish abstraction, most of these works have since disappeared from the market and popular awareness.

of cultural exchange and stylistic dialogue with both the French and Russian avant-gardes. This manoeuvring positioned New York on the transnational axis of Poland's stylistic sources. The eldest and best-established artists chosen were Piotr Potworowski and Henryk Stazewski. Stazewski was part of the old guard of non-objective, geometric-style painters, having been a founder of the constructivist group *Blok* with Władysław Strzemiński and Katarzyna Kobro. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Potworowski had been a part of the interwar *Kapist* (Colourists) group, which drew on the loose painterly style and soft palette of the French post-Impressionists.[14]

Many of the selections for *Fifteen Polish Painters* resembled Kantor's *Alalaha* in style and scale, eschewing recognisable subject matter in favour of gestural, non-objective abstraction. Emphasis on form superseded content, traditional pictorial space broken down and tactile application of paint prioritised over narrative or legibility. Moreover, the works demonstrated a high degree of variety in their abstraction. With the exception of two nudes by Nowosielski, all paintings were non-representational in some way, but ranged from thickly impastoed, dense and cluttered canvases (Brzozowski, Kantor, Kobzdej) to cleaner uncluttered geometric compositions (Wojciech Fangor and Stazewski) and meticulously textured microplanes (Gierowski). Some works relied on balance, precision and regularity of paint application to unify the surface on a shallow plane (Pagowska, Kierzkowski), achieving structures almost cellular in their consistency. Others are highly gestural, evocative of the motion of the human body and its temporality (Dominik, Brzozowski, Kantor) or savage and arachnid (Tchorzewski). Sensitive and deliberate collages of Rudowicz and Warzecha layered published and written ephemera with a thinly painted and scraped-down surface, receiving much critical acclaim. From austerity to colourism, filmy membranes of paint to grotesque impasto, mathematical deliberation and proportion to unabashed theatricality manifested in rhythmic amoebas, the exhibition unveiled both the intellectual and emotional veins of Polish abstraction.

Critics received MOMA's *Fifteen Polish Painters* show with both enthusiasm and scepticism. The press reception indicates that visitors had difficulty separating the status and context of abstraction in Poland from the perceived political intervention of the museum. Some reviewers celebrated the independent spirit of the Polish painters, 'rebels with cause,'[15] while others saw the abstract idiom

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14 *Grupa Kubistów Konstruktywistów i Suprematystów 'Blok'* ('Block' Group of Cubists, Constructivists and Suprematists 1924-1926) was a group with strong ties to the Russian Constructivist and Suprematist avant-gardes of the 1920s. The name *Kapist* comes from the group organised in 1923 as *Komitet Paryski* – the Paris Committee – maintaining a brisk interchange with French artists of the 1920s.

15 Aline B. Saarinen, 'Moscow Astonished by Polish Modern Abstract Art', *New York Times*, 25 January 1959, p. X17.

as 'another bondage'. Released from Socialist Realism, the Poles had succumbed to the tyranny of the 'moment's international idols' – American Abstract Expressionism.[16] Some questioned the motivation behind the unprecedented surge of interest. One reviewer called the catalogue essay written by Selz 'a masterpiece of political walking on eggs.'[17] Another berated the show for including what he called second-rate abstract painters as 'service to a cause,' accusing the Museum of Modern Art of dropping their own art world 'iron curtain'.[18] By 1961, the institution's whole-hearted endorsement of abstract painting came as a surprise to no one, and the response indicates that innuendos of nationalism, politics, or curatorial bias were perceived by the audience. Painterly authenticity, I argue, was the political and cultural red herring sought by all and achieved by no one in the multi-faceted struggle to represent the 'East' to the 'West'.

The contention surrounding *Fifteen Polish Painters* reveals the riven state of the New York art world of 1961. The ability of abstract painting – internationally – to communicate clearly and persuasively its continued relevancy to a sceptical public had met its limitation. New York artists like Allan Kaprow spurred abstract painting off the canvas, with the practice of his live 'happenings' beginning in 1958. Kaprow interpreted happenings as the heir to Jackson Pollock's Abstract Expressionism, transforming gestural painting into real-life gestures. Event-structured actions, usually with some artistic direction or script, happenings incorporated the audience, casual passers-by and artist-participants in real world movements and experiential interactions. Jean Tinguely, in Paris the same year, introduced meta-matic motorised painting machines that mechanically generated abstract compositions or allowed the public to crank, peddle or spin an apparatus to make their own. Both happenings and the meta-matics forced abstract painting down from its pedestal with a tongue-in-cheek tactics of irony and participation. This is not to say that the art world had moved on from abstract painting *tout court*. However, many artists – and their publics – felt the imminent exhaustion of non-objective painting, regardless of its country of origin.

The ambivalent reception of Polish abstract painting makes plain that seemingly 'autonomous' and 'formalist' abstract idioms were fraught with contradiction and symbolism arising from the work's inextricable social context. In this, Kantor's international networking loomed large in both the credit and criticism he was afforded. Having made several extended trips to Paris (in 1947, 1955, 1958 and 1961), Kantor's historiography repeatedly states that he encountered the organic splatter and impasto *l'art informel* of Georges Mathieu, Wols, Jean Fautrier and

16   *New York Herald Tribune*, 1 August 1961.
17   L.J.A., 'Polish Painters of the New Order', *The Washington Post*, 22 October 1961.
18   John Canaday, 'Fifteen Polish Painters', *New York Times*, 6 August 1961.

the Abstract Expressionism of Jackson Pollock in the Parisian galleries in 1955.[19] Interpreted in both positive and negative fashions, the westward border crossings exhibited in Kantor's work earned him the title of 'internationalist' by those who celebrated these connections, and 'copyist' by those who dismissed Kantor's production as lacking authenticity or as vulnerable to Western fashion. These interpretations both essentialise or project imagined but presumably readable national features onto 'Polish' art, at the same time as they presume that stylistic idioms can be easily consumed and uncritically regurgitated within a linear and progressive narrative of history. The unequal power relation underlying this framework reinforces hegemonic interpretations of what qualifies as aesthetically significant – Western Modernism – and perpetuates outmoded centre/periphery power dynamics. Kantor's visual repartee with both *l'art informel* and Abstract Expressionism can be discerned in the abstract paintings included in *Fifteen Polish Painters*. However, the seven works exhibited were part of a large and diverse body of abstract painting produced by Kantor between 1945-1965. His continual self-reinvention during these years, at first glance, appears to be a search for an effective visual language, more than systemisation of a signature style. However, to interpret this as a 'search' presumes a precariously teleological endpoint to the experimentation localised in the culmination of an artist's individual genius. Instead, I propose to interpret the dialogue itself as a long-term strategy of Kantor's oeuvre. This practice appears both tacit and overt for Kantor, who over his career pointedly quoted Théodore Géricault, Rembrandt van Rijn, Diego Velázquez, Francisco Goya, Jan Matejko, Albrecht Dürer and Eugène Delacroix, among others in his work, and strongly hinted to his contemporaries: Pablo Picasso, James Rosenquist, Cristo, Georges Mathieu, Pollock, Kaprow. Perhaps, as the epigraph to this section inferred, there were indeed a few jokers at the *Fifteen Polish Painters* exhibition. But the semiotic irony and belatedness mobilised in Kantor's painting practices of 1955-1965 is also readable, and more consequential, in his performative and participatory work of 1965-1970, including his 'happenings'.

Kantor travels to New York

The most significant question of influence surrounds Kantor's American sojourn in 1965. Part of the wave of cultural exchange initiatives prompted by the 'thaw', the New York-based Ford Foundation, in conjunction with the Institute for Inter-

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19   Most recently, Piotr Piotrowski has asserted that Kantor's 1956 travels in France were single-handedly responsible for launching *l'art informel* painting in Poland thereafter. Piotr Piotrowski, *In the Shadow of Yalta: Art and the Avant-garde in Eastern Europe 1945-89*, trans. Anna Brzyski (London: Reaktion Books, 2009), p. 71-83.

national Education (IIE) began initiatives with Poland early, in 1957.[20] However, due to a dispute with the Polish government over the control of candidate selection criteria, a conflict that mirrored the one of MOMA's with *Fifteen Polish Painters*, the Ford Foundation indefinitely suspended their Polish cultural exchange programme in 1962.

The sponsorship for Kantor's sojourn therefore travelled, like his paintings, through unofficial channels. Kantor met Shepard Stone, Director of the Ford's International Exchange Program, on Stone's travels in Poland in 1957-1958. At that time, Stone visited Kantor's studio in Krakow and purchased a painting, striking up a friendly acquaintance in the process. Through letters, Kantor pressed this personal connection, asking for funding to come abroad, which Stone surreptitiously arranged.[21] Kantor wrote to Stone in 1963, expressing frustration that he would be unable to export paintings produced in Poland for exhibitions planned for New York and Paris in 1963 and 1964. He asked Stone for support to go abroad and produce new works that could thus be shown internationally.[22] Despite the fact that the Ford's Polish programme was stalled, Stone agreed to an extra-institutional solution facilitated by contacts outside the foundation in Warsaw and New York. The IIE supplied the funding under the auspices of the Ford, but the official channel for the exchange would be an invitation from a New York gallery, upon condition that the Ford Foundation remain unmentioned in the negotiations.[23] Kantor's generous and chaperoned itinerary included trips to museums, theatre productions, private art collections and artists' studios in New York, Chicago and

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20 The development of these programmes is discussed in Volker Berghahn's text, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe: Shepard Stone Between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy* (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001). According to data collected by the Soviet and East European Exchanges Staff of the Department of State, there were 2,224 American visitors to Poland and 3,068 Poles to the United States during 1958-1965. See Frederick Barghoorn, 'Cultural Exchanges between Communist Countries and the United States', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 372 (July 1967), p. 113-123; Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press, 2003), chapter 22.

21 Letter, Shepard Stone to Tadeusz Kantor, 28 March 1963, Reel K-Mt, c.1455, General Correspondence 1963, Ford Foundation Archives, New York (hereafter Ford). Kantor wrote letters to Stone in German, a language in which they were mutually fluent. Kantor's linguistic skills, both French and German – but not English – certainly eased his border crossings during these years.

22 Letter, Tadeusz Kantor to Shepard Stone, 25 February 1963, Reel K-Mt, c.1455, General Correspondence 1963, Ford.

23 Letter, Lech Kalinowski to Shepard Stone, 7 October 1964; letter, Stanley Gordon (International Affairs Program) to Richard Myer (IIE), 22 October 1964, Reel A-Lin, c.1469, General Correspondence 1964, Ford. This is corroborated by the fact that the IIE has no record of Kantor as a participant, though his name is listed on some of their publications. Many individuals assisted Stone and Kantor with negotiating the invitation issues necessary to issuing entry and exit visas, including Lech Kalinowski, professor of Art History at the Jagellonian University in Krakow and a former Ford Foundation grant recipient, a Mr Bielicki of Warsaw, and Mateo Lettunich in New York in cooperation with an unnamed New York gallery.

Los Angeles.[24] He reputedly met with many American artists their rising in stature, including Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Rauschenberg, Mark Rothko, John Cage, George Segal, Jim Dine and Allan Kaprow.[25]

Happenings and participatory work in Poland

Scholars have often positioned these encounters to substantiate or vindicate the mode of avant-garde practice, happenings, that Kantor forged upon his return to Poland in 1965. Garnering anecdotal significance through repetition in the literature, the cliché 'Kantor brought happenings to Poland' has achieved the status of myth. It is true that Kantor was one of the first to perform this genre of work in Poland after his New York sojourn; however, the full extent of Kantor's interactions with these American practitioners of pop art, happenings, assemblage, installation art and experimental music may never be fully known or understood. The question of his exposure and absorption perhaps has occluded more provocative questions concerning Kantor's proto-conceptual interrogation of the limits of the genre, by means of a manipulation and reiteration of the practice that reveals the artwork's dependence on social contingencies. Presciently postmodern, a reorganisation of the interpretive framework of Kantor's experimentation instead foregrounds the evocation of irony wrought through repetition, appropriation, pastiche and parody, continuing the system of international dialogue begun in his painting practice. This alternative approach both considers and outdistances the weighted question of influence. This removes Kantor from being a dupe of cultural relativism and positions him in a critical role as a mediator between international publics.

This interrogation of the happening's medium and limitations would have been at the forefront of Kantor's observations in New York. An art world plagued by unpredictable and uncontrollable social contingency confronted American artists in 1965 – a conceptual re-evaluation of the genre was taking place. By 1965, happenings had lost the novelty and vitality of the phenomenon of the late 1950s, and the exploration capitulated into a self-conscious and self-critical place. Allan Kaprow lamented true spontaneity as dead and complained of the affected nature of performance solely for documentary impulse of the camera.[26] Indeed, right after Kantor's departure, the mainstream magazine *Esquire* decried that it was

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24 Kantor began his sojourn in New York, travelled to Chicago from 16-20 August 1965; to (presumably) Los Angeles for 20-25 August, and returned to New York from 25 August-5 October.

25 This list of American artists whom Kantor encountered on his travels in the United States varies by source.

26 On the relationship between Kaprow's happenings and photography see Judith Rodenbeck, 'Foil: Allan Kaprow before Photography', in Judith Rodenbeck and Benjamin Buchloh (eds.), *Experiments in the Everyday: Allan Kaprow and Robert Watts – Events, Objects, Documents* (New York: Columbia University, 1999).

definitively out of fashion to be seen at the site of a happening. The palpable frustration of artists at this seeming failure of authenticity, factionalism and the ruinous effect of attendees must have been apparent to Kantor. He would have experienced the production not as an autonomous, idealised or self-contained art form, communicating 'real experience', but deeply pressured and even convulsed by the pandemonium surrounding the execution, participation and reception of the work. Artists like Allan Kaprow, at that point, were assessing how to resolve the problems posed by the physical and psychological limitations of the medium: problems of spontaneity, control, participation and audience.

The happening, and the exhaustion of the genre in the mid-1960s, was not just about performance as such, but reflected an entire transformation of the artistic approach to publicness. Kantor's manipulation of these factors signals a critical remobilisation of the practice, replaying the contingency and difference of Western art idioms across the field of the 'iron curtain'. A happening is a performative collaboration, a social contract between the audience and the established scenario facilitated by the artist, instead of a scripted, staged and controllable event. Live, but without the set parameters of theatre, and 'art' but constituted of fundamental challenges to art's traditional demarcations of space, substance and behaviour, the interrogation of this social contract would impact the stakes of translation and participation in the execution and reception of the work. Kantor's participatory work of 1965-1970 in Poland drew on the social complexities endemic to 'late' happenings, revealing moments of synthesis and critique that render irrelevant the question of Kantor's influences versus autonomy, and his cultural resistance versus compliance.

The work *Signez s'il vous plaît*, (1965) evinces how Kantor reconciled the move from two-dimensional painting to scenarios of spectator engagement. Not a 'happening' per se, *Signez s'il vous plaît* marks the transition from abstract painting to a more conceptual interface with his public. First exhibited as a series of blank, white envelopes called the *object-envelopes*, at Krzysztofory Gallery in Krakow 1965, he repeated the show at the Galerie de l'Université in Paris in 1966 under the title *Signez s'il vous plaît*.[27] Even the semiotic shift of the name indicates Kantor's re-calibration of these objects from passively displayed fixtures, to interactive documents of spectator action: 'Please, sign here'. Blank, white envelopes were exhibited on the gallery wall with attached pencils in order for spectators to decorate, provide feedback or autograph. The work was then 'emballaged' by Kantor – a process of collage-like repurposing where the envelopes were adhered to a large-scale canvas

27   The envelope was an important theme for Kantor that he employed in gigantic proportions in his 1967 happening *List*, (the Letter) paraded down the main commercial street in Warsaw, Nowy Świat. In addition, Kantor planned an event for a post office during his trip to New York, an occurrence, to my knowledge, that did not materialise.
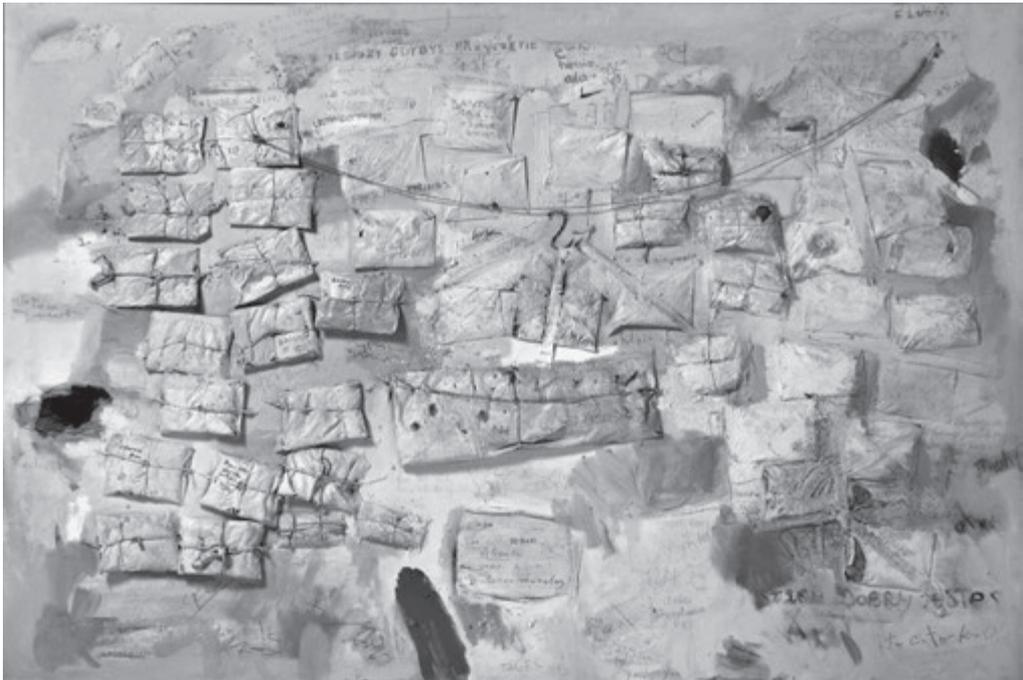
Tadeusz Kantor, Signez s'il vous plaît, 1965. Collection Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

and painted over in graffiti aesthetic. A record of public expression, the scrib-blings and notes serve as a memento of the place and time of their production, revealing sketches, signatures and scrawled slogans, including protests against American intervention in Vietnam. The mode of expression is deeply localised, yet the repetition of this project across national and political boundaries exposed not differences in media, but in audience, serving as a record of participation that the intangible live action of happenings could not make permanently legible. The loose mark-making of the emballage echoes Abstract Expressionism, revising it with the participatory and democratic intervention of a live happening. This angle was not lost on Kantor's spectators, who seemed increasingly self-aware that the process was being immortalised. One Polish gallery participant playfully wrote on an envelope in Krakow the question: 'What would Tadzio bring from Paris? More dirty tricks?' The thought that the public was participating, yet also being duped by the art project, is revealing of how some members of Kantor's audience viewed the cultural interchange between East and West during these years. Ambiguously mimicking the bureaucratic voice of cultural authority in Poland, this line wags a scolding, yet affectionate, finger in Kantor's direction. Expressing that the specta-tor felt like the victim of a prank from Paris, the diminutive 'Tadzio' fondly conveys that the writer would willingly, if self-consciously, participate in the joke.

On 10 December 1965 Kantor presented his first official happening, *Cricotage*, in the café of the Society of the Friends of the Fine Arts (Towarzystwo Przyjaciól Sztuk Pienknych) in Warsaw. Participants performed fourteen ordinary daily activities: sitting, shaving, eating, undressing, moving heavy objects and making phone calls. Action is layered with vocalisation: a sitting woman repeatedly articu-lates, 'I am sitting', another figure utters the same sentence over and over, and a third man pontificates vacuously and continuously aloud about art. The gestures may be quotidian, but they become caricatured and surreal in their repetition, exaggeration and cacophonous overlapping. The goal of these disparate actions and utterances is not to make the movements artistically strange in themselves, but to recast the environment through the displacement of familiar physicality, space and social interaction. In Kantor's happenings, the symbiotic relationship between the action and its environment greatly increases in importance, begin-ning a long-term evaluation of how the space puts pressure on the interpretation of the work: [the object]... 'does not lose its reality, does not change its meaning, but makes it possible to doubt the reality of the entire environment. The environment becomes somewhat strange, absurd and unreal.'[28] Just as a plain white envelope

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28   Quoted in Paweł Polit, 'Pulsating of the Space: Tadeusz Kantor's Economics of the Impossible', in Jarosław Suchan (ed.), *Tadeusz Kantor Niemożliwe* (Krakow: Bunkier Sztuki, 2000), p. 40. This quote is specifically in reference to a later project series by Kantor, which I address elsewhere, but the conceptual orientation, I argue, is developed throughout his live practices of the 1960s.
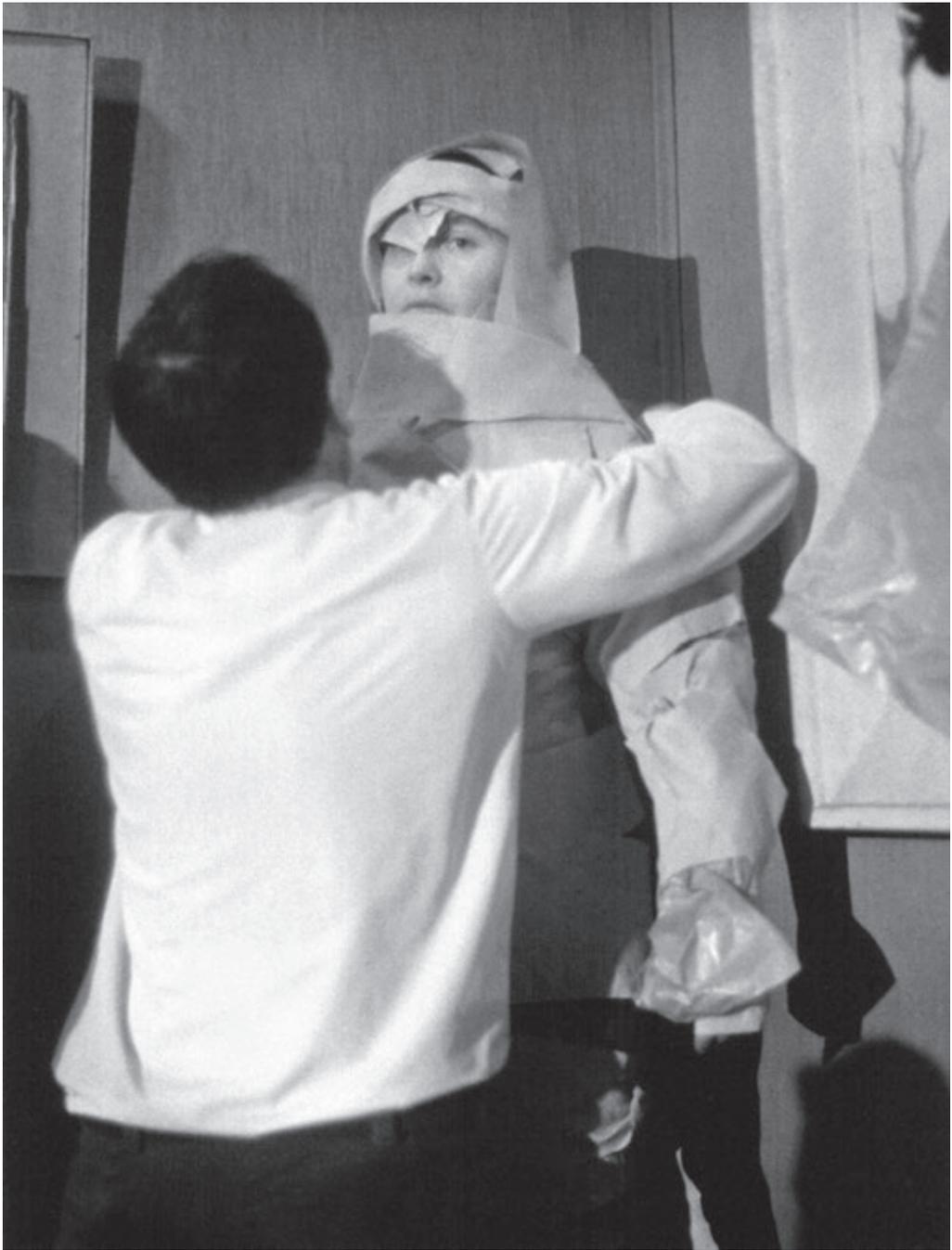
Tadeusz Kantor, documentary photograph from Cricotage, December 10, 1965. Foksal Gallery Archives, Warsaw.

could take on a wholly distinct social meaning in Paris or Krakow, so could an action as innocent as sitting – 'I am sitting' – reveal the distinction between Kantor's publics in Warsaw and New York.

A feature of this first happening, the *Human Emballage* (*Die Grosse Emballage*, or *Żywy Ambalaż*) involved wrapping a live public 'sculpture' in paper in the gallery and on the street. This performance was repeated later that month in Krakow, the following year in Basel and in 1968, in Nuremburg for the filming of a documentary *Kantor ist Da* (directed by Dietrich Mahlow, 1968). Wrapping and envelopes were cornerstones of Kantor's iconography in the 1950s-1960s, yet this work represents Kantor's first foray into merging the live human body with his technique of the *emballage*, joining the monumental with the performative and drawing the artwork out into the public space of the street.[29] The documentary photographs from the various iterations of this work reveal a woman – Kantor's wife – standing on a makeshift pedestal about knee-high. Arms at her side, she is wrapped from head to toe, except for her face, with a wide paper tape. Bound even to the pedestal, she is a completely static figure, a living sculpture.

The public, performative figure of the wrapped 'object' may be interpreted as a cross-cultural dialogue with Allan Kaprow's happening *Calling* performed on 21-22 August 1965, dates overlapping with Kantor's stay in the United States, though I have not found proof that he attended. *Calling* was a two-part happening – one of Kaprow's sequentially repeated performances. The first day took place in Manhattan and the second day out in the countryside at George Segal's farm in North Brunswick, New Jersey. In this work, human packages were made by wrapping participants alternately in foil, fabric, laundry bags and rope. The figures were transported to and deposited at public sites where they vocally shouted out to each other, picked up by other participants, re-wrapped, and re-deposited at other sites. The finale of the Manhattan day's events was a convergence upon Grand Central Station, where the packaged individuals clawed their way out of their wrappings, left the station and ended the event by making a long unanswered phone call at a pay phone.

As *Calling* was designed to be a public event repeated in two distinctly different environments, the structure of Kaprow's 'script' was balanced by unexpected social contingency. Although he designated the work 'for performers only',

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29 Kantor produced more than a dozen happenings between 1965-1970. Some of his most acclaimed include: *A Demarcation Line* (18 December 1965); *A Grand Emballage* (20 October-1 November 1966); *A Letter* (21 January 1965), *A Panoramic Sea-Happening* (23-27 August 1967); *Homage to Maria Jarema* (30 October 1968); *A Winter Assemblage* (18 January 1969); *Anatomy Lesson According to Rembrandt* (24 January 1969). Kantor produced drawings of a wrapped human body as early as 1963, the year of his first emballages. 1963 is also the year of his 'Popular Exhibition' at the Krzysztofory Gallery, which is generally credited as one of the first environment projects in Poland.

Kaprow moved the event out of the gallery into the social space of what perform-ance theorist Richard Schechner has called 'accidental audiences' – people ran-domly encountered on the street and without expectations regarding the course of artistic action, or their potential role in it.[30] This moving out into the street, and on the second day to the privacy of the countryside, were two new tactics addressing alternate modes of publicity and privacy in order to remedy the distur-bances wrought by jaded crowds of art spectators with which Kaprow had grown frustrated. Confronted outside the safe frame of the gallery, the public became incidental witnesses to an activity that must have appeared alternately comical and strangely ominous removed from the parameters that normally structure the psychology of art spectatorship.

After returning to Poland Kantor sought out such participatory and repeated gestures in works like *Signez s'il vous plaît*, and the development of a living sculp-tural intervention into the public sphere highlighted a potential for critique and an expansion of the practice. Kantor had attempted to foster a creative dialogue with Kaprow and sent him several scripts of his work in the 1960s, including that for *Grosse Emballage*, dated October 1966, planned for Galerie Handschin in Basel.[31] Perhaps the intention was to develop an international project on the model of Kaprow's 1966 simultaneous *Three Country Happening* with Marta Minujin (in Buenos Aires, Argentina) and Wolf Vostell (in Berlin, Germany). However, no offi-cial collaborations between Kaprow and Kantor ever took place. Several of Kantor's subsequent happenings contain references to vocabularies and tactics produced by Kaprow, but the staging of the works and the unique public encounter sought to forge a new artistic relationship with, and experience for, the Polish popula-tion. This strategy did not seek to reproduce a sameness of avant-garde experience between New York, Krakow and Warsaw, but to articulate and emphasise its dif-ferences and limitations. Critically remobilising the idiom as a semiotic exercise, Kantor's public experiments reflect a desire to disclose and prod the unique fac-ets of Polish visual art audiences in the context of a transforming socialist public sphere, revealing, translating and replaying the living differences of Western art practice, and the experiential expectations of its public, across the 'iron curtain'. The resulting irony exposes the fallibility of tropes like cultural authenticity or national style, making this impossibility – *niemożliwe* – the centre of the critique.[32]

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30 For Schechner's discussion of the difference between integral and accidental audiences, see his *Performance Theory* (New York/London: Routledge, 1977), p. 193-94.

31 Allan Kaprow Papers, 980063, Box 68, Artist Files: H-K, Folder: Tadeusz Kantor 68/8, Getty Research Insti-tute Archives, Los Angeles.

32 A much debated term in Kantor's lexicon, '*niemożliwe*', the impossible, inspired a book-length exploration in 2000: Jarosław Suchan (ed.), *Tadeusz Kantor Niemożliwe* (Krakow: Bunkier Sztuki, 2000).

Conclusion

Happenings, as a medium distinct from painting and theatre, were originally construed as a mode of moving art into the realm of civil society. Participation and contingency were seen as democratising forces, broadening the audience's experience through contribution, transforming spectatorship into agency. It is this factor of democratisation that essentially brought about the crisis and dissolution of happenings as practice, since contingency exceeded the bounds of the artist's control. Kantor's transmissions and translations served to recapture the inherent irony in this practice, to reinvest in the medium through critiquing this mode of civil society in a place where this question was precisely at issue in a realm of uncertainty: Poland's contested present and future in the politically fluctuating period of the 'thaw'.

Kantor's works, both in the international dialogues of his painting practice and his post-New York participatory and performative works, manifest the stilted dialogue and fraught power relations that speak to the transitional struggle for a renewed national and cultural identity for Poland, autonomous from the shackles of both the East and the West. In a way, Kantor's happenings mark the failure of abstract painting in the Polish context, an idiom that became untenable, ceasing to either speak for or challenge the experiences of the public. The belatedness of Kantor's relationship to international abstraction and happenings offered him the evaluative distance necessary to explore the social impact and potential value of the artforms to mediate both international discourse and that of a local and shifting public sphere. The hybridity and liminality of Kantor's self-conscious manipulations brought to the fore the social, cultural and political stakes of spectatorship between the divided dreamworlds of the East and the West.

4   Co-Producing Cold War Culture

East-West Film-Making and Cultural Diplomacy

»   *Marsha Siefert*

Cinema has long been claimed as a producer of 'dreamworlds', and more than one commentator has noted the chronological coincidence between the industrialisation of the film industry and the Bolshevik Revolution.[1] Film scholars have also documented the dialogic aspects of Hollywood and Soviet Goskino film rivalry and their images of each other as reflecting the state of international relations throughout the Cold War. Hollywood offers a range of such landscapes from *Red Danube* to *Red Dawn*.[2] Soviet cinema too has its cinematic Cold War scenarios and stereotypes, such as the American journalists who engage in *The Russian Question* (1947), or *Night on the 14th Parallel* (1971).[3] This chapter addresses a related development within the post-war international film industry – the rise of films produced by more than one nation. Between 1953 and 1985, the Soviet Union realised well over 100 co-produced films, many across the 'curtain' with France, Italy, Norway and Japan. Building on one of the themes of this volume – investigating those cultural agents who desired to escape the rigidity of East-West divides – this chapter will focus on the dynamics and dilemmas of Soviet co-produced films.

Soviet attempts to co-produce films, especially with the West, represent a challenge that is in part shared with European film industries – the competition with Hollywood. Even when they are formally introduced as part of the Soviet film

1   The author would like to thank Sergei Dobrynin and Sergei Kapterev, two fine scholars of Russian and Soviet film, for their invaluable help with archival documents. The interest of Denise Youngblood and of Tony Shaw, whose *Cinematic Cold War: The American and Soviet Struggle for Hearts and Minds* (Lawrence, ᴋs: University Press of Kansas, 2010) breaks new ground in this topic, has been much appreciated. This chapter is part of the author's book project on Soviet film co-productions.

2   Harlow Robinson, *Russians in Hollywood, Hollywood's Russians: Biography of an Image* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2007); Michael Strada and Harold Troper, *Friend or Foe? Russians in American Film and Foreign Policy, 1933-1991* (Lanham, ᴍᴅ.: Scarecrow Press, 1997); Tony Shaw, *Hollywood's Cold War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

3   For examples see Stephen Hutchings (ed.), *Russia and its Other(s) on Film: Screening Intercultural Dialogue* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Sergei Dobrynin, 'The Silver Curtain: Representations of the West in Soviet Cold War Films', *History Compass* 7, no. 3 (2009), p. 862-878.

bureaucracy, co-productions are presented as an economic arrangement, as a way to compete with Hollywood's market dominance. Of course co-production is neither merely 'an economic initiative (...) nor is it simply a means of spreading costs. It is also a symbolic intervention.'[4] Once a nation moves to make a film collaboratively with another nation, the representation of one's own national heritage and culture in relation to the other is called into question and requires negotiation. The complications come not just in the choice of film subjects or scenarios, but also from different traditions of storytelling. In these traditions, again, the Soviet Union may share with Europe an ideal more akin to art than commerce. Added to this pressure is the economic model of a successful – popular and profitable – film, which demanded the recognisable stars and blockbuster elements that Hollywood had perfected. The Soviet film bureaucracy wanted to control its own representations, themes and messages, especially in projecting its image abroad, but periodically recognised that some compromise might be necessary to penetrate the global film market. Their centralised system of production and bureaucratic control over film topics and scripts made working with another country even more complicated. In spite of these obstacles Soviet interest in producing films with the West persisted and in turn introduced the participation of non-state actors, like private film companies and producers, into the Cold War contest. The Soviet efforts to co-produce films on their own terms exhibit a multilayered dynamic process in the negotiation and export of cultural influence during the Cold War.

The idea of film co-production recapitulates other types of treaty negotiations and co-operation in Cold War diplomacy between the Soviet Union and other nations. The equality of each partner was crucial to Soviet aims, as exemplified by several collaborative projects in science, including the famous joint space flight in 1975.[5] The Soviet rhetoric of 'peaceful co-existence' emphasised such parity, while times of trouble saw tit-for-tat responses. Soviet officials described cinematic cooperation as 'joint film' to emphasise that the partnership was more than production but also included script and artistic expertise. That phrase was diplomatically enshrined in the 1958 US-USSR Lacy-Zarubin cultural exchange agreement and used in most Soviet documents.

This chapter begins with an exploration of how co-producing films fits into the international film industry and the practice of Cold War cultural diplomacy. The next section examines the Soviet motives and intentions – both economic

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4   Graham Murdock, 'Trading Places: The Cultural Economy of Co-Production', in Sofia Blind and Gerd Hallenberger (eds.), *European Co-Production in Television and Film* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1996), p. 103-114, quotation p. 107.
5   The mutual reinforcement of different types of Soviet-American 'collaborative' projects is suggested by an article in *Soviet Film* (July 1975) in which their correspondent interviews Cosmonaut Alexey Elseiev, head of the Soviet-American flight, about his relations with the cinema both as a viewer and as a 'star'.

and political – for film co-production through archival documents and attention to the institutionalisation of a specific department – Sovinfilm – during the late 1960s. The chapter closes by discussing three co-produced 'biographical films' from 1969-1971 to illustrate Soviet experience in co-operating with Europe and 'filming with the enemy.'

Co-productions, Europe and the International Film Industry

Co-produced films must be situated within the context of the international film industry in which national film industries compete for prestige and market share. Film co-productions are just one of several formulae for multiplying a film's potential to cross national boundaries – for audience, profits and cultural politics – that developed over the twentieth century. Much of this effort exploited the export potential of films made for a domestic audience. Before the coming of sound film in the late 1920s, film could be transformed for export by substituting subtitles in the language of the receiving country. Sound film brought many experiments in multiple language films, such as the Paramount studios in France and the German studio Ufa's expansion in the German sphere of influence during the 1930s and early 1940s.[6] These co-operative ventures might feature a star or locations from a second country, a storyline shared by one or more countries, or a genre like melodrama or musical that more easily crossed national lines. Often films were shot twice on the same set, each time in a different language with variations in stars, dialogue or plot adapted for the receiving audiences. Film finance also took many forms, depending upon the role of the state in supporting and regulating the film industry. The range of options for how various components of film production and distribution could be divided or shared, therefore, were already present in the interwar years.

The onset of the Cold War coincided with hard times for all film industries, including Hollywood. Faced with rising competition from television, a loss of necessary profits from all-but-destroyed European markets, and the legal dismemberment of its oligopoly of production and distribution, post-war Hollywood began to produce films in Europe and elsewhere as 'runaway' productions, benefitting from

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6   Richard Maltby and Rush Vasey, 'The International Language Problem: European Reactions to Hollywood's Conversion to Sound', in *Hollywood in Europe: Experiences of a Cultural Hegemony*, David W. Ellwood and Rob Kroes (eds.), (Amsterdam: vu University Press, 1994); Chris Wahl, '"Paprika in the blood": On ufa's Early Sound Films Produced in/about/for/with Hungary', *Spectator* 27, no. 2 (Fall 2007), p. 11-20; Thomas Elsaesser, *Weimar Cinema and After: Germany's Historical Imaginary* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 120; Sibylle M. Sturm and Arthur Wohlgemuth (eds.), *Hallo? Berlin? Ici Paris!: Deutsch-Französische Filmbeziehungen, 1918-1939* (Munich: Edition Text+Kritik, 1996).

the lower costs, exotic locations, and local personnel, and spending the export film profits that could not be taken out of the country. 'Hollywood on the Tiber' is the most famous example.[7]

European film industries began to revive by the late 1950s, and they, too, began to look to co-production as a way to boost productivity, to share production costs and to increase the number of cinema-goers. Between 1949 and 1964, clustering toward the 1960s, European film industries co-produced over 1,000 films, primarily through bilateral national agreements emphasising cultural affinities.[8] France and Italy led the European co-producers, although Spain also was highly active.[9] In many cases these co-productions were official, commencing with a treaty of cooperation whereby each participating government recognised the film as a product of 'national culture' and might therefore offer subsidies or tax breaks. Less formal arrangements might be made between international partners, especially when a Hollywood studio wanted to invest in a film. The key variables were how the film production divided responsibility for creative decisions, from casting and script to the finished film, including stars, locations, and stories, as well as how territories for distribution and revenue were allocated. Often films that started as co-productions turned out to be more about acquiring an international star, engaging less expensive labour and/or locations in another country, and obtaining European financing, rather than collaboration in terms of subject, script and style.[10]

Soviet Films and Cold War Cultural Diplomacy

The Soviet film industry confronted similar problems in attempting to make and export technologically sophisticated and appealing films in their bid for 'cultural supremacy' in the Cold War.[11] During Stalin's last years the Soviet studio system

7   Toby Miller, *Global Hollywood 2* (London: BFI, 2005).
8   Anne Jäckel, *European Film Industries* (London: BFI, 2003); Marsha Siefert, 'Twentieth-Century Culture, "Americanization", and European Audiovisual Space', in Konrad Jarausch and Thomas Lindenberger (eds.), *Conflicted Memories: Europeanizing Contemporary Histories* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), p. 164-193.
9   George Michael Luyken, 'The Business of Co-Productions: Simply Sharing Costs or Building a New European Audiovisual Culture?' in Blind and Hallenberger, *European Co-Production in Television and Film*, p. 115-126, 116; Alejandro Pardo, 'Spanish Co-Productions: Commercial Need or Common Culture', in Sandra Barriales-Bouche and Marjorie Attignol Salvodon (eds.), *Zoom In, Zoom Out: Crossing Borders in Contemporary European Cinema* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), p. 89-127.
10   Recent examples have been called 'Euro-puddings' due to less-than-satisfactory cinematic results. For post-1989 European co-production financing in Eastern Europe, see Anne Jäckel, 'Cultural Cooperation in Europe: The Case of British & French Co-productions with Central and Eastern Europe', *Media, Culture & Society* 9, no. 1 (1997), p. 111-120.
11   David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

had been crippled by doctrinal supervision.[12] Film trade with the West had virtually come to a halt, with the dearth of domestic films being supplemented by old Hollywood films and 'trophy' films from the war years. After 1953, Soviet filmmakers had some leeway to boost the numbers and quality of films, so they wanted access to the latest Western films and techniques and to re-enter the international film world.[13] Film was discussed at the 1955 Geneva meeting of Foreign Ministers in which France, the UK and the US proposed a seventeen-point plan for exchanging media with the Soviet Union. While the USSR rejected the initiative, they remained open to bilateral or multilateral agreements.[14] Bilateral agreements were to become the norm in film projects and the USSR signed a cultural agreement with France the next year.

Arranging film 'co-operation' with the US proved more difficult, however. Exchange visits of Soviet and American delegations resumed in 1955[15] and Boris Polevoi, the *Pravda* correspondent who led the Soviet journalistic delegation, published his *American Diaries* in 1956. Polevoi's confidential 16-page report was written for the Central Committee. Amidst the advice he offered about how to better communicate the socialist message to Americans, he commented specifically on the film industry. 'In the course of our meetings in Hollywood,' he wrote, the idea arose of corresponding American and Soviet film festivals of each others' films, an idea 'ardently supported by filmmakers, by studio executives, and by the so-called Hollywood "tycoons".' Polevoi thought it would be 'the right thing to do.'[16] In August of the following year, a similar two-week trip was made by the Soviet deputy minister of culture in charge of film – 'the highest ranking cultural emissary to visit the United States in the last decade.' In an interview he stated that his ministry was 'open-minded' about 'barter' in the entertainment field, offering three propositions. One was again reciprocal film festivals and another was the exchange of actresses and actors to star in each other's films – when asked, he

12   Peter Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society from the Revolution to the Death of Stalin* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

13   For an excellent analysis, see Sergei Kapterev, 'Illusionary Spoils: Soviet Attitudes toward American Cinema during the Early Cold War', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 10, no. 4 (Fall 2009), p. 779-807.

14   Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), p. 14-15.

15   On Moscow's initiative in these years see J.D. Parks, *Culture, Conflict and Coexistence: American–Soviet Cultural Relations, 1917-1958* (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland, 1983), chapter 10.

16   Rossiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii [hereafter RGANI], f. 5, op.15, d.734, p.131-145, here p. 140-141. The meaning of this trip for cultural diplomacy is nicely elaborated by Rósa Magnúsdóttir in 'Mission Impossible? Selling Soviet Socialism to Americans, 1955-1958', in Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried (eds.), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), p. 50-74. I thank her for sharing this document with me.

'wouldn't mind trading for Marilyn [Monroe].' The last was a 'joint production' by both motion picture industries.[17]

The idea was also raised by visiting film-makers in Moscow. The most dramatic anticipation was publicity surrounding Hollywood producer Mike Todd's visit in April of 1956, when he boasted that he would shoot 'War and Peace' in Russia as a co-production, a claim that was later denied by Soviet authorities.[18] The idea was kept alive, however, in a long letter by a well-known Soviet playwright published in *Literaturnaia Gazeta* the following year.[19] 'Let's Make a Film Together,' he wrote Mike Todd, and suggested an epic film depicting Russian-American relations during the American Civil War featuring Abraham Lincoln and Alexander II among others. He had a scenario ready. 'I don't know who is to blame' for the failure to reach an agreement, he stated. 'But that is not the main thing. No big venture ever started without difficulties and even some disappointments. However that may be (...) at this particular time it is essential that cultural ties between our countries be broadened in every way (...). The wider the world, the more interesting the life.'[20]

The Soviet press continued to promote the idea of joint films. *Sovetskaia Kultura*, writing on 1 January 1958, declared that 'such films are one of the many aspects of cultural co-operation. In spite of the intrigues of reaction, cultural ties are growing and being expanded. Ever louder sounds the voice of art; it knows no boundaries, it opens to people perspectives, paths for the future, it speaks great goals. Art serves the cause of peace.'[21] On 23 January *Izvestia* published a list of 'Jointly Produced Films,' several – with India, Finland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia – already completed. A list of films in process, primarily with socialist partners, demonstrated the breadth of their efforts: literary adaptations with Bulgaria, Hungary and Greece, heroic tales with Egypt and Romania, a scenario 'of great interest' entitled 'Moscow-Peking', and with France a story of 'the fighting friendship' of wartime aviators.[22]

Thus it is not surprising that Soviet negotiators continued to press for joint films in their cultural negotiations with the United States. A very general provision to that effect was included as part of the US-USSR cultural exchange agreement signed on 27 January 1958: 'To recognize the desirability and usefulness of organizing joint production of artistic, popular science and documentary films and of

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17 'Russia Ready for Talks on Film "Barter"', *Chicago Daily Tribune* (27 August 1956), p. 16.
18 'Todd Seen Shooting "War and Peace" in Russia as Co-Production', *Variety* (11 April 1956).
19 'Let Us Make a Film Together: Open letter to Mr. Michael Todd', *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (3 October 1957), 4, trans. in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* [hereafter CDSP] 40, no. 9 (13 November 1957), p. 16-17.
20 Op. cit, 'Let Us Make a Film'. *Variety* also reprinted this letter.
21 Open Society Archives, Budapest. r.r.g., 'Films and "Guided Creativity"', Office of the Political Advisor, Radio Free Europe/Munich, Background Information USSR (8 August 1958). Citation on p. 20, footnote 9.
22 'Jointly Produced Films', *Izvestia*, 23 January 1958, p. 4. CDSP 4, no. 10 (5 March 1958), p. 45.

the conducting, not later than May 1958, of concrete negotiations between Soviet Union film organizations and U.S. film companies on this subject (...). The subject matter of the films will be mutually agreed upon by the two parties.'[23] These concrete negotiations turned out to be quite protracted. According to a US participant, the US delegation 'must have appeared to the Soviets as a scene straight from a Hollywood movie,' as they entered the Ministry of Culture conference room sporting dark sunglasses and deep tans.[24] Nonetheless a further agreement on film exchange including the approval of joint productions was signed on 9 October of that year.[25]

A skeptical analysis of the meaning of the Soviet co-production effort was provided by Radio Free Europe's Office of the Political Advisor in a 25-page August 1958 report on the Soviet film industry called 'Films and Guided Creativity'.[26] Calling co-productions 'one of the propaganda vehicles used by the Communists for some time,' the analyst sees them becoming more numerous and more important within the framework of the steadily growing 'Soviet cultural offensive.'[27] Their value to all the 'Communist countries' included their access to funds, facilities and technical skills from the West, specifically France and Italy. The RFE analyst also affirms Western interest – the large and virtually untapped market, the competition from domestic television, and the Soviet willingness to co-produce with any country, including the United States, and lists the number of ongoing and planned Soviet and East European co-productions with other countries.

In spite of these pronouncements, Soviet co-productions were rare during the Khrushchev years, with fewer than twenty co-produced films completed before 1965. One might attribute this absence to many causes, not the least of which is the difficulty of realising any film co-production. From the socialist side, film industry personnel from Hungary and Poland would have been less likely to seek co-productions with the USSR for some time after 1956. The 1958 concept of 'guided creativity' suggested already a more cautious approach to approved films, a conservatism that intensified with the 'literary ferment' that ensued after the October 1961 Communist Party conference and spread to the film industry by

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23 Section VII, item 5, 'United States and U.S.S.R. Sign Agreement on East-West Exchanges', [US] *Department of State Bulletin* (17 February 1958), p. 243-247, quotation on p. 245.

24 Hans N. Tuch, *Communicating with the World: U.S. Public Diplomacy Overseas* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), p. 134.

25 'United States and U.S.S.R. Agree on Films To Be Exchanged', [US] *Department of State Bulletin* (3 November 1958), p. 696-698.

26 R.r.g., 'Films and "Guided Creativity"', p. 19-21.

27 This phrase became codified in early Cold War parlance with the publication of Frederick C. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960).

spring of 1963.[28] Internally the Soviet film bureaucracy was more concerned with repertoire control and retained the complex hierarchical administrative system of film theme and genre plans along with multilayered script approval, which made the process of obtaining approval for a film long and cumbersome. Also, the Soviet film industry was state-supported and film directors were paid according to the prestige of the film they were allotted in the plan, and so the rewards and incentives were internal to the system. Economics mattered, however. All movie theatres throughout the USSR had to contribute a portion of their receipts to the government to finance future films, and so they programmed films that the audience would pay to see. Often these were foreign imports or genre films that were not so highly regarded by the Soviet film bureaucracy.[29] During the years of the 'thaw' the 1930s idea of 'cinema for the millions'[30] had re-emerged along with the other demands of the global marketplace and East-West rivalry to produce conditions for cautious experiments in co-produced films.

Soviet Co-Produced Films from 1965

With the exception of two films produced with Germany in the late 1920s,[31] the Soviet efforts to co-produce films began in 1953.[32] Despite the flurry surrounding the 1958 exchange agreement with the US, subsequent Soviet co-productions numbered only one or at most two films a year.[33] The topics and partners were

28 See, for example, Priscilla Johnson, *Khrushchev and the Arts: The Politics of Soviet Culture, 1962-1964* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1965), p. 95-101; Josephine Woll, *Real Images: Soviet Cinema and the Thaw* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2000), p. 103-111.

29 Marsha Siefert, 'From Cold War to Wary Peace: American Culture in the USSR and Russia', in Alexander Stephan (ed.) *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy and Anti-Americanism After 1945* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), p. 185-217; Sudha Rajagopalan, *Indian Film in Soviet Cinemas: The Culture of Movie-Going after Stalin* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire That Lost the Cultural Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), chapter 2.

30 Richard Taylor, 'Ideology as Mass Entertainment: Boris Shumyatsky and Soviet Cinema in the 1930s', in Richard Taylor and Ian Christie (eds.), *Inside the Film Factory: New Approaches to Russian and Soviet Cinema* (London/New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 193-216.

31 Moscow's Mezhrabpom Film Studios made these first two co-productions with Prometheus Studios in Berlin (*Salamander,* 1928 and *Zhivoi trup* [The Living Corpse] 1929). Louis Harris Cohen, *The Cultural Political Traditions and Developments of the Soviet Cinema from 1917 to 1972* (New York: Arno Press, 1974), p. 547.

32 See Sergei Kapterev, *Post-Stalinist Cinema and the Russian Intelligentsia, 1953-1960: Strategies of Self-Representation, De-Stalinization, and the National Cultural Tradition* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2008), p. 285-288 for an analysis of one of the earliest Soviet co-productions, *The Heroes of Shipka*, made with Bulgarian filmmakers in 1954.

33 To put this number in perspective, in 1965 France was involved in about 100 international co-productions. Luyken, 'The Business of Co-Productions', p. 116. For the 8 July 1967 version of the French-Soviet Film

predictable, with safe genres like historical dramas, war films and children's films. The co-producers were usually from the 'bloc' or countries friendly with the Soviet Union.[34] The numbers of co-produced films showed a marked increase in the mid-1960s, with five co-productions appearing in 1965, two in 1966 and six in 1967. Publicity stressed the co-operation at all levels of the film, from screenwriting to location shooting. For example, the Soviet-Romanian co-production of the World War II film, *The Tunnel*, was directed by a Romanian who co-wrote the screenplay with a Soviet writer, with Soviet actors in the cast, location shooting in Romania and studio shooting in the Soviet Union: '[The] *Tunnel* is a psychological film (...) about friendship and unity of ideals born in unity of struggle.'[35] *Soviet Film*, the glossy export magazine translated into six languages (but not Russian) and sent only abroad, announced a new round of joint films in early 1966. The Chief Editor at Mosfilm proclaimed that they were 'an important means for promoting cultural ties' and were sometimes 'unavoidable' because the 'destinies of different nations are bound up closely.' Prominent among the announced films were two with the West – *And They Marched to the East* with Italy and *Normandie-Nieman* with France.[36] This renewed attention and small but significant increase in the number of film co-productions must be understood in light of the new leadership in the USSR and the Soviet film industry.

The Soviet film industry in 1965

In October 1964, Khrushchev had been ousted and Alexei Kosygin took over Khrushchev's position as Soviet Premier, while Leonid Brezhnev became General Secretary. Kosygin's economic reforms included a move from heavy industry and military hardware to light industry and consumer goods, and the principle of 'material interest' [or profit motive] was officially recommended by the 1965 Plenary of the Central Committee.[37] Although Brezhnev disagreed with this policy and emerged as the man in power by 1970, Kosygin remained in his post.

Co-Production and Exchange agreement, see <http://www.cnc.fr/CNC_GALLERY_CONTENT/DOCUMENTS/UK/Film_coproduction_agreement/239_agreement_Russia_08_07_1967.pdf> (accessed October 2010).

34   A US-USSR co-production had been in the works since 1962 but was halted at the end of 1965. For this story see Marsha Siefert, 'Meeting at a Far Meridian: American-Soviet Cooperation in and on Film in the 1960s', in Patryk Babiracki and Kenyon Zimmer (eds.), *Cold War Crossings: International Travel and Exchange in the Soviet Bloc, 1940s-1960s* (College Station, TX, forthcoming).

35   Anne Jäckel, 'France and Romanian Cinema 1896-1999', *French Cultural Studies* 11, no. 33 (October 2000), p. 409-425.

36   'In Collaboration with', *Soviet Film* 112 (September 1966), p. 5.

37   Steven P. Hill, 'The Soviet Film Today', *Film Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (Spring 1967), p. 33-52, here p. 44.

This period opened up opportunities for the film industry in various ways. First, between 1953 and 1963, there was no separate ministry for film, which was subordinated to the Ministry of Culture. In 1963, film once again was administered by a separate bureaucratic entity, the Cinematography Committee at the USSR Council of Ministers (Goskino), which in 1965 was again reorganised and raised in status.[38] Second, during the 'thaw' most 'film workers' belonged to other unions, in particular the Writers Union, and had no union of their own. In the late 1950s, film-makers began taking steps to create a separate organisation and finally succeeded in establishing the Union of Film Workers at the First National Congress of Film Workers held in Moscow in 1965.[39]

Also in 1965, the values of commerce and 'entertainment' returned to the Soviet film industry, as represented by the Experimental Film Studio, which was set up in the second half of 1965 to make films with potential for export as well as for domestic appeal.[40] The studio's artistic supervisor was Grigorii Chukhrai, director of *Ballad of a Soldier* (1959) and the executive producer was Vladimir Pozner Sr., a frequent player in co-production stories given his international experience as a 1940s Hollywood screenwriter and Paris correspondent. Konstantin Simonov, a prominent author who visited Hollywood in 1946, headed the script department.[41] The Experimental Film Studio was described as similar to the American film entity United Artists, with no formal studio facilities and with directors and actors hired on a film-by-film contract basis. Films were to be initiated by writing a film script rather than the usual literary scenarios. The proportions of time spent on films were reassigned, with less shooting time and more time for preparation and editing. Compensation schemes also built in a percentage of profit, with a special consideration of film genre. As Chukhrai stated in an interview: 'The existing "planning" of the creative process causes direct harm to quality,' and a new system would be instituted whereby 'the economic effectiveness of the studio will depend entirely on the people's evaluation of the finished product.'[42] Although the Experimental Film Studio ended in 1976, it represented an attempt to minimise bureaucratic interference and depart from the 'gray genres' favoured by the authorities.[43]

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38 Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, p. 58.

39 Val S. Golovskoy with John Rimberg, *Behind the Soviet Screen: The Motion-Picture Industry in the USSR 1972-1982*, trans. Steven Hill (Ann Arbor MI: Ardis, 1986), p. 37.

40 Hill, 'Soviet Film Today'.

41 Anna Lawton, *Before the Fall: Soviet Cinema in the Gorbachev Years* (Washington DC: New Academia, 2004), p. 82.

42 'The Future of an Experiment: Lenin Prize Winner Grigori Chukhrai Speaks', *Sovetskaia Rossia* (19 May 1965), 3, trans. CDSP 17, no. 22 (23 June 1965), p. 31-32.

43 George Faraday, *Revolt of the Filmmakers: The Struggle for Artistic Autonomy and the Fall of the Soviet Film Industry* (University Park PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), p. 125; Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, p. 57-62.

Yet, as always in the Soviet Union, there were countervailing tendencies. When Alexei Romanov from the Central Committee's Department of Propaganda and Agitation[44] was dramatically named head of the Cinematography Committee by the USSR Council of Ministers in March 1963,[45] he brought strong ideological expectations for Soviet film to promote 'the political enlightenment and aesthetic education of the people' in accordance with 'the interests of communist construction and the Soviet nation.'[46] This appointment had come in the midst of Khrushchev's crackdown on the arts, which for film culminated in the controversy surrounding the awarding of first prize at the July 1963 Moscow Film Festival to Fellini's *8 1/2*; Romanov was forced to declare in a press conference: 'We reject any implication that the jury's verdict marks a retreat in our own ideological struggle – contrary to misleading comments in the foreign press.'[47] Thus the change in leadership and atmosphere must be interpreted cautiously. While certainly the Experimental Film Studio provided an opportunity for talented film-makers, as well as an attempt to improve the recognisably laggard film production, its viability and longevity were never secure.

From 1965, the emphasis within Goskino appeared to be expansion, both in the numbers of films made for mass audiences and in popular genres, as well as in terms of its own power. As popular movies increased economic rewards and also migrated to or were made for television, so too did the departments and activities related to film, including film distribution, advertising and international relations, grow and prosper.[48] The new atmosphere of striving for popularity and power through industry-building was displayed at the fifth International Moscow Film Festival held from 5-20 July 1967, coincidentally the 50th anniversary of the Revolution, and attended by several international stars and directors. In his report to the US Secretary of State, the Chair of the US delegation, Jack Valenti – the recently appointed Head of the Motion Picture Association of America – found the Moscow theatre at 10 o'clock in the morning 'filled and jumping with people (...) applauding and cheering response from the moment that the trademark of a U.S. film appeared on the screen.' Noting the interest of the Soviet public in American films, he adds that 'creative artists in films speak a common language which most of the time rises above doctrinal and transitory stereotypes,' with film offering 'a most promising and fruitful channel of communications.' He also had 'private conversations' with 'Chairman Romanov', which 'led to improved understanding

44 Golovskoy, *Behind the Soviet Screen*, p. 13-14.
45 Peter Johnson (Reuters), 'New Film "Czar" Names In Red Cultural Shakeup', *Washington Post* (24 March 1963).
46 Quoted in Woll, *Real Images*, p. 225.
47 This story has been related in several contexts; see e.g., Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, p. 235-239, quotation on p. 237.
48 Woll, *Real Images*, p. 226-227.

and perhaps cleared the way for more substantive results of benefit to both coun-
tries in the future.'[49] Just one week after the end of this festival Alexei Romanov
addressed a long and comprehensive memo to the CPSU Central Committee in
support of a new unit to deal directly with joint film productions.[50]

The Soviet Case for Film Co-productions – East and West

The July 1967 memo begins by recounting several of the coproductions (or 'joint
productions') completed or in the works for the 'socialist countries,' tactfully one
from each. The titles listed included those genres likely to find favour with the
Party leadership: socialist biographies like *Lenin in Poland* (*Lenin v Pol'she*, Sergei
Iutkevich, 1965), historical dramas from the Russian Civil War, like *The Red and
the White* (*Csillagosok, katonák*, Miklós Jancsó, 1967) co-produced with Hungary,[51]
and World War II dramas with Romania (*The Tunnel,* Francisc Munteanu, 1966)
and Yugoslavia (*Checked – No Mines*, Zdravko Velimirovic and Iurii Lysenko, 1965).
Documentaries about the Soviet Union from film-makers of socialist countries
and Soviet use of technical facilities of film studios in socialist countries were also
mentioned. 'The volume and the variety of forms of such work have significantly
increased in recent years.'

The memo next elaborates the advantages of recent Soviet co-productions with
Western countries, specifically mentioning France, Italy and Japan. New agree-
ments had been signed with Italy in January 1967 and with France during the
visit of the French Prime Minister, Georges Pompidou. 'The business and artistic
circles of France and Italy have great hopes for these agreements,' says Romanov,
'since they see in them an opportunity, to break free, to an extent, from the domina-
tion of the American film monopolies and to strengthen their national cinemas.'[52]
Throughout the memo, the language of cultural contest and presumed shared
alliances in the struggle against Hollywood are emphasised. Romanov's analysis
was not dissimilar to complaints made by the Europeans themselves. He provides

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49 Jack Valenti, 'Report of the United States Delegation to the V. International Film Festival, Moscow, U.S.S.R.,
    July 5 through July 20, 1967.' Unpublished report submitted to the US Secretary of State, Foy Kohler Papers,
    Manuscript collection no. 036, Canaday Center, University of Toledo Libraries.
50 RGANI, f. 5, op. 59, d. 64, ll. 136-142 [Stamped 27 July 1967].
51 Jancsó's film was not finished at the time of the memo; his 'ambiguous and distinctly non-heroic portrayal
    of events' displeased the Soviet authorities who made changes to the film for the premiere and later banned
    it. Jancsó still managed to have his own version distributed. See John Cunningham, *Hungarian Cinema from
    Coffee House to Multiplex* (London: Wallflower, 2004), p. 111-112; Mira and Anton J. Liehm, *The Most Important
    Art: Eastern European Film after 1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 395.
52 RGANI, f. 5, op. 59, d. 64, l.137.

data about American investment in English and French films and explicates fully his perception of the situation in Italy:

> In Italy, the American film monopolies have managed to capture both the distribution and production of Italian films. More than three-fourths of Italian films are made on American money; Italian actors, directors, and even producers are hired by representatives of American film companies. It is not rare that, due to this, Sovexportfilm, wishing to buy one or another Italian film, has either to negotiate with the American companies that own these films, or to cancel the purchase altogether.
>
> This situation in the Italian cinema has put some renowned Italian directors, among them a number of communists, in a very difficult situation, and has left them without work (De Santis, [Roberto] Rossellini, [Carlo] Lizzani). Some progressive Italian directors are forced to make films for American film companies ([Vittorio] De Sica, Nanni Loy, Dino Risi).

Romanov concludes that cooperation with Italy and France would help 'the Soviet film industry accumulate the experience these countries possess, and then use the most progressive methods of modern film production in its own work,' a key concern for film-makers and also perceived as one of the reasons that Soviet films had difficulty penetrating the world market.

Romanov's other reasons for pursuing joint films recognise additional aspects of the cultural contest, even among their own socialist colleagues. For example, he mentions that the Western countries are already co-operating with the other socialist countries for joint films and mentions in particular Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland. He relates this to 'considerable interest in analogous co-operation with the Soviet Union'; presumably, the success of other socialist countries would persuade the Soviet bureaucrats of a need to increase their influence. A second and compelling reason he offers is the 'huge artistic and commercial success' of the Soviet filmed version of *War and Peace* (Bondarchuk 1966) in Europe and Japan. In film industries success breeds imitation or at least multiplication. Thirdly, Romanov importantly places Soviet cinema within the global industry: 'It must be noted that in recent years *a general tendency has formed and is developing in the world cinema toward international co-operation in film production, and it would be sensible to use it.*'[53] This sentence is underlined in the document, presumably by a member of the Central Committee who also presumably found the idea 'sensible'.

To sum up, Romanov articulates what might be considered the most positive formula for combining economic gain with ideological goals.

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53 RGANI, f. 5, op. 59, d. 64, l.139. An accompanying note in the margin says 'Eto zdorovo', a colloquial Russian expression meaning roughly 'This is great', or 'This is cool'.

> The implementation of the opportunities opening up in the area of Soviet inter-
> national co-productions (*on subjects acceptable to us*) will allow the Soviet motion
> picture industry to combine the commercial goals with the tasks of international
> ideological influence in a more flexible way, will bring in additional hard-cur-
> rency profits, and will act as another important channel through which we will be
> able to more actively propagandise the communist world-vision, the Soviet film
> art and the masters of our cinema on the world screens.[54]

The memo closes with a bold evaluation of the Soviet film bureaucracy that forms
the basis of his request. 'The Soviet cinema at present is not fully prepared to con-
duct a wide joint film cooperation with foreign countries.' Romanov enumerates
the challenges in practical terms, from how to get sufficiently quick decisions from
the authorities when negotiating with foreign film companies to how to pay for
visiting foreign film dignitaries to the fact that Soviet studio representatives arrive
for business meetings 'later than scheduled.' He even ventures economic com-
parisons like the difference in the costs of film production and its organisation,
as well as in the salaries of actors and film personnel in the studios of the USSR
and other socialist countries. He ends with a request 'to allow the Committee to
create a special creative artistic unit that would centralize work on co-productions
with foreign countries, as well as production services to foreign film companies.'

On 1 March 1968, the Deputy Chairman of the CPSU Central Committee's
Department for Culture 'recalled' the letter, with the statement that 'at present,
the Cinematography Committee at the USSR Council of Ministers is at work on a
long-term plan of joint film productions which will be presented to the CPSU Cen-
tral Committee. After this plan is confirmed, it will become possible to review the
question of the Committee's rights and of the order in which joint film produc-
tions with foreign countries should proceed.'[55] The promise of 'new suggestions'
did in fact materialise in December 1968. The All-Union Corporation of Joint Pro-
ductions and Production Services for Foreign Film Organizations, or Sovinfilm,
was created as one of the units under the Administration for External Relations of
the USSR State Cinema Committee (Goskino), which also supervised Sovexport-
film for foreign trade and Sovinterfest for international film festivals. This organi-
sation was to encourage co-productions and help integrate Soviet film-making
into the global cinema marketplace. According to its President, Sovinfilm was first
and foremost an 'economic organization. We are here to organize coproductions
between the Soviet Union and any other country that has an interesting proposi-
tion.' The goal of Sovinfilm was to give aid, especially if a foreign producer wanted

54 RGANI, f. 5, op. 59, d. 64, l.140-141; emphasis added.
55 RGANI, f. 5, op. 59, d. 64, l.145. At this time the State Committee for Cinematography answered to the USSR
Council of Ministers. Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, p. 30, fn1.

to shoot footage, etc. – 'all the services – naturally, for a price.'[56] In another interview Sovinfilm Chairman S.A. Kuznetsov listed a number of ongoing projects, but argued that the most important were those in which 'our film studios participate as equal partners.'[57] Striving for this type of arrangement created the greatest challenge for the Soviet Union.

Soviet protestations about the importance of economics did not of course negate the problems of finding a suitable topic and developing an acceptable script for a co-production. Other European co-productions of the time, especially those aiming for artistic consideration, were also made on topics that were 'politically consensual, aesthetically conventional, and rooted in high cultural traditions,' with stories based on literary classics, grand historical narratives and cultural heroes.'[58] An early co-ordinated project for European co-production sponsored by the Council of Europe had hoped to use the films to demonstrate the 'historical process of [European] interchange which had been taking place throughout the centuries by less deliberate and conscious methods,' but in the end each country contributed only one film, the styles so highly varied that the films had little circulation.[59] Throughout Europe in these years, prestige products adapted 'great literature' or the lives of 'great men' but genre films like melodrama and history crossed borders most easily.

Soviet Co-Produced Films after 1965

Foreign film-makers or entrepreneurs interested in working with the USSR readily understood that the choice of film subject ought to favourably project Soviet achievements, even if the suggestions elided the imperial Russian past and communist present.[60] Romanov's memo affirms this choice:

> The subjects suggested for co-productions are, as a rule, acceptable for our side (adaptations of Russian and Soviet classics, films based on the music of Russian composers). In recent times, they also include the events of the October revolu-

56 Otari V. Teneyshvili, quoted in Vladimir Pozner, 'Sovinfilm, New USSR Body, to Oil Machinery for Co-Prod. with West', *Variety* 257, no. 13 (11 February 1970), p. 29.

57 B. Vaulin, 'At the Joint Production Headquarters', *Novosti ekrana* (Vilnius), no. 47 (1969).

58 Tim Bergfelder, *International Adventures: German Popular Cinema and European Co-Productions in the 1960s* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), p. 53-58.

59 C.H. Dand and J.A. Harrison, *Educational and Cultural Films: Experiments in European Co-Production* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1965).

60 The complexities for the Soviet interpretation of imperial Russian culture appeared long before the Cold War. See Kevin F. M. Platt and David Brandenberger (eds.), *Epic Revisionism: Russian History and Literature as Stalinist Propaganda* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005).

tion and the Second World War (...). For large-scale joint film projects such subjects can be used as, e.g., the historical events of the Second World War or historic connections between the USSR and particular countries.[61]

As Romanov predicted, *War and Peace* (1968) literally and figuratively aided the Soviet desires to co-produce a large historical epic with the West. Sergei Bondarchuk, favoured Soviet actor and director of *War and Peace*, used the Red Army as extras in this and in *Waterloo* (1970), an Italian/Soviet production in which the French were once again defeated. The Italian company Dino De Laurentis Cinematografica was provided with shooting locations, extras and pyrotechnics and featured many Soviet actors.[62] International stars were also recruited to expand market potential. *Waterloo* starred Christopher Plummer as Wellington and Rod Steiger as Napoleon. Claudia Cardinale and Sean Connery appeared in the 1969 Italian/Soviet co-production *The Red Tent*.[63]

Thus, the economic model of epic films and big stars, action and adventure, exciting locales and historical costumes was realised relatively soon after Sovinfilm's creation. By 1981, the Soviet co-production with France and Switzerland – *Teheran 1943* – starring Alain Delon, was the top-grossing film in the USSR for 1981.[64] Its description epitomises the thriller Soviet style:

> The leaders of the German Reich are planning the assassination of Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill. Carefully prepared by the aces of the German intelligence, the act was to take place in the autumn of 1943 during the Teheran conference of the allies in the anti-Hitler coalition. The film tells how that criminal political operation was uncovered and foiled. The action takes place in Germany, France, Britain, Switzerland, Iran, the USA and USSR.[65]

For reasons of solidarity the Soviet Union pursued co-productions with other socialist countries in the socialist bloc and by the time of *perestroika* the Soviet Union had produced at least one or two films with each of the bloc countries, including Cuba, Vietnam, China and Mongolia. While the topic of socialist co-

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61 RGANI, f. 5, op. 59, d. 64, l.139.
62 B. Vaulin, 'At the Joint Production Headquarters'.
63 Paula Michaels, 'Mikhail Kalatozov's The Red Tent: A Case Study in International Coproduction across the Iron Curtain', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 26, no. 3 (August 2006), p. 311-326. Connery apparently had just fallen out with the James Bond film producers and few in the USSR had seen the Bond films. Maria Kuvshinova, 'Film Scholar Sergei Lavrentiev on the History of Coproductions in the Soviet Union....' Interview, 5 January 2011; available at <http://openspace.ru/cinema/projects/70/details/19612>; (accessed 17 February 2011).
64 Available at <http://encyclopedia.quickseek.com/index.php/> (accessed 29 May 2006).
65 Advertisement in *Soviet Film* (April 1981).

productions goes beyond the scope of this chapter,[66] one example can illustrate how a socialist co-production attempted to involve western film-makers and ended up with a Soviet partner in attempting to make a film considered artistic in form, socialist in content, and yet still a commercial success – the 1971 biopic, *Goya*.

Usually discussed within the oeuvre of its prestigious director, Konrad Wolf, *Goya* is notable as a socialist co-production initiated by DEFA, the film studio of the GDR. The story is based on the 1951 novelised biography by Leon Feuchtwanger, a German exile in Hollywood. Goya's transformation from a court portrait painter to an artist of revolution seemed a perfect socialist biography. Its history as a co-production, as narrated from German documents,[67] describes the hopes of the director and his colleagues in 1963 for a coalition with Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, with the partners to provide both locations and 'actors with darker hair and eyes.' By 1964, DEFA managers for financial reasons also sought Western partners from Madrid, Paris and Munich, as well as government support for the plan 'to open up countries and markets for our cinema' as well as to gain more control over the development of German literary heritage to be adapted 'according to our national concept and duty.' Only with the failure of deals with a West German studio, a French actor and a Yugoslav studio, was a Soviet partner pursued, even though the idea had been broached as early as 1962 by the novelist's widow; translations of Feuchtwanger's work had a checkered but noticeable status in the USSR following his 1937 visit. In July 1966, Konrad Wolf discussed the possibility of a future joint film with Alexei Romanov during a trip to the Soviet Union and the next year attempted to negotiate a contract with Mosfilm, supported by the Soviet director Mikhail Romm, but the agreement failed.[68] The acquisition of Soviet partnership (and their large ruble contribution) only succeeded after Erich Honecker personally wrote to the Soviet minister of culture in 1971. In addition to DEFA and the Soviet studio Lenfilm, who supplied its star Donatas Banionis, the Sofia Feature Film Studio of Bulgaria and Bosna Film of Yugoslavia participated.

The appearance of the film in 1971 seemed to fit the more liberal artistic environment[69] and the interest in the pre-socialist cultural traditions and the appropri-

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66 The dynamics of film co-operation, involving the rivalry and resistance of the countries in the Soviet bloc, is a much larger topic. Each country had its own film traditions and desire for independence from Moscow in their film-making efforts. This led them to negotiate their own co-production deals with each other and the West. For more see Marsha Siefert, 'East European Cold War Culture(s)? Commonalities, Alterities and Film Industries', in Annette Vowinckel, Thomas Lindenberger and Marcus Payk (eds.), *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives on Eastern and Western European Societies* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012).

67 Mariana Zaharieva Ivanova, 'DEFA and East European Cinemas: Co-Productions, Transnational Exchange and Artistic Exchange', Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2011, p. 59-73.

68 Ivanova, 'DEFA', 71, cites the veto by the Soviet Vice Minister of Culture because the script 'lacked resonance with contemporary socialist reality.'

69 Seán Allan, 'DEFA: An Historical Overview', in Seán Allan and John Sandford (eds.), *DEFA: East German Cinema, 1946-1992* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1999), p. 15-16.

ation of the traditional literary canon that emerged in the GDR in the early 1970s.[70] The lavish sets, the two-part story, the recreation of Inquisition Spain, the large amount of film shot, the detailed 150-page book accompanying the production, the potential marketing 'tie-ins' with Spanish concerts and the reproduction of Goya's works[71] all suggest that indeed, as Liehm and Liehm state, *Goya* aimed to synthesise three values that DEFA films [and Soviet films] had until then been trying in vain to achieve: artistic quality, recognition abroad and box-office success.[72] Although respected, the film did not quite meet these expectations.

The film also struggled as a co-production, with criticism from the Soviet partners.[73] Lenfilm's managing director demanded substantial revisions to the tribunal scene and shortened the ending by 20 minutes; their dramaturge objected to the 'modernised' language of the dialogues and requested an introduction for younger filmgoers.[74] The Soviet critique had one other referent, though – the Hollywood biopic about Goya that they had purchased and distributed in the late 1960s. Already in 1968, *Sovetskaia Rossiya* had complained about Ava Gardner's 'naked Maja' when shown at the Red Sormovo Plant's Palace of Culture,[75] and a prominent eight-page 1972 review of Goya led by ridiculing Gardner's 'lush pose' one more time. In unifying 'the artist and the life',[76] the history of the film *Goya* also embodies Feuchtwanger's subtitle – 'the difficult road to knowledge'.

Cultural Export versus Co-Production

Two other examples that coincide with the creation of Sovinfilm and the renewed push toward co-productions display the Soviet hopes and concerns in trying to co-produce films on their own terms and especially on their own culture. These two efforts embody two international successes of Russian musical culture – the bass Feodor Chaliapin and the composer Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky. Mark Donskoi, veteran Soviet director best known for his film trilogy on the life of Maxim Gorky, made the case for why a filmed life of Chaliapin should *not* be a co-production in

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70   Daniela Berghahn, 'The Re-Evaluation of Goethe and the Classical Tradition in the Films of Egon Günther and Siegfried Kühn', in Allan and Sandford (eds.), *DEFA: East German Cinema*, p. 222-223.

71   Larson Powell, 'Breaking the Frame of Painting: Konrad Wolf's *Goya*', *Studies in European Cinema* 5, no. 2 (2008), p. 131-141, here p. 133.

72   Liehm and Liehm, *Most Important Art*, p. 363.

73   Foreign comparisons of the film with Tarkovsky's biopic of the icon painter *Andrei Rublev*, released that year in the Soviet Union five years after its completion, would not have helped.

74   Ivanova, 'DEFA', p. 71-73.

75   I. Leshchevsky, 'Why Buy Trashy Foreign Films? Newspaper Asks', *Sovetskaia Rossia* (17 April 1968), p. 3; CDSP 20, no. 16 (8 May 1968), p. 17-19; excerpted in *New York Times* (21 April 1968), IV, p. 13.

76   Irina Rubanova, Review of *Goya*, *Na ekranakh mira*, 4 (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1972), p. 36-44.

a 15 December 1971 letter – to Comrade Brezhnev himself. He had dreamed of this film for over ten years and prepared a two-part script, he wrote; in fact the film had been announced already in the export magazine *Soviet Film* in 1969.[77] 'As soon as they learned that I was going to make a film about Chaliapin,' writes Donskoi, 'foreign companies hastened to offer their services for a co-production. I have refused, since I believe that such a film should only be made in our country.'[78] He gives several reasons, among which are that his travels abroad reinforced the subject's necessity. He also argues that Soviet cinema must go on the offensive, citing barriers put up against the distribution of Soviet films and the 'billion dollars' the FBI has allocated for the ideological war through the art of cinema.[79] He offers what would appear to be an appealing theme, the way in which many Soviet productions dealt with Russians who became famous abroad and did not return after the revolution:

> The first film, *The Glory and the Life*, shows how the powerful sons of the era – the creators of a new, genuine art – were emerging from the depths of the people. The second film, *The Last Kiss*, deals with the tragedy of a man separated from his native land. The leitmotif is: 'Russia can do without us, but we cannot do without her.' This results in the conclusion: 'No matter how rich and famous you are, if you don't have native soil under your feet, if there are no dear eyes around – your happiness is lonely, and a lone man cannot be happy. The sun doesn't shine in a foreign land!'

The request was 'postponed' and in spite of there being a full director's two-part script, the film was never made. The usual explanation is that the 'postponement' was due to Donskoi's co-author of the film script, the well-known poet and writer Alexander Galich.[80] Already warned in 1969 after the Western publication of a samizdat collection of his songs, Galich was expelled from the Writers' Union on 29 December 1971, two weeks after Donskoi's request. Soon thereafter he was expelled from the Union of Cinematographers and he left the country in January 1974. His participation makes Donskoi's suggestion that there was co-production interest quite probable, since Galich had been to France twice as the writer for the French-Soviet co-production of the biopic on Petipa, the French ballet master in nineteenth-century Russia (*Third Youth*, Jean Dreville, 1965). Another potential

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77 'A Great Singer', *Soviet Film* (October 1967), p. 12. The IMDB also lists this film as a 1969 production, and as late as August 1971 the *Musical Times* (112, no. 1542, p. 759) lists its subject and director.

78 TsKhSD, f.5, op. 63, d. 152, ll. P. 1-2; reprinted in V. Fomin (ed. & commentary), *Kinematograf ottepeli: dokumenty i svidetelstva* (Moscow: Materik, 1998), p. 171-172.

79 Donskoi also cites the newly formed PEN as part of this effort.

80 Fomin's editorial comment confirms this reason.

co-producing country was Italy, as evidently urged by Chaliapin's son, Fedor Fedorovich Chaliapin. Galich's daughter tells a story that might also explain Donskoï's protests against co-production. Presumably a rich American offered to finance the film and Galich had no choice but to advise him to contact the Minister of Culture, E.A. Furtseva, who refused. 'When Donskoi joined the discussion, arguing that it would be nice to film in Paris and in America (...) Madam Minister cut him short: "You can very well shoot everything in Riga."'[81]

A contrast to the *Chaliapin* example comes with a concurrent attempt initiated by the successful Russian émigré Hollywood composer, Dmitri Tiomkin,[82] to film a life of Tchaikovsky. He obtained a pledge of support from an American studio and their co-operation was announced in 1966. According to Alexander Slavnov, the head of the Foreign Section of the Moscow Cinema Committee, 'though made at a Soviet studio, [the film] is designed for the world market. Dmitri Temkin [sic], eminent American composer, will participate in the making of it. Warner Brothers have already signed a contract with Sovexportfilm for its distribution.'[83] In what might be considered a typical distribution agreement, Warner Brothers would release the film in all countries outside the Soviet bloc and Finland. Mosfilm, the major Soviet studio, would supply the star, director, script and technicians while Warner Brothers was to pay for any international stars and to give advice on ways to give the Russian script more international appeal. In the US press *Tchaikovsky* was publicised as part of the renewal of the US-Soviet film exchange deal that had expired at the end of 1965.[84] Later that year, the film was discussed at the first World Congress of the Screen Writers Guild in Hollywood, with representatives from 14 countries including the USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. 'Warner-Soviet Film Plan seen as Help in Easing Tensions' read the 1966 headline. The article noted that the usual problem with co-productions was 'the trouble of finding a topic acceptable to both the Americans and the Russians,' but concluded that Tchaikovsky 'will not ruffle anyone's feathers.'[85]

By the time of its Russian premiere in the fall of 1970, *Tchaikovsky*'s role as cultural ambassador had been undermined by the sale and resale of Warner Brothers, with the new management looking for sure moneymakers. When the film was

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81 Alena Galich, quoted at <http://www.bard.ru/article/24/07.htm> (accessed 21 August 2010). Given that *Soviet Film* in October 1967 had advertised that filming would be done in Italy, France and America along with Russia, the events in this story must have occurred later.

82 His Hollywood success was notable for its American character. Tiomkin received Academy Awards for *High Noon*, *The High and the Mighty*, and *The Old Man and the Sea*, and composed the musical score for many other Westerns, including *Duel in the Sun*, *Giant*, and *The Alamo* plus the theme song for television's 'Rawhide'.

83 'in Collaboration With...', *Soviet Film* no. 9 (September 1966), p. 5.

84 Vincent Canby, 'U.S.-Soviet Deals on Films Pending', *New York Times* (26 February 1966), p. 14.

85 Harry Bernstein, 'Warner-Soviet Film Plan Seen as Help in Easing Tensions', *Los Angeles Times* (12 October 1966), A1.

ready for distribution, 'Warners walked away.'[86] Tiomkin tried again. He acquired the English-language rights and created a new version, which premiered in the fall of 1971. The film was trimmed from 157 minutes to just over 90 minutes and used a prologue and voice-over narration read by Lawrence Harvey plus subtitles. In his many interviews Tiomkin reiterated his hopes that the film 'will improve US-USSR relations and is sure it will establish the Soviet film industry as a major force.'[87] But even with all Tiomkin's efforts, including the nomination by the Academy Awards committee for 1971 and support from the Minister of Culture, E.A. Furtseva, on her own trip to the United States (and Hollywood) in January 1972, the film was considered a foreign language entry and did not fulfil the dreams of its makers, either in the USSR or the US.[88]

Conclusion

While the 'Party line' is a major feature of Soviet cinema, the USSR shared various concerns with other European cinemas vis-à-vis Hollywood and faced similar problems in developing its film industry, including the challenge of television and the requirements for blockbusters. European countries, especially France and Italy, were leading the way in co-productions not only for economic gain but also for their own interests in cultural diplomacy[89] and film was part of that effort. The interest in reinforcing European connections, seeking a common denominator in European art as compared to Hollywood plots, and forging some economic solidarity in the ongoing efforts at European integration are sufficiently important that they should be considered as part of the story of Cold War cultural diplomacy, European style.

In what way do these efforts represent a form of cultural diplomacy in the cultural contest writ large, that is, the East-West rivalry? In spite of well-publicised attempts to put together a Soviet-American co-production from 1960 onwards, the only one officially completed during the Cold War period was a version of Maeterlinck's play, *The Blue Bird,* released in 1976. The *New York Times* critic cynically observed that 'peace treaties and trade pacts are international agreements arrived at through compromise. Movies are not. *The Blue Bird*, the first (and possibly the last) American-Soviet motion picture co-production, isn't good and it isn't a dis-

86   Steve Toy, 'Tiomkin Bullish On Producing Films With Bearish Russia', *Variety* (20 December 1971), p. 3.

87   Mary Blume, 'Tiomkin Goes Home for Film', *Los Angeles Times* (14 December 1969), R 34.

88   For a more complete history of this film see Marsha Siefert, 'Russische Leben, Sowjetische Filme: Die Film-biographie, Tchaikovsky und der Kalte Krieg', in Lars Karl (ed.), *Leinwand zwischen Tauwetter und Frost: Der osteuropäische Spiel- und Dokumentarfilm im Kalten Krieg* (Berlin: Metropol, 2007), p. 133-170.

89   On French efforts to use Europe as a means to export French culture abroad, see Anthony Haigh, *Cultural Diplomacy in Europe* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1974), p. 28.

grace. It's not much of anything.'[90] But that pronouncement perhaps misses the essence of cultural diplomacy, which is not necessarily the product but the process itself and the larger context in which any given film must be understood. In the realm of negotiation about individual films, archival evidence suggests that each scene was carefully scripted and styled, debated back and forth through endless revisions, and argued at the highest levels while aiming for a mass-market film with artistic resonance. Such discussions, even among well-intentioned film-makers at the level of filming and editing decisions, exhibit a kind of diplomacy that does involve cultural values and negotiation. The deal-making, the official visits, and the publicity about the process also chronicle frustrations and intersect with high politics. Co-productions, along with all the other foreign films exchanged, seen, debated and analysed, form part of a larger portrait of attempts at co-operation amid the crises of the Cold War decades. The process kept a line open, a possibility alive, even if it seemed that most of the time each country preferred its own image and version of the other.

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90   Vincent Canby, 'This "Blue Bird" Has a Right to Sing the Blues', *New York Times* (16 May 1976), p. 77.

Modernity East and West

5 The Dreamworld of New Yugoslav Culture and the Logic of Cold War Binaries

» *Sabina Mihelj*

'We are following our own path into socialism, and we will not allow anyone, neither those in the East nor those in the West, to make us stray away from this path.'[1] This statement, taken from a speech delivered by the Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito at the plenary session of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) in 1954 (formerly the Communist Party of Yugoslavia), encapsulates what was then the guiding ideological principle of the Yugoslav federation. It also serves as an apposite starting point for discussing the theoretical and methodological limitations of thinking about the Cold War in terms of a rigid East-West divide. A narrative structured around a black-and-white conflict between two ideologically opposed blocks is obviously ill-suited to account for the history of post-World War II Yugoslavia. In the years that followed the Tito-Stalin split in 1948, the Yugoslav political leadership embraced a new set of political and economic principles, centred on the ideal of 'worker's self-management' and premised on a rejection of 'Soviet' or 'Stalinist' models and a rereading of the classics of Marxism-Leninism.[2] In line with this ideological reorientation, the Party was expected to abandon its role as the 'commander' and 'direct operative manager' of social, state and economic life, and instead dedicate itself to the 'political and ideological work in educating the masses.'[3] Ensuing changes in the Yugoslav foreign policy, characterised by the country's prominent involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement, followed a similar logic, and can be seen as a balancing act aimed at eschewing the logic of bloc politics.[4]

Shifts in the realm of cultural policies were based on the same template.[5] Already in 1949, Yugoslav communist authorities came to the conclusion that the

1   Quoted in *Primorske novice*, 3 April 1954, p. 1.
2   Dennison Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment, 1948-1974* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1977), p. 61.
3   Quoted in ibid., p. 75.
4   See Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Nonaligned World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).
5   Studies that trace various aspects of this transformation include Petar Luković, *Bolja prošlost. Prizori iz muzičkog života Jugoslavije 1940-1989* (Beograd: Mladost, 1989); Aleš Gabrič, *Socialistična kulturna revolucija: Slovenska kulturne politika, 1953-1962* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1995); Predrag J. Marković, *Beograd*

old approach, aimed at changing popular consciousness and instituting new cultural values with the help of 'administrative means', was misguided, and had to be replaced with a less intrusive and prescriptive approach to culture, more amenable to ideological pluralism.[6] The Departments of Agitprop and Propaganda were formally abolished in 1952, socialist realism was no longer treated as the only ideologically acceptable paradigm, and Yugoslavia's museums, cinemas, concert halls and bookshops opened their doors to cultural imports from the West. By the mid-1950s, the number of films imported from the United States was over five times higher than in 1949, while the number of Soviet films decreased rapidly.[7] In 1952, the daily newspaper *Politika* started publishing Donald Duck comics, and re-launched its popular weekly comic magazine *Politikin Zabavnik*.[8] At the same time, the official attitudes towards jazz and popular music in general softened as well, though a measure of suspicion remained.[9] These changes were accompanied by a new understanding of Yugoslav identity and culture, based on the idea of Yugoslavia as a meeting point of two cultural worlds, which presumably gave rise to a unique cultural hybrid containing elements drawn from both the East and the West.

It is tempting to adopt the categories and phrases used by Yugoslav leaders and policymakers themselves and describe the post-1948 Yugoslav economy, politics and culture in ways they themselves often did, namely as a distinctive blend of West and East, market principles and state control, entertainment and education. Yet is such an approach really capable of overcoming the limitations of Cold War binaries? Not quite. Narrating the history of Tito's Yugoslavia in terms of a separate path into socialism would mean missing the active role of official discourse in moulding and appropriating Yugoslav realities, and obscuring those of their features that may not quite fit the self-congratulatory image of Yugoslav uniqueness. While the LCY did indeed give up its monopoly over the political decision-making process, it never abandoned its monopoly over political organisation, and retained control over the appointment of key personnel in the country's leading mass organisation, the trade unions, municipal governments and elsewhere.[10] In the realm of economic policy, the state retained a powerful role, and although the successive waves of economic reforms did bring significant changes that helped increase the general well-being of Yugoslav citizens, the Yugoslav system effec-

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između istoka i zapada 1948-1965. godine (Beograd: Službeni list SRJ, 1996); Andrew Baruch Wachtel, *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); and Reana Senjković, *Izgubljeno u prijenosu: Pop iskustvo soc culture* (Zagreb: Biblioteka nova etnografija, 2008).

6   Marković, *Beograd između...*, p. 325-327.
7   Ibid., p. 449.
8   Ibid., p. 447-449.
9   Luković, *Bolja prošlost...*, p. 10-20.
10   Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment...*, p. 73-74.

tively remained socialist in nature, and self-management was never fully implemented in practice.[11] Changes in the realm of culture were possibly more far-reaching, yet it is important to keep in mind that cultural experimentation was punctuated by periodic purges of cultural institutions, closing down of journals and persecutions.[12] Neither is it possible to sustain the argument that the Yugoslav experiment was entirely unique in the socialist East. Changes similar to those recorded in Yugoslavia were taking place elsewhere in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union itself, especially in the new cultural climate of the 'thaw',[13] making differences between Yugoslavia and the rest of the communist world more a matter of degree than of any profound, qualitative differences. Or, to put it differently: the dreamworld of socialist Yugoslavia after 1948 may well have been premised on the notion of Yugoslav uniqueness, but whether the reality of socialist Yugoslavia was indeed so unique is disputable.

How, then, should we approach the East-West binary and the associated categories and distinctions underpinning the divided dreamworlds of Cold War culture, including those that were – as with the Yugoslav one after 1948 – aiming to escape the logic of bloc politics? One fruitful way of inquiry is to delve into the negotiations and adaptations of these dreamworlds in the realm of everyday life, and explore those aspects of cultural practices and forms that eschew the neat distinctions of official discourse and policies. Yet if pursued on its own, this route of exploration risks getting caught in the popular narratives of repression and resistance, which are evidently in tune with contemporary sensibilities and recollections of the socialist past, but fail to capture the logic of Cold War dreamscapes and their role in really existing socialism. To avoid this, we need to complement this approach with another line of inquiry – one pursued also in this chapter – which involves treating Cold War categories and distinctions as objects of analysis in their own right, examining their discursive logic and uses in particular social contexts, and their relationship with the fluid nature of cultural processes, events and products they are meant to describe. This method of inquiry enables us to move beyond the simple acknowledgement of the mismatch between official proclamations and everyday practices, and gain a closer insight into the nature of this mismatch, its epistemic effects and links with relationships of power and social divisions. Gaining such insight is of vital importance if we are to fully appreciate the role of binary thinking during the Cold War and overcome its legacies in contemporary debates about the period.

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11 Milica Uvalić, *Investment and Property Rights in Yugoslavia: The Long Transition to a Market Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

12 Gabrič, *Socialistična kulturna revolucija…*; Marković, *Beograd između…*, p. 323-355.

13 See Susan Reid and David Crowley (eds.), *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-war Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 2000).

Yugoslav culture and early Cold War binaries in the Yugoslav northwest

The rest of this chapter applies this analytical approach to a case study, namely the journalistic discourse about culture in the north-western part of Yugoslavia, encompassing the region bordering Italy and the eastern side of the upper Adriatic coast. The proximity of Italy, the bilingualism of the local population, and the presence of ethnic minorities on both sides – Italians in Yugoslavia and Slovenians in Italy – were a constant source of inter-ethnic tensions, suspicions and even violence,[14] but also encouraged cross-border exchanges even at the height of Cold War tensions, and obstructed the processes of cultural homogenisation and nation-building on each side of the border. Italian radio and later television channels were immensely popular with the local Yugoslav audiences, and from the mid-1950s onwards, when special passports were introduced for local residents, shopping trips and visits to friends and family members in Italy became increasingly common.[15] At the same time, many Italians and Slovenian minority members living in Italy became regular customers of local Slovenian and Croatian restaurants and petrol stations, followed radio and television programmes broadcast from Yugoslavia, and also formed a substantial proportion of foreign tourists visiting the Yugoslav coastal resorts.

To examine the key traits of the early Cold War discourse about culture in the shifting ideological and cultural landscape of the region, this chapter focuses on the immediate post-World War II period up to 1948, when Yugoslav cultural forms and practices were organised, both institutionally and discursively, in much the same way as their equivalents in the Soviet Union and elsewhere in communist Eastern Europe. The media covered in the analysis include all the major Croatian and Slovenian newspapers published in the north-western part of the federation (*Riječki list/ Novi list*, *Glas Istre*, *Primorske novice*), the pro-Yugoslav Slovenian minority newspaper issued in Trieste (*Primorski Dnevnik*), and one Italian minority newspaper (*La Voce del Popolo*). It is important to clarify the limitations imposed by the nature of primary sources used. Especially in the early post-war years, the press largely reflected official views and did not exert an independent influence on cultural processes.[16] This was also a period when literacy rates were relatively low and local resistance to communist policies fairly widespread. Therefore, it may well be that the framing of culture promoted by the press was largely ignored by

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14 Marina Cattaruzza, *L'Italia e il confine orientale* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007), p. 168-181.

15 Jože Šušmelj, 'Videmski sporazum', in Jože Pirjevec, Gorazd Bajc and Borut Klabjan (eds.), *Vojna in mir na Primorskem* (Koper: Založba Annales, 2005), p. 307-322.

16 Gertrude Joch Robinson, *Tito's Maverick Media: the Politics of Mass Communications in Yugoslavia* (Urbana/Chicago/London: University of Illinois Press, 1977), p. 16-25; Carol S. Lilly, *Power and Persuasion: Ideology and Rhetoric in Communist Yugoslavia, 1944-1953* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001), p. 43-45.

the wider population. Accepting this proposition, however, would mean confusing influence with approval; while the socialist Yugoslav press certainly cannot be taken as an accurate expression of public culture as a whole, it nevertheless played a major role in delineating the boundaries of what was publicly acceptable, and imposing 'a structure of thinking' even among those who did not support the regime.[17] It is also worth keeping in mind that the Cold War, similar to all other twentieth-century wars, was a truly mass phenomenon. Fought in an era when power was exercised in the name of the masses, wars required extensive mobilisation of civilians into army troops and depended on mass support – or at least an illusion of mass support – among citizens-voters who formed part of the 'home front' and participated in the battle as distant spectators. As such, total wars could not exist without the mass media, which forged symbolic bonds between the soldiers at the front and the population at home, providing both with images of triumphant self-assertion and of the threatening, devious acts of the enemy.[18] The cultural contest that formed part of the Cold War was no different in this respect, which makes the examination of journalistic framings of culture vitally important to its understanding.

Throughout the period examined in this chapter, the border between Italy and Yugoslavia remained in flux. As the Cold War rivalry began to take shape, the territorial dispute between the two neighbouring states assumed a strategically important geopolitical role. Consequently, the fate of the port city of Trieste and the surrounding area became a burning issue not only for Italy and Yugoslavia, but also for 'The Big Four' – the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France – who took over the task of finding a solution to the 'Trieste problem'.[19] Following the signing of the Paris Peace Treaty in 1947, an interim solution was implemented, which included the establishment of the Free Territory of Trieste, an unusual political formation comprising Trieste and its immediate surroundings. The territory was divided into two zones, one controlled by the Allied Military Government and the other by the Yugoslav army. The legitimacy of this solution remained disputed, and much of the local population, in particular in Trieste, continued to live in a state of perpetual mass mobilisation.[20] The inclusion of much of the Istrian peninsula into communist Yugoslavia also prompted yet another wave of mass migration; in total, almost half of the Italian population living in these

17 See Jeffrey Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. xiv.

18 Susan L. Carruthers, *The Media at War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), p. 54-107.

19 Glenda Sluga, *The Problem of Trieste and the Italo-Yugoslav Border: Difference, Identity, and Sovereignty in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), p. 133-155.

20 Bogdan C. Novak, *Trieste, 1941-1954: The Ethnic, Political and Ideological Struggle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

territories, along with a number of anti-communist Slovenians and Croatians, left for Italy and other countries, and were replaced by immigrants from other parts of Yugoslavia.[21]

Operating in this volatile context, marked by the intensification of the global confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, the press was involved in a constant ideological battle. Along with the rest of the Yugoslav media, it formed part and parcel of a complex apparatus for cultural change, modelled on the one established in the Soviet Union and aimed at fostering the rise of a new, socialist Yugoslav culture.[22] Although the Yugoslav press was legally free and not owned directly by the state or the League of Communists, this apparatus nevertheless provided ample opportunities for the LCY to filter undesirable content and use the press as a collective agitator and propagandist. The Departments of Agitprop and Propaganda were regularly sending out detailed instructions on the most desirable cultural content, supplying the newspapers with ready-made articles, monitoring the content of newspapers for ideological purity, and giving recommendations about editorial board membership.[23] The LCY also used its influence over the legislative, judicial and executive bodies to pass and enforce legislation favourable to the Communist Party. For example, although the 1945 Law on the Press guaranteed free expression of opinion, the Criminal Law at the same time allowed for various more or less direct ways of censorship.[24] This legislative framework enabled the communist officials to issue publishing permits only to 'loyal' publishers, boost the circulation of Party-sponsored newspapers by allocating press subsidies, and prevent the spreading of unorthodox views by limiting the use of paper, denying access to printing facilities, delaying various bureaucratic procedures, and even confiscating the printing presses.[25] Finally, most major newspapers were founded by the Peoples' Front of Yugoslavia, a mass organisation that shared LCY's ideological convictions.

Ideologically, the normative views about Yugoslav culture promoted by the LCY in this period were rooted in Marxist-Leninist perceptions of modernity and society, centred on the notion of culture as a tool of progress and the elevation of the working classes. Three closely intertwined features of these normative framing

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21 The latest estimates put the total number of those who left between 1941 and 1961 at 302.000, and the total number of immigrants at 198.000. Olinto Mileta Mattiuz, 'Gli spostamenti di popolazione nel territorio annesso alla Jugoslavia dopo la Seconda guerra mondiale. Tentativo di quantificazione demografica', in Tullia Catalan, Giulio Mellinato, Raoul Pupo, and Marta Verginella (eds.), *Dopoguerra di Confine – Povojni čas ob meji*, (Trieste: Regione Autonoma Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Università di Trieste and Istituto regionale SML nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 2007), p. 687-704.

22 Lilly, *Power and Persuasion* ..., p. 35-54.

23 Ibid., p. 39-41.

24 Božidar Novak, *Hrvatsko novinarstvo u 20. stoljeću* (Zagreb: Golden Marketing – Tehnička knjiga, 2005), p. 460.

25 Robinson, *Tito's Maverick Media*, p. 16-25; Lilly, *Power and Persuasion*, p. 43-45.

were particularly prominent in the analysed newspaper coverage: (a) the under-
standing of culture as a tool of progress and education; (b) the emphasis on a
distinctly socialist nature of progress that culture was expected to foster, (c) the
conviction that ideological content of culture was more important than its aes-
thetic form, and (d) the privileging of mass over elite culture. On every account, the
'new Yugoslav culture' was construed as the exact opposite of 'bourgeois' culture
of the pre-war past, which allegedly continued to flourish in the capitalist West.
The cosmology drawn by the media was one of clear divisions and black-and-white
contrasts, which neither acknowledged nor tolerated any shades of grey.

Culture as a Tool of Progress

To start with, the new Yugoslav culture was seen as an integral instrument of
progress, and was expected to foster the cultural, ideological and civilisational
'elevation' of the Yugoslav population by cultivating its cultural awareness and sen-
sibility, inculcating the ability to appreciate and understand art, as well as stimulat-
ing the acquisition of technical and physical skills – in other words, to encourage
Bildung in the original German sense of the word. For instance, in one article,
government investment into the renovation of a 'home of the people' [*narodni*] in
one of the Istrian villages – a building that would typically serve as a venue for local
gatherings, literacy classes and various other activities – was presented as evidence
of government support for 'raising the cultural level' of the population.[26] In a simi-
lar vein, a report summarising the intention of the theatre in Rijeka emphasised
inviting workers to 'treat theatre as their home', arguing that this would 'help in
their general and cultural elevation and raise the level of artistic education.'[27] As
with other elements of the journalistic framing of Yugoslav culture in this period,
the belief in culture-induced 'elevation' was shared by the Soviet system of cultural
values, as established in the post-revolutionary period.[28]

As the above-quoted examples suggest, the provision of cultural activities and
infrastructure that would foster the elevation of the whole population was seen as
a key task of local cultural institutions as well as government authorities. In this
sense, the notion of culture as an instrument of progress was used for the pur-
pose of institutional self-legitimation, including the self-legitimation of the ruling
communist authorities themselves. Yet the duty to foster the development of new

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26 Photo-news article without title, *Glas Istre*, 3 October 1947, p. 10.
27 J.K., 'Plan rada narodnog kazališta u novoj sezoni', *Riječki list*, 5 September 1947, p. 3.
28 Shiela Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University
    Press, 1992), p. 217-219; David Lloyd Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity, 1917-
    41* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 15-56.

Yugoslav culture was not in the exclusive domain of the state and the party. On the contrary, organisations and individuals at virtually all levels of society were expected to contribute to this endeavour. These expectations were clearly visible in the coverage of mobilisational activities designed to boost Yugoslav productivity, including short periods of intensive industrial production known as 'shockwork' and various competitions between local factories, schools, and other organisations. These activities were based on the Russian Stakhanovite movement and had their precedents in the 1930s Soviet Union.[29] Announcements and journalistic reports of these mobilisational events were a common sight in the local media, and often received a prominent position on the first few pages of the newspapers. As one article explained, cultural activities formed an integral part of the process of 'ideological elevation', which was designed to accelerate the industrialisation of the country and help construct the 'new Yugoslavia'. Given the importance of culture for Yugoslav development, the author was concerned about the lack of cultural events accompanying mobilisational activities, and appealed to the local labour union organisations to invest more effort in promoting education and literacy among the population. This example shows how the notion of culture as an instrument of progress served not only as a discursive tool of power legitimation, but also as an instrument of normative assessment, used to distinguish between the good, commendable aspects of cultural processes and events, and the less worthy ones.

Closely linked to these normative ideas was the treatment of cultural skills and artefacts as an indicator of the country's level of civilisation and progress. Attitudes to literacy are a case in point. High levels of illiteracy, common especially among the rural population, were seen as major markers of cultural and civilisational underdevelopment, 'suffocating the free labour force and enthusiasm for work among our people' and thereby hindering the progress of villages as well as the realisation of the five-year plan.[30] Several articles urge the local population and in particular the Yugoslav youth and women to attend literacy classes. As one article insisted, illiteracy should be erased from Tito's Yugoslavia, 'since it is only in this way that we will be able to build the country and make it cultured and progressive.'[31] Or, as one Yugoslav citizen explained in a letter he wrote as part of his literacy training: 'The war is over, but we need to continue with our struggle against illiteracy.'[32] Literacy, in other words, was believed to constitute a core element of Yugoslavia's development, and diminishing illiteracy rates served as material proof of the country's progress.

29 Lilly, *Power and Persuasion*, p. 118-120.
30 'Narodna vlast vodi brigu o podizanju kulturnog nivoa naroda', *Glas Istre*, 3 October 1947, p. 10.
31 Marija Banko, '"Najveća nam je briga naučiti čitati i pisati"', *Glas Istre*, 7 March 1947, p. 5.
32 The letter was reproduced in *Glas Istre*, 7 March 1947, p. 5.

Apart from providing the normative basis for assessing the level and quality of Yugoslav culture from within, the understanding of culture as a means of progress also functioned as a marker of Yugoslav identity in relation to its various external others, be they historical or contemporary. In this sense, the notion of culture as a tool of development was used to position the new Yugoslav culture geo-culturally, in relation to the East and the West, as well as historically, in relation to the 'old' culture of the pre-war decades. Articles promoting 'cultural elevation' routinely referred to the neighbouring country and the former Fascist rule in particular as being responsible for the cultural 'backwardness' of the local population. An article reporting on a cultural youth festival in Buje thus contrasted the flourishing cultural life of the village in the new Yugoslavia with the cultural wasteland of pre-war decades, when the local population 'was left without its own language, without books and education and without opportunities for cultural development.'[33] The same message was repeated in a report summarising the achievements of the new administration in one of the localities in Istria, where Fascism was blamed for the obstacles faced by the new administration, in particular for the low literacy rates and education among locals.[34]

Such sharp contrasts between the past and the present, 'us' and 'them', obscured fundamental continuities with the pre-war past, as well as similarities with cultural policies and practices on the other side of the Iron Curtain. The idea of culture as a tool and marker of development was widely spread across nineteenth-century Europe and constituted one of the guiding principles of the rise of mass literacy and the numerous campaigns for compulsory education, all of which were, much as the campaigns for literacy documented in Yugoslav newspapers, couched in the language of progress.[35] The practice of viewing the acquisition of cultural skills as an index of progress has its roots in the same period, and coincided with the rise of modern states and mass democracy that demanded authorities to legitimise their power by, among other things, providing the population with means of cultural progress.[36] In the post-war years, the efforts to enlist culture in the struggle against backwardness were common across the East-West divide, and also underpinned much US research on modernisation and development in the Middle East and Latin America.[37] The close link between culture and progress was thus something

33   T.D., 'Omladinska smotra kulture u Bujama', *Glas Istre*, 7 March 1947, p. 5.
34   Julij Beltram, 'Dosedanji rezultati dela ljudske oblasti v Koprščini in Bujščini', *Primorski dnevnik*, 3 Sept 1947, p. 1.
35   David Vincent, *The Rise of Mass Literacy: Reading and Writing in Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), p. 7-10.
36   Ibid., pp. 21ff.
37   See Karl W. Deutsch, 'Social Mobilization and Political Development', *The American Political Science Review* 55, no. 3 (1961), p. 493-514; Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (New York: Free Press, 1958).

that was neither particularly new nor unique to the socialist East, but instead constitutes one of the key features that attest the shared roots of the understanding of culture on both sides of the Cold War divide.

Culture as an Instrument of Socialist Modernisation

While helping raise the general civilisational level of the local population, cultural activities in the new Yugoslavia were also meant to fulfil more specifically socialist goals. To this end, Yugoslavia needed a culture that was not aimed solely at entertainment, but was dedicated primarily to the cultivation of specifically socialist values and sensibilities. An unsigned article published in the Italian minority daily thus criticised the local labour unions for putting too much emphasis on entertainment and staging too many 'light' plays and comedies, and for stuffing local libraries with sentimental novels instead of providing cultural activities capable of promoting socialist principles and helping recruit volunteers for shockwork and the youth labour brigades.[38] Such popular entertainment, it was argued, will instil idleness and promote worldly pleasures instead of mobilising the population for the construction of socialism. Modern dance and music, including boogie-woogie, jazz and swing, popularised by Allied soldiers in neighbouring Italy[39] and trickling through the Free Territory of Trieste and across the border into Yugoslavia, were particularly singled out for criticism. In one article, jazz was described as 'hysterical',[40] while another suggested that 'boogie-woogie 'has nothing to do with culture.'[41] These anxieties were shared by Soviet Party officials, who were constantly concerned about the vulnerability of the Russian people to various cultural seductions and deviations orchestrated by the capitalist world.[42] To be sure, both leisure and entertainment were considered legitimate and necessary, yet the key task of Yugoslav cultural manifestations lay elsewhere: 'they should inculcate seriousness of life needed for the construction of the new state, they should teach people to take pride in work, to take pride in making a contribution to the creation of a common future.'[43] Another article was similarly prescriptive, and argued that

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38 N., 'Più contenuto nei programmi artistici', *La Voce del Popolo*, 3 January 1947, p. 3.

39 See Stephen Gundle, *Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian Communists and the Challenge of Mass Culture, 1943-1991* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 32-35.

40 Sequi, 'Per la nuova cultura', p. 1.

41 'Gledaliških dvoran za SNG ni, fašistom pa so vedno na razpolago', *Primorski dnevnik*, 3 December 1947, p. 2.

42 David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 7.

43 N., 'Più contenuto nei programmi artistici', *La Voce del Popolo*, 3 January 1947, p. 3.

more should be done to set up cultural events aimed at promoting people's partici-
pation in agricultural and other activities laid out in the five-year plan.[44]

The emphasis on the educational and mobilisational role of culture also played
a key role in the selection of various fictional and semi-fictional cultural forms
published in the same newspapers. For instance, the protagonists of short stories,
serialised novels and comic dialogues were most often model socialist workers
or peasants, involved in a revolutionary battle or in heroic re-building of their
war-torn society. One such serialised novel was set in the context of the Octo-
ber Revolution,[45] while another featured Istria peasants reminiscing about their
resistance activities during World War II, and proudly talking about the freedom
brought to them by the new Yugoslav rule.[46] As a rule, Western politicians fea-
turing in such novels or short stories were portrayed in a negative light: in one
case, former US president Herbert Hoover was described as a 'warmonger', while
another involved a mocking portrayal of Harry Truman.[47] The comic dialogues
between Franina and Jurina, appearing on the pages of the Croatian-language
newspaper *Glas Istre*, offer another example. The protagonists of these dialogues
were always the same: two Istrian peasants talking in the local dialect, one some-
what more ignorant than the other and usually a target for mild ridicule as well as
education. In each episode of the dialogue, the better-informed protagonist would
talk to his friend about an important event or issue and criticise him for knowing
so little about it. In all cases, the events and issues discussed were taken from the
Party's agenda for that week or day, and included for instance the five-year plan and
the Yugoslav state budget, the building of the new railway system, and the 30th
anniversary of the October Revolution.[48]

As with the notion of culture as a tool of progress, the emphasis on education-
centred culture as an instrument of socialist Yugoslav modernisation can easily
lead us to miss important similarities with attitudes and processes in the West as
well as links with long-term developments on both sides of the Cold War divide.
To start with, disdain for popular entertainment was certainly not unique to the
socialist East. The popularity of American movies, music and dances among young
East and West Germans in the early 1950s provoked strikingly similar responses in
both Germanies, causing anxiety over the oversexualisation of women and femini-
sation of men purportedly stimulated by these cultural forms.[49] Reactions among

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44 Štefica Kopitar, 'O nekim nedostacima u postavljanju kulturno-prosvetnog rada', *Glas Istre*, 3 October 1947,
    p. 10.
45 Kononov, 'Djevojka sa severa', *Glas Istre*, 7 November 1947, p. 6.
46 Zora Pamić, 'Prve brazde', *Riječki list*, 3 March 1947, p. 3.
47 Boris Gorbatov, 'Harry Truman' and 'Herbert Hoover vojni hujskač', both in *Primorski Dnevnik*, 1947.
48 'Franina i Jurina', *Glas Istre*, 3 April 1947 p. 7, 7 March 1947 p. 7, and 7 November 1947 p. 7, respectively.
49 Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley/
    Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2000), p. 31-70.

contemporaries in neighbouring Italy were often rather similar, though negative attitudes to popular entertainment were widespread primarily among supporters of the Communist Party, while Catholic circles quickly became rather adept at appropriating popular cultural forms for their own benefit.[50] Across Western Europe, and in fact even in the American 'empire of fun' itself, new forms of entertainment were provoking mixed reactions, which often varied with age, gender, race and socioeconomic background, and did not coincide with territorial and cultural boundaries. Neither was this mixture of suspicion and enthusiasm limited to the post-World War II period.[51] For instance, the notion that cultural activities should be dedicated primarily to educational ends was common among British socialists already in the late nineteenth century. Their struggle for the reduction of working hours went hand-in-hand with growing concern over how workers should best spend their leisure time, and worries over the impact of commercial entertainment.[52] Evidently, the anxieties surrounding popular culture encountered in socialist Yugoslavia were feeding on a long tradition of cultural fears associated with the rise of mass society, consumerism and modernity, and marked post-Cold War cultural policies and discourses about culture in both in the East and the West.

Substance over Form

The binary of entertainment and education was closely intertwined with another key distinction underpinning the journalistic writing about culture in the Yugoslav northwest, namely the distinction between 'substance' and 'form'. As with other aspects of journalistic discourse about culture discussed so far, this feature echoed debates in the Soviet Union in the post-revolutionary period[53] and had parallels with debates about culture elsewhere in the Eastern bloc at the time.[54] Yugoslav art critics were frequently warning against 'purely formal beauty', 'art for art's sake' and 'ideologically empty art', presenting them as remnants of the 'old', 'bourgeois' culture that distracted the masses from real social problems and rational explanations and solutions. Due to this, argued various authors, ideological substance should be treated as decisive when evaluating a work of art. A characteristic example can be found in a commentary published on the front page of *La Voce del Popolo*, written by Eros Sequi, the first secretary of the Union of Italians.

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50 Gundle, *Between Hollywood and Moscow*, p. 35-54.

51 Reinhold Wagnleitner, 'The Empire of the Fun, or Talkin' Soviet Union Blues: The Sound of Freedom and U.S. Cultural Hegemony in Europe', *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 3 (1999), p. 499-524.

52 Chris Waters, *British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, 1884-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press).

53 Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front*, p. 196-198.

54 Caute, *The Dancer Defects*, p. 284-285, 380-382, 420-422.

In his view, people should be prepared to compromise on the 'external aspects' of culture, and keep in mind that 'external beauty can only be established once one has assured a progressive substance.' Only songs, poetry and scenes related to 'actual problems,' even if 'deficient in artistic form,' argued Sequi, will have the capacity to educate the masses and teach them how to enjoy art for its ideological substance rather than merely artistic form.[55]

The distinction between substance and form was repeatedly drawn upon in articles about various cultural activities in the region, and positive assessments typically referred to correct ideological content. The already mentioned report on the cultural youth festival organised in the Istrian village of Buje commended the participants for staging 'good plays', and as evident from their titles, a prime criterion was the inclusion of socialist ideas or motives from the Yugoslav partisan struggle during World War II. One such play, entitled *The Hotel of the Past*, was praised for revealing 'the deception, exploitation and inhospitality in hotels of the past,' implicitly suggesting that the Yugoslav hotels of the future will be fairer to both their employees and guests.[56] Following similar criteria, a review of cultural events organised by the local labour unions disappointedly commented on the 'ideological emptiness' of some of the events, and listed several theatre plays that would have allegedly better served the purpose of education and mobilisation.[57]

The contrast between ideological emptiness and progressive substance was used also to demarcate the 'new' Yugoslav culture in spatial, geo-cultural terms. The exemplary models of cultural products and activities that paid due attention to 'substance' were often found in the Soviet Union, while negative examples of 'formalistic' culture were associated primarily with 'the West'. In an article about Soviet culture translated from the Soviet daily *Pravda*, Western culture and civilisation were described as 'superficial', hiding a 'spiritual poverty of contemporary imperialists and their followers.' In contrast, Soviet culture allegedly 'arose from and blossoms on the basis of a genuine democracy, brotherly friendship of equal nations', and now 'provides the rallying point for all the progressive forces of the world.'[58] Differences between Yugoslav and Italian culture were scrutinised through the same normative lens. The article written by Eros Sequi is particularly revealing in this respect. In his view, Italians, including those living in Yugoslavia, were prone to a 'misguided', 'bourgeois' and overly 'formalistic' treatment of art and culture, since their cultural capabilities were 'most ruthlessly manipulated and made deviant by decades of Fascism.'[59] This 'deviant' culture was seen not

55 Eros Sequi, 'Per la nuova cultura', *La Voce del Popolo*, 1 January 1947, p. 1.
56 T.D., 'Omladinska smotra kulture'.
57 N., 'Più contenuto'.
58 'Svjetski značaj sovjetske kulture', *Riječki list*, 5 September 1947, p. 3.
59 Sequi, 'Per la nuova cultura', p. 1.

only as an integral element of 'the old society' dominating in neighbouring Italy, but also as 'the secret weapon of imperialism' operating from within the socialist Yugoslav state itself, and hampering its progress. In contrast, local inhabitants of Slavic descent were considered to be 'much more open to re-education,' since their cultural sensibilities have allegedly not been contaminated by the educational system of Fascist Italy.[60]

Yet again, we see how the binary of 'form' and 'substance' was used to legitimise some cultural endeavours and discredit others, thereby establishing a hierarchy of cultural products and events within the Yugoslav northwest itself as well as promoting the superiority of Yugoslav culture internationally and historically. As with the binary pairs of categories discussed earlier, these hierarchical distinctions drew a symbolic map of the world that had its own powerful effects, but can hardly serve as an accurate guide to general cultural values and production at the time, let alone their historical roots. During the early Cold War, assaults on formalism had many proponents among the intellectual Left in Western Europe and were not necessarily accompanied by a wholesale rejection of modernism or by commitment to socialist realist art.[61] The general population in the United States was also not particularly enthusiastic about modernist abstractions and stylistic innovation in poetry and prose, despite the fact that avant-garde art was often promoted internationally as a defining feature of 'American' art.[62]

Culture for the Masses

The final notable feature of the journalistic framing of culture in the Yugoslav northwest in the immediate post-war years was its endorsement of the mass character of culture. The new Yugoslav culture was expected to extend its appeal well beyond the educated elites and thereby contribute to the erasure of class boundaries. Writers, poets and intellectuals were requested to dedicate their work to the working people and serve their interests and needs. Yugoslavia was to be a country in which culture addressed the genuine needs of the working masses, in which the qualitative distinction between elite and mass culture was abolished, and in which high-quality culture was produced and enjoyed on a mass scale. An article written by a prominent Croatian language teacher, journalist and writer proudly announced that Yugoslavia was 'a country of new culture, in which a book is

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60 Ibid.
61 Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, 'Modernism between Peace and Freedom: Picasso and Others at the Congress of Intellectuals in Wrocław, 1948', in David Crowley and Jane Pavitt (eds.), *Cold War Modern: Design 1945-1970* (London: v&a Publishing, 2008), p. 33-41.
62 Caute, p. 11-12.

not a good produced for the market, but [...] an integral part of working people's life.'[63] Not all of the cultural products and activities at the time, however, were equally successful at attracting mass participation, and much of the reporting on cultural activities was dedicated to criticising particular events and activities for failing to live up to the new cultural ideals. For example, an article evaluating the cultural-educational activities in the city of Rijeka and its surroundings criticised the organisers for their failure to establish strong ties with mass organisations and achieve greater popular appeal.[64] The already discussed article detailing the plan for the theatre in Rijeka was marked by the same normative assumptions about the role of culture, emphasising the efforts to 'massify the theatre' and 'turn the whole nation into a theatre audience' by introducing season tickets for labour union members.[65]

As with other aspects of the journalistic understanding of Yugoslav culture, mass appeal served not only to define the 'new' Yugoslav culture from within, but also played a key role in distinguishing it from Italian and more broadly 'Western' culture. While the articles acknowledged that Italian culture is highly developed, they were also pointing out that the ability to appreciate and enjoy it was limited to the wealthy, educated elites rather than being democratically available to its whole population, including the working classes. The aforementioned article discussing the work plan of the local theatre contrasted the strategies for massification adopted by the theatre with the situation under Italian rule, when the authorities 'calculatedly diverted the working people from theatre, deliberately entertaining them with light comedies [...] in order to distract them from political and social problems.'[66] In contrast, the Soviet Union was presented as a shining example of the growing 'massification' of culture, exemplified in the mushrooming of cultural institutions and activities that made culture available to the masses. An article translated from *Pravda*, which depicted the cultural and educational achievements of the Soviet Union since the revolution, also included details about the number of new theatres and schools built and books issued since the revolution, and boasted about the rising educational level of the general population.[67] A similar quantitative approach to measuring cultural development was employed when assessing the cultural progress of Yugoslavia. Occasionally, newspapers published lists with exact numbers of books issued, new magazines and newspapers established, or libraries built since the formation of the 'new' Yugoslavia.

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63 Tone Peruško, 'Nagradjena knjiga o Rijeci', *Riječki list*, 2 March 1947, p. 3.
64 Kopitar, 'O nekim nedostacima ...'.
65 J.K., 'Plan rada narodnog kazališta'."
66 Ibid.
67 Kaftanov, '30 godina ...'," p. 8.

These clear-cut distinctions again obscure continuities with the past and neglect structural similarities in cultural practices and values on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Although ideas about the desirable content of culture varied greatly, being able to provide culture for the masses was a goal pursued by intellectuals and politicians on both sides of the Cold War divide, at least in the early post-war years.[68] In the United States, modern means of mass communication in particular were believed to constitute a powerful instrument of cultural development and modernisation. For many American social scientists and UNESCO officials at the time, the media were 'great multipliers', capable of increasing the amount of information people can send and receive to unimaginable levels, and thereby speeding up processes of social and economic change in even the most remote backwaters of the world.[69] The habit of assessing development by means of quantitatively measuring the proliferation of mass culture was also not unique to the Eastern bloc. Literacy rates, newspaper circulation, cinema seats and radio receivers per capita were all indicators widely adopted in post-war American studies of modernisation and development.[70] Nor were these attitudes to, and uses of, mass culture limited to the post-war period. In the 1920s and the 1930s, meanings associated with the masses in both the Soviet Union and the United States were largely positive, and in both countries, mass culture, in particular cinema, played a key role in promoting official, utopian visions of the present and future.[71] The same applies to the history of 'culture counting' that became widespread across Europe already in the nineteenth century,[72] as modern states started perceiving themselves as responsible for the cultural education of their populations.

Conclusion

In sum, the normative distinctions permeating the journalistic writings about culture in the northwest of Yugoslavia in the post-war years served a number of distinct ends, all of which were intimately linked to the production of a sense of a Yugoslav self and its internal and external others. On the one hand, the Cold War binaries helped legitimise the authority of cultural institutions and the communist authorities at large, as well as served to establish hierarchical relation-

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68   Andrew Ross, 'Containing Culture in the Cold War', *Cultural Studies* 1, no. 3 (1987), p. 328-348.

69   See Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*; Lucian W. Pye, 'The Concept of Political Development', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 358, no. 1 (1965), p. 1-13.

70   See Deutsch, 'Social mobilization...'; Everett M Rogers, 'Mass Media Exposure and Modernization among Columbian Peasants', *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 29 (1965), p. 614-625.

71   Susan Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in the East and West* (Cambridge, MA/London: MIT Press, 2000), p. 147-61.

72   Vincent, *The Rise of Mass Literacy*, p. 4-5.

ships between cultural products, events and forms produced by local institutions, groups and individuals. On the other hand, they were also instrumental in situating the here and now of Yugoslav culture vis-à-vis the then and there of its pre-war past and Western capitalism. As pointed out throughout the chapter, the normative distinctions drawn by the media provide a rather poor guide to the actual reality of cultural practices, values and products both within and beyond Yugoslavia. Above all, they downplay the similarities between perceptions of culture on both sides of the Iron Curtain, and neglect their shared roots that stem from the cultural norms, attitudes and practices established already in the nineteenth century.

Nevertheless, this mismatch between cultural dreamworlds and realities should not lead us to discount the Cold War binaries as entirely irrelevant to our understanding of the cultural history of this period. However far from reality they were, the cultural dreamworlds of the Cold War provided the ideological blueprints of institutional forms and practices, which in turn endowed them with the power to mould reality in their own image, and brush over those aspects that did not quite fit the picture. Understanding the logic of these institutionally supported dreamscapes can therefore help explain why so many people were willing to overlook the gap that separated these idealistic visions from the reality they lived in. Arguably, explaining this state of oblivion, be it wilful or not, is just as vital to our understanding of Cold War history as the investigation of the various ways in which social actors may have resisted, ignored or otherwise 'made do' with or indeed eschewed the logic of Cold War rhetoric. Without that, we are running the risk of reducing our account of really existing socialisms to one that contrasts official imposition with popular resistance, repression with dissidence, and as such – though perhaps well attuned to contemporary political interests and divided memories of the period – has little to do with the actual logic and power of socialist dreams and nightmares.

6   Sounds like America

Yugoslavia's Soft Power in Eastern Europe

» *Dean Vuletic*

In April 1960, the Yugoslav entertainment magazine *Arena* published a letter from Vanya Shevchenko, a reader in the Soviet Union. Writing that he could obtain *Arena* in his home city of Kiev, Shevchenko complimented Yugoslavia's cultural production, especially its films and opera singers, and expressed a desire to one day visit the country. He continued:

> I would like to write to Yugoslavs and receive letters from them about film, popular music, jazz, we could do an exchange of magazines, pictures of actors etc. Writing letters brings people closer together and reduces the distance between them. I would also like to exchange long-play popular music records. Your singers are exceptional – Ivo Robić, Olivera Marković, Lola Novaković, Dušan Jakšić. A big thank you to them![1]

Shevchenko's letter reflected a newfound attraction to Yugoslavia's cultural products – and especially its popular music – that began in societies all over Eastern Europe in the late 1950s. A decade beforehand, Yugoslavia's cultural prestige in Eastern Europe had been low, partly because its cultural infrastructure had been less developed in comparison to other states in the region. After 1948, when Moscow severed its alliance with Belgrade after the latter refused to submit to Soviet domination, Yugoslavia had also been culturally, economically and politically isolated from its socialist kin. This was exacerbated from 1950, as Yugoslavia courted economic and military support and opened up to cultural influences from the West unlike any other Eastern European state. However, soon after the death of Soviet leader Josef Stalin in March 1953, relations between Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe moved into a different phase: his successor Nikita Khrushchev visited Belgrade in May 1955 and issued the Belgrade Declaration, which acknowledged the right of Yugoslavia to pursue an independent line in socialism and foreign affairs.

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1   Vanja Ševčenko, 'Pismo iz Kijeva', *Arena* (14 April 1960).

By 1961, when the first conference of the Non-Aligned Movement was held in Belgrade, Yugoslavia had developed a non-aligned foreign policy that saw it allied with neither the East nor the West, but which permitted it to foster relations with both blocs for the rest of the Cold War.

It was through this constellation of international developments that popular music became a tool of 'soft power'[2] in Yugoslavia's foreign relations, in order to assert the state's cultural and political distinctiveness vis-à-vis the rest of Eastern Europe. After the re-establishment of political ties with Eastern Europe in the mid-1950s, Yugoslavia renewed its cultural exchange with the region and began to export Yugoslav-made cultural products that were imitative of Western models. These underlined both Yugoslavia's openness to Western cultural influences and how much more closed to them the other states of Eastern Europe had become. The fact that these products were considered more 'Western' determined their very popularity in Eastern Europe: as the historian Predrag Marković notes, 'Yugoslav culture was also popular in the East, for other reasons: Yugoslav books and films were overvalued because they were experienced as "windows" to modern art currents of the West.'[3] Popular music was one of the first and principal means through which Yugoslavia's soft power was transmitted, as the broadcasts of its radio stations could be received in many parts of Eastern Europe, and the Yugoslav government's Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries sent jazz orchestras and pop singers to perform in the region even before the State Department began to send American ones.

The symbolic importance of popular music artists was certainly not lost on Yugoslavia's political leaders. These artists were, after its president Josip Broz Tito, the best known Yugoslavs abroad: as the pop singer Anica Zubović recalls, Tito even called them 'his ambassadors'.[4] For Yugoslavia, the export of its popular music had multiple propagandistic benefits. First, it conveyed an image to both the East and the West of a liberal, modern, open and prosperous state. Looking East, this was meant to underline the benefits of Yugoslavia's independent line of socialism and non-aligned foreign policy, and present it as a model to admire, desire and even imitate. There were also economic benefits to be had by Yugoslav artists as they could expand their markets considerably by performing in Eastern Europe. Looking West, the message was similar: its popular music showed that Yugoslavia was more culturally liberal and open than the rest of Eastern Europe, and hence

2   In his seminal work on the topic, the political scientist Joseph S. Nye defines 'soft power' as 'the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies.' Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), p. x.
3   Predrag J. Marković, *Beograd između Istoka i Zapada, 1948-1965* (Belgrade: Službeni list SRJ, 1996), p. 521.
4   Cited in Petar Luković, *Bolja prošlost: prizori iz muzičkog života Jugoslavije 1940-1989* (Belgrade: Mladost, 1989), p. 124.

deserving of economic, military and political support.[5] At the same time, cultural openness could also camouflage the less desirable elements of the Yugoslav system, such as Tito's dictatorship, one-party rule, the suppression of political opponents and censorship of cultural production that was critical of the regime.

Conceiving Cultural Relations

Although cultural openness became a trademark of Yugoslav socialism, throughout the 1950s the ideological reconciliation of it was a tangled process for the ruling Communist Party of Yugoslavia, which was renamed the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) in 1952. Of all the cultural influences from the West, popular music in its jazz, pop and rock–and-roll varieties became a particular object of cultural anxiety. Due to contemporary cultural and political developments, popular music from the United States had a major influence, but France, Italy and West Germany were also important sources because of their geographical proximity and traditional ties with the lands that comprised Yugoslavia. Their popular music symbolised Western liberalism, modernity and prosperity and was highly popular among Yugoslavia's youth, and the relatively undeveloped domestic scene could hardly provide a variant to counter it. Western popular music thus posed a number of problems for the LCY: how could the party control it without inciting a backlash from Yugoslavia's youth, which was the first generation to mature under the socialist regime and therefore a test case for its success? And could Western popular music be incorporated into its cultural politics without compromising the party's ideology or according Western economic and political systems an enhanced legitimacy? After extensive internal and public debates, by 1957 the LCY accepted that it could appropriate Western popular music in its own cultural politics if it was ideologically, linguistically and productively 'Yugoslavised', which led to significant investments being made in the development of a local industry.[6] In doing so, the party strengthened the domestic grip of its ideology without compromising its international image of openness: it reduced a dependence on Western popular music by producing imitations of it at home, yet because they were so imitative

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5   Yugoslavia would also use its cultural co-operation with the West to promote its tourist industry, which was a significant source of hard currency in subsequent decades. This was one of the reasons why it particiapted in the Eurovision Song Contest from 1961, and it was the only Eastern European state to do so during the Cold War. For a study of Yugoslavia's participation in Eurovision, see Dean Vuletic, 'The Socialist Star: Yugoslavia, Cold War Politics and the Eurovision Song Contest', in Ivan Raykoff and Robert Deam Tobin (eds.), *A Song for Europe: Popular Music and Politics in the Eurovision Song Contest* (Aldershot, Hampshire/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), p. 83-97.

6   For a discussion of these issues, see Dean Vuletic, 'Generation Number One: Politics and Popular Music in Yugoslavia in the 1950s', *Nationalities Papers* 36, no. 5 (November 2008), p. 861-879.

they could also be exported abroad to affirm Yugoslavia's modernity, openness and prosperity.

In the late 1950s, Yugoslavia's foreign policymakers were also aware that they needed to change their propaganda tactics to adapt to changes in cultural fashions, international politics and technological innovations, especially as they observed other states, particularly the United States, using new techniques in cultural diplomacy. In 1958, the Central Committee of the LCY – which comprised the party's top leaders and had an ideological commission that discussed cultural matters – declared that cultural propaganda was more important than economic or socio-political propaganda and recognised a need to study how other states were promoting themselves abroad.[7] A year later, it observed that, with the changes in the Cold War, propaganda played an even greater role in the promotion of a state's cultural and economic achievements. This was especially due to the 'thaw' in Eastern Europe which, under Khrushchev's tenure as Soviet leader, saw a relaxation on restrictions in cultural life as well as improvements in relations with the West. The Central Committee noted that 'in the new situation' international meetings and cultural ties had become more important for Yugoslavia's affirmation abroad, and it accordingly urged its artists to participate more in them.[8]

The improvements in political ties with Eastern Europe thus prompted Yugoslavia's political leaders to re-conceive their cultural relations with the region, and how they would go about this was further influenced by cultural trends and technological advances. For example, the change in the content of Yugoslavia's international cultural exchange was also determined by a new attitude towards folk music, which had previously dominated its cultural exports to both East and West. However, from the mid-1950s it was accorded less value by Yugoslavia's cultural and political elites, who thought that it presented an outmoded image of their state and did not reflect advances in economic growth and social modernisation since 1945. In 1958, Marko Ristić, the president of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, wrote that since the eighteenth century, when European intellectuals such as Alberto Fortis and Prosper Mérimée had begun 'to take interest in us purely as some exotic, Balkan tribes' through 'our primitive folklore,' folk music had portrayed an un-modern image of Yugoslavia's peoples, and that

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7   Archive of Yugoslavia (AY) 507, A-CK SKJ, VIII, 11/2-b-108, Ideological Commission, 'Zapisnik sa sastanka Komisije za ideološki rad pri CK SKJ održanog 16.X.1958 g.' (Belgrade, 16 October 1958), p. 2.

8   AY 507, A-CK SKJ, VII, 11/2-b-127, Ideological Commission, 'Rezime aktuelnih zadataka na polju ideološke aktivnosti i propagande u vezi sa mejdunarodnom situacijom' (Belgrade, 19 September 1959), p. 2.

we need to correct the old-fashioned and one-sided picture, which is even a little offensive for us, that the world often has of us as a picturesque and primitive country in which folklore is the highest artistic goal.[9]

With other genres, such as classical music, Yugoslavia could still not match the prestige of the Soviet Union and other Eastern European states, although it had some artists who were internationally successful classical musicians and who figured prominently in its cultural promotion abroad, such as the Zagreb Soloists. Yugoslavia's relative superiority in Western-style popular music meant the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries began to promote that genre more in its cultural relations with Eastern Europe.

From the mid-1950s, some officials in the State Department also realised that the United States' cultural diplomacy could be strengthened by appropriating American popular music, especially jazz. In many respects, Yugoslavia was following the propaganda trends set by the United States. However, in one way it preceded America in marketing jazz in Eastern Europe: before the State Department began sending jazz artists there in 1958, the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries sent Yugoslav ones in 1957.[10] One of the reasons for this was that cultural relations between Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe were resumed fairly soon after the death of Stalin in 1953, whereas continuing tensions between Eastern Europe and the United States delayed the development of their cultural relations until later on (although the situation differed with each Eastern European state: for example, Poland was open to cultural co-operation with the West earlier than the Soviet Union). In this regard, Yugoslavia's cultural ties with the West and its political relations with the East allowed its artists to traverse borders in a way that those of few other states could in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Even after the early 1960s, as the Soviet Union and the United States began to co-operate more in cultural exchange, Yugoslavia maintained a privileged position: Eastern European regimes still considered Yugoslavia a lesser evil in comparison to the West, and they were more willing to allow Yugoslav popular music artists to perform in their states than American ones.

The State Department's appropriation of jazz in its cultural diplomacy was also tied to issues of racial politics in the United States, and it was intended to improve its international image with regard to its race relations, which the Eastern

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9   Marko Ristić, *Politička književnost (za ovu Jugoslaviju): 1944-1958.* (Sarajevo: Oslobođenje, 1977), p. 253, 261.

10   The first jazz tour that the State Department organised in Eastern Europe was that of the Dave Brubeck Quartet in Poland in 1958. However, the first international jazz tour sponsored by the State Department was undertaken by the Dizzy Gillespie Band in 1956, and it included Yugoslavia. Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 32-33, 47-51.

European states were commonly critical of.[11] However, for Yugoslavia this racial dimension was not a domestic issue but a foreign policy one, and as its political leaders were developing closer ties with African states through the Non-aligned Movement, the development of jazz in Yugoslavia paralleled this and reflected a new interest for African and African American cultures. Although Yugoslavia did not suffer from the sort of racial tension present in the United States, it did face issues with national relations at home, and popular music was considered to have a function in overcoming these and shaping a pan-Yugoslav culture that could be shared by all of its national groups. So, while jazz was used in American cultural diplomacy to promote a racially inclusive image of the United States, in Yugoslavia it could express the unity of its multinational federation in a way that folk music could not. Whereas the varied folk traditions reflected the geographical, cultural and historical differences of Yugoslavia's national groups, popular music presented a more modern and unified impression of them, especially among the younger generation. The Yugoslav jazz orchestras and pop singers that were sent to tour Eastern Europe were thus usually composed of a multinational squad of artists, just as those sent by the State Department had a multiracial make-up.

Cultural exchange between Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe was two-way, but when compared to the sort of cultural products that the Eastern Europeans were sending to Yugoslavia at the time, it was Belgrade that appeared to be winning the propaganda battle. Yugoslavia's political leaders had already realised in the mid-1950s that, with the re-establishment of political ties with Eastern Europe, their country would now be exposed to cultural and political propaganda from both the East and the West.[12] These concerns intensified when relations with Eastern Europe were again strained from 1957 to 1961, after the LCY once more refused to acknowledge the primacy of the Soviet Union in the international communist movement, and Moscow criticised Belgrade for being too open to Western cultural, economic and political influences. In Yugoslavia, this period was dubbed the 'anti-Yugoslav campaign' or the 'second Soviet-Yugoslav split,' but while relations between it and Eastern European states were tense during this time, they were never cut off as they had been in 1948. However, Yugoslavia's political leaders were aware that Eastern European cultural products did not have the same appeal as Western popular culture and that the methods that the Eastern Europeans were using in their cultural propaganda were outdated, especially in the eyes of young people. For example, the Soviet Union had made its cultural comeback in Yugosla-

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11   For a study of the use of jazz in the State Department's cultural diplomacy, see Von Eschen.

12   AY 142-46-162-325-326, Socialist Alliance, 'Zapisnik sa sastanka Komisije za idejno vaspitni rad Saveznog od-bora SSRNJ održanog 5 februara 1955 godine', p. 2-3.

via in 1955 with a folk group,[13] and in 1958 the National Youth of Yugoslavia, the LCY's youth wing, noted that Eastern European states were still using folk music in their radio programmes to spread propaganda.[14] Considering the offensive that Yugoslavia was unleashing with its own popular music, as well as the concerts that had already been staged in it by Western artists, it was not surprising that a People's Youth report on the influence of foreign propaganda observed that young people did not find Eastern European efforts so interesting.[15] Indeed, it was common knowledge which state had been more open to Western cultural influences in the 1950s: during the first and second Soviet-Yugoslav splits, Eastern European propaganda had painted Yugoslavia as so 'pro-Western' that this label would now work to Belgrade's advantage in its cultural infiltration of Eastern Europe. What had once been its stigma was now its brand.

Yugoslavs On Tour

Ivo Robić was one of the artists who most contributed to Yugoslavia's cultural prestige in the late 1950s, as he was its most famous singer in that decade and its greatest ever popular music export. In 1959, Robić achieved stardom in West Germany with his hit *Morgen* (Tomorrow), which was the start of a successful career in German-speaking territories that would span the next few decades. The song also reached the music charts in the United States and brought Robić recording contracts there, but he never achieved the same level of success in America that he did in West Germany. Yet, Robić did not only make it in the West – he also managed to succeed on the other side of the Iron Curtain. With the re-establishment of political ties between Yugoslavia and Eastern European states after 1953, cultural agreements between them were revitalised and co-operation was renewed between their radio stations, musicians' organisations and record companies. One example of this was the Czechoslovak record company Supraphon, whose delegation visited Belgrade in 1956 to look for a singer to record American and Czech songs, and it chose Robić. From 1956 to 1965, he recorded fifty-five songs for the company, including covers of hits by George Gershwin, Domenico Modugno and Elvis Presley; his biggest hit was Paul Anka's *Diana*, which sold out in Czechoslovakia in 1958.[16] Robić's contract with Supraphon represented a penetration of

13 AY 559-112, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, *Information Bulletin* (July-September 1955), p. 15.
14 AY 114-38, People's Youth, 'Stenografske beleške sa sastanka pretsedništva CK Narodne omladine Jugoslavije' (Belgrade, 13 October 1958), p. 14-15.
15 AY 114-73, People's Youth, 'Uticaj strane propagande na omladinu' (August 1959), p. 6.
16 Vesna Leiner, Maja Šojat-Bikić and Boris Mašić, *Mister Morgen: Ivo Robić* (Zagreb: Muzej grada Zagreba, 2007), p. 29-34.

the cultural barrier that had existed between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia since 1948, when their vibrant cultural relations, which had been especially strong in the field of music, were practically halted as a result of Belgrade's defiance of Moscow.

Supraphon's employment of Robić was an early indication that Eastern Europe could provide markets for Yugoslav popular music, and that this could be effectively used in Yugoslavia's cultural exchange and incorporated into bilateral cultural agreements. One of the first ways in which the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries did so was by sending Yugoslav jazz orchestras to tour the region, with the Jazz Orchestra of Radio Belgrade being the first. It began by visiting East Germany and Hungary in 1957, and the memoirs of its conductor, Vojislav Simić, are a source for understanding how Eastern Europeans consumed Yugoslav popular music, and what Yugoslavs and other Eastern Europeans thought of one another at the time. For example, while Simić observed that the East German audiences responded warmly to the orchestra as it played Yugoslav and American jazz pieces accompanied by the singers Lola Novaković and Robić, he was more critical of the state itself, and his assessments of it convey a sense of Yugoslav superiority. To him, East Germany and other Eastern European states appeared more poor and oppressed in comparison to Yugoslavia, and he regarded his ability to travel there as confirmation of the greater freedom accorded to Yugoslav citizens – even though, at this time, they were still less free to travel than they would be from the early 1960s. For example, on his way to East Germany he noted how strict border controls were between Eastern European states that were meant to be 'brotherly republics'. He also noticed how modestly the East Germans lived and considered their part of Berlin to be uglier than the western section; he even visited West Berlin one evening and was impressed by its prosperity (even though his East German hosts had warned him of the 'immorality' of West Berlin, which only encouraged him and his colleagues to want to go there). However, the otherwise successful tour of East Germany was cut short, not because the Yugoslavs had had a better time in West Berlin, but because the East Germans had found a speech by Tito to be insulting to their president, Wilhelm Pieck. In response, the East Germans cancelled the orchestra's remaining concerts and forced them to work off their commitments by recording in studios.[17] This action was a harbinger of the approaching anti-Yugoslav campaign, and the East Germans' censorship of Simić's orchestra foreshadowed the treatment that other Yugoslav artists would face as Eastern European states sought to restrict them. Yugoslavia's political leaders tried to stem the tide of the anti-Yugoslav campaign by recognising East Germany in October 1957, thereby becoming the first state to which the Hallstein Doctrine – according to which Bonn would not have diplomatic relations with

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17   Vojislav Simić, *Susreti i sećanja* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga-Alfa, 2005), p. 67-70.

any state that recognised East Germany – was applied. Nonetheless, cultural ties between East Germany and Yugoslavia did not flourish, and they were actually livelier between West Germany and Yugoslavia, in spite of the fact that diplomatic relations between Bonn and Belgrade had been cut off. Until the restoration of diplomatic relations between Belgrade and Bonn in 1968, cultural ties, especially in popular music, would prosper not through state agreements but private and commercial ones between West German companies and Yugoslav artists, as the example of Robić demonstrated.[18]

The Jazz Orchestra of Radio Belgrade's concerts in Hungary were also coloured by the politics of the time, coming as they did only months after the ending of the Hungarian Revolution. Although Belgrade had initially been a supporter of the revolutionary movement, by November 1956 Tito came to agree with Khrushchev that it should be suppressed. However, Yugoslavia's political leaders became more critical of the Soviet treatment of Hungary after the revolution was quashed, which also contributed to the second Soviet-Yugoslav split. Yugoslavia's status as the only Eastern European state to have so far successfully resisted the Soviet Union was attractive to those in Hungary and other parts of the region who were dissatisfied with Moscow's cultural and political dominance, and this added to the allure of Yugoslav popular music artists and radio programmes. Capitalising on this, Yugoslavia made efforts to improve ties with Hungary and to promote itself there through cultural exchange after the revolution. Popular music had already proven to be fruitful for this, as Hungarians had been exposed to Yugoslav fare through radio broadcasts from across the border, including Hungarian-language ones from Vojvodina. For example, two songs by Darko Kraljić, *Somborske ruže* (Sombor Roses) and *Čamac na Tisi* (The Boat on the Tisa), became so popular in their Hungarian translations that the Yugoslav ambassador in Budapest, Dobrivoje Vidić, called them 'the biggest and best Yugoslav propaganda.'[19]

Riding on this wave of Yugoslavia's popularity in Hungary, the Jazz Orchestra of Radio Belgrade held concerts in several Hungarian cities in March 1957. Due to the curfews that were still in place following the Soviet invasion, the concerts had to be held in the afternoon; however, apart from this there were no other restrictions imposed, and none of the concerts were cancelled as had happened in East Germany. Simić considered the concerts in Hungary to have been highly successful, with audiences demonstrating a familiarity with Novaković, whom they were acquainted with from the radio. As he writes with regard to the Budapest performance:

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18   AY 559-91a, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 'Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom I – 1957' (Belgrade, 1958), p. 251.

19   Cited in Luković, p. 13.

> There was great interest for our concert, and in front of the theatre there were so many people looking for an extra ticket that we couldn't get into the hall. Many of our people [Yugoslavs] were also among them. At that time, just because we came from Tito's Yugoslavia, we appeared like the heralds of a new age. And our music, that is jazz, was a rare enjoyment for them. It was a great success and the concert lasted almost three hours.[20]

The Jazz Orchestra of Radio Belgrade proved so popular in Hungary that it was invited back for a one-month tour in the summer of 1957. In the following year, it also toured Poland for three weeks and had five concerts in Czechoslovakia, all of which included the singers Dušan Jakšić and Novaković.[21] Simić's account of the Polish tour does not suggest that his orchestra faced any problems there, which reflected the Polish regime's more liberal attitudes towards Western popular music in comparison to those of its counterparts elsewhere in Eastern Europe.[22]

One of the reasons for the success of the Jazz Orchestra of Radio Belgrade in these states was its contemporary repertoire and style of performance, which underlined how much more exposed Yugoslav artists had been to Western trends than their Eastern European counterparts. Simić recalls this with regard to the orchestra's 1958 tour of Czechoslovakia, which had been a major centre for jazz in Europe during the interwar period. In Prague, his orchestra appeared in the famous Lucerna Concert Hall before members of the Karel Vlach Jazz Orchestra, and he remembers that they

> were surprised by our good playing, but also a little jealous of our success, because they were technically better than us, and known even before the war. Our major advantage, however, was youthful enthusiasm, a modern jazz repertoire (Basie, Ellington, Billy May and Woody Herman), our free movement on the stage and our excellent soloists/improvisationalists.[23]

For the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, the performances of the orchestra in Czechoslovakia were also indicative of how Prague was starting to open up to a wider variety of international cultural influences after having prioritised relations with Eastern European states for a decade.[24] However, Czechoslovakia again became a particularly vocal participant in the anti-Yugoslav

20 Simić, *Susreti i sećanja*, p. 73.
21 Ibid., p. 74-78.
22 Timothy W. Ryback, *Rock around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 22-24.
23 Simić, *Susreti i sećanja*, p. 77.
24 AY 559-92, Embassy of Yugoslavia in Prague, 'Izveštaj o propagandnoj aktivnosti ambasade u 1957 godini' (Prague, 6 February 1958), p. 7.

campaign, and Prague subsequently postponed planned tours of Yugoslav popular music artists even though it had already agreed to them. Indeed, after the tour of the Jazz Orchestra of Radio Belgrade in 1958, there would be no organised exchange of popular music between Belgrade and Prague until 1962.[25] The change in relations between the states was also embodied in the fate of a Czechoslovak-Yugoslav film coproduction called *The Star Goes South*, a musical comedy which tells the story of a Czechoslovak jazz orchestra that travels to perform on the Dalmatian coast, only to have its trips constantly disrupted by the failure of the orchestra's singer to meet the group, which she eventually does.[26] Although the film was produced in 1958, it was not shown in Czechoslovakia until 1964 due to the intervening political tensions with Belgrade, and its musical score was censored in music publications and on radio programmes as its songs were considered to be promoting an attitude that was too friendly towards Yugoslavia.[27]

Apart from the Jazz Orchestra of Radio Belgrade and Robić, there were other Yugoslav popular music artists who were making an impression in Eastern Europe. Indeed, they looked not only to the north of Yugoslavia but also to the east, and in Bulgaria and Romania, for example, Yugoslav popular music was widely listened to in the late 1950s. A report on Bulgaria produced by the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries in 1958 stated that Yugoslav jazz artists had been performing there more often in the previous year. However, it also observed that there were some problems with the way that these musicians behaved and that they needed to be brought under control, which indicated that the Committee was concerned about how they were affecting Yugoslavia's international image.[28] In 1959, the Bulgarian counterpart of the Committee noted that it had hosted many Yugoslav singers and that it wanted Belgrade to invite more Bulgarian ones, highlighting its concern that exchange in this field was unbalanced, but also suggesting that Bulgarian popular music was not modish enough to appeal to Yugoslav audiences.[29] The reverse was true in Bulgaria, as a report on Bulgarian-Yugoslav cultural relations prepared by the Committee in 1960 observed that Bulgarians

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25 For example, because of the political tensions, a visit by Bojan Adamič's Dance Orchestra was cancelled by Czechoslovakia in 1958. AY 559-92, 'Saradnja Jugoslovenske radiodifuzije sa radiodifuzijama istočnoevropskih zemalja' (Belgrade, 26 December 1958), p. 2.

26 'Hvězda jede na jih/Zvijezda putuje na jug', in Ivana Tibitanzlová (ed.), *Český hraný film III, 1945-1960/Czech Feature Film III, 1945-1960* (Prague: Národní filmový archiv v Praze, 2001), p. 76-77.

27 Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Territorial Sections – Confidential, 1960-1964, Yugoslavia, 2, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia, letter to the Ministry of Education and Culture of Czechoslovakia, 'Publikování písně z čs.-jugoslávského filmu "Hvězda jede na jih"' (Prague, 28 October 1959), p. 1-2.

28 AY 559-92, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 'Zabeleška o gostovanju jugoslovenskih pevača, orkestara i artista u Bugarskoj' (Belgrade, 11 August 1958), p. 1.

29 AY 559-117, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 'Zabeleška o razgovoru u Komitetu za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom 29.11.1959 godine' (Belgrade, 20 March 1959), p. 3.

were avidly listening to Yugoslav radio stations and popular music artists such as Robić and Nikola Avtovski, sarcastically adding that '[h]ere our popular music is considered to be of quality(!).'[30]

As one of the Eastern European communist parties' main criticisms of the LCY in the late 1950s was that it had opened itself up too much to Western cultural, economic and political influences, it followed that they became particularly suspicious of the use of Western-style popular music in Yugoslavia's international cultural exchange. In addition, the appeal of Yugoslav popular music concerned the Eastern European regimes not only because it showed that their citizens were fans of Western-style popular culture, but also because it suggested that the Yugoslav political model could be attractive to them. The Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries was aware of the propagandistic value of Yugoslav popular music in such a political climate: in 1958 it discussed what sort of counter-propaganda it could undertake to combat the anti-Yugoslav campaign, and it resolved that the expansion of radio broadcasts to Eastern Europe was one solution.[31] The Committee also observed that Eastern European states were trying to thwart the impact of Yugoslav popular music artists, and a report in 1959 noted that they were resistant to receiving them, although there was a public backlash against this in some places.[32] For example, the Bulgarian authorities did try to place restrictions on the performance of Yugoslav popular music and ban the sale of its records, but these were opposed by cultural workers and the public who were fans of it.[33] In Romania, there was also an attempt to restrict public access to a concert by a Yugoslav band that played jazz and Italian pop songs, in line with a policy of limiting its citizens' exposure to Yugoslav cultural influences – but the concert was so popular that the public simply forced its way into the concert hall.[34]

Although Yugoslav popular music artists had been able to visit Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania from 1956, it had always been more difficult for them to visit the Soviet Union, not only due to the anti-Yugoslav campaign, but also because the Soviets were still not as open to Western-style popular music and were less interested in staging performances of it, be it

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30 AY 559-138, Dobrivoje Sekulović, Embassy of Yugoslavia in Sofia, letter to the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (Sofia, 23 January 1960), p. 5. Avtovski was from Macedonia and he highlighted a special role for that republic in Yugoslavia's cultural relations with Bulgaria, as the closeness between the Bulgarian and Macedonian languages made Macedonian popular music easier for the Bulgarians to consume.

31 AY 507, A-CK SKJ, VIII, 11/2-b-102, Ideological Commission, 'Stenografske beleške Komisije za ideološki rad CK Saveza komunista Jugoslavije održano 16 VI 1958 u Beogradu' (Belgrade, 16 June 1958), p. 40-44.

32 AY 559-117, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 'Kulturne veze sa lagerom' (Belgrade, 12 March 1959), p. 5.

33 AY 559-138, Sekulović, p. 5.

34 AY 559-169, Luka Soldić and Arso Milatović, Embassy of Yugoslavia in Bucharest, letter to the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (Bucharest, 22 February 1961), p. 5.

with artists from the United States or Yugoslavia. In 1957, the People's Youth did send jazz groups to the World Youth Festival in Moscow,[35] but as tensions between Belgrade and Moscow increased the possibilities for the further exchange of popular music between them were thwarted. For example, the Soviets began by cancelling a tour of Bojan Adamič's Dance Orchestra from Ljubljana in 1958, saying that they would refer back to the Yugoslavs about it in September; with Soviet criticisms of the LCY escalating throughout the year, that tour never happened.[36] The Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries also noted that while the Soviets had cancelled this visit they still wanted to send their own performers to Yugoslavia, which prompted a discussion within the Central Committee of the LCY on the problems that Yugoslavia was encountering in its cultural relations with Eastern Europe. Miša Pavičević, a member of the Central Committee, observed the following with regard to this:

> We have the opposite tendency vis-à-vis the USSR and [East] Germany. They propose their planned visits to Yugoslavia for later and want Yugoslavs to first come and visit their countries. They put off their deadlines, but urge our delegations to come. For which reasons I don't know. The Old Man [Tito] recommends that we approach those people with open explanations and that we say that such an atmosphere has been developed with regards to the anti-Yugoslav campaign that it does not create comfortable conditions for the beneficial results of such visits. We have about ten cancelled visits, and they are pushing for them but are cancelling their own. We need to take a stand.[37]

In 1959, the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries believed that Moscow was not living up to the agreement on cultural exchange by refusing Yugoslav popular music artists, and that it was doing so because these were of a quality that the Soviets could not match.[38] In 1960, the Committee claimed that Moscow was still rejecting Yugoslav popular music groups and that it wanted to keep exchange to the level of circuses and folklore, with its intention being to por-

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35 AY 114-37, People's Youth, 'Zapisnik sa sastanka Pretsedništva CK NO Jugoslavije održanog 15.VII.1957' (Belgrade, 15 July 1957), p. 5; AY 114-37, People's Youth, 'Zapisnik sa sastanka Pretsedništva CK NO Jugoslavije održanog 2 i 3.IX.1957' (Belgrade, 2-3 September 1957), p. 12-14.

36 AY 559-110, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 'Pregled izvršenja plana kulturne saradnje za 1958 godinu (prvo polugodište)' (Belgrade, 1958), p. 2; AY 559-116a, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, "Komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom 1' (Belgrade, 1959), p. 291.

37 AY 507, A-CK SKJ, VIII, 11/2-b-102, Ideological Commission, p. 48-49.

38 AY 559-117, Embassy of Yugoslavia in Moscow, 'Izvršenje plana kulturne i naučne saradnje za 1959 godinu' (Moscow, 7 September 1959), p. 3.

tray the Yugoslavs as 'uncultured' and 'uncivilised'.[39] Yugoslavia had nowhere near the number or quality of circuses that existed in the Soviet Union, so the Soviet request appeared to be an attempt to trump the cultural propaganda of Yugoslavia in areas in which the Soviet Union was stronger.

However, relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia did start to improve from 1960. Belgrade demonstrated that it wanted to have better relations with Eastern Europe, and as Moscow realised that it was suitable to have closer ties with a Yugoslavia that was affirming itself as a significant international player through the Non-Aligned Movement. This, together with increasing cultural exchange with the United States that saw the Soviet regime soften its hostility towards Western popular music, opened the way for Yugoslav popular music artists to access what would become an important market for them. The Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries managed to get Yugoslav popular music groups into its cultural agreement with the Soviet Union from 1960, and their debut took place that same year when Yugoslavia participated in an international consumer goods fair in Moscow. The singers Jakšić, Zubović, Radmila Dimić and Aca Sarijevski performed there with the Rade Jašarević Orchestra, and for two weeks they held two concerts per day.[40] As Zubović recalls, '[t]he people, of whom there were thousands, looked at us as if we were gods; well, for God's sake, we came from Yugoslavia!'[41] Zubović returned to the Soviet Union in 1961 to perform with Novaković, Cune Gojković, Krsta Petrović and the Jazz Orchestra of Radio Belgrade; the Committee even sent them to the Soviet Union in place of a folklore ensemble, which showed how successful it had been in altering the cultural agreement to suit its own interests.[42] Thereafter, Moscow began to accept more of such groups from Yugoslavia, especially as the anti-Yugoslav campaign subsided and the Soviet Union also opened up to visits by American jazz musicians. Yet, there were still some complaints by the Committee that the Soviets were sending Yugoslav performers away from the big cities and to smaller places where they would have less of an impact, but the political motivations behind such moves became less suspect as relations between Belgrade and Moscow normalised in the early 1960s.[43]

39   AY 559-138, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 'Naše kulturne veze sa inostranstvom' (Belgrade, 1959), p. 2, 4.

40   AY 559-170, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 'Izveštaj Komisije za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom za 1960 godinu' (Belgrade, February 1961), p. 47.

41   Cited in Luković, p. 123.

42   AY 559-171, Josip Pirjevec, Embassy of Yugoslavia in Moscow, letter to the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (Moscow, 19 September 1961), p. 2; AY 559-198, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, letter to the Embassy of Yugoslavia in Moscow (Belgrade, 14 January 1961), p. 1; AY 559-200b, Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 'Izveštaj Komisije za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom za 1961 godinu' (Belgrade, December 1961), p. 52.

43   AY 559-201, Mirko Bašić, Embassy of Yugoslavia in Moscow, letter to the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (Moscow, 22 January 1962), p. 8.

In 1962, the Committee noted that Eastern European states wanted more bands from Yugoslavia,[44] signifying the development of a market that would be lucrative for Yugoslav popular music, especially in the Soviet Union. After that year, the penetration of Yugoslav popular music into the Soviet Union went fairly unhindered, and some of its biggest stars would make successful careers there, such as Đorđe Marjanović, Miki Jevremović and Radmila Karaklajić. However, even for the Yugoslav artists who had participated in the cultural exchange with Eastern Europe in the late 1950s, the economic benefits had been positive. Simić notes that performing in Eastern Europe had allowed his orchestra's members to purchase goods there that were cheaper than at home; if they were paid in local currency, the artists usually tried to buy as much as they could and then take it back to Yugoslavia. Although he observed that the products available in Eastern European stores were generally less varied than in Yugoslavia, goods typically produced in those countries were less expensive, such as East German technical items, Czechoslovak crystal or Polish damask. Sometimes the artists were paid upon their return to Yugoslavia, but this, too, was a boon for many: Simić recalls that after the tour to the Soviet Union in 1961, some people even managed to earn enough to buy their own cars.[45]

And yet, as Yugoslavia was finding markets for its cultural products in the East, its citizens were still invariably more attracted to the popular culture coming from the West than from other socialist states. The sense of superiority towards the East would remain a defining aspect of a common consciousness among Yugoslavia's citizens – as well as the self-image of the LCY – throughout the Cold War. However, it was always betrayed by inferiority towards the West, which was itself affirmed by the party's concessions to western models in its own cultural politics. Reflecting on this relationship between Yugoslavia's self-identity and how it was defined by perceptions of the East and the West, the writer Slavenka Drakulić maintains that

> [t]he deprivation of other people fed our vanity, especially in the USSR, because the people there were the most deprived and isolated of all. It was perhaps a kind of compensation for our own treatment in the West, where we felt humiliated by the wealth and the Westerners looked down upon us. Then it was we who felt inferior.[46]

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44 AY 559-229, 'Izveštaj Komisije za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom za 1962. godinu,' (Belgrade, March 1963), p. 73.

45 Vojislav Simić, *Veselo putovanje: sa džez orkestrom RTV Beograd po belom svetu* (Belgrade: Radio-televizija Srbije, 2005), p. 52.

46 Slavenka Drakulić, *Café Europa: Life after Communism* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1997), p. 29.

Yugoslavia was admired by other Eastern Europeans because it was the closest thing that they had to the West figuratively and literally, but they had it precisely because it was ideologically and physically not the West. Ironically, had the LCY's embrace of the West been un-ambivalent, Yugoslav popular music artists would not have had the same access to Eastern European markets that they did. A sense of cultural and economic inferiority vis-à-vis the West, as well as a concern that this undermined the LCY's influence over Yugoslavia's citizens, also motivated the party to pursue cultural and political co-operation with the East. Indeed, this was the cultural crux of non-alignment: enough cultural openness to endear itself to the West and satisfy Yugoslavia's citizens, but also a foot in the East to ensure that the political situation at home would never undermine the LCY's rule.

Conclusion

What was unique about Yugoslav popular music artists in the late 1950s and early 1960s was that, unlike their counterparts in either of the Cold War blocs, they could travel to and perform more freely in both the East and the West. Yugoslavia's special international position permitted it to produce stars such as Robić who were successful in Western Europe as well as in the East. On both sides of the Cold War divide they were respectively Orientalised and Occidentalised: in Western Europe, Yugoslav artists were often considered to be exotic because they were Slavs, Eastern Europeans, citizens of a socialist state and often Mediterraneans, while in the East they were regarded as more modern and fashionable due to Yugoslavia's cultural openness to the West. Yugoslavia's geopolitical position permitted its cultural products and workers to traverse the borders of the blocs in a privileged manner, a status that was nurtured by Yugoslavia's political leaders and accepted by both eastern and western governments. This special cultural position was at its peak from 1956 until 1961, before other Eastern Europeans, especially Poland and Hungary but also the Soviet Union, opened themselves up more to western cultural influences in the spirit of the 'thaw'. However, it would to varying degrees characterise Yugoslavia until the end of the Cold War, and certainly remained its trademark in comparison to the rest of Eastern Europe.

This study of popular music as a tool of Yugoslavia's soft power in Eastern Europe shows that, to understand the international relations of culture during the Cold War, we need a much more diverse picture than the two-bloc one that has so far dominated historiography. I have highlighted the special role that Yugoslav cultural and political actors had in the Cold War in the late 1950s and early 1960s, which permitted them to act as gatekeepers and merchants of cultural trends between the East and the West in spite – or because – of the restrictions that existed between the two blocs. In doing so, I have tempered an analytical depend-

ence on the role of the superpowers that has overwhelmed studies of the cultural Cold War. Rather than just seeing it as a battle between the East and the West led by the Soviet Union and the United States respectively, in considering the role of non-aligned and small states we see how the bipolar paradigm used to explain Cold War international cultural relations conceals much of the subject's richness. The cultural Cold War was not always the hostile, superpower battle that it has often been presented as in historiography. Cultural influences that travelled between the blocs could take routes through third countries such as Yugoslavia, or small states like it could themselves act as a cultural force in their own right. Furthermore, the rules of play in the cultural Cold War were not just determined by its bipolar division, but also relied on hierarchies, relations and stereotypes that existed among its actors long before the Cold War had even started, and which were constantly re-negotiated throughout its duration. Indeed, that Yugoslavia was exporting its popular music to the rest of Eastern Europe had an even greater meaning when we recall that it had had one of the least developed musical infrastructures in Europe prior to the Cold War, never before matching the prestige that Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland or the Soviet Union had had in classical or popular music. This is not to overestimate the cultural impact of Yugoslavia, for it certainly did not have the cultural might of America, France, Italy, West Germany or the Soviet Union. Yet, for many in Eastern Europe it was an 'America', or, at least, the closest that many Eastern Europeans could get to it, as it was easier for them to access Yugoslav-made cultural products or even to travel there. The influence of the United States in the cultural Cold War should thus not be overestimated, because for some in the late 1950s and early 1960s 'America' could be found in other places, even in Yugoslavia. As the singer Anica Zubović recalls from her performances in the Soviet Union: 'when I was in Russia in the sixties they told us that we were "capitalists", that Yugoslavia was – America.'[47]

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47   Cited in Luković, p. 125.

7   Moving Toward Utopia

Soviet Housing in the Atomic Age

»   *Christine Varga-Harris*

As the American journalist Marguerite Higgins was travelling by train from Finland to Russia in the early 1950s, a Soviet customs officer confiscated from her a copy of the seemingly innocuous magazine *Good Housekeeping*. The official claimed that he needed to verify with his supervisor whether she was permitted to have this publication in her possession. Higgins, however, believed, 'What bothered him (...) were the photographs of refrigerators, shiny kitchens, and home decorations. These illustrations would make it obvious to any Russian that there are lots of things for sale in the United States that are not available to Russians.'[1] Her assumption may have been correct, but towards the end of the decade, Soviet citizens were able to see for themselves the remarkable wares accessible to American consumers: during the summer of 1959, more than two million visitors were officially admitted to the American National Exhibition held in Moscow.[2] By this time, Nikita Khrushchev had initiated a policy to increase the flow of consumer goods within the Soviet Union, and confident that this mandate would succeed, he declared his ambition to 'catch up with and overtake' the capitalist world during the infamous 'Kitchen Debate' with then American vice-president Richard Nixon. Standing before a model washing machine, the two leaders discussed security issues and the merits of their rival political systems. Nixon stressed the widespread availability of household appliances and the broad choices open to the American consumer. Khrushchev meanwhile acknowledged the superiority of Western technology in the domestic sphere, but claimed that the Soviet Union would soon reach parity with the United States.[3] This contest, like the incident that Higgins

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1   Marguerite Higgins, *Red Plush and Black Bread* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1955), p. 21.

2   Walter L. Hixson, 'From the Summit to the Model Kitchen: The Cultural Agreement and the Moscow Fair', in *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p. 201.

3   For more on the kitchen debate see Karal Ann Marling, 'Nixon in Moscow: Appliances, Affluence, and Americanism', in *As Seen on TV: The Visual Culture of Everyday Life in the 1950s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 242-283 and Hixson, p. 151-183.

described, highlighted the symbolic and ideological significance of household goods during the Cold War – this time on the international stage.

In the American case, according to the historian Elaine Tyler May, the combination of the reliable breadwinning husband and the purposeful homemaking wife quelled unease over the external threats of the post-war world order. At the center of this scenario was the suburban single-family home, epitomised by 'Levittown'. As May argued in her path-breaking book *Homeward Bound*, American families during the Cold War were drawn to the home because it held emotional appeal after the tragedies of the Great Depression and World War II, and offered optimum contentment and security against nuclear holocaust and communism.[4] The very site of the heated discussion between Nixon and Khrushchev at the American Exhibition seems to affirm this assertion. In the assessment of the Americanist Karal Ann Marling, the fact that the debate took place in the kitchen of a model ranch house served as a reminder 'that what was at stake in an era of atomic bombs was existence – home, hearth, all the most basic human functions.'[5]

As in the United States, the home assumed vast significance in the Soviet Union. The most striking manifestation of this was the enormous construction campaign that Khrushchev launched in 1957 to end the longstanding housing crisis and provide each family a 'separate apartment' (*otdel'naia kvartira*). This ambitious goal displaced the more modest government policy, largely necessitated by shortage, of allotting every family a single room within a large flat. In this housing arrangement – the communal apartment (*kommunal'naia kvartira*) – tenants collectively shared spaces like the bathroom, lavatory and kitchen.[6] Incidentally, one-family apartments had been built during the previous regime, under Joseph Stalin, but these were largely reserved as rewards to model workers or bonuses to political officials.[7] At the same time, progress toward resolving the general housing shortage stalled as the development of heavy industry and wartime preparation took precedence over mass housing. It was not until after the death of Stalin in

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4 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1988), p. 172. Although her analysis highlights consensus in post-war American society, May acknowledges that the American family was segregated along both class and racial lines, and that atomisation was another consequence of being 'bound to the home' – sources of discontent that would become visible by the 1960s. For more on Levittown, see May, p. 152-153.

5 Marling, 'Nixon in Moscow', p. 249 and p. 278.

6 Some key features of communal apartment life are captured in Svetlana Boym, 'The Archeology of Banality: The Soviet Home', *Public Culture* 2, no. 2 (Winter 1994), p. 266.

7 For a historical account of the development of the separate apartment from the Stalin through Khrushchev periods, see Steven E. Harris, 'The Origins and Design of the Separate Apartment', in *Moving into the Separate Apartment: Building, Distributing, Furnishing, and Living in Urban Housing in Soviet Russia, 1950s-1960s* (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2003), p. 76-127. As Harris demonstrates, the separate apartment of the 1930s was not always settled by one family, thereby making it, for all intents and purposes, a communal dwelling. The same was true of the Khrushchev era.

1953 that extensive housing construction and a widespread transition to separate apartments received priority in economic planning.

Integral to the single-family dwelling of the Khrushchev period was a cultural approach to the 'good life' analogous to the American one of the 1950s and early 1960s. Namely, housing – along with concomitant household items like furniture, appliances and decorative wares – symbolised a burgeoning consumer culture (notwithstanding actual, comparative deficiencies in terms of quantity, quality and assortment).[8] At the same time, unlike its American counterpart, the Soviet home represented neither the reinforcement of traditional family values and gender norms, nor a bastion of security in the face of potential nuclear annihilation.[9] Rather, it signalled the dawn of a new era – a communist one.

Tracing the various ways in which fulfilling the objective of mass housing indicated advancement toward the good life of communism, this chapter is centred on one key trope: the housewarming. Throughout the Khrushchev era, newspapers and magazines featured elated individuals fortunate to be moving into wonderful new housing. By publicising this private moment, journalists bestowed upon it an officious function, that of denoting the soundness of the ideological structure. As this chapter will demonstrate, the scenario depicted did not merely present cheerful new residents so as to conjure up the future that awaited ordinary readers. It also comprised a testament to the position of the state in Soviet society as the embodiment of revolutionary ideals, as a paternal figure, and as a formidable competitor in the Cold War.

Official conceptions of house and home during the Khrushchev years fulfilled a function similar to that of the housewarming. Most significantly, they gestured toward the tangible contrast between life *before* the Revolution, when the Russian proletariat was confined to slums, and *after*, when each worker could live in a humane manner. Thus, the ideal traits of Soviet housing – rational, dignified and egalitarian – constituted markers of the communist utopia embedded in revolutionary promises for daily life (*byt*). Indeed not only housing construction but also revolutionary rhetoric about government provision was reinvigorated after the death of Stalin. Specifically, drawing on the legacy of the nationalisation and redistribution of living space among workers that followed within months of the Bolshevik assumption of power, the Khrushchev regime conflated housing allocation with state and Party 'concern for the person' (*zabota o cheloveke*).[10]

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8   On Soviet consumerism during the 1950s and 1960s, see Susan E. Reid, 'Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev', *Slavic Review* 61, no. 2 (Summer 2002), p. 211-252.

9   These elements of post-war domesticity in the United States are delineated in May, *Homeward Bound*.

10   For an overview of Soviet housing redistribution, integral to which was the expropriation of private dwellings that belonged to members of the aristocracy and middle class, see Alfred John DiMaio, Jr., *Soviet Urban Housing: Problems and Policies* (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1974).

Housing also encapsulated what was perceived to be a critical distinction between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world: in a socialist country, the caring state safeguarded proletarian ownership of the means of production *and* of habitation, while under capitalism private individuals motivated by profit forced the working majority to toil and live for their own personal enrichment. Such comparisons were not restricted to discourse on housing. As the sociologist Vladimir Shlapentokh noted, official rhetoric generally presented the Soviet system as superior to capitalist countries (including pre-revolutionary Russia) and proclaimed the superiority of the future communist society over all others.[11]

Given the centrality of the separate apartment to the housewarming narrative in particular, this chapter will also examine how official visions for individualised housing came to be reconciled with the collectivist ideals upon which the Soviet Union was founded. As will be shown, the plans that design experts (architects, interior designers and urban planners) devised to synchronise the various elements of daily living contributed to harmonising such binaries as collective-individual, work-rest and productivity-leisure. Thus, the single-family flat was made socialist, much as the American ranch house brimming with consumer goods represented the capitalist way of life. An overview of the model Soviet dwelling of the 1950s and 1960s, will set the backdrop for this discussion. Throughout, portraits of housewarming celebrations in Leningrad will offer a localised glimpse into the final, crucial component of the housing campaign: moving in.

Building for the Soviet Person Housing Befitting Socialism

The year 1957 was a notable one for the Soviet Union not only because of the official declaration to provide each family with a separate apartment, but also due to the launch of *Sputnik*, the first artificial satellite, into orbit around the earth. Delineating a connection between the domestic housing programme and the international space race, one design expert proclaimed that the decorative objects adorning the interior of the Soviet home should reflect these remarkable times – a 'century of refined thought, technical progress, cybernetics and the conquest of the cosmos.'[12] Such emphasis on innovation permeated every facet of housing policy during the Khrushchev years. In the sphere of construction, ingenuity was evinced by the use of prefabricated building materials and industrial production methods. These, together with standardised designs (*tipovye proekty*) that empha-

11 Vladimir Shlapentokh, *Soviet Public Opinion and Ideology: Mythology and Pragmatism in Interaction* (New York: Praeger, 1986), p. 15.

12 Leonid Leonov, 'Krasota vospityvaet', *Dekorativnoe iskusstvo SSSR* [*Decorative Arts of the USSR*; hereafter *D i SSSR*], no. 1 (January 1959), p. 9-10.

sised form over function, were not only touted as modern, but were also deemed essential for enabling construction workers for more quickly, efficiently and inexpensively house the Soviet people.[13]

Khrushchev began outlining the norms that would become the foundation of his housing campaign a few years before he assumed leadership, at the 1954 All-Union Conference of Builders. On this occasion, he publicly rebuked architects for being preoccupied with producing 'fine silhouettes' – which required more time and resources to construct than simple ones – and inattentive to ordinary people, who 'need homes' and 'want to live in buildings.'[14] Architects subsequently eschewed superfluous decorative details for apartment blocks in favour of an aesthetic that conjured up simplicity and lightness.[15]

The Cherëmushki district in Moscow and the territory adhering to Shchemilovka Street in Leningrad earned distinction as the first

A typical Leningrad khrushchevka, the endearing term for the Khrushchev-era apartment house. (Photo: Christine Varga-Harris, Spring 2002).

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13 For further details on Soviet housing policy, architecture and construction, spanning from Khrushchev to Gorbachev, see Blair A. Ruble, 'From *khrushcheby* to *korobki*', in *Russian Housing in the Modern Age: Design and Social History*, William Craft Brumfield and Blair A. Ruble (eds.) (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1993), p. 232-270.

14 Albrecht Martiny, 'Housing and Construction in the Period of "De-Stalinization": The Change in Construction Policy from 1954 to 1957', in *Politics and Participation Under Communist Rule*, Peter J. Potichnyj and Jane Shapiro Zacek (eds.) (New York: Praeger, 1983), p. 97.

15 See for example, Iu. Arnat, 'Novaia arkhitektura i ee trebovaniia', *D i sssr* no. 1 (January 1962), p. 22-23. On the meanings ascribed to these design traits in the context of de-Stalinisation, see Catherine Cooke, 'Beauty as a Route to "the Radiant Future": Responses to Soviet Architecture', *Journal of Design History* 10, no. 2 (1997), p. 137-60.

experimental sites in the country to employ the new designs and building techniques. Shchemilovka then came to serve as a model for housing built throughout the 1950s and 1960s. By 1959, nearly 95 per cent of all new residential construction in Leningrad was based on the architectural designs and industrial methods applied in this district, while entire cities throughout the Soviet Union came to be erected in accordance with specifications compiled by Leningrad architects.[16]

To dramatically convey the wonders of new construction that arose in the capital city, the state commissioned the operetta *Cherëmushki*, with music composed by Dmitry Shostakovich. In the 1963 film adaptation, akin to Hollywood musicals of the time, characters variously refer with affectionate familiarity to the advanced building methods used here and joyously sing of a new city district blossoming like a cherry tree on the foundations of old Cherëmushki (Cherrytown).[17] The construction feats occurring on Shchemilovka Street, meanwhile, garnered public praise in the press. Reporting on two of the buildings ready to be occupied in 1957, the local newspaper *Evening Leningrad* (*Vechernii Leningrad*) showcased the modern kitchen, lavatory and bathroom, as well as the central heating and hot water with which each flat was equipped. It also featured the space allocated for shops on the ground floor of the buildings, as well as the lawns, flowerbeds, benches and playgrounds projected for the surrounding environs. Thus, for the tenants moving into the apartment houses completed on this street, the dream of marvelous housing was becoming a reality. At the same time, the buildings still under construction were eagerly anticipated to provide 'all the conveniences for future tenants.'[18]

As this piece on Shchemilovka suggests, the official aspiration to supply decent housing extended beyond the home to incorporate the courtyards of apartment blocks and the urban landscape as a whole. Under Khrushchev, design professionals afforded particular attention to reconceptualising the neighbourhood. The resultant *mikroraion* (literally, 'micro-district') was designed to provide for all the needs of local residents, with attractive building courtyards radiating out toward shops, service establishments and cultural venues. In each of these areas, practicality was of utmost concern. Thus, even in the planning of green spaces, experts emphasised the functional over the decorative role of public lawns, gardens and parks. Such sites were expected to ensure tranquillity for healthy relaxation and

16 A.A. Liubosh, 'Navstrechu III Vsesoiuznomu s"ezdu arkhitektorov. Nekotorye itogi tvorcheskoi deiatel'nostu Leningradskikh Arkhitektorov', *Stroitel'stvo i Arkhitektura Leningrada* [*Construction and Architecture of Leningrad*], no. 11 (November 1960), p. 1.

17 *Cherëmushki* (*Cherrytown*), directed by Gerbert Rappaport (Russia, 1963).

18 Unsigned, 'V chest' 40-letiia Velikogo Oktiabria. Kollektiv tresta no. 3 dosrochno zakanchivaet montazh krupnopanel'nykh domov v 122-m kvartali na Shchemilovke. Etazh za sem' dnei', *Vechernii Leningrad* [*Evening Leningrad*; hereafter, *VL*], 22 July 1957, p. 1.

Nikita Khrushchev (third from the right, in the center of the front row) at an experimental construction site on Shchemilovka Street in Leningrad, 23 May 1957. Photograph by V. Kapustin. Central State Archive of Documentary Films, Photographs, and Sound Recordings of St. Petersburg, Br 18377. Reprinted with permission of the TSGAKFFD SPb.

facilities for recreational activities ranging from chess games to team sports.[19] Taking into consideration these important functions, one architect referred to the 'greening' of urban territory as 'one of the immediate tasks of the formation of the socialist city.'[20] Ideally then, green spaces would develop in tandem with housing construction.

Encompassing fine apartments with modern amenities, pleasant courtyards and neighbourhoods offering a plethora of consumer conveniences and cultural provisions, the overall vision for socialist dwelling during the Khrushchev era was based on a total living schema that was not uniquely 'Soviet'. In fact, the various characteristics of housing design and construction that were ubiquitous in the

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19 O.A. Ivanova, 'Sistema zelenykh nasazhdenii Leningrada', *Arkhitektura i Stroitel'stvo Leningrada* [*Architecture and Construction of Leningrad*; hereafter, *A i s Leningrada*], no. 2 (February 1957), p. 27-32, and L.L. Shreter, 'Novyi mikroraion na prospekte Engel'sa', *A i s Leningrada*, no. 3 (March 1959), p. 28-30.

20 O.A. Ivanova and A.V. Makhrovskaia, 'Ozelenenie i vneshnee blagoustroistvo zhilykh kvartalov Leningrada', *A i s Leningrada*, no. 1 (January 1956), p. 15.

Soviet Union throughout the 1950s and 1960s were informed by architectural concepts of the 1920s and 1930s that had been imported from the West, as well as general post-war design trends.[21] For instance, the notion that form should follow function was evident in the philosophies of the American architect Louis Sullivan and the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, whose first large commission had been in Moscow in the 1920s.[22] As for the post-war period, simple and functional 'international' design offered an inexpensive way to enable rapid reconstruction in Western and Eastern Europe, suited as it was to mass production.[23]

Also common in the post-war era was the meticulous planning of every element of the interior layout of the separate apartment – from the most prominent piece of essential furniture to the smallest sentimental knick-knack.[24] Where the character and meaning of domestic wares were concerned, one design professional of the Khrushchev period acknowledged that like other items of furnishing and decoration, in terms of function or dimensions a chair is a chair whether made in the Soviet Union or abroad. Nevertheless, he asserted, 'all these things organising daily life should always (…) bear the imprint of a social structure characteristic for a Soviet country.' Noting the 'relatively large quantity of spaces for studies' and the 'many book shelves' being incorporated into new apartments in the Soviet Union, he indicated that the values of a given society could be intimated through housing design – in this instance, a high literacy rate. He thus proclaimed: 'The contemporary interior of a dwelling is the direct result, the concrete, material expression of the social order of the Soviet people.'[25]

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21 Following the death of Stalin, even stylistic references from Russian tradition, namely Constructivism of the 1920s, were sometimes imported from the West, essentially 'projected back at Soviet architects' after decades of official disfavour within the Soviet Union. Catherine Cooke (with Susan E. Reid), 'Modernity and Realism: Architectural Relations in the Cold War', in *Russian Art and the West: A Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture and the Decorative Arts*, Rosalind P. Blakesley and Susan E. Reid (eds.) (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007), p. 184.

22 On the impact of Western ideas on Russian architecture from the nineteenth century onward, see William Craft Brumfield (ed.), *Reshaping Russian Architecture: Western Technology, Utopian Dreams* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

23 For a concise overview of the development of these characteristics of architecture in the West, see Witold Rybczynski, 'Style and Substance', and 'Austerity', in *Home: A Short History of an Idea* (New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1986), p. 173-193 and p. 195-215, respectively.

24 Ibid., 203. On the importance of outfitting the domestic interior to the overall success of housing policy in the Soviet Union, see for example, L. Kamenskii, A. Sipko and O. Sveshnikov, 'Dlia novykh kvartir', *D i SSSR*, no. 7 (July 1958), p. 6.

25 N. Luppov, 'Inter'er – kompleks iskusstv', *D i SSSR*, no. 9 (September 1961), p. 12 and 10, respectively. The meanings assigned to Soviet interior design and household wares are further analysed in Christine Varga-Harris, 'Homemaking and the Aesthetic and Moral Perimeters of the Soviet Home during the Khrushchev Era', *Journal of Social History* 41, no. 3 (Spring 2008), p. 561-589; Susan E. Reid, 'Khrushchev Modern: Agency and Modernization in the Soviet Home', *Cahiers du monde russe* 47, nos. 1-2 (January to June 2006), p. 227-268; and Iurii Gerchuk, 'The Aesthetics of Everyday Life in the Khrushchev Thaw in the USSR (1954-64)' (trans.

The foundation of this social order was the 1917 Revolution. Tracing continuity, Khrushchev went so far as to suggest in his memoirs that the progress in construction made during his leadership signified a revolution in itself. 'To use the words of John Reed [the famous American journalist who witnessed the Russian Revolution],' he proclaimed, 'we "shook the world" with our massive program to build housing for our people.'[26] In quantitative terms, the amount of living space that this policy yielded was remarkable. In Leningrad alone during the 1950s and 1960s, the local press was proclaiming, 'One hundred new tenants each day!'[27] Western experts suggest that such assessments should not be dismissed as hyperbole. According to Blair Ruble, the housing campaign that Khrushchev set in motion provided almost 300 million citizens throughout the Soviet Union about 70 million apartments by the late 1980s.[28]

'Moving in': The Housewarming Scenario and Movement toward Communism

Amid the flurry of construction occurring across the country during the 1950s and 1960s, the housewarming joined the building site as a prominent theme in the press. The typical feature showcasing this occasion began by describing a procession of vehicles piled up with furniture winding its way toward the courtyards of new apartment complexes before then focusing in on its principal subject: the 'new tenant' (*novosël*). At this point commentary would shift to the ecstatic families themselves – unloading their household possessions and carrying them into their flats, as well as appreciating the workmanship in their recently completed building. Articles on housewarmings also highlighted the comforts and conveniences awaiting new residents; provided quantitative accounts of general progress in construction and projections for the future; and presented housing as a gift, often coinciding with holidays like New Year's Eve or the anniversary of the October Revolution.[29] Finally, these human-interest stories asserted that new

Susan E. Reid), in *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Postwar Eastern Europe*, Susan E. Reid and David Crowley (eds.) (Oxford, UK: Berg, 2000), p. 81-99.

26   Strobe Talbott, trans. and ed., *Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament* (Toronto: Little, Brown and Co., 1974), p. 105.

27   Unsigned, 'Sto novoselii ezhednevno', VL, 9 February 1963, p. 1.

28   Ruble, 'From *khrushcheby* to *korobki*', p. 232.

29   The theme of the housewarming and the notion of housing as a gift were not novel to the Khrushchev years. On the Stalin-era incarnation of each of these, see, respectively, Victor Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2000), p. 87, and Jeffrey Brooks, 'The Economy of the Gift: "Thank You, Comrade Stalin, for a Happy Childhood"', in *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 83-105. What appears to be new during the 1950s and 1960s, is the incorporation of builders – often as heroic workers – into housing narratives. Indeed they were habitually offered 'hearty thanks' both for their general role in fulfilling housing policy and for specific

ЛУЧШАЯ ПОДАРОЧНАЯ КОРОБКА К ПЕРВОМАЮ.

Рисунок Е. ЩЕГЛОВА.

КРОКОДИЛ 12 (1590) 30 АПРЕЛЯ 1960
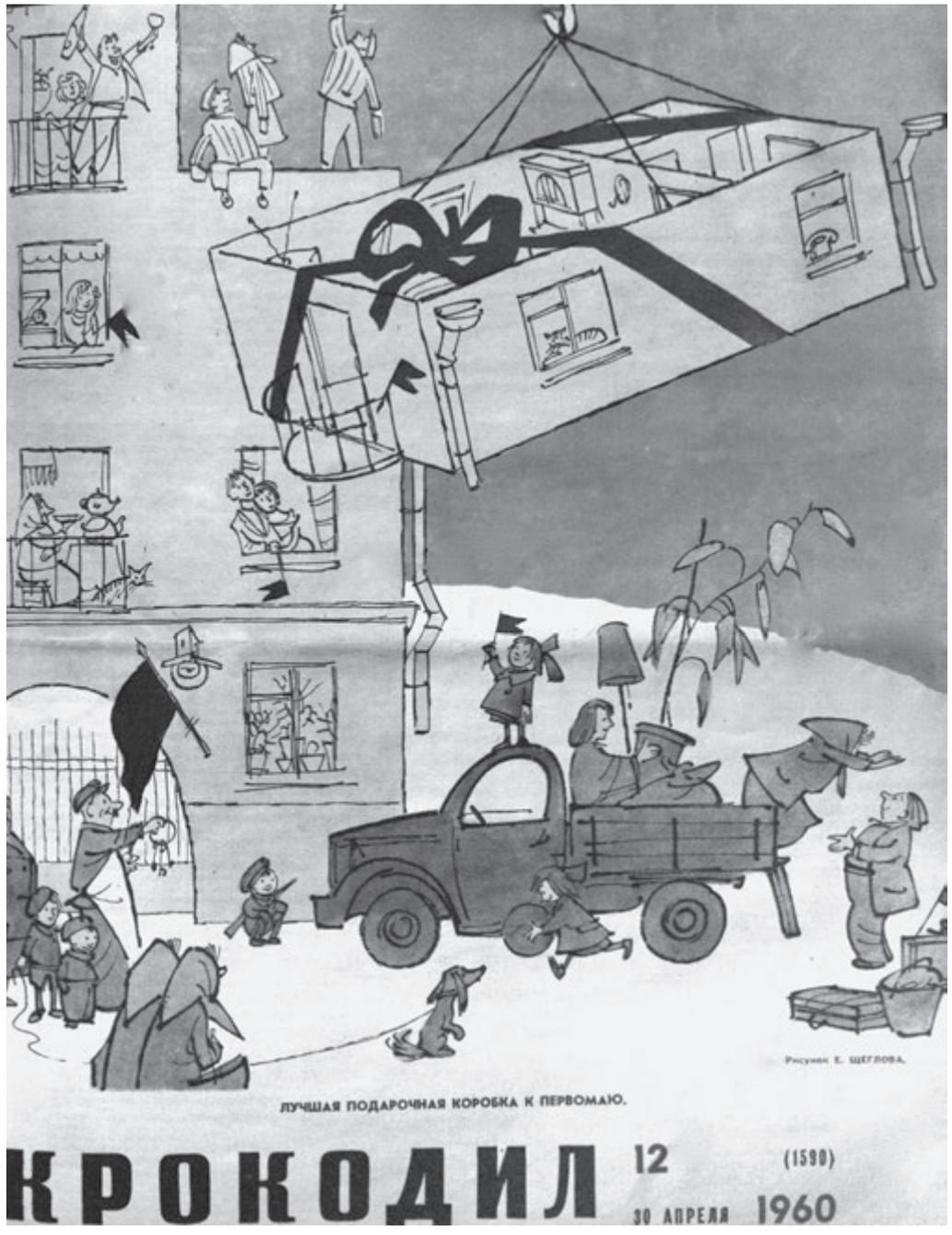
"The best gift box for the First of May!" (Krokodil, 30 April 1960, front cover).

housing attests to state and Party concern for the 'well-being of the people' (*blago naroda*) – either through editorial commentary or explicit statements from new tenants gleaned through interviews.

Illustrative is an April 1962 article showcasing the hundreds of families preparing to celebrate 1st May – International Workers' Day – in a new apartment. At the centre of the story is A.G. Grigor'evich, employed at an experimental factory in the textile industry. He was among the many new residents of 52 Tipanov Street rushing up and down the staircase of this building in a 'festive mood' as they moved their household possessions into the flat that had just been assigned to their family. Alongside the frenzy of trucks and people, the piece remarks on the attractiveness of the building and the beauty of the entire architectural ensemble of which it is a part, as well as the 'careful finishing' and 'lovingly selected tone of wallpaper' within each apartment. This thoughtful attention to detail purportedly recalled for Grigor'evich what the revolutionary poet Vladimir Mayakovsky had once written: 'It is very just, this, our Soviet power.'[30] On a similar note, one 'new settler' whose family had just been allotted a 'bright and well-equipped' apartment on the eve of 1964, wrote a piece for her factory newspaper expressly to thank the government and Party for its concern; she concluded by proclaiming that new housing represented the concrete embodiment of the official determination to build communism.[31] Declarations like these evoked a powerful connection between the private housewarmings made possible by state housing provision, and general progress toward realising the promises of the monumental historical event of 1917.

The cultural scholar Helena Goscilo has discerned that the formula *'K* [toward] + *x'* (for example, *'K kommunizm!'*/'Toward Communism!') was typical of pronouncements about the future utopia throughout the Soviet era, 'which all invoked the Soviet rhetoric of "en route to", "moving towards", and similar circumlocutions.'[32] During the Khrushchev era, in this very spirit of movement, features chronicling housewarmings often displayed the hustle and bustle of '*settling* in', instead of portraying a family already '*settled* in'. Thus, workers moving into new housing were cast as fretting over the perfect placement of their house-

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feats like completing buildings ahead of schedule in honour of important occasions like the jubilee of the 'Great October'. See for example, S. Zhitelev, 'Poslednie doma v schet godovoi programmy', *VL*, 20 November 1957, p. 1. For a more thorough treatment of these themes, see Christine Varga-Harris, *Constructing the Soviet Hearth*, unpublished manuscript.

30 D. Sokolov, 'S novosel'em, druz'ia!', *VL*, 28 April 1962, p. 1.
31 V. Doroshenko, 'V novoi kvartire', *Proletarskaia pobeda* [*Proletarian Victory*; hereafter, *Pp*], 30 December 1963, p. 2.
32 Helena Goscilo, 'Luxuriating in Lack: Plenitude and Consuming Happiness in Soviet Paintings and Posters, 1930s-1953', in Marina Balina and Evgeny Dobrenko (eds.), *Petrified Utopia: Happiness Soviet Style*, (London/New York: Anthem Press, 2009), p. 54.

Новоселье метростроевцев

Metro builders moving into a new apartment. (Vechernii Leningrad, 6 March 1964, p. 1).

hold belongings, hanging pictures and setting up their television sets.[33] A photograph that appeared on the front page of a 1964 edition of *Evening Leningrad* captured just such a scene. Depicting members of a family of Metro workers settling into their new apartment, the recent residents are so engrossed with hanging their drapery and carefully arranging their china in their commode that they seem unaware of the camera focused upon them. Meanwhile two children, ostensibly too young to participate in these activities, look upon their elders almost as if spellbound, patiently guarding the remaining items yet to find a place in the new flat.[34]

Alongside happy tenants moving into new apartment blocks, old city districts made modern and attractive through extensive renewal were also incorporated into the housewarming scenario. Moreover, the revival of established working-class areas represented socialist progress as much as the development of the new

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33 See for example, I. Grechnev and G. Bregin, 'V gostiakh u novoselov', *Kirovskii rabochii* [*Kirov Worker*], 4 July 1962, p. 1.

34 *VL*, 6 March 1964, p. 1.

mikroraion. For example, a newspaper feature on one old district enthusiastically announced, 'The Narva Gates [district] is becoming still more beautiful, even more well-equipped [*blagoustroennaia*], and here (...) the inexorable will of the Soviet people to more quickly construct the radiant building of communism proclaims itself.' Referring to a historically industrial area of Leningrad, this piece juxtaposed the 'pre-communist' Narva Gates area remembered by long-time residents, with the housing complexes that had emerged here since the Revolution. Pitiful wooden disease-infested hovels lacking ventilation and clean drinking water, together with muddy streets, vacant lots and trash heaps, characterised the 'Narva Gates' of the past.[35]

In a similar vein, a Leningrader who had lived in the Moscow district of the city for fifty-seven years recalled the former debris and 'destitute and hungry people' she had encountered there in the past. She claimed that this part of Leningrad had been 'typical for a capitalist city of working-class outlying districts, with its squalid hovels, taverns, churches and impassable mud roads.' During the years of Soviet power, however, there arose in this area an enormous construction site where hundreds of apartment buildings had been erected with multiple amenities, including gas, plumbing and trash chutes. In addition, a multitude of shops and services had appeared on their ground floors (from dining halls to hairdressing salons), the surrounding roads had been paved, and transportation links to the centre had been established. The author of this particular chronicle of resurrection concluded: 'All this again confirms the great concern of the Party and government for the welfare of the people.'[36]

As these accounts illustrate, 'before' signified the old capitalist order in which private proprietors had offered workers horrid living conditions on exploitive terms, and 'after' comprised the socialist present in which, each day, more and more workers were moving into bright, clean flats equipped with amenities like indoor plumbing and courtyard gardens. Like the archetypal housewarming narrative, representations of revitalised neighbourhoods also evoked movement toward communism. Furthermore, in highlighting efforts to resolve the housing crisis and fulfil modern ideals for design and construction, they affirmed the identity of the Soviet state as socialist. After all, a socialist system ideally provides for the fundamental human needs of each of its citizens, including shelter.

This commitment articulated in local housewarming stories was also at the core of dozens of propaganda publications issued under Khrushchev addressing the

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35   Unsigned, 'Segodnia za Narvskoi zastavoi', *VL*, 3 February 1962, p. 2.
36   A. Durandina, 'Glazami starozhila', *Pp*, 11 February 1957, p. 2. That this piece appeared a few months before the official proclamation 'To each family a separate apartment' demonstrates a degree of continuity in the trope 'then versus now' – as of the housewarming motif (see footnote 29) and official declarations about the importance of decent housing to labour productivity (see footnote 52).

subject of housing more generally.[37] These pamphlets frequently adhered to a formula that entailed describing egregious living conditions during tsarist times and outlining poor contemporary housing conditions in capitalist countries (even providing statistics from their national presses). They also illustrated the transformation in housing since the Revolution; detailed the current construction programme, citing achievements and goals; and presented concrete evidence of change in various cities and rural settlements through a plethora of facts and figures.[38]

One such publication that appeared in 1963 noted that in the preceding five years, two times as many apartments had been built in the Soviet Union per one thousand inhabitants as in the United States or France and that fifty million Soviet citizens (about one-quarter of the population of the country) had moved into better housing. The authors also boasted that about six thousand well-equipped apartments were being occupied by new inhabitants on a daily basis, and that each family would have a modern home provided with a variety of neighbourhood consumer amenities by 1980 – the same year that Khrushchev projected for the attainment of communism. The progress made thus far was attributed to post-war industrialisation, which had made possible rapid construction, and urban planning methods that incorporated considerations for landscaping, service establishments and recreational facilities aimed at satisfying all the needs of residents and promoting 'communist living'. The socialist state, which had displaced exploitative private ownership, was also, of course, robustly credited.[39]

The fact that the working class theoretically owned not only the means of production, but also the 'means of daily living' (i.e., housing), further underscored the difference between communism and capitalism. Indeed in addition to repeatedly invoking state paternalism, housing rhetoric at times showcased proletarian ownership as central to the Soviet system. According to one propaganda brochure, 'rooms and the household articles within them' belong to the people, as well as entire buildings, parks, clubs, theatres, stadiums and sanatoria.[40]

Together with socialised ownership, the emancipation of women was another feature of communism integrated into housing discourse – as into the concrete designs intended to modernise the home and rationalise urban planning. As one propaganda publication declared: 'In a housing district there should be all that is necessary for healthy and cultured living. Therefore, alongside the satisfaction of the need for lodging, housing construction ought to serve the development

37 These short books or brochures were aimed at instructing Communist Party activists.

38 See for example, N. Grigor'ev, *Zhilishchnaia problema budet reshena* (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1963), and A.I. Shneerson, *Chto takoe zhilishchnyi vopros* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo vpsh i aon pri tsk kpss, 1959).

39 Unsigned, 'Zhilishchnoe-stroitel'stvo v sssr', in *Zhilishchnoe stroitel'stvo v sssr. Moskva. Leningrad. Kiev* (Moscow: Profizdat, 1963), p. 3-16.

40 M.I. Lifanov et al. (eds.), *Za kommunisticheskii byt* (Leningrad: Obshchestvo po rasprostraneniiu politicheskikh i nauchnykh znanii rsfsr, Leningradskoe otdelenie, 1963), p. 57.

of new forms of living, liberating women from the burden of labour-intensive housekeeping.'[41] Where practicalities were concerned, architects incorporated sideboards and kitchen tables with 'pull-out' shelves into their plans for the domestic interior so that 'the housewife' might fulfil tasks like meal preparation seated, and thereby protect her strength and health. 'Domestic novelties' were also meant to make housework more manageable, as were items like refrigerators and electric stoves with ovens that were becoming more and more accessible.[42] Commenting on their positive impact, the magazine *Woman Worker* (*Rabotnitsa*) claimed that electrical appliances 'lighten and simplify the household labour of millions of women' and thereby enable them 'to become more involved in culture and art, and to devote more attention to the upbringing of children.'[43] Of course, as this assertion suggested, well-appointed homes and new consumer wares would not entirely liberate women from housework, but rather permit them more time for other responsibilities, like child rearing, that typically fell exclusively to them. Furthermore, domestic 'aids' increased expectations for housekeeping, much as they did in post-war societies in the West.[44]

In other regards, the communist utopia appeared to be within reach, for even as design experts were engrossed in modernising it, official discourse about consumer services suggested that the role of the kitchen, and of the housewife herself, would wither away before too long. The socialised 'house kitchen' (*domovaia kukhnia*), located on the ground floor of selected new apartment buildings, was supposed to fill the void once this revolution had been realised. Serving lunches, selling prepared foods made on the premises, and even taking advance orders for holiday meals, some women hailed their local house kitchen for reducing their household chores.[45] Despite such occasional accolades, however, the popularity of house kitchens remains questionable, as does their widespread availability.[46]

41 V.G. Sinitsyn, *Byt epokhi stroitel'stva kommunizma* (Cheliabinsk: Cheliabinskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1963), p. 147.

42 Beseda s direktorom Nauchno-issledovatel'skogo instituta zhilishcha B.R. Rubanenko, 'Bystro, deshevo, dobrotno!', *Rabotnitsa* [*Woman Worker*], no. 9 (September 1957), p. 1-3; M. Smirnova, 'O veshchakh, kotorye nam sluzhet. Zametki chitatelei. Tam budet udobnee', *VL*, 20 November 1959, p. 2; TASS, 'Dlia nashego byta', *VL*, 11 February 1961, p. 5; and E. Barklai, 'Spetsial'noe khudozhestvenno-konstruktorskoe biuro. Reportazhe. Slovo imeet... Otdel zhilogo inter'era', *D i SSSR*, no. 11 (November 1963), p. 13.

43 Unsigned, 'Dlia vas, zhenshchiny! Beseda s direktorom Pavil'ona luchshikh obraztsov Vsesoiuznoi Torgovoi Palaty I.I. Gordeevym', *Rabotnitsa*, no. 11 (November 1959), p. 22. Of course, the level of production and quality did not meet the rapidly rising demand for goods like washing machines and refrigerators, and this was officially acknowledged.

44 For illustrations of this phenomenon in post-war Western societies, see for example, Claire Duchen, 'Occupation Housewife: The Domestic Ideal in 1950s France', *French Cultural Studies* 2, part 1 (February 1991), p. 67-77, and May, *Homeward Bound*.

45 See for example, P. Kozhanyi, 'Pis'ma chitatelei. Domovaia kukhnia', *Rabotnitsa*, no. 5 (May 1958), p. 29.

46 Susan E. Reid, 'The Khrushchev Kitchen: Domesticating the Scientific-Technological Revolution', *Journal of Contemporary History* 40, no. 2 (2005), p. 294.

Where official intentions were concerned, what can be discerned from this '"dialectical contradiction" in housing policy – between the expansion and extension of public services, on the one hand, and the provision of a high standard of comfort in the home, on the other'?[47] It might be argued that relating the housing programme to broader concerns like the welfare of the mass citizenry or the emancipation of women served to mitigate tension between policies aimed at providing both individual family apartments and socialised conveniences. After all, in the larger scheme of daily life, neighbourhood amenities like house kitchens ostensibly served not only women, but also the community as a whole. One design professional, outlining how traditional tasks like baking bread had become relegated to consumer enterprises, claimed that such 'modern' services not only freed women from time-consuming housework, but also promoted 'the spirit of collectivism and genuine comradeship' and engendered 'the organic unity of the individual and social sectors.'[48] In accordance with this aim of harmonising the interests of all segments of society, professionals concurrently posited the various elements of the *mikroraion* – apartment buildings, green spaces, consumer services, educational institutions and cultural amenities – as intertwined.[49]

Overall, by accentuating the mutually supportive functions of the structure of the separate apartment and communal service networks, and of individual home life and collective activity, official proclamations implicitly muted the tensions inherent in these contradictory pairings. Thus, for example, a harmonious residential infrastructure that would facilitate rest and rejuvenation at home was presented as crucial to workplace efficiency, which in turn would benefit society as a whole.[50] It is in this vein that an article in one factory newspaper declared that conveniences are 'not trifles, nor secondary things' because 'both the mood of people and their labour productivity' depend upon their availability, as on the very manner in which daily life is organised.[51] Two new residents confirmed this when they wrote to *Evening Leningrad* claiming that the joy they felt each day upon coming home to their new flat instilled in them the sense that life was improving – something that made their work in industry also 'merrier'.[52] Other workers moving

47 G.D. Andrusz, 'Housing Ideals, Structural Constraints and the Emancipation of Women', in *Home, School and Leisure in the Soviet Union*, Jenny Brine, Maureen Perrie and Andrew Sutton (eds.) (London, UK: George Allen and Unwin, 1980), p. 20.

48 A. Riabushin, 'Sotsiologiia byta i khudozhnik. Zhilishche novogo tipa', *D i SSSR*, no. 2 (February 1963), p. 5, 7.

49 The entire issue of *Arkhitektura i stroitel'stvo Leningrada*, no. 2 (February 1959) is devoted to detailing and assessing plans for buildings for consumer and cultural use (schools, kindergartens, movie theatres, shops, bath houses and so forth). See also O.A. Ivanova and A.V. Makhrovskaia, 'Voprosy kompozitsii zhilogo mikroraiona', p. 10-14.

50 See for example, Sinitsyn, 56, 60-62 and Lifanov et al. (eds.), *Za kommunisticheskii byt*, p. 79.

51 I. Grechnev and G. Bregin, 'V gostiakh u novoselov', p. 1.

52 A. Kuchinskaia and R. Mustafina, 'Chitateli nam pishut. Khorosho v nashem dome', *VL*, 15 September 1956, p. 2.

into new apartments with bright, spacious rooms were apparently also inspired to work more efficiently. 'Look... what a wonderful building!' they exclaimed, 'And how many of them they are building all around. And this is all for us. We want to work even more, even better, in order to show gratitude to our native land [*Rodina*] for her maternal concern.'[53]

Such glowing accounts were purposefully selected to grace the pages of newspapers and magazines. After all, publicising the achievements of socialism was a paramount mission of Soviet journalism.[54] Reflecting official prescriptions in a popular format was also important. It is in this way that journalists and editors conveyed the professional conviction that home and work were organically connected, that a satisfactory domestic life inspires productivity, while without decent living conditions, 'there is no full personal life, no active intercourse with people outside of their labour activity.'[55] Such rhetorical manoeuvres simultaneously divested a single-family dwelling of individualism and rendered it socialist.

'Settling In': Disappointment and Stagnation in the Housewarming Narrative

Although a staggering amount of housing was built over the course of the 1950s and 1960s, the availability of new flats could not keep pace with the need for them. Even by the late 1970s, supply had yet to meet demand.[56] Nevertheless, the potential for more comfortable living for those who enjoyed a housewarming during the Khrushchev period should not be discounted, nor should the possibilities for a better life evoked by the construction sites dotting the urban landscape. As the American journalist Harrison Salisbury noted of *Cherëmushki*, this operetta served as 'a kind of a fairy story about Cherëmushki,' one that 'represents what Cherëmushki means to Moscow and its citizens' more so than what it actually is.[57] Recognising the shortcomings even of this model housing district, Salisbury added that compared with the basement flats in which some Muscovites were living, Cherëmushki seemed like paradise.

It is nevertheless curious that chronicles of 'spoiled housewarmings' – simultaneously expressing elation and chagrin – appeared in the Soviet press right along-

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53 Unsigned, 'Novosely', *VL*, 10 October 1959, p. 1.

54 Thomas C. Wolfe, *Governing Soviet Journalism: The Press and the Socialist Person after Stalin* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), p. 61.

55 N.P. Krasnov et al., *Dom i byt* (Moscow: Izdateľstvo ministersva kommunaľnogo khoziaistva RSFSR, 1962), p. 3.

56 Henry W. Morton, 'Who Gets What, When and How? Housing in the Soviet Union', *Soviet Studies* XXXII, no. 2 (April 1980), p. 235.

57 Harrison E. Salisbury, *To Moscow – And Beyond: A Reporter's Narrative* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1959, 1960), p. 38.
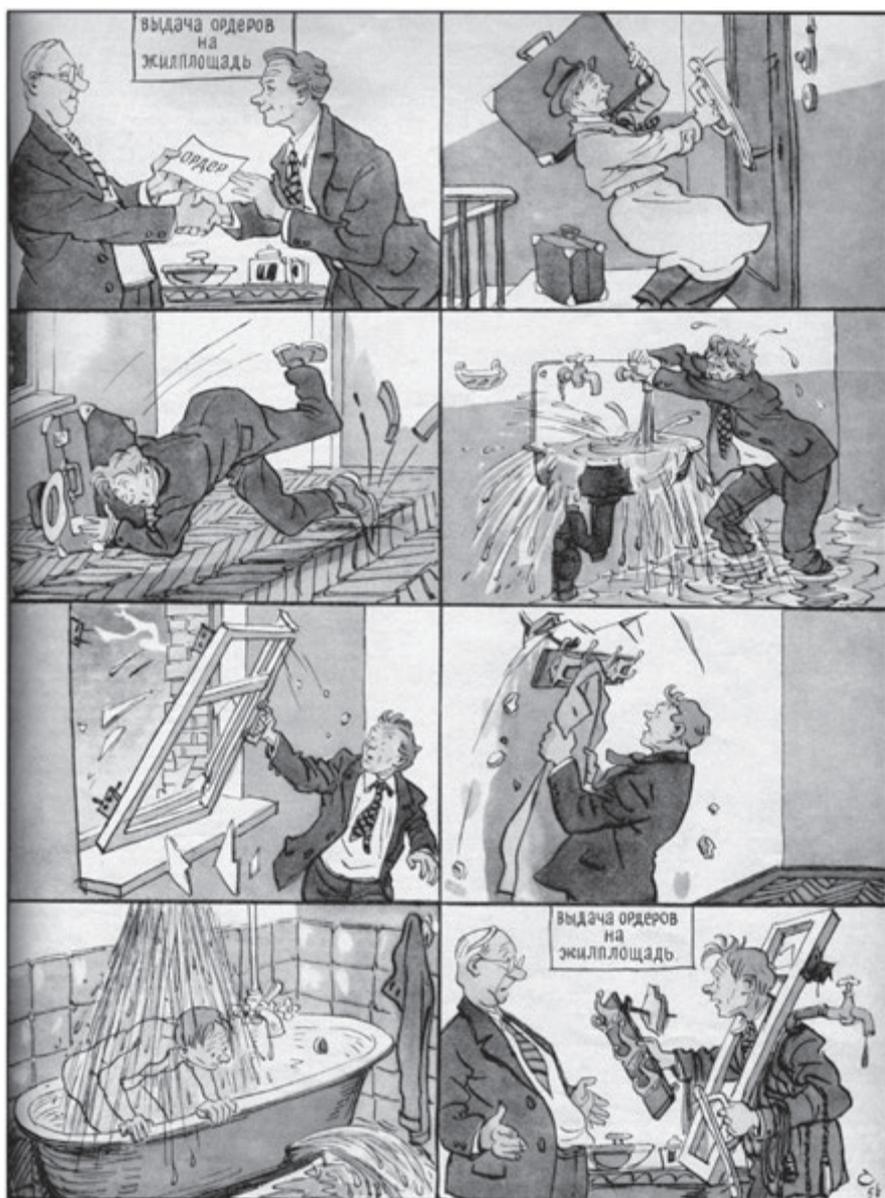
*Portraying the antithesis of the happy housewarming, this pictorial diary chronicles the trials and tribulations of one new settler – from obtaining a writ for a new apartment to discovering the shoddy workmanship that confronted him upon moving in. The fact that this cartoon appeared months before Khrushchev announced his housing construction campaign foreshadows the shortcomings that would accompany his altruistic policy and indicates continuity in living conditions (*Krokodil, 10 September 1956, 5)*.*

side glowing accounts of new housing. One such article began by announcing the happiness of a Leningrad family on the occasion of their move from a 'tiny little room' to their own separate two-room apartment. Its subtitle, however, foreshadowed the unpleasantness that awaited the new tenants: 'Move in – shed a few tears.' The family soon discovered, among other problems, that both their radiator and their ceiling leaked. After repeated attempts at repair had failed, the author of this piece concluded by asking: 'Is it not time to eliminate these defects and to not darken the joy of the housewarming for tenants of a new building?'[58]

The fact that the spoiled housewarming and shoddy construction or repair work were common themes in the national satirical magazine *Crocodile* (*Krokodil*) demonstrates the ubiquity of such shortcomings throughout the Soviet Union. For example, one correspondent reported with humorous embellishment that in Astrakhan there had been constructed an unprecedented number of so-called 'good, fully-equipped buildings,' which in reality were 'fundamentally bad'. In one of these apartment houses, he asserted, the radiator had exploded in a fountain, damaging the floor and furniture; in another, tenants on the first floor were inundated with gaseous fumes, while those on the upper floor were freezing. The reporter blamed such disgraceful construction projects on 'economising' and indifference toward 'the people'.[59] Such sarcastic tales offered caricatures for the amusement of readers who themselves might have experienced similar disappointment in new housing. However, they also indirectly reflected the altruistic official policy and the concern for the people that the ideal housewarming represented – even if it had not yet been fully and perfectly realised.

Conclusion

A Soviet-era anecdote recounting an annual meeting of the State Housing Construction Committee notes two topics on the agenda: 'the building of new apartment houses and the building of communism.' The chairman opens the meeting: 'In view of the fact that we have no bricks and no mortar, let us devote today's session to the discussion of the second question.'[60] The objects of this joke correspond with fundamental aspects of the housewarming narrative – housing construction and communist advancement. Specifically, evoking the sluggishness conveyed in satirical accounts of 'moving in', this anecdote raises the following question: was building communism merely a diversion concocted by the Soviet

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58   M. Bekher, 'Nevziraia nalitsa. Poselilis' – proslezilis'', *Pp*, 17 April 1962, p. 2.

59   B. Iudin, 'Lozhka degtia', *Krokodil*, 30 June 1960, p. 10-11.

60   Irina H. Corten, *Vocabulary of Soviet Society and Culture: A Selected Guide to Russian Words, Idioms, and Expressions of the Post-Stalin Era, 1953-1991* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992), p. 42.

state and Communist Party to placate a populace disgruntled with its standard of living or to promote a brilliant image of socialist society in the midst of Cold War rivalry? As this chapter has asserted, providing decent living conditions and reaching communism were innately connected in housing policy under Khrushchev. The fact that 'bricks and mortar' were at times in short supply does not diminish the revolutionary precepts upon which each mandate was based. Moreover, official commitment to housing construction is substantiated by the numerous ideological treatises that were devoted to the subject of mass housing and by the enormous number of apartments actually built.

That ideological principles also inspired confidence in the regime is suggested by the vigour with which thousands upon thousands of Soviet citizens seeking better living conditions – those whom the housewarming still eluded – petitioned both local and national officials.[61] These petitioners, familiar with government policy, appropriated the rhetoric of progress and asked why they themselves were not benefiting from the extensive construction they witnessed taking place all around them. For example, in a 1963 letter to Khrushchev, the war veteran and factory worker G.P. Isaenkov rhetorically asked why, given the grandiose building efforts taking place in Leningrad, he and his wife could not be immediately provided a mere one-room flat in this city.[62] Of course, even when drawing upon the official housewarming narrative, the stakes that individuals placed in state housing construction were not necessarily (or genuinely) 'socialist' in nature. Decent housing, both for those who obtained a separate apartment and for those still awaiting their happy housewarming, meant living in dignity and tranquillity, and space for personal development and enjoying time with family and friends.[63]

Returning to the broader context, how did the Cold War figure, rhetorically, in the revolutionary trajectory of housing policy? As the Kitchen Debate demonstrated, Khrushchev was determined to overtake the West where consumer contentment and social welfare were concerned. What is particularly interesting is

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61 The executive committee of the Leningrad city soviet (the highest body of municipal government) alone received thousands of complaints or written petitions, annually, regarding the housing question. See for example, *Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sankt-Peterburg* [Central State Archive of St. Petersburg; hereafter, TSGA SPb], f. 7384, op. 37a, d. 8, l. 1 and l. 8.

62 TSGA SPb, f. 7384, op. 42, d. 343, l. 425. As this request for better living space implies, a sense of entitlement was one driving force behind petitions to exchange housing. For more on the ways in which this notion was embedded in unpublished petitions, see Christine Varga-Harris, 'Forging Citizenship on the Home Front: Reviving the Socialist Contract and Constructing Soviet Identity During the Thaw', in Polly Jones (ed.), *The Dilemmas of De-Stalinization: A Social and Cultural History of Reform in the Khrushchev Era* (London/New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 101-116.

63 This sentiment is gleaned, for example, from TSGA SPb, f. 7384, op. 37a, d. 48, l. 174. On popular housing ideals and conceptions of 'then versus now' see Christine Varga-Harris, '*Khrushchevka, kommunalka*: Sotsializm i povsednevnost' vo vremia "ottepeli"', *Noveishaia istoriia Rossii/Modern history of Russia*, no. 1 (2011), p. 160-166.

the *way* in which Soviet daily life was depicted. Most obviously, as shown, the individual family living signified by the separate apartment was expected to complement social collectivism and workplace productivity. After all, communism was supposed to be built right alongside better housing.

Also noteworthy was the manner in which movement toward communism was depicted in this, the atomic age. The dismantling of the Stalinist regime under Khrushchev had rendered moot terror and the threat of internal 'enemies of the people' in the Soviet Union; according to Shlapentokh, declarations about the advantages of socialism now came to legitimate the state in lieu of coercion.[64] Thus, while fear – for example, of nuclear annihilation – may have, in part, kept Americans 'homeward bound' in the post-war years, state promises for a bright communist future were employed to mobilise the masses in the Soviet Union during the 1950s and 1960s. Two contemporaneous images are illustrative. One is a 1962 *LIFE* magazine cover showing a plan for a well-equipped fallout shelter beneath the bridge of an immaculate highway laden with automobiles and surrounded by pristine buildings.[65] The other is a Yuri Pimenov painting of the same year, 'A Wedding on Tomorrow's Street', which depicts a smiling newly-wed couple leading its wedding party over wooden planks through a muddy construction site, with building cranes soaring in the background. The American image emphasises abundance at risk, a domestic dreamworld that could potentially end tragically, while the latter portrays a happy world still being built.

Even the defects that 'new settlers' in the Soviet Union habitually highlighted did not turn the radiant future into a spurious mythological construct. Its presence was manifested in the bulldozers animating the urban landscape, and its arrival was situated in a definable place: the separate apartment that for many had become a reality. The housewarming celebrated in each such utopia-in-miniature, meanwhile, indicated that the Soviet government was at last realising its avowed obligation to house the people. Thus, alongside acknowledgement that communism as an all-encompassing way of life was still being constructed, every single completed new flat constituted evidence both of improvement in daily life and of advancement toward socialism, with communism being the anticipated next, and final, phase of the Revolution.

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64   Shlapentokh, *Soviet Public Opinion and Ideology*, p. 11.
65   This appeared on the front of the 12 January 1962 issue of *LIFE*.

8   Cold War Modernism and Post-War German Homes

An East-West Comparison

»   *Natalie Scholz & Milena Veenis*

Introduction: Cold War Modernism in the West and the East

The stylistic dichotomy between modernism on the one hand and socialist realism on the other is a standard theme in narratives of the cultural Cold War. This narrative, encompassing the whole range of cultural productions from literature, dance and music to art, design and architecture, is itself not free from Cold War rhetorical elements. To interpret modernist culture as a free and individualist form of artistic expression in opposition to socialist realism as an essentially traditional and even national approach to culture, suggests the clear-cut logic of two opposing political systems being reflected in the propaganda uses of culture in both camps.[1]

In 1983, Serge Guilbaut published his influential study about how Abstract Expressionism came to represent American culture and in turn was used by the state and the CIA to demonstrate two things: firstly, that the United States contributed substantially to Western (formerly European) high culture; secondly, that American Art, in contrast to the Soviet Union, represented above all the freedom of the individual.[2] More recently, this interpretation has been taken up in different historical studies on the cultural Cold War, producing new perspectives on a debate previously focused on art-historical issues. Thus, it has become clear that the political appropriation of modernism reached far beyond the practice of exhibiting paintings. Especially in the field of architecture and industrial design modernist aesthetics acquired strong symbolic and representational significance

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

2   Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom and the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). See also Michael L. Krenn, *Fall-Out Shelters for the Human Spirit: American Art and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

to the national (or international) audience at home. Concerning the latter, the political meaning will inescapably be intertwined with other meanings and other cultural contexts than the East-West competition of political systems.

Patrick Major and Rana Mitter's useful distinction between 'cultural cold war' as a form of cultural diplomacy and 'cold war culture' as a 'system of meaning and behaviour shaped by the dynamics of the conflict' should therefore be used to consider more thoroughly the mutual influence and interdependence of these two sides of the coin.[7] To put it differently, the ways in which specific elements of Cold War culture were locally appropriated can only be understood in relation to a society's internal goals, needs and debates.

The relative popularity of modernist forms in Cold War Europe, used by the us as a weapon in order to win European populations over to the western ideological cause, is neither an indication of America's success, nor an affirmation of modernism's 'liberal', 'progressive' or 'free' nature. Its appeal in Cold War Europe can only be understood against the background of European struggles to reinvent the guiding political principles and imaginaries of their societies in the shadow of the interwar crisis and the catastrophe of World War ii.

In the light of this argument, the theme of interior design in both Germanies is an especially interesting and complex case in point. Recent scholarship has revealed that the home was a crucial topic in post-war Europe (and in America), both as a site of technical, social and cultural renewal and as an imaginative space serving to deal with the future *and* the past.[8] The way houses and homes were conceived, constructed and furnished was generally regarded as a central political issue, through which the government had to prove its ability to solve social problems. At the same time, the living space also was to reflect the formation of post-war societies as a whole. The question of where, how and in what style of furnishing people lived was therefore closely connected to the question of what kind of society was to be (re)constructed. In the two Germanies this relationship between design and the reordering of post-war society was furthermore closely

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7   Patrick Major and Rana Mitter, 'Culture', in Saki R. Dockrill and Geraint Hughes (eds.), *Cold War History* (Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave, 2006), p. 240-262, quotation p. 241. See on this debate also Peter J. Kuznick en James Gilbert, 'u.s. Culture and the Cold War', in Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert (eds.), *Rethinking Cold War Culture* (Washington/ New York: Smithsonian Institution, 2001), p. 1-13; Peter Filene, '"Cold War Culture" Doesn't Say it All', in Kuznick and Gilbert (eds.), *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, p. 156-174.

8   See 'Notions of Home in Post-1945 Europe' in Paul Betts and David Crowley (eds.), *Journal of Contemporary History* 40 (2005); Liesbeth Bervoets and Mikael Hård (eds.), *Home Cultures* 10 (2010); Johannes von Moltke, *No Place Like Home: Locations of Heimat in German Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Becky E. Conekin, *The Autobiography of a Nation: The 1951 Festival of Britain* (Manchester/New York: Manchester up, 2003); Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge/London: mit Press, 1995); Claire Duchen, 'Occupation housewife: The domestic ideal in 1950s France', *French Cultural Studies* 2 (1991), p. 1-12; David Crowley and Susan E. Reid (eds.), *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (Oxford/New York: Berg 2002).

related to both countries' efforts to create a new 'national' self-understanding after the political break of 1945. While for West and East Germans this effort was necessarily linked to the question of how to deal with the national socialist past, the United States, and later on the Soviet Union developed their own political agendas with design.

The United States was the first to bring the interior design of private dwellings onto the agenda of cultural diplomacy. During the 1950s, it sought to further propagate the American model of mass consumption in Europe by organising a series of exhibitions in West Germany and other Marshall Plan countries to demonstrate the technical achievements and 'international modernism' of the Western home.[9] As is well known by now, the typical modernism of the showrooms was not only quite dissimilar to the average American home, but also heavily contested as a political symbol by many conservatives.[10] The 'American modern home' was primarily created for the West and also East European publics rather than for American audiences.[11]

Obviously, the domestic environment did not get the same kind of attention in Stalin's USSR, given both the central role of production and work in socialist ideology, and the socialist emphasis on the collectivist, rather than intimate and individual aspects of leisure. Consequently the domestic sphere initially played an inferior role in the Soviet Union's Cold War propaganda.[12] On the stage of international exhibitions this tradition became once more visible at the Brussels' world fair in 1958, where the US exhibition centred on the material world of private everyday life, whereas the Soviet Union quintessentially displayed machines, airplanes and a *Sputnik* satellite.[13]

This did not prevent Khrushchev from engaging in the famous kitchen debate with vice president Nixon in Moscow just a year later, discussing which system could provide its people with better equipped homes.[14] In fact, Soviet culture of the Khrushchev era 'became obsessed with homemaking and domesticity' as Susan

9   Greg Castillo, 'Domesticating the Cold War: Household Consumption as Propaganda in Marshall Plan Germany', *Journal of Contemporary History* 40 (2005), p. 261-288.

10 Marlin, *As Seen on TV*; Shelley Nickles, 'More is Better. Mass Consumption, Gender, and Class Identity in Postwar America', *American Quarterly* 54 (December 2002), p. 581-622.

11 This does not preclude though that it had an influence on internal visions of the 'American way' simultaneously circulating in US publications and advertisements.

12 See for example Anthony Swift, 'The Soviet World of Tomorrow at the New York's World's Fair, 1939', *Russian Review* 57 (1998), p. 364-379.

13 Karl Pawek, 'Versöhnung mit der Zivilisation', *Magnum: Die Zeitschrift für das moderne Leben* 18 (June 1958), p. 39. 'Brussels's Light-Up Time: Shapes, sights of the World's Fair show age of marvels and contest of ideas', *LIFE* 19 (12 May 1958), p. 47-50.

14 See the various contributions in Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann (eds.), *Cold War Kitchen: Americanization, Technology, and European Users* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009).

Reid put it.[15] This is partly due to the fact that after Stalin's death in 1953 the politics of de-Stalinisation broke with the preceding practice of rehabilitating bourgeois living cultures and started to embrace the modernist style of interior design, reconnecting to the early post-revolutionary period.[16] Curiously, the fact that America had symbolically loaded modernism as *the* style of the West did not restrain Russia from using the same aesthetics for the purpose of giving a new shape to post-Stalin socialist society. This is a remarkable indication that the Cold War culture of one country could produce phenomena not only partially at odds with its own culture, but also in paradoxical conformity with the enemy's Cold War culture.

Where do these observations leave us with Cold War modernism in general and the German cases in particular? West Germany welcomed modern design nearly from the beginning. The German Democratic Republic (GDR) started to rehabilitate modernism during the second half of the 1950s, after having embraced socialist realism before, following the Soviet line. In both countries the state sponsorship of this style went hand in hand with a public discourse on the morality of domestic objects and on the way the right objects with the right design would help to rebuild the 'new' post-war German societies and reshape their respective citizens. Although the underlying political ideologies were obviously very different, the significance both countries tried to inscribe into the aesthetics of everyday objects was in many ways very similar. But astonishment about the fact that 'products specifically formulated for their appeal in the capitalist West had suddenly become the standard bearers of socialist domestic culture'[17] will not suffice as historical interpretation. Instead, we propose to step back from an approach which takes the Western story of modern design as the model against which the East has to be evaluated. Rather, the remarkable load of political meaning injected into modern design in both countries can only be understood as part of a general attempt to reshape society in the specific historical constellation of the post-war era, when countries were confronted with a triple challenge: reinventing modernity, doing so in the shadow of a troubling past, and constantly facing the competition with a hostile political system on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

The following comparison between the political meanings of modern design in post-war East and West Germany is based on the conviction that modern design had (and has) no intrinsic relationship with any twentieth century political ideology. On the contrary, modernism has proven to be quite adaptable and capable to express national socialism/fascism, communism and liberal democracy. Its quite remarkable success in both West Germany and the GDR further supports this

15 Susan E. Reid, 'Communist Comfort. Socialist Modernism and the Making of Cosy Homes in the Khrushchev Era', *Gender & History* 21 (2009), p. 465-498, quotation p. 469.

16 Ibid., pp. 471-72.

17 Castillo, *Cold War at the Home Front*, p. 176.

conviction, but the German case also sheds light on another issue. The fact that both the aesthetic of interior design and the political interpretations with which it was presented reveal conspicuous similarities in both Germanies, makes clear that the two central ideas associated with modern design – the belief that it would be possible to improve social life in a rational way, and the rejection of fundamental class differences – were indeed of crucial importance for the post-war cultural reconstruction in West and East. In the specific context of the two post-Nazi-era German states another aspect was added. The design communities in both countries recognised modern design as an aesthetics opposing, and thereby enabling a clean break with the dark sides of the German past. Modern design, in other words, was considered to be able to wipe out the national socialist legacy which was regarded as either the apex of capitalism (East) or the culmination of all reprehensible characteristics of Wilhelmine culture (West).

Post-war ideals of societal renewal were thus materialised in rather comparable ways in both states; inhabitants of both countries were to furnish their homes in a modern way. As we will show, there were striking differences as well, between the ways in which modernism was appropriated by both German states. Furthermore, the American use of modern design as a symbol of the West also left its mark on the ways in which West and East Germany were able to assign political meaning to modern design. In West Germany designers and journalists were prompted to take a stance on the American influence, whereas in the GDR designers were provoked to invent new labels and adapt different interpretations to a German design tradition that had been appropriated by its western neighbour. However, it is telling that in both German states designers simply suppressed modern design's interpretations as far as these did not fit in with their ideological and political views – be it on the other side of the Iron Curtain, or on the other side of the political turning point of 1945.

A Post-War Aesthetics of Renewal

In the course of the 1950s, politicians and professionals in East and West Germany discovered the aesthetics of everyday objects as strong political symbols as well as powerful educative tools for the overall renewal of their societies. The backdrop, though, against which these ideas developed, was the reality of what German historians have once called the 'breakdown society' (*Zusammenbruchgesellschaft*).[18] National socialist measurements of self-destruction, combat and the allied bombings of German cities had produced a landscape of urban ruins and destroyed

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18   Christoph Kleßmann, *Die doppelte Staatsgründung: Deutsche Geschichte 1945-1955* (Bonn: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), p. 39.

infrastructure which, after the war, resulted in poverty, hunger and a severe housing shortage aggravated by the arrival of millions of displaced persons and refugees from the former Eastern German provinces.[19] Although industrial production soon increased again in the western sectors, everyday life continued for years to be shaped by the scarcity of basic commodities, the production of 'privation commodities' (*Notprodukte*) made of war materials and the dominance of the black market forcing many people to exchange material goods for food.[20]

Despite the fact that both the Marshall Plan and the Korean War boom helped the economy grow ever more quickly after the founding of West Germany in 1949, the great majority of West Germans could not afford to buy anything beyond absolute necessities for survival until well into the 1950s.[21] Judging from popular lifestyle magazines the average West German citizen was indeed not concerned with the style of furnishings but rather with having an apartment at all. Consequently, existential practical problems like heating dominated as well as the omnipresent question of how to organise the furniture in a very small apartment or how to give a personal touch to a room furnished by the owner.[22]

This did not prevent the professional industrial designers from putting the aesthetics of things quickly back on the public agenda. It may have been by coincidence but it was nevertheless telling that the German *Werkbund*, which had been re-established in 1947, inaugurated its first major exhibition under the title *Neues Wohnen* (New Dwelling) only nine days before the new West German Basic Law was promulgated on 23 May 1949. The contributors to the catalogue expressed above all their concern about the new Germany losing its capacity to 'design its own world' and urgently pleaded for a reanimation of the German design expertise of the 1920s.[23]

Mere survival also dominated life in the future GDR amidst the ruins of the war. About 45% of the country's productive capacities had been destroyed, and contrary to the western part of the country, the Soviet-occupied part did not receive help from the Marshall Plan. Instead of receiving aid, it was forced to pay about

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19   Approximately 12 million people according to Kleßmann, ibid.

20   Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegrist, *Deutsche Kulturgeschichte: Die Bundesrepublik von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (München: Hanser, 2009), p. 23-25; Malte Zierenberg, *Stadt der Schieber: Der Berliner Schwarzmarkt 1939-1950* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008). See on the *Notprodukte* also *Blasse Dinge: Werkbund und Waren 1945-1949*, exhibition of the German Werkbund (Berlin: Anabas, 1989).

21   Michael Wildt, 'Privater Konsum in Westdeutschland in den 50er Jahren', in Axel Schildt and Arnold Sywottek (eds.), *Modernisierung im Wiederaufbau: Die westdeutsche Gesellschaft der 50er Jahre* (Bonn: Dietz, 1998), p. 275-289. For a recent discussion of the effects of the Marshall Plan on the German economy see Werner Abelshauser, *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte seit 1945* (München: C.H. Beck, 2004), p. 130-154.

22   See for example the following articles in *Das Blatt der Hausfrau*: 'Unser winterlicher Freund', 2 (1952), p. 8; Mein Dachkämmerchen', 11 (1952); 'Aus eins mach zwei', 25 (1952).

23   Jupp Ernst, 'Die Form aus der Maschine', in *Neues Wohnen: Werkbund-Ausstellung Deutsche Architektur seit 1945* (Cologne 1949), unpaginated.

14 billion dollars reparations to the Soviet Union in the first eight years of its exist-ence.[24] The reparations were mainly taken in kind; the Soviet occupying forces dismantled everything they could lay their hands on and transported it to the Soviet Union.[25] Large parts of East Germany's railway network were broken up and transported to the Soviet Union, further frustrating the country's miserable production capacities by a lack of transport capabilities. Hunger reigned and dur-ing the first years after the war one and a half times more people died than during the last years of the war.[26] Life was reduced to the barest form of survival, and it goes without saying that in this context the specific form and design of material necessities was completely irrelevant.

Interestingly, this began to change as soon as the material situation allowed. From the beginning of the 1950s onwards, when the first ruins were cleared and hunger no longer dominated all of public life, the GDR began to search for an ade-quate material expression of its status as 'first socialist state on German soil.' In line with the classical Marxist axiom that the material basis of society determines the social relations and mentality of a people, a lot of attention was paid to finding the right forms for East German daily life. It was considered important for their further development that they would be surrounded by the right, socialist-proof material world. This not only pertained to the public sphere (urban development and architecture), but people's private surroundings were an equally relevant issue for public concern.

In order to legitimise its existence, which was primarily politically motivated, the socialist state-that-was-no-nation needed an appealing form to materially express its identity. Since the GDR's existence was primarily justified by the state's presumably distinct anti-fascist character, the country was in need of a form that would best be able to express socialism as anti-fascism. Opinions differed as to how that form should look, favouring different elements of German design his-tory. Although the East German design world eventually agreed on modern forms of design as the most appropriate way to both express the socialist state's anti-fascist identity and educate East German consumer-citizens to recognise socialism as an improvement compared to 'the former social order,' this accord was certainly no foregone conclusion.

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24 Historians do not agree on the precise amount of reparations paid by the GDR to the Soviet Union. Between 1945 and 1953, the GDR paid 'the highest known level of reparations in the twentieth century', Corey Ross, *The East German Dictatorship* (London: Arnold, 2002), p. 84. See also Mark Landsman, *Dictatorship and Demand* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

25 See Jochen Laufer, 'From Dismantling to Currency Reform: External Origins of the East German Dictator-ship, 1943-1948', in Konrad Jarausch (ed.), *Dictatorship as Experience: Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR* (New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1999), p. 73-91, especially p. 76.

26 See Rainer Gries, *Die Rationen-Gesellschaft: Versorgungskampf und Vergleichsmentalität: Leipzig, München und Köln nach dem Kriege* (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 1991), p. 120.

Designer Mart Stam, Dutch by birth but having lived and worked an important part of his life in Germany and the Soviet Union before returning to the Netherlands in 1934, chose to settle in the eastern part of Germany in 1948 in order to help rebuild the socialist country. As a close colleague of Le Corbusier and Gerrit Rietveld, Stam deemed a Bauhaus inspired, modernist line of design the most appropriate way to underline and express the GDR's socialist character. He not only regarded modernism's straight lines and lack of ornamentation as the most appropriate symbols for socialism's classless society, but he also recognised modernist architecture as the most practical solution for the GDR's massive housing problems. These views were widely shared amongst professional designers and other East German intellectuals, but there were powerful antagonists as well, the most important of whom was undoubtedly Walter Ulbricht – until 1950 Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the GDR, from 1950 General Secretary of the Central Committee of the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (SED).

Ulbricht, who had been a woodworker before becoming a professional politician, was inspired by the neoclassicist style and tradition he had encountered during his years in exile in the Soviet Union under Stalin. Just like in the Soviet Union, he favoured forms in which national traditions were 'respected, integrated, and enhanced,'[27] and he considered what he called 'proletarian classicism' to be the most appropriate socialist form. He denounced modernism for uprooting national heritage and denying the real meaning of art, reducing everything to its form.[28] At the SED's third conference in July 1950 a declaration of war was waged against what was called 'formalism' in art and architecture. Formalism, the pejorative and official designation for Bauhaus' modernist principles, was regarded as 'the outcome of "cosmopolitanism", of capitalism, and of the "cannibalistic" teachings of the imperialist [American] war-mongers.'[29]

Although Ulbricht, representing the GDR's central leadership, did not favour modernist design, it continued to be a very popular style amongst East German designers, and Mart Stam's career continued to show an upward line.[30] In 1952, he organised an exposition on '*Industriewaren von Heute*', choosing the displayed objects from amongst 'a sea of kitsch'[31] – an indication that the struggle between

27   Anna Minta, 'The Authority of the Ordinary: Building Socialism and the Ideology of Domestic Space in East Germany's Furniture Industry', in Mart Kalm and Ingrid Ruudi (eds.), *Constructed Happiness: Domestic Environment in the Cold War Era*, Estonian Academy of Arts Proceedings, 16 (2005), p. 102-117.

28   Ibid.

29   Ibid., p. 106.

30   Stam was respectively rector of the Academy of Arts and *Werkkunst* in Dresden (1948), Rector of (East) Berlin's Academy for Applied Art (1950), and founder of the Institute for Industrial Design in Berlin (1950).

31   Horst Oehlke, 'Design in der DDR', in Regine Halter (ed.), *Vom Bauhaus bis Bitterfeld: 41 Jahre DDR-Design* (Gießen: Anabas Verlag, 1991), p. 75.

modernism's protagonists and opponents was not decided yet, and was still being fought feverishly.

At about the same time, West German designers and journalists, educators and state officials started to intensively promote modern design. New or re-established institutions like the new German *Werkbund*, the government agency *Rat für Formgebung* (German Design Council 1951) and the *Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm* (Ulm Institute of Design 1955), an official successor of the Bauhaus school, reinterpreted the modern design tradition as an expression of a specifically German and at the same time anti- or post-fascist humanist cultural idealism. The public discussion about questions of interior design expressed the difficult search for a new identity adapted to the political and social conditions of life in post-war West Germany. For architects and designers the aesthetic appearance of everyday objects was the main post-war challenge. At stake was the need to finally find the right way of modernising the country. For these professionals, the 'good form' of domestic things was an explicitly moral issue, for neither the pathos-driven irrationalism of the Nazis nor capitalist materialism should shape the modern West German society in the making.[32]

Already in September 1951, the West German political magazine *Der Spiegel* paid attention to what it perceived as a disparity between the new forms created by interior designers and the taste of the average customer. Contrary to the functional, Bauhaus-inspired pieces of the former, many consumers seemed to favour curved lines and types of furniture that professional designers ridiculed as 'Gelsenkirchener Barock'.[33] Different professional institutions, such as the building society *Neue Heimat* and the programme for social housing, began to experiment with ways to actively shape West German consumer taste, which they deemed misguided, in order to convince them of the advantages of modern furnishings instead of the traditional opulent designs.

Although the early issues of the West German magazines under scrutiny did not really favour a specific form or design tradition, this began to change as early as 1953 and 1954, when *Brigitte* and *Constanze* published programmatic articles in which they half described, half argued for a general change in decoration styles in favour of a decisively 'modern' orientation. One recurrent line of the argument for modern design during the first half of the 1950s was directly related to the living conditions in post-war Germany. The urgent lack of housing and the decisively smaller floor space of the newly-built apartments compared to bourgeois

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32   See especially Paul Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Greg Castillo, 'The Bauhaus in Cold War Germany', in Kathleen James-Chakraborty (ed.), *Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), p. 171-193.

33   'Weg von Tante Frieda', *Der Spiegel*, 26 September 1951, p. 32-33.

standards (50 square meters for a family in the social housing sector)[34] served as a practical and moral argument in favour of modern lines and forms. The overly adorned and oversized historicist furniture, so it was argued, just did not fit in any more. Even more so, the material and spatial constraints that strongly added to the fervour with which modern design was welcomed back were transformed into a virtue. It was argued that West Germans were morally obliged to give up the old dreams of bourgeois representation to achieve a simpler, more honest but also more comfortable and in the end more egalitarian way of life.[35]

With modernist design starting to become popular in West Germany, its East German proponents lost terrain. The political and economic Cold War between the two blocs was at its apex, and the GDR needed to clearly demarcate itself from its national twin and political opponent. When in 1953 the East German national exhibition *Besser Leben – schöner Wohnen* (Live better – Dwell beautifully) was organised, a strong plea was made for a design that was to derive its main source of inspiration from the workers' and farmers' traditions. The organisers consoled the public that there was no need to shy away from ornamentation and in a so-called *Schreckenskammer* (chamber of horrors) the dreadfulness of modernist design was presented. At that time Mart Stam decided to leave the country. In 1953, he moved to Amsterdam.

Interestingly, this incident is not mentioned in the all-embracing, detailed history of East German design, *Gestalten für die Serie: Design in der DDR 1945-1988*, written in 1988 by East German designer Heinz Hirdina.[36] An equally remarkable omission is Hirdina's complete negligence of the Soviet Union's influence on East German design-politics, which is well documented. When Stalin died in 1953, Ulbricht lost an important ally in his battle against modernism and his defence of ornamentation. Khrushchev took a completely different stance where it concerned the material reconstruction of the socialist countries. He reproached the building industry for not using standardised, prefabricated concrete constructions, and architects for continuing 'to adorn apartment block's with extravagant decorative details.'[37] His plea for standardisation (which was primarily motivated by economic considerations) had a deep and lasting influence on design throughout the socialist bloc, including the GDR.

In 1956, two design-related journals were established in the GDR: one explicitly aiming at people who were (professionally) interested in design, *Form und*

34 Adelheid von Saldern, 'Von der „guten Stube" zur „guten Wohnung": Zur Geschichte des Wohnens in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland', *Archif für Sozialgeschichte* 35 (1995), p. 227-257, 233.

35 'Warum denn so verschnörkelt?' *Constanze* 3 (February 1953), p. 48-49.

36 Heinz Hirdina, *Gestalten für die Serie: Design in der DDR 1949-1985* (Dresden: VEB Verlag der Kunst, 1988).

37 Greg Castillo, 'East as True West: Redeeming Bourgeois Culture, from Socialist Realism to *Ostalgie*', *Kritika* 9 (2008) no. 4, p. 764.

Zweck, and a popular home-decorating journal, *Kultur im Heim*. *Form und Zweck*'s first issue clearly shows the direction in which East German form and design would develop. Its pleas for a 'simple, space-saving (...) parsimoniousness,' its battle against kitsch, and against 'capitalist mass production's' attempts to 'cheaply produce goods that look expensive' indicate the strong preference for modernism's basic assumptions, practices and principles the journal shared with its popular colleague.[38] Hardly two years after Stam left the GDR in disappointment, the officially state-supported perspective on design in the GDR was dominated by modernist forms and lines – both in architecture and in the production of consumer goods and household objects.

In the GDR the aim was to educate East Germans. They were to become so enlightened that they would internalise social and political needs and objectives to the extent that these would guide their taste preferences, instead of whimsy considerations on fashion. In West Germany the rationality of consumer choice was a theme promoted by journalists in many ways and on many terrains, targeting especially the post-war housewife.[39] But the rhetoric devices the magazines' advice pages used to convince West Germans of the advantages of modern design differed from the East German discourse. The presentation of rational and moral arguments was frequently combined with a method of playful seduction reflecting the need to negotiate between existing, still mostly conservative, style preferences and the new vision of the modern world of dwelling. The message's tone was different on both sides of the German-German border: in West Germany consumers were not only convinced of but also seduced towards modern forms, using advertising methods of persuasion, for instance by claiming 'To have no money – that is very modern' or by using headlines reminiscent of advertising slogans: 'That's how dwelling becomes fun!' In the GDR, on the other hand, 'the proper form' did not need to be sold by presenting it as 'actually very fashionable.'[40] East Germans simply had to become so enlightened that they, as good socialist citizen-consumers, would come to accept right forms as such.

Another difference concerns the labelling. Whereas 'modernism' and 'Bauhaus' were frequently used terms in the West, they were not referred to openly in the GDR. There, the preferred style was described in great detail, constantly referring to 'the basis of an object's beauty is its practical function,' thus clearly depicting modernist forms without ever mentioning this as such – Bauhaus remained

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38 *Form und Zweck* (hereafter *FuZ*) 1956-1957, p. 13.
39 See Erica Carter, *How German is She? Postwar West German Reconstruction and the Consuming Woman* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).
40 'Wie modern sind wir eigentlich?' *Brigitte* 6 (March 1954), p. 4-6, and 'So macht das Wohnen Spaß!' *Constanze* 20 (September 1954), p. 102-103.

the style 'that did not dare to speak its name.'[41] Its East German heirs referred to their style as 'functionalist', while their opponents called it 'formalist'. The taboo on directly referring to the Bauhaus tradition as a source of inspiration was certainly a reaction to the style's ideological appropriation by the Western world. Once living and working in the US (from 1937), Walter Gropius started to ideologically reframe Bauhaus design, depicting it as an essentially democratic and anti-totalitarian form, belonging to the West. When the West German Academy of Design in Ulm, founded in 1955 with the support of Max Bill, a former Bauhaus student, was presented as the successor of Bauhaus,[42] this provoked East German designers to invent new labels and adapt different interpretations to a (common) German design tradition.

These differences notwithstanding, it is clear that both Germanies, contending with comparable problems and objectives, acknowledged comparable forms, using comparable arguments and rationales. On both sides of the German-German border thrift was recognised as the main ethical as well as aesthetic imperative, and journalists in East and West came to vehemently promote a frugal interior decoration in an educational tone. Below, we will describe both the forms of interior decoration and the didactics with which these were combined, and we will show that both in the GDR and in the West the stern enlightenment was combined with a mild understanding for those who 'had difficulties to get off the image of an ostentatious bedroom in the old style.'[43]

Educating the German Dweller

Comparable forms of design were embraced by designers in both German states, and in both states they were used to the same end: to demarcate the break with the fascist past, to instruct German citizen-consumers not to be seduced by the reactionary, false promises that had characterised national socialism, and to build up a better society.[44] Both in West and in East Germany, modernism was regarded as an appropriate way to re-educate the population towards a more egalitarian and enlightened stance on material culture. The conspicuously frequent use of the first person plural 'we' ('we are modern,' 'our lifestyle' etc.) signals how clearly

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41 Greg Castillo, 'East as True West: Redeeming Bourgeois Culture, from Socialist Realism to *Ostalgie*', *Kritika* 9, no. 4 (2008) p. 747-768.

42 Greg Castillo, 'The Bauhaus in Cold War Germany', in Kathleen James-Chakraborty (ed.), *Bauhaus Culture*. See also Paul Betts, 'The Bauhaus as Cold War Legend: West German Modernism Revisited', *German Politics and Society* 14 (1996), p. 2, 75-100.

43 'Möbliere sparsam – auch im Schlafzimmer! Die Schönheit in der Ecke', *Constanze* 14 (July 1954), p. 90.

44 On the relation between kitsch and reactionary politics (with a link to national socialism) see Lothar Kühne, *Gegenstand und Raum: Über die Historizität des Ästhetischen* (Dresden: VEB Verlag der Kunst, 1980), p. 218-220.

the seemingly banal theme of interior decoration was linked to a search for a collective identity. The two non-national German societies searched for something ideally all their respective citizens would have in common. There are two reasons why especially modern lines and forms were deemed appropriate to realise both countries' new beginnings. The first has to do with the relation between modernism's unadorned and simple characteristics, which made it an appropriate style to stress the socially inclusive politics both countries strove for, albeit embedded in different overarching political programmes. The second reason why modernism was used to connote and express hopes for a better future is that the frugality and functionalism of its forms stood for a pragmatic rationalism with which to solve the problems of post-war life and embark on a journey to a better future.[45]

Until roughly 1957, the concept of *moderne Wohnkultur* in West Germany clearly combined these two motivations: First, the desire to start anew and distance oneself from a generally 'bad past' by aesthetically fashioning the longed-for better living conditions as counter models to pre-war bourgeois and authoritarian values; second, the conviction that this new culture of material well-being would also have to be one of social egalitarianism. The importance of cultural renewal in the home, even in times when most people still could not afford to buy new furniture at all, is reflected in repeated articles on how to remove the embellishments of the 'huge and ornate pieces of furniture' one had inherited or bought for a low price. The 'cold pomp' of turn-of-the-century furniture, the epitome of false ideals of social grand-standing, proved quite easy to get rid of, resulting in simple, modest and very convenient pieces that were in line with the *Zeitgeist* and could easily be combined with other pieces.[46]

Although West German ideas of the aesthetic modernisation of everyday life were explicitly presented as being part of a broader Western development, America appears to have been a very present but also largely ambivalent example. Albeit clearly the epitome of a modernised country, it was sometimes seen as a positive model whereas at other times it was deemed too different and remote from post-war West German realities. Not surprisingly, the Western countries that were referred to as model-states of modern design were above all the Scandinavian countries with their strong social-democratic and egalitarian political tradition, especially Denmark and Sweden. They showed that the ideal of a low-key, egalitarian modern interior design could successfully be combined with widespread

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45 This belief in rational and technical solutions was certainly a tendency common to many post-war societies. On Britain, see Becky Conekin, Frank Mort and Chris Waters, 'Introduction', in Becky Conekin et al. (eds.), *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain 1945-1964* (Londen/New York: Rivers Oram Press, 1999), p. 1-21.

46 'Himmel, wir haben geerbt', *Brigitte* 4 (1953), p. 4-5; 'Schnörkelmöbel sind kein Unglück: Die Säge schafft's', *Constanze* 7 (March 1954), p. 88-89.

German ideas of homely comfort and modesty.[47] Interestingly, the Scandinavian countries were also referred to as positive models in East German design literature and journals, be it at a later date.

During the first two decades after the war the design literature in the GDR is characterised by a fierce and outspokenly idealistic and educational rhetoric in which, although fascism and national socialism are hardly referred to explicitly, the shadows of the country's dark past are clearly discernible. Incessant are the reminiscences and friendly paternalistic attempts to re-educate the population not to fall for the 'lamentable *Repräsentationssucht*' that characterised the '*Wolfs-gesetzen des Kapitalismus*,' the horrible results of which were well known. Until the founding of the GDR, the (East) German population was said to have lived in the 'mental vacuum' that characterised life in capitalist societies, which they were accustomed to 'fill' with 'primitive, unconscious, emotional, and psychic calls' for kitsch,[48] or with

> artificially artistic design, the contents of which bear no relation whatsoever with reality, because it is filled, not with real emotional value, but with sentimentality, and because its missing expressive power is replaced by erotic, politic, religious or other fantasy-incentives.[49]

In the new socio-political circumstances, people's material surroundings were 'much more than just a shield, a skin, or our life's visual scenery,' with which they used to superficially saturate the emptiness that characterised their former exist-ence. In socialist societies, material goods were the actual result of human effort and they should therefore be recognised as 'part of our essence, which develops with us and through which we find ourselves, realize ourselves.'[50]

East Germans thus had to learn to recognise the extent to which their taste preferences still testified to the 'habits from the capitalist world, rooted in obsolete concepts, that remain relatively stable for a long time.'[51] Misleading and recurrent mistakes were the desire for objects whose appearance was meant to impress, or objects whose form disregarded contemporary life and circumstances. They were often entwined in kitschy-looking objects. This label applied to all objects whose outer form promised an alternative to present-day life, especially newly made, old-

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47 For America see 'Blick nach innen', *Constanze* 13 (June 1953), p. 56-57; for Denmark and Sweden, 'Bitte gucken Sie rein! So sieht ein dänisches Haus aus', *Constanze* 3 (February 1954), p. 55; 'Das fiel mir in Schweden auf', *Constanze* 19 (May 1956), p. 142-143; Dieter Conrads, 'Die Nächsten kennt man am wenigsten/Schwedische Eindrücke', *Brigitte* 22 (October 1954), p. 8-9.

48 *Kultur im Heim* (further referred to as *KiH*) 6 (1968), p. 6.

49 *KiH* 6 (1968), p. 5.

50 Idem.

51 *KiH* 6 (1968), p. 4.

looking objects. Equally dishonest were objects whose function was hidden behind an irrelevant decoration; they not only renounced their primary aim to serve a specific goal but also their origin, because their appearance suggested another area of production than the one in which they were actually made. A comparable critique pertained to richly decorated objects, whose adornments did their utmost best to disguise their industrial origins. People who preferred to be surrounded by such things were actually trying to escape from the times in which they lived.

These points of departure formed the basis of East German designers' search for forms that expressed contemporary, industrial means of production, and that were in line with the innermost functions and aims of the products concerned. All this was to be done as economically as possible, because the available means were to be used in a sensible and responsible way. Thrift thus became a leading principle for design in the GDR; it was an important virtue – not just for purely economic reasons (the amount of money, raw materials, and manpower that were used during production), but also from a more qualitative perspective. Uneconomically designed objects tended to overwhelm and belittle their users,[52] and because an object's appearance should be subordinate to the people who were to use it, its ideal form was to resemble a wrapping or cover. Then the object could show what it was meant for: for closing, sealing and covering (technical) functions.[53] This perspective gave rise to an economically inspired, rigidly functionalist aesthetics, in which objects with straight lines and angles were preferred to rounded or curved forms. Rational, functional, enlightened, in accordance with present-day reality, no deceit, no insincere seduction, mutual alignment, and as economical as possible: those were East German design's main tenets. Taste was to be subordinate to reason. If a form was right, one could learn to appreciate it.

At least until the 1960s, an educational approach in many ways comparable to the East can be found in most of the West German design guidebooks. Just like in the GDR, the West German design literature does not openly refer to the national socialist past, which it is trying to disassociate itself from. There were two main discursive strategies with which the design literature connected the promotion of a modern style to the idea of a break with the past. The first one consisted in establishing an associative link between the German bourgeois culture of the turn-of-the-century and national socialism and the detested values it represented. For instance in May 1954, when *Brigitte* celebrated the asymmetrical and organic aspect of post-war modern interior design (later to be called *Nierentisch*), it declared 'we are not so fond of the square-cut any more, like we used to be years ago.' The broader political implications of this statement only become obvious in the German version, where both the word *eckig* (square-cut) and *zackig* are used,

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52   See for instance *KiH* 1, no. 3 (1971), p. 1.

53   Hirdina, *Gestalten für die Serie*, p. 58.

a combination of words clearly associated with militarism. The growing tendency to emphasise the light, fresh and cheerful characteristics of the shapes of tables and lamps seemed to express the wish to distance oneself not only from ideas of weighty German *Kultur* and bourgeois representation but also from the shadows of the recent past more generally.[54]

The second discursive strategy relied on the already mentioned reinterpretation of Bauhaus modernism as being clearly anti-totalitarian and thus anti-fascist. The story of Bauhaus designers having to leave Germany under the Nazis was popularised, producing the common-sense idea that the development of modern design had more or less come to a halt.[55] This was in fact at best a half-truth since the matter-of-fact style which owed a lot to the Bauhaus tradition had in many ways been taken onboard and promoted by official institutions of the Third Reich.[56] But then, this part of the legacy of modern design was quite consistently concealed in West German public discourse, whereas in the East the problem was solved by rhetorically opposing the Bauhaus legacy, which had initially been interpreted as a capitalist aberrance.

Referring to the *Werkbund* tradition, West German designers frequently emphasised that the human being had to be the central purpose of all the objects in a home instead of regarding the things themselves as the purpose of everyday human activity – as was supposedly formerly the case. Sometimes ideas of the 'good form' of objects (forms that reflect their purpose in a timeless and universal manner) were explicitly combined with visions of a 'uniform "society",' for instance in the advice manual *Die schöne Wohnung*, which saw its sixth revised edition in 1952 having continuously been reprinted since 1931.[57] But mostly, authors highlighted the individual aspect of interior decoration: 'There are no recipes for apartments, because we are too different from one another.'[58] This emphasis on individuality did not mean however that there were no aesthetic standards according to which a 'better' or a 'worse' taste could be determined. The often cited ideal period (and style) of 'good dwelling' was not by coincidence the *Biedermeier*, a time before industrialisation and the advent of historicist furniture fashion. Good form took on the values already present in the *Biedermeier* era:

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54 'Versuchen Sie es doch mal schräg', *Brigitte* 11 (2 May 1954), p. 8-9.

55 See for instance 'Ein Mann ist erschüttert: Walter Gropius kam heim', *Der Spiegel* 16 August 1947.

56 Joachim Petsch, 'Möbeldesign im Dritten Reich und die Erneueurng des Tischler-Gewerbes seit dem ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert', in Sabine Weißler (ed.), *Design in Deutschland 1933-45: Ästhetik und Organisation des Deutschen Werkbundes im Dritten Reich* (Gießen: Anabas-Verlag, 1990), p. 42-55; Sabine Zentek, *Designer im Dritten Reich: Gute Formen sind eine Frage der richtigen Haltung* (Dortmund: Lelesken Verlag, 2009). See as an example of the Nazi rhetoric on simple furniture August Grosskinsky (in co-operation with the Deutsche Arbeitsfront), *Schönheit des Wohnens: Ein Bildwerk über deutsche Wohnmöbel* (Freiburg 1941).

57 *Die schöne Wohnung*, commented and arranged by Gudio Harbers (Müchnen: F. Bruckmann, 1952), p. 5.

58 Traute Tschirwitz, *Betrifft Wohnung* (Recklinghausen: Paulus Verlag, 1954), p. 8.

This is good, modern furniture: honest and simple, purposeful and beautiful, appropriate for the material and construction. They will be recognised as good even in a hundred years.[59]

The so-called *Stilmöbel*, the post-war equivalent of nineteenth-century stylistic historicism, were seen as the incarnation of bad taste, just as was said of their turn-of-the-century predecessors. They imitated historical styles in an artificial way, or so the argument went, and therefore pretended to be what they were not, namely old, handmade of expensive wood, thereby in turn helping their owners or potential buyers to pretend being something they were not: rich and bourgeois or even aristocratic. Time and again designers deplored that many people still stuck to their old habits, misunderstanding the purpose of things as being representational, instead of useful, filling their apartments with too many pieces of furniture and 'superfluous civilisation stuff.' Such people had not understood that 'our way of life has fundamentally changed and that a new spirit is searching for new forms,' they had not understood that furniture was there for people and not the other way around.[60]

Comparable arguments were brought to the fore in the GDR. Just like its West German counterparts, the East German design community warned consumers not to be 'owned' by their possessions. The main difference between the two was that in the GDR the reprehensible bourgeois aesthetics were regarded as an essential part of capitalism. Following Marx' idea on the fetish relationship between people and objects, East German readers had to understand that their preference for fashionable, so-called 'chic' things actually conveyed a form of alienation that characterised life in capitalist societies. In these societies, the urge to obtain ever more possessions went hand in hand with growing rivalry between men, and there was no room for sincere relationships between people. 'The constitutive moment of bourgeois enjoyment (...) is exclusiveness, the exclusion of others,' according to the East German philosopher Lothar Kühne in his book on aesthetics.[61] Aesthetics and taste were to be the result of a well-balanced rational analysis. Existing and past-time preferences were deemed irrelevant, except as a starting point for further clarification and enlightenment.

In order for East German consumers to recognise the right material entourage, they had to learn how to align their tastes and desires with what was considered to optimally serve society's further development. A match between personal taste and society's needs was only possible if people would learn to recognise communal

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59 Ibid., p. 32.
60 Walter Pause and Peter Eggendorfer, *Heim nach Maß: Heitere Lektionen über modernes Wohnbehagen* (München: Max Wittkop, 1958), p. 14 and 28.
61 Lothar Kühne, *Gegenstand und Raum: über die Historizität des Ästhetischen* (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1980), p. 186.

interests as their own. This was to be accomplished by constantly training them to give up their acquired habits, primary impulses and individual desires, and to ask themselves how these related to the needs of the greater social context. The main instrument to achieve this was the power of reason.[62]

In order to help East German citizen-consumers to find 'forms of expression that are *lebensbejahend*, honest and true,'[63] social scientists, philosophers and designers studied the relationship between socialism, aesthetics and taste.[64] Their insights were popularised and disseminated by *Kultur im Heim*'s editors to reach and counsel the East German public. Functioning as mediators between the professional design community and East German consumers, the editors explained to East Germans which forms were acceptable and which were not, which living room interiors were to be preferred, and which were to be denounced.

According to the editors, it was 'tasteless, absurd, and kitschy to produce a salt-shaker in the form of an animal or mushroom.' What is more: it was even 'inappropriate, and thus superfluous,' to decorate salt-shakers at all.[65] Preferring a fake, old-looking object was wrong, because it was usually not the result of a true understanding of the object concerned. If people's preference for old-looking objects was based on real knowledge (about the object's development, and the era in which it was made and used) it was acceptable, because the proprietor then knew 'that old objects express the destiny of craftsmanship and older generations' taste, that they incorporate a part of the mentality and way of life at that time.'[66] If such knowledge and insight were not present, the attractiveness of old-looking objects was merely based on 'immature understandings.'[67] People had to learn that their uninformed eye betrayed them when it seduced them to favour objects that in reality were 'unnatural, meaningless, superfluous, unpractical, and overloaded,'[68] and 'sugary, false, unreal, plagiaristic, badly faked, functionless, counterfeit.'[69]

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62 'Empirical observation is not enough to understand reality in such a way that the essential truth, grasping the total direction of historical movement and development, will be the result. For this, a high level of thinking is needed which can never be accomplished without a scientifically based world view.' Jutta Schmidt, 'Über die Gestaltung des sozialistischen Menschenbildes', *Einheit* 21, no. 11 (1961), p. 1436.

63 *KiH* 4 (1977), p. 34

64 See for instance Martin Kelm, *Produktgestaltung im Sozialismus* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1971); Kühne, *Gegenstand und Raum*; Erhard John, *Kultur – Kunst – Lebensweise* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1980); Alfred Hückler et al., *Einführung in die industrielle Formgestaltung: Lehrbrief* (Berlin: Eichenverlag der KDT, 1983); Herbert Letsch, *Der Alltag und die Dinge um uns* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1983); Horst Redeker, *Die klassische Kulturkritik und das Dilemma der Dekadenz* (Berlin: Institut für Angewandte Kunst, 1958); Horst Redeker, *Chemie gibt Schönheit* (Berlin: Institut für Angewandte Kunst, 1959).

65 Ibid.

66 *KiH* 6 (1988), p. 27.

67 *KiH* 5 (1968), p. 1.

68 *KiH* 1 (1969), p. 49.

69 *KiH* 4 (1966), p. 22.

Comparable disadvantages and reproaches also applied to objects that were not in line with East German circumstances: objects whose production was extremely expensive, or objects that were adorned in order to be adorned, that attracted attention in order to attract attention, that were different in order to be different, new in order to be new, or objects that derived their assumed beauty merely from the fact that they were supposed to be 'fashionable'. The danger of such taste preferences, according to the editors of the journal, was that too much importance was ascribed to material objects. People were in danger of being dominated by the objects, instead of the other way around.

Although Marxist dialectics assumed that East Germans' tastes would almost automatically develop along the lines sketched above – because 'the enlightened human subject' would inevitably tend to favour 'objects which are in line with his essence' – this appears not to have been the case.[70] The frequency with which both *Kultur im Heim* and *Form und Zweck* (for over thirty years) kept on explaining and warning against oft-made form mistakes, makes clear that designers had a hard task re-educating East German consumers. As Varga-Harris makes clear, writing about the Soviet Union: 'the tendency of design professionals to offer advice and express key principles of interior decoration in negative terms might serve as a clue about actual decorating practices.'[71] In spite of everything, people continued to favour the same ineradicable-but-reprehensible style characteristics. Whether they liked it or not, designers simply had to adjust their designs to be more in line with popular taste preferences, which was one of the reasons why the East German material world came to look slightly different than the ideal picture sketched above – a topic we will return to.

The Messy Reality of Actually Existing Modernism

As was shown above, both the educational rhetoric and the specific forms that were preferred by West and East German designers were quite comparable, but due to the different (economic) dynamics in both countries, the prescribed norms were adapted in different ways in the two Germanies, resulting in a rather dissimilar material culture. Illustrated magazines in West Germany, for instance, played a different role than in the GDR. While both in the GDR and the West they served as mediator between design professionals and the public of consumers, the economic system of the free market produced its own logic of a sales attitude doomed to be positive. As a matter of fact, an important and particularly popular

70   *KiH* 4 (1977), p. 34
71   Christine Varga-Harris, 'Homemaking and the Aesthetic and Moral Perimeters of the Soviet Home During the Khrushchev Era', *Journal of Social History* (Spring 2008), p. 561-590, especially p. 574.

version of post-war modern design was a purely commercial phenomenon and not part of the agenda of professional designers organised in the *Werkbund* and the Ulm Institute of Design. This was the so-called 'Nierentisch'-design which departed from an all too rigid and geometric functionalism by adopting organic and round forms, flashy colours as well as asymmetric arrangements.[72] Although most *Werkbund* designers had strong objections to this playful commercialisation of modernism, the popular magazines actually did not distinguish between the different branches of modern design which they all presented as part of a wished for aesthetic 'revolution' in the West German living rooms.

Organic design was indeed very popular, especially among young people and in public spaces like cinemas and fashion boutiques, an aspect that probably fuelled its later status as an iconic style of the fifties. However, it was far from representing the common furnishing taste of the West German citizens. A survey from 1963 actually indicated that a huge majority of West Germans still preferred either *Gelsenkirchener Barock* or other historic styles.[73] From 1956 onwards, the magazines took up this subject matter and started to report more often on antiques, the way these could be combined with modern pieces, and on German film stars' penchant for historic furniture. Even if the 'good form' philosophy always acknowledged the aesthetic value of certain old styles, especially the *Biedermeier*, this rediscovery of old furniture and styles represented a significant change in a discourse that so vigorously had campaigned for the new. As a result of this shift, West German magazines became distinctly more open to individual preferences and style combinations.

As early as October 1956 *Brigitte* reflected on this subject by – again – offering Sweden as a model, this time for the particularly skilful and personal way in which the Swedish were believed to combine old and new furniture styles.[74] Even the formerly rejected *Stilmöbel* found their way into the lifestyle magazines. After an advertisement campaign for *Stilmöbel* was published in *Brigitte* in 1959, the magazine started a series of articles under the title *Möbelstile und Stilmöbel*' The articles not only gave background information on 'authentic' *Stilmöbel* (handmade in an authentically historical style) as opposed to inauthentic copies (mass-produced randomly mixing historical styles), but also presented and explained the main characteristics of the most important styles of earlier times.[75]

In the late 1950s, two developments occurred that gave West German popular discourse on modern interior design a special flavour compared to East Germany.

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72 Paul Betts, 'The Nierentisch Mimemis. Organic Design as West German Pop Culture', *German History* 19 (2001), p. 185-271.

73 Alphons Silbermann, *Vom Wohnen der Deutschen. Eine soziologische Studie über das Wohnerlebnis* (Cologne: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1963).

74 'Behaglich wohnen mit alten Möbeln. Stilgemisch mit persönlicher Note', *Brigitte* 23 (October 1956), p. 42-43.

75 'Möbelstile und Stilmöbel', *Brigitte* 1 (29 December 1959), p. 58-59.

First, there was the growing tendency to underline the *international* aspect of modern home decoration and turn it into an explicit programme. In 1957, five years after the US State Department had staged an exhibition in West Germany that was 'grooming modernism as the stylistic *lingua franca* of international consumer capitalism,' *Brigitte* began to introduce the terms 'international' and 'European style' on its advice pages.[76] With this phenomenon the main message of the former US initiative to promote modern design as above all a symbol for Western internationalism had found its way into mainstream public discourse. This happened, however, without an American origin of this trend ever being explicitly acknowledged. Secondly, there was an ever-stronger emphasis on individual differences of aesthetic preferences and on the merits of freely combining pieces from different styles. This development fitted in well with the first, since the ideal of a Western international community of consumers always implied a certain respect for specific regional and national features. But it can also be seen as reflecting above all the general trend of a steadily diversifying mass production.

This diversification of mass production as well as the dissemination of organic and playful forms not only in West Germany but also in international modern design made it increasingly difficult to hold onto the utopian vision of a society united by a common taste for simple 'good-form' interiors. The modernisation of taste, initially thought to be a reflection of rational clarity, turned out to be anything but clear in the messy reality of consumer capitalism. Even the most common denominator of this cultural movement, the rejection of kitsch, started to lose its original meaning and the self-proclaimed taste educators were forced to adapt their agenda to new realities. While lifestyle magazines had an economic interest in not growing too far away from their readers' actual taste preferences, this did not have to affect highbrow journalists. Nevertheless, in 1961, one of the leading intellectual promoters of post-war modern design, the monthly magazine *Magnum*, published an entire issue under the title *Geliebter Kitsch* (Beloved Kitsch). Though not completely renouncing a critical approach to the dangers of kitsch, the editors had to acknowledge that 'kitsch has reached modernity' and that 'the modern style is no longer what it once was meant to be, an anti-thesis to kitsch.'[77] In a logical move the following number was published under the title 'Future without style?'

In the GDR, the strict and rigid modernist design ideology was watered down as well, but both the way in which this was done, and the concrete objects that resulted from the adjustment, differed from the above-sketched West German modifications. The main differences were the result of the completely different economic mechanisms operating in the socialist country.

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76 Castillo, 'Domesticating the Cold War', p. 278.
77 'Geliebter Kitsch', *Magnum: Die Zeitschrift für das moderne Leben* 37 (August 1961), p. 46.

Because the socialist state bestowed such an important, educative role to material culture, designers obtained a central role in the production process.[78] It was their task to see to it that the population would be surrounded by the right forms and to develop a national style that was in accord with material culture's progressive function. In order to realise this, it was first of all important to clear the country's existing product landscape. East German designers were asked to sort out capitalism's inheritance, reduce the existing variety of forms and put a halt to objects' 'form-wilderness'.[79] Starting in the late 1950s, an all-encompassing 'assortment clearance' was ordered. Designers were instructed to critically study the country's existing material culture in order to select the most appropriately designed objects, which were then chosen for further production.

Their selection was to leave no room for 'bourgeois' taste preferences or for objects that expressed people's 'desire for prestige' or 'petty bourgeois ambitions.'[80] Prancing and making others green with envy were inappropriate for, and did not fit in with socialist society's egalitarian ideals.[81] Interestingly, soberness, modernism's main ideological form tenet, worked both ways: reducing ornamentations also reduced production costs. Modernist designers' educational mission thus seamlessly embraced the government's main economic goals, and the two parties naturally found each other in a thrifty, frugal, material culture. Although modernist designers generally had much more influence on the production process in the East than in the West, in everyday life the frugality pact between government and designers often broke on factors outside both groups' control. In factories, for instance, it frequently happened that a high-positioned party member decided to adjust a design in a way that fundamentally ran counter to the enlightened perspective sketched so far, usually because (s)he did not like the proposed object's style.[82] Explaining why his designs were often discarded or changed by East German policymakers, party members and people with a high position in industry, an East German designer made clear that these people usually had a totally different taste than professional designers. The former category was often from a poor, working class background,

> where there was only enough money for the bare necessities. For a long time those people had looked up to a somewhat flashy form of comfort, which for them was the ultimate ideal. The interiors they had seen at the mayor and the

78　See Eli Rubin, 'The Form of Socialism without Ornament. Consumption, Ideology, and the Fall and Rise of Modernist Design in the German Democratic Republic', *Journal of Design History* 19, no. 2 (2006), p. 155-169, especially p. 164.

79　Hirdina, *Gestalten für die Serie*, p. 56.

80　*KiH* 3 (1971), p. 1.

81　Ibid.

82　Milena Veenis conducted fieldwork on this issue in a medium-sized town in Thuringia during 1993-1994.

notary's house – that was what they wanted: a shiny cabinet with glass windows (...) a beautifully adorned candlestick on top, and a copious couch next to it (...). That was their petty bourgeois image of an ideal home. That was their idea of how things were done by people in a certain position. That was the image of prosperity they would strive for if they obtained such a position themselves. That was what they wanted to spend their money on, so those were the kinds of objects that had to be made. When they were confronted with something that was too modern, too simple, too plain (...) they told us: 'That is not what our people want'. And maybe that was correct, but they themselves did not want it in the first place. The petty bourgeois ideal always remained intact in our country, and whenever some high-ranking party member had something to say, he could change the plans according to his own wishes.

The story shows that people who at the local level were responsible for the state's frugal policy, only subscribed to the *economic* aspects of the thrifty, national ideology. The match between the economic necessity of thrift and most designers' frugal ideas, which was pledged at the national level, was locally frustrated by party bosses and others in power who clung to their old taste preferences, even though these were not sensible or 'sound socialist.' If even a loyal party members' taste was not susceptible to rational consideration, it may be safe to conclude that East German material reality was less susceptible to rational considerations than the lucid socialist ideals would suggest.

The result was that objects were often characterised by odd combinations of strict lines and mismatched ornamentations, showing a striking compromise between functionalist-inspired and (economically) reasonable ideas of designers on the one hand, and 'lagging' petty bourgeois taste preferences of party bosses and most consumers' on the other – a compromise between modern lines and a 'cozy-looking' decor. This was also visible in the way chipboard (a frequently used material in the GDR) was used. Chipboard perfectly fitted in with socialist ideas: it exemplified the optimal use of raw materials, was visibly industrially produced and thus perfectly 'present-day'. Remarkably, almost all chipboard objects and furniture were placarded with a wood motif of plastic foil, suggesting that they were actually made from wood, and thus disguising the product's factory-made character with a 'natural' look.

Most designers knew that their ideas on functional forms expressing present-day modes of production were relatively unpopular. 'In our country, everything always looked the same: straightforward and unadorned. We didn't like that. We preferred objects with a little adornment here, and a little ridge there,' people explained when discussing their former material world. But ridges and adornments were not in line with socialist policy and designers stuck to a rational, more or less ageless ideal according to which form followed function.

At the academy, students even learned to design *contrary to* the somewhat softer, rounded, fashionable (and Western-looking) forms that so many East German consumers desired, Karin, a 35-year old designer, explained:

> These forms were regarded as a genuflection for naive consumers, but consumers were to be educated. That was what needed to be done. And that was what we were for. It was not our task to make what people wanted or liked. Because what they liked and wanted was no design. It had nothing to do with design at all – that was what we learned.

But she, too, frequently had to accept that the academy's ideals notwithstanding, her well-considered designs were embellished with flowery motives and colourful squares once they were taken into production.

Apart from the tension between enlightened ideas and traditional taste preferences, the most important factor influencing the East German material landscape was the GDR's relatively poor economic situation (as compared to the Western countries it was competing with). When discussing material culture's everyday form and socialist ideas on the subject with a highly-educated, prominent member of the SED, he snarled curtly:

> Ideology?? Socialist personality??? Come on! It was all a matter of money! Our objects were ugly, because we couldn't afford anything else. Besides, there was no need to please the eye; everything was sold anyway.

Almost from the beginning, East German production was plagued by deficiencies and shortages, which had a devastating effect on both the quality and availability of consumer goods. It is well known how much effort and time East Germans spent on obtaining everyday goods like clothes and furniture: waiting times were unpredictable, large-scale exchange networks were necessary, people spent a lot of time sewing and repairing things, and East German daily life was characterised by a constant wheeling and dealing in order to obtain the necessary objects.[83]

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83   Ina Merkel, 'Consumer Culture in the GDR, or How the Struggle for Antimodernity Was Lost on the Battleground of Consumer Culture', in Susan Strasser, Charles McGovern and Matthias Judt (eds.), *Getting and Spending: European and American Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 281-300. See also Milena Veenis, 'Consumption in East Germany: The Seduction and Betrayal of Things', *Journal of Material Culture* 4, no. 1 (1999), p. 79-112; Judd Stitziel, 'Shopping, Sewing, Networking, Complaining: Consumer Culture and the Relationship between State and Society in the GDR', in Katherine Pence and Paul Betts (eds.), *Socialist Modern: East German Everyday Culture and Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), p. 253-287; Milena Veenis, *The Scent of Soap and Christmas Parcels: East German Fantasies about Western Consumer Society* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2011).

The insufficient availability and quality of East German goods played a significant role in the population's dissatisfaction and the vigour with which they took to the streets during the famous autumn of 1989. It did not take long before they were able to buy exactly those 'kitschy' objects enlightened designers had always opposed as 'bad taste': old-looking and richly adorned, with pastoral scenes and gold-coloured sham. Modern design's egalitarian creeds notwithstanding, objects carrying the label 'modern' have returned to their *real existierender* place and destiny 'of old': educated middle-class people's homes.

9 Flying Away

Civil Aviation and the Dream of Freedom in East and West

» *Annette Vowinckel*

After the end of World War II, civil aviation expanded very fast. Its success was partly based on technical progress achieved in the context of military aviation during the War but also on the growing need of ordinary people to travel faster, further and more comfortably. This expansion was accompanied by a radical change in collective imagination: airplanes were no longer bomb carriers but the key to potentially unlimited mobility, to long-distance travelling and materially as well as symbolically to the rise of a new jet set. Aviation brought about a new world which Walter Kirn, in his 2001 novel *Up in the Air*, describes as *Airworld*: a closed universe with distinguished social, aesthetic and economic rules.

In planes and airports, Kim's protagonist Bingham explains,

> I feel at home. Everything fellows like you dislike about them – the dry, recycled air alive with viruses, the salty food that seems drizzled with warm mineral oil; the aura-sapping artificial lighting – has grown dear to me over the years, familiar, sweet. I love the Compass Club lounges in the terminals, especially the flagship Denver Club, with its digital juice dispenser and deep suede sofas and floor-to-ceiling views of taxiing aircraft. (...) I even enjoy the suite hotels built within sight of the runways on the ring roads, which are sometimes as close as I get to the cities that my job requires me to visit.[1]

For Kirn, *Airworld* is 'the scene, the place, the style.' It is the world of glamour, passions and news, a 'nation within a nation, with its own language, architecture, mood, and even its own currency – the token economy of airline bonus miles that [he has] come to value more than dollars.'[2]

During the twentieth century *Airworld* turned into a large projection screen, becoming an integral part of our cultural production and perception. Not only has

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1 Walter Kirn, *Up in the Air* (New York et al.: Doubleday, 2001), p. 5. In 2009, director Jason Reitman turned the novel into a movie starring George Clooney as Ryan Bingham.
2 Ibid., p. 7.

it generated airports, airplanes, and a society of travellers; it has also generated a utopian space, a dreamworld shaped by the longing for freedom and success translating as mobility.[3] We can assume that these dreamworlds were in several respects similar in the East and in the West, for the dream of flying seems to be an anthropological phenomenon rather than a historical fashion; this is what Ovid's myth of Daedalus and Icarus implies as well as medieval debates about flying creatures, by Leonardo da Vinci's attempt to construct a flying vehicle and by the twentieth century experience with making aviation the favoured choice in transportation.[4] In fact, there are so many structural similarities between the development of civil aviation in East and West that we can assume that the needs and imaginations involved were almost identical even if the political conditions under which *Airworld East* and *West* respectively functioned were different.[5]

Of course, the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 and the travel restrictions decreed permanently cast doubt on the modern endeavour to increase mobility in any possible way. While socialist ideology deemed the claim for unlimited mobility (including westbound travel) to be decadent, western democrats declared travel restrictions to be an attack on basic human and civil rights. Here, mobility became a synonym for (political as well as individual) freedom and thus a motive for (individually) escaping the socialist realm. It is self-evident that a simple equation of mobility and freedom can easily be deconstructed. Immanuel Kant never felt 'unfree' even if he did not leave Königsberg in his lifetime. Still, it is possible that he would have protested against a law prohibiting travel. Inversely, the restriction of mobility indicates a lack of 'freedom' even if travelling is not necessarily enough to 'feel free.' We would thus have to ask why the limitation of travel options between the Germanies by law between 1961 and 1989 was considered to be more incisive than travel restrictions caused by poverty, lack of language skills, or fear of flying.

However, even if socialist governments saw a conflict between social justice and mobility, between progress and decadence, between collective and individual freedom, they still established an *Airworld* that structurally did not differ too much from its Western counterpart. It is thus the task of this paper to fathom

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3   This development has been described very accurately in Peter Fritzsche, *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination* (Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press, 1992). A good sociological analysis of the concept of mobility is provided in Wolfgang Bonß and Sven Kesselring: 'Mobilität am Übergang von der Ersten zur Zweiten Moderne', in Ulrich Beck and Wolfgang Bonß (eds.), *Die Modernisierung der Moderne* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2001), p. 177-90.

4   Wolfgang Behringer and Constance Ott-Koptschalijski, *Der Traum vom Fliegen. Zwischen Mythos und Technik* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1991), p. 17.

5   A detailed history of military aviation and the competition between East and West is given in Jeffrey A. Engel, *Cold War at 30,000 Feet. The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

the different (and shared) dreamworlds generated by civil aviation as part of a larger cultural framework. On the surface, *Airworld* was fragmented by the East-West divide; at second glance, however, it perfectly pictures the fact that some very basic needs and values matched those held by the 'other'. Therefore I will try to overcome the predominant Western perspective on 'the East', traditionally dominated by compassion for those who were not allowed to travel to Western countries, in favour of a more prosaic analysis of mobility as a key element of modernity.

In this intent I will first describe *Airworld* as a worldwide and system-spanning set of airports, aircraft and route networks, inhabited by pilots, flight attendants, tourists and (more recently) frequent flyers. I will then analyse its symbolic dimensions as represented in marketing campaigns and public discourses about freedom and security. Finally, I will discuss air piracy as an example of ambivalent action in a Cold War *Airworld*. While it was, on the one hand, a rather unconventional way of individually escaping the socialist realm (including Cuba), it was also a means of openly protesting the global division of the world, which obviously did not match the (Western) ideals of a mobile society and free *Airworld*. (Ironically, skyjacking was also adopted by anti-imperialist organisations that aimed to attack Western societies by attacking its *Airworld*.) Along with a historical case of hijacking I will discuss the novel *Tupolew 134* by German author Antje Raviç Strubel and the movie *Judgment in Berlin* (USA 1989) that both try to make sense of the events from different perspectives but that do come to similar conclusions, not only regarding political aspects but also in their appreciation of the aircraft as a getaway vehicle.

In historical perspective one might argue that travel restrictions (matching not only an economic need but also Stalinist anti-cosmopolitanism[6]) – along with the violence of civil rights, media restriction and the lack of consumer goods – were one factor that contributed to the decay of socialism in a globalising world. Assuming, however, that most citizens of the former socialist states could (and can) not afford long distance travel anyway, it becomes obvious that *Airworld* is also an imagined space and a dream world which has, since the end of the Cold War, modified – but not abolished – its entrance regulations. I will argue that even if travel restrictions substantially limited the range of the Eastern *Airworld*, flying was still a shared metaphor for freedom and progress in the East and the West.

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6   According to Susan Buck-Morss, cosmopolitanism 'became synonymous with betraying the motherland' in Stalinist culture. Susan Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), p. 122.

Airports, Airplanes, Route Networks

When the Cold War reached its peak in the 1950s and 1960s, cars and trains were still the most common means of transportation. However, the number of flight passengers worldwide quintupled from 13.2 million in 1945 to 68 million in 1955.[7] While memories of World War II – one of the first wars in which civilians were systematically threatened by air raids – slowly faded, civil aviation began to shrink the world. Distances between metropolises like New York, Paris, Tokyo or Sao Paulo diminished and civil aviation gradually became part of daily life and news.

One condition for the onset of this process was the construction and expansion of airports. In 1948, the city of Berlin opened a new airport at Tegel because both the old central airport at Tempelhof (which was finally closed in 2008) and Gatow airport proved to be undersized.[8] New York Idlewild Airport (renamed John F. Kennedy International Airport in 1963), built to draw extra traffic from La Guardia airport, was opened in the same year and expanded so fast that the airport became an airport city, it's main attraction being the TWA terminal built by the Finnish architect Eero Saarinen in 1962.[9] This terminal, groundbreaking for airport architecture, is both functional and a mirror of flight aesthetics. It is famous for its excellence in capturing the atmosphere Walter Kirn described in *Up in the Air* and has consequently become one of *Airworld*'s icons. In 1959, Chicago O'Hare International had to be reconstructed because the number of passengers had outgrown the size of the airport. In the mid-1960s, 24 million passengers passed through, turning Chicago into one of the largest airports in the world.[10] In the course of the 1960s, a number of international airports were built in non-Western cities: in 1953, a new airport was constructed in Nairobi – a terminal with 161.400 persons arriving or departing in 1954. In the early 1960s, Palisadoes Airport at Kingston, Jamaica, was turned into an international airport; in 1968, a new terminal was built in Bagdad because the old one had become too small.[11] Many other examples could be given.

7   Jin-Tai Choi, *Aviation Terrorism. Historical Survey, Perspectives and Responses* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 2.

8   Roy Allen, *Große Flughäfen der Welt* (Zürich: Orell Füssli, 1968), p. 26. For a comprehensive history of airport architecture see Koos Bosma, 'Auf der Suche nach dem perfekten Flughafen', in Alexander von Vegesack and Jochen Eisenbrand (ed.), *Airworld: Design und Architektur für die Flugreise* (Weil am Rhein: Vitra-Design-Stiftung, 2004), p. 36-64.

9   Alastair Gordon, *Naked Airport. A Cultural History of the World's Most Revolutionary Structure* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004), p. 196-202 (unfortunately, Gordon does not go into the details of Eastern European and Russian airport construction); Allen, *Große Flughäfen*, p. 116-122; Mark Dery, 'Memories of the Future: Excavating the Jet Age at the TWA Terminal', in Darren Tofts, Annemarie Jonson and Alessio Cavallaro (eds.), *Prefiguring Cyberculture. An Intellectual History* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), p. 294-301.

10   Allen, *Große Flughäfen*, p. 32.

11   Ibid., p. 112-116; 50-53; 23-25.

Of course, the same developments were underway in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. Khodynka Aerodrome in Moscow, set up in the late nineteenth century and located near the city centre, was closed in the 1980s because in the meantime three major airports had been built: Vnukovo Airport, opened in 1941, had served as a military base in World War II and was opened for civil aviation in 1956; Sheremetyevo International Airport was opened in 1959 and expanded on occasion of the Olympic Games in 1980; already in 1964, a third airport for flights inside the Soviet Union was opened at Domodedovo.[12] Warsaw saw a very similar development; here, the aerodrome at Mokotów Fields (1924) was succeeded by Okęcie Central Airport which expanded gradually and was renamed Frédéric Chopin Airport in 2001. In Prague, Kbely military airport was opened in 1919; in 1937 Ruzyně Airport took over and today has four terminals.

Airport architecture knows a variety of forms and concepts, by and large representing the style and taste of their times and political conditions; this is true both for Eastern Europe where terminals were built in the style of 'socialist realism' and for Western countries in which airport buildings often reflect the aesthetics of aviation proper (like the already-mentioned TWA building at JFK, the tent-shaped roof of Detroit Airport or, more recently, Renzo Piano's Osaka terminal). However, even if socialist airport design differs from the Western in that it is – on the surface – more functional and in coherence with socialist realist aesthetics, both trends are modernist at the core. This becomes even clearer if we take a look at airport interiors, which have, in contrast to the exterior shapes, become rather uniform.[13] They are characterised by consistent formal details like icons, signs, letters and numbers leading travellers safely and efficiently to their destinations. The design is clear and full of sharp contrasts, creating an atmosphere of rationality, clarity and calculability and thus an atmosphere of safety based on high technical standards (an atmosphere which perfectly reflects the decreasing number of plane crashes in civil aviation).

Like airports and their interiors, airplanes have gone through various stages of change and enlargement. Western trade names like Boeing, McDonnell Douglas, Lockheed, and later Airbus,[14] stand for the production of ever larger and faster air planes – as do Tupolev, Antonov, or Ilyushin in the Soviet Union. Airplane construction was for several reasons largely an enterprise undertaken by the superpowers after World War II. For one thing, it is very expensive; besides, the superpowers were interested in concentrating military expertise at home. In West Germany, for example, airplane construction was prohibited until 1955 in order to

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12   Ibid., p. 107-11.

13   Gordon, *Naked Airport*, p. 224-227.

14   For a historical account of the competition between Boeing and Airbus see John Newhouse, *Boeing versus Airbus: The Inside Story of the Greatest International Competition in Business* (New York: Knopf, 2007).
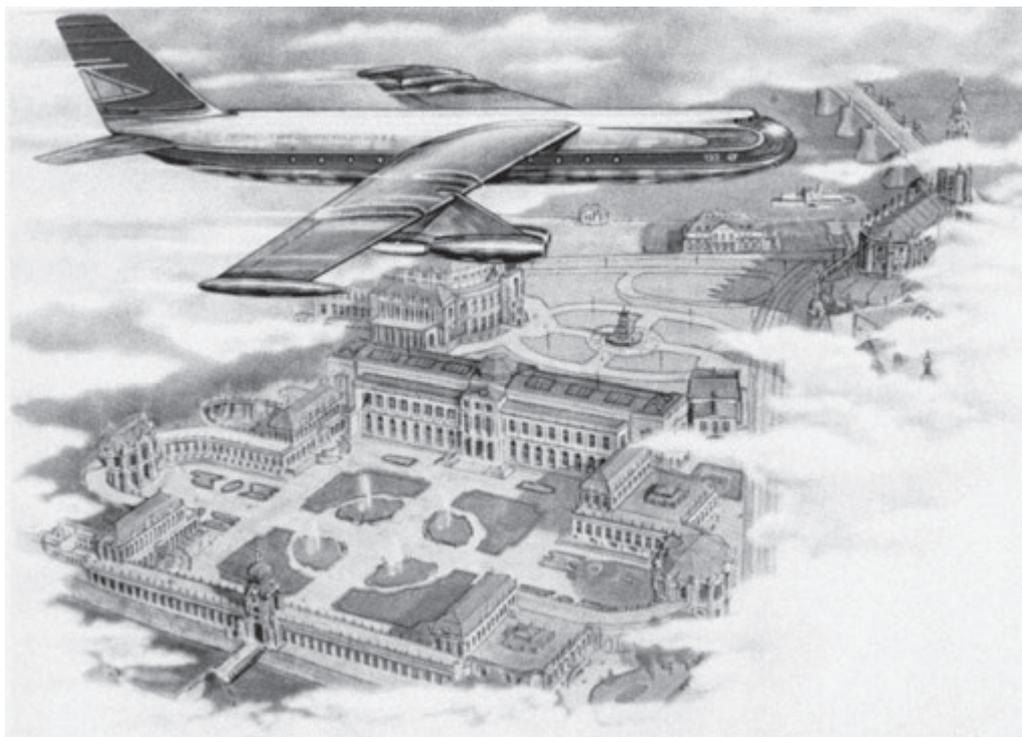
Postcard: The Junkers 152 over Dresden, 1958 (private collection).

prevent remilitarisation. In the German Democratic Republic (GDR) some efforts were made to co-operate with the Russian airplane industry. Russian Ilyushin IL airplanes, for example, were assembled at VEB Flugzeugwerke Dresden, which was trying to lay the foundations for a national air industry.[15] However the most ambitious project of the GDR's own air industry, the '152' jet, fell victim to politics when the GDR and the Soviet Union agreed that East German airplane construction should be stopped in favour of airplane construction in the USSR. The production of the '152' ceased and Interflug subsequently operated Russian Ilyushin, Tupolev and Antonov airplanes.[16] It is striking that a hand-drawn sketch of the '152' was published in the form of a postcard, showing the GDR's only national aircraft circling over the undestroyed city centre of Dresden. The message of this image seems to be that the new aircraft would heal, if only symbolically, the wounds of World War II.

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15   Helmut Erfurth (ed.), *Das große Buch der DDR-Luftfahrt: Zivile Luftfahrt 1945 bis 1990* (Munich: GeraMond, 2004), p. 39; 48-53.
16   Ibid., p. 55-89, especially 77-79.

Since the 1950s, many propeller-driven aircrafts were discarded in favour of jet aircraft. Classical types like the Lockheed Super Constellation were gradually crowded out by more efficient models like the Boeing 777, Airbus A320, the so-called Jumbo Jet Boeing 747 or, most recently, Airbus 380. In 1968, several months before the release of the Concorde supersonic jet constructed in France and Britain, the Russian Tupolev Tu-144 was introduced as the first supersonic jet in history. Simultaneously, airplane interiors – like airport interiors – became more and more standardised and also more comfortable.[17]

Even if neither West Germany nor the German Democratic Republic had an aircraft industry of their own after the war because allied forces prohibited the production of potential war assets, each of the German states re-founded Lufthansa airline in 1954 when the restrictions of civil aviation were loosened. Only in 1958 was the East German Lufthansa renamed Interflug.[18] Like other East European airlines – Russian Aeroflot, Hungarian Malev or Polish LOT – Interflug ran an international route system until passenger mobility was restricted after 1961. From then on, ordinary citizens under the age of 65 could only travel inside the socialist bloc, unless they were diplomats or athletes attending international competitions. However, a 1985 Interflug route map still shows the Berlin-based airline's connections to 47 destinations including North, South, Central and Western European destinations (Helsinki, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Brussels, Milan, Rome, Vienna, Istanbul, Larnaca and Athens) as well as several destinations in North Africa and the Middle East (Algiers, Beirut, Amman and Tripolis), destinations in Africa (Brazzaville, Luanda, Maputo, Addis Abbeba), the Far East (Hanoi) and, of course, various destinations in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The only American destination is Havana; interestingly, there is not a single flight connection to South America. This shows that even if most citizens were not allowed to travel to the majority of destinations, Interflug still kept them in the route system in order to prove its commitment to international standards.

Airworld is inhabited by pilots, flight attendants, tourists and – more recently – by frequent flyers, whose role models have changed over the course of the century. This is least applicable to pilots who have always had the image of being competent, technically adept, sovereign, stress proof, eloquent, urbane and attractive men in the prime of life. Until the emergence of no-frills airlines they were decently paid and had an equally good social reputation. One of the major changes is that the pilot's occupation is no longer a male domain. Starting in the 1980s,

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17   Barbara Fitton Hauß, 'Eine Zeitreise in der Flugzeugkabine', in Vegesack and Eisenbrand (eds.), *Airworld*, p. 82-122; Detlef Siegfried, 'Das Flugzeug', in Alexa Geisthövel and Habbo Knoch (eds.), *Orte der Moderne. Erfahrungswelten des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2005), p. 47-56.

18   For the history of *Interflug* see Karl-Dieter Seifert, *Weg und Absturz der Interflug: Der Luftverkehr der DDR* (Berlin: Brandenburgisches Verlagshaus, 1994).

many airlines systematically trained female pilots as well and their number has slowly but steadily increased over the years.

Flight attendants (formerly called 'stewardesses') went through a far more radical change. In the early days of aviation the female flight attendant was like a flying nurse; she did not (only) prepare meals but had to help in case of air sickness or other physical problems on board. After World War II, flight attendants (the majority still female) were commonly regarded as 'airborne waitresses', allegedly mainly responsible for the distribution of meals and drinks. Despite the fact that they became ever more professional and were mainly responsible for the observance of security guidelines on the part of the passengers, they also became *Airworld*'s sex objects. They were expected to be young, beautiful, unmarried and always charming, especially when dealing with male travellers.[19] Only in the context of the women's liberation movement of the late 1960s and 1970s did they manage to improve their situation by protesting against miserable working conditions and by changing their image from the 'silent sex servant' to the competent flight attendant who would not quit because she got married, pregnant or too old (meaning, in the early days: older than 30).[20] However, the image of the ever friendly, sexually attractive service girl – an image which in the United States was fuelled by films like *Come Fly With Me* (1963) and novels like *Coffee, Tea or Me? The Uninhibited Memoirs of Two Airline Stewardesses* (1967) – is somehow still present today, with Eastern European and Far Eastern airlines hardly differing from Western airlines.

Starting in the late 1980s, *Airworld* became acquainted with a new group of inhabitants: frequent flyers. Some American airlines were the first to introduce frequent flyer programmes after the former head of American Airlines, Robert Crandall, had realised that 40 per cent of business turnover came from only five per cent of the passengers. He thus invented a system aimed at binding these passengers – mainly businessmen – to one company by offering free flights and upgrades. Starting in the 1990s, German Lufthansa launched a programme called Lufthansa Skymiles and Alitalia followed with its Mille Miglia programme. Reflecting the fact that there had been a planned economy not forcing airlines to compete in the same way as Western airlines did, and also reflecting the fact that there were less businessmen around than in the US, Aeroflot only set up a similar Bonus Programme in 2006. In fact, the absence of frequent flyers – along with travel restrictions – was one of the most striking differences between Eastern and Western *Airworlds* since the beginning of the Cold War. The frequent flyer – as

19 Kathleen M. Barry, *Femininity in Flight: A History of Flight Attendants* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 1-10; Joanne Entwistle, 'Mode auf dem Höhenflug – Die Flugbegleiterin und ihre Uniform', in Vegesack and Eisenbrand (eds.), *Airworld*, p. 176-210. For historical images see Elissa Stein, *Stewardess. Come Fly With Me!* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2006).

20 Barry, *Feminity in Flight*, p. 36-59.

Das Liniennetz der Interflug 1985

Kopenhagen, Stockholm, Helsinki

Leningrad, Moskau, Kiew, Simferopol, Sotschi

Warschau, Prag, Tatry, Bratislava,
Budapest, Bukarest, Sofia, Burgas,
Varna, Tirana

Amsterdam, Brüssel

Berlin

Istanbul, Athen, Beirut,
Larnaca, Damaskus,
Bagdad, Amman, Dubai

Mailand, Rom

Havanna

Taschkent, Karatschi, Hanoi

Wien, Zagreb, Belgrad

Algier, Tunis, Tripolis, Lagos,
Brazzaville, Luanda, Maputo

Kairo, Karthum,
Addis Abbeba

Erfurt

Budapest,
Burgas,
Varna

Dresden

Moskau,
Sotschi,
Tatry,
Budapest,
Sofia, Varna,
Burgas

An Interflug route map from 1985. Despite GDR citizens being unable to fly to most of the destinations, the airline maintained its image as an international carrier.

described by Walter Kirn – represents the jet set and thus a group of persons who not only profited from the Western economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s but who subsequently changed their habits regarding travel and consumption, taste and lifestyle and, consequently, their entire *habitus*. More than anybody else, the frequent flyer appears to be the dynamic and successful beneficiary of the transition from the late industrial to the postmodern era.

Freedom and Security: A Modern Paradox

Aside from its material base and its agents, *Airworld* was also constituted by certain dreams and expectations that were at best captured by marketing campaigns.[21] The main topics were speed, security, service, space and cosmopolitanism. For example, a 1948 American Overseas Airlines poster shows two airplanes tighten-

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21   See for instance Jochen Eisenbrand, 'Fluggesellschaften und Corporate Design', in Vegesack and Eisenbrand (eds.), *Airworld*, p. 144-174.

ing a world map in the air, thus suggesting that distances become shorter in the air.[22] A KLM poster of 1953 shows a giraffe looking at a KLM airplane in the sky, advertising the 'Trans-Sahara Route'. Three years later, in 1956, an Air France poster also showed a giraffe filled with flags from different nations; this giraffe, too, focuses on an airplane flying over its head (this time an Air France jet), while the text line says: *Le plus long réseau du monde* ('The world's largest route network'). Other posters simply promoted chosen travel destinations; however they all indicate that travelling the world in reasonable time is no longer a dream but reality. The common subject of all these posters is the diminution of the world, both in a geographic and in a touristic sense, in a process which we would today call globalisation – a process closely intertwined with the rise of civil (and cargo) aviation in the second half of the twentieth century.

Many airlines also took pride in offering spacious seats, good food and movie entertainment. However, safety was hardly a topic for commercials. The airlines seemed to fear that raising the issue would only alert (potential) passengers to it – no matter how safe aviation had become. Despite the fact that the number of flights and the number of flown miles rose exponentially after World War II, the total number of airplane disasters remained stable. Until today, statistics list approximately 20-40 accidents annually, including emergency landings and other incidents without casualties.[23] Flying became safer, even if individual passengers did not necessarily *feel* safer. Nevertheless, most therapies against the fear of flying use statistics and technical knowledge in order to cure the clients of irrational fears when the most dangerous part of the flight is the car ride to the airport.

Strikingly, the difference between individual risk and the reality of statistics is the subject of Max Frisch's novel *Homo faber*, written in 1957 and starting with the description of an emergency landing of a Super Constellation in the Mexican desert. Frisch's protagonist Walter Faber, an engineer and rationalist who had – for reasons unknown – hesitated to enter the plane survives the touchdown in the desert, not guessing that subsequently his entire life would take a new direction and turn into what we could describe as a Greek tragedy: Faber, not aware that he has an adult daughter, meets this very daughter 'accidentally' on a transatlantic steamboat, falls in love with her and loses her in a tragic accident, the morale being that even if the plane crash is statistically unlikely, it is likely compared to the chance to unknowingly meet one's own daughter, fall in love with her and tragically cause her death. Thus, the novel can be read as a critique of rationality and blind trust in technical progress for which the plane crash is central.

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22   Mathias Remmele, 'Einladung zum Fliegen – Plakatkunst im Dienst der zivilen Luftfahrt', in ibid., p. 230-262.
23   See for instance www.flugzeug-absturz.de (accessed 17 June 2010).

American Overseas Airlines, designed by Jan Lewitt/George Him, 1948, Digital Image © (2011-11-07) The Museum of Modern Art/Scala, Florence.

Despite the fact that fear of flying was (and still is) quite prevalent, civil aviation has continued to grow unhindered.[24] By the early 1970s, annual flight trips became a standard model for family and backpacker vacations. In 1969, the Boeing 747 was introduced, which had a range of 5300 miles and reached a cruising speed of 555 mph, making long-distance trips faster and more comfortable. Consequently, space, service and entertainment remained central issues in many airlines' marketing strategies of the 1970s.

In general we can state that after World War II the airplane became an icon of freedom, representing the modern dream of mobility and success both symbolically and materially. Still, with growing mobility new risks came up, and while the risk of crashing faded, the risk to be hijacked on board an aircraft grew in inverse proportion. A striking number of airplane hijackings were caused or inspired by the Cold War. Many cases of air piracy were attempts to escape from socialist countries, and even if every single case of skyjacking was based on a very pragmatic decision, reflecting the fact that airplanes seem to be easier to handle than

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24   Hasso Spode, '"Nichts wie weg hier!" – Luftfahrt und Tourismus in historischer Perspektive', in Vegesack and Eisenbrand (eds.), p. 12-32.

boats or trains, it is still obvious that the airplane was also charged with ideas of freedom, independence, success and dynamics grown on *Airworld*'s soil.

Skyjacking during the Cold War

The first reported skyjacking took place in 1931. A PanAm aircraft which had been hired by the United States postal services was hijacked by Peruvian rebels who used it as a base for dropping flyers in remote areas of their country and then returned the aircraft to the pilot.[25] During the Cold War skyjacking became a form of action practised by refugees as well as by criminals, terrorists and freedom fighters. Some skyjackings were even carried out by mentally ill people suffering from persecution complexes. Altogether 821 cases of skyjacking were documented in the years 1947-1990.[26] The peak was reached in 1969 when 85 incidents of skyjacking were counted in a single year; this year's skyjackings were partly carried out by Palestinians protesting against the Israeli occupation of Arab territories during the Six Day War of 1967. From then on, the skyjackers' ambition was not to get from A to B but to take hostages, who were set free when the skyjackers' (political) demands were fulfilled. In 1970, for the first time a case of skyjacking was broadcast live by Japanese television, making sure that skyjacking would become a classic media event.

Many of these hijackings clearly reflected Cold War reality. The first series of hijackings from socialist Eastern Europe to the West began when a Romanian citizen hijacked an aircraft to Turkey in order to apply for political asylum. In 1948, a Czech aircraft was directed to West Germany, a Yugoslavian aircraft to Italy, a Romanian aircraft to Salzburg in Austria and another Romanian aircraft to Istanbul.[27] It is quite noteworthy that in this year a case of hijacking in the opposite direction was registered: for reasons unknown a Greek DC3 was hijacked by eight passengers and redirected to Tetovo near Skopje in Yugoslavia.[28]

The series of hijackings from East to West continued over the following decades: a Hungarian aircraft was hijacked to Germany (4 January 1949), a Romanian aircraft to Greece (29 April 1949), a Polish one to Sweden (also 29 April 1949), another Polish aircraft to Denmark (16 December 1949). Three Czech aircraft were forced to fly to Munich on 24 March 1950, and a Yugoslavian aircraft landed in Switzerland on 17 October 1950. The list continued until the fall of the Berlin

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25 David Gero, *Flüge des Schreckens: Anschläge und Flugzeugentführungen seit 1931* (Stuttgart: Motorbuchverlag, 1999), p. 10.

26 Choi, *Aviation Terrorism*, p. 6.

27 Ibid., p. 10f.

28 Gero, *Flüge des Schreckens*, p. 10.

wall in November 1989, most cases ending with the hijacker's application for political asylum.[29]

A second series of Cold War hijackings occurred in the context of the Cuban revolution of 1959. First, Fidel Castro's rebels hijacked several Cuban airplanes in order to use them for their own revolutionary purposes.[30] Since regular flight schedules between the United States and Havana ceased after Castro's victory, some exiled Cubans tried to get back home by way of hijacking an aircraft while at the same time some of Castro's opponents in Cuba tried to flee the island by the same method.[31] It is an irony of history that in this context quite a lot of citizens of the United States ended up visiting Cuba involuntarily – a circumstance welcomed by Castro who allegedly provided those tourists with rum and cigars, invited them for sightseeing tours in Havana, charging the US airlines between $2000 and $3000 per person before sending them back home.[32]

A third series of Cold War hijackings occurred in the wake of political protest in early 1980's Poland which led to the foundation of *Solidarnosc*. Between 1981 and 1983, ten aircraft were directed from Poland to West Berlin, causing the local population to translate the Polish airline's name LOT as 'Landet Ooch in Tempelhof' (Landing also at Tempelhof).[33] Practically, this route was convenient because the distance was very short and did not leave much time for border controls to intervene. Usually the airplanes stayed at a low altitude so that it was difficult to see them on the radar. Tempelhof airport could easily be recognised from above because of its unique architecture.[34] And of course Tempelhof still fed on its significance as the base for the Berlin airlift of 1948-1949, one of the very early landmarks of the Cold War.[35]

A first agreement to fight airborne terrorism was passed in 1969, but took effect several years later.[36] However, this agreement did not primarily react to what was happening in Eastern Europe but to pilots' protests in the United States and to the growing threat of terrorism. Soon, metal detectors were installed in the airports and security measures were tightened. During the 1970s many governments changed their strategies: while in the early years of skyjacking they had

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29 For a detailed survey see ibid., p. 9-21.

30 Johan Grimonprez, *Inflight: What To Do With a Stolen 777* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2000), p. 23.

31 Andreas Killen, *1973: Nervous Breakdown. Watergate, Warhol, and the Birth of Post-Sixties America* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2006), p. 13-44.

32 Grimonprez, *Inflight*, p. 23.

33 Lutz Freundt, '*Mauerflieger*': *Berliner Luftkorridore – Flughafen Tempelhof* (Diepholz: AeroLit, 2001), p. 152f.

34 Ibid.

35 See, for example, Wolfgang Huschke, *Die Rosinenbomber: Die Berliner Luftbrücke 1948/49. Eine Geschichte der Menschen und Flugzeuge* (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 1999).

36 BGBl. [Bundesgesetzblatt] 1969, p. 11, 121; Edward McWhinney, *Aerial Piracy and International Terrorism: The Illegal Diversion of Aircraft and International Law* (Dordrecht: Springer, 1987).

been eager to negotiate with the hijackers, they eventually started to take military action. Consequently, the skyjackers' chances of success gradually dropped. The annual number of skyjacking incidents dropped to 20-30 in the 1980s and to 15-20 in the 1990s.

Antje Raviç Strubel: *Tupolew 134*

The novel *Tupolew 134*, written by German author Antje Raviç Strubel and published in 2004, is based on a true story, which unfolded in Germany in 1978.[37] Two citizens of the German Democratic Republic (Ingrid Ruske and Detlef Tiede alias 'Katja' and 'Schaper' in the novel) plan to escape to West Germany using fake West German passports. When their contact person (Ruske's West German boyfriend) does not show up in Gdansk, where he was supposed to hand over the fake passports, Ruske and Tiede spontaneously decide to hijack an airplane with a toy gun they had chanced upon in a flea market. They manage to redirect a Polish aircraft to Berlin Tempelhof. Since Tempelhof airport was under us-american administration and several agreements to fight airborne terrorism had passed in the course of the decade, the us administration takes the hijackers to court and accuses them of violating aviation law and taking hostages by force. When it turns out that they used only a toy gun and that actually the Polish crew willingly flew them to West Berlin, the defendants are set free. Ingrid Ruske is discharged and Tiede is sentenced to nine months in prison – exactly the time period he has spent in pre-trial custody.

In Raviç Strubel's novel the actual hijacking performed by 'Katja' and 'Schaper' fills only a relatively short passage. Yet this passage is quite revealing:

> So we're in the West now, [Schaper] said before taking down the pistol.
>
> Look, the pilot said. Gropiusstadt. So many multi-storey buildings. Not a nice place to live in, after all. – No, no, he said when he realized that Schaper was about to capitulate and put the pistol on the floor. Keep it. You have to keep it. Don't throw it away until we're there. Else we'll have trouble. Big trouble!
>
> Schaper nodded to the flight attendant. He nodded apologetically and inadequately shrugged his shoulders. (...)
>
> You can see the border, the pilot said. Very long, long empty stripes. You see?
>
> Yes, I see, I see. But we've crossed them, damn it, we've crossed them!
>
> Congratulations, said the pilot. Pasdrawljaju.

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37 The documentary *Entführung aus Liebe – Protokoll einer DDR-Flucht* (directed by Thomas Donker and Margit Geßner, Germany 1999, broadcast by Phoenix on 17 August 2001), gives a detailed account of the events in 1978-1980 and includes interviews with the persons involved.

> Looks like a scar. A damned large scar.
> Down there they won't see it. (...)
> Damned shit, he said, we simply crossed the entire shit.[38]

In the novel the border between the two German states appears as an empty strip and a large scar. The 'real dimension' of the partition only becomes visible from a bird's-eye view. West Berlin is not described as an open and lively city but as a cold and anonymous juggernaut. Hence, the flight is a metaphor for the shift in perspective rather than for freedom or mobility in a professional or touristic sense. Strikingly, the shift between an earthbound and an airborne perspective was enhanced by aviation, a phenomenon scrutinised by art historian Christoph Asendorf: 'With the conquest of the sky a new space of experience was unlocked. Even if flying in airplanes was anything but a common way of travelling, we can observe that in the nineteen-twenties a new way of seeing things came up. The airplane perspective starts to influence our visual vocabulary, and it becomes a subject for artists and theorists.'[39]

In *Tupolew 134* this shift of perspective is neutrally identified with the shift from East to West: 'Katja' and 'Schaper' distance themselves from both political systems, thus enabling themselves to observe rather than to judge. In theory, they could even have had the same conversation flying eastwards.[40] Thus, the hijacking episode in *Tupolew 134* appears to be a literary reflection on the intrinsic link between a physical and an ideological meta-perspective rather than a success story of escape from the Soviet realm. Unlike the arrival in West Berlin the flight experience is one of mental liberation for Raviç Strubel's protagonists. Consequently, the most tragic figure in the story (in history as in the novel) remains Ruske's West German lover who was imprisoned by the Stasi when he entered the German Democratic Republic (by train!) on his way to Gdansk. He was only released in 1980 and married Ruske after his return to West Germany.

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38   Antje Raviç Strubel, *Tupolew 134* (Munich: Beck, 2004), p. 145 (my translation). The events of 1978 had already inspired a (somewhat less sophisticated) novel in 1989: Andreas Schmidt, *Alarm in Ost-Berlin: Interflug – 203 entführt! Ein Tatsachenroman über die erste Flugzeugentführung in der DDR* (Böblingen: Tykve, 1989).

39   Christoph Asendorf, *Super Constellation. Flugzeug und Raumrevolution: Die Wirkung der Luftfahrt auf Kunst und Kultur der Moderne* (Vienna/New York: Springer, 1997), p. 34.

40   Even if this ease was historically rather rare, there were some individuals who chose to leave West Germany and move to the socialist German Democratic Republic. See Bernd Stöver, *Zuflucht DDR: Spione und andere Übersiedler* (München: Beck, 2009).

Judgment in Berlin

In contrast to Raviç Strubel's novel, which focuses on an individual escape from East to West Germany, a US movie goes into the details of Allied law and diplomacy. *Judgment in Berlin* (USA/West Germany 1988), directed by Leo Penn and starring his brother Sean Penn, Martin Sheen, and Jutta Speidel, is based on the same historical incident as *Tupolew 134*.[41] However, it is not made in the style of a coming-of-age novel but in the style of an American courtroom movie. As in *Tupolew 134*, the actual hijacking fills only a few minutes at the very beginning. Here, too, the focus is not on the violence of the act (which was, after all, with a toy pistol) but on the flight over Berlin and the bird's-eye perspective on Tempelhof. Upon arrival, Helmut Thiele (as Detlef Tiede is named in the movie) – who has just before stated that he 'hates flying' – is received by a member of the US Air Force with the words: 'Welcome (...) to free West Berlin!'

Since fleeing from East Germany had never been considered to be a crime in the West, both the hijackers and the Berlin public expect the hijackers to be set free immediately. However, as the state attorney explains: 'Nobody has ever been prosecuted for leaving East Germany, but this is different, it's hijacking.' Consequently, the skyjackers' detention prepares the plot for Penn's courtroom movie about the conflict between law and order on the one hand and the defence of civil rights (including the right to mobility) on the other.

During the trial, Judge Herbert J. Stern (figuring in the movie under his real name) asks himself whether 'our [Western] prisons [are] so much better than their [Eastern] streets' – clearly suggesting that hijacking an airplane into freedom is perfectly legitimate as long as nobody is injured. As in history and in the novel, both defendants are discharged of all accusations after a witness declares that they did not use violence and that the Polish crew quite eagerly agreed to land in Tempelhof. Finally, Judge Stern turns down the state attorney's claim to sentence Schaper to four years of prison and sets him free, arguing that his primary task is to defend the constitution of the United States of America.

In this movie the airplane is both a symbol of freedom and the stage for a violent act which is judged to be legitimate in the name of individual freedom. Based on this brief summary, one might suspect that Penn's movie is full of anti-communist propaganda. Yet, a second look proposes a different reading. The conflict between a conservative state attorney, who argues that *any* violation of aviation law should be severely punished and a liberal judge, who comes to the defence of the defendants – not least by guaranteeing them a trial by jury – is won

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41   *Judgment in Berlin*, directed by Leo Penn, USA/West Germany 1988, 92 min. For details see http://german. imdb.com/title/tt0095415/ (accessed 6 January 2008). The movie was based on a novel of the same title by Herbert J. Stern.

by the judge. And while Stern later wrote a book on the case, defending his view and inspiring the movie *Judgment in Berlin*,[42] Penn manages to produce a very thoughtful film about the tensions between justice and law under the conditions of the Cold War. Interestingly, both his movie and Raviç Strubel's novel draw on the aircraft as a symbol of freedom, as well as symbol of transition, neutrality and change of perspective.

Shared/Divided Dreamworlds

An investigation of the cultural, social, technical, aesthetic and narrative history of flying has shown that the sky over Europe was a divided sky between 1961 and 1989 but that dreams of freedom and mobility were similar in the East and the West and that Eastern and Western *Airworlds* – despite travel restrictions and different ideological positions towards free travel – were structurally rather similar. On both sides of the iron curtain the airplane was an icon of freedom – be it freedom in the sense of touristic mobility, in the context of civil or human rights, or in the sense of technical progress prompting a better life. The similarities, on the one hand, point to the fact that *Airworld* had long been reflected upon as a utopian space in works of fine art,[43] photography, architecture, literature and movies. For example, Italian *Aeropittura* as part of the Futurist movement of the early twentieth century was obsessed with civil as well as military aviation[44] and airport construction has in many aspects been groundbreaking for modern architecture.[45]

Yet the dream of flying was most stirring in the 1960s and 1970s, when civil aviation became affordable for the masses – even if, in the wake of the Yom Kippur War of 1973, some Arab states imposed an oil embargo and terrorist groups appropriated hijacking as a means to rouse attention for their causes.

Still, civil aviation was celebrated as a modern way of overcoming time and space on a global scale until it was identified as a threat to the environment in the late 1970s (already pictured by Icelandic painter Erró in 1967). From then on the dream of flying was flawed by the insight that aircraft noise causes stress, that the acceleration of modern life has brought about severe collateral damage and, finally, that the burning of kerosene contributes to the climate change. These observa-

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42 Herbert Jay Stern, *Judgment in Berlin* (New York: Universe Books, 1984).

43 Bodo-Michael Baumunk (ed.), *Die Kunst des Fliegens* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 1996), p. 9.

44 See for example, Myriam Wierschowski, 'Italienischer Futurismus und Aeropittura', in Baumunk (ed.), *Die Kunst des Fliegens*, p. 84-94. For Russian artistic reflection on aviation see Andrei Alexejewitsch Kowaljow, 'Freier Flug im totalen Raum. Der Mythos des Fliegens in der sowjetischen Kunst der 20er und 30er Jahre', in ibid., p. 120-124; Igor Alexandrowitsch Kasus, 'Die Luftfahrt und die sowjetische Avantgardearchitektur der 20er Jahre', in ibid., p. 140-151; Asendorf, *Super Constellation*, p. 49-70.

45 See Gordon, *Naked Airport*, p. 261-263.

ERRÓ, The Second Cry, 1967, photo: © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2011.

tions have more recently prompted a kind of critique of civilization in which aviation plays a prominent role. From a 21st-century perspective we could hence state that flying has brought about a dream of freedom as well as new nightmares concerning the future of mankind. One could even state that, ironically, after the end of the Cold War, aviation has come to transcend borders both in terms of mobility and environmental damage. Yet, if we compare the Eastern and Western ways to promote *Airworld* as a transportation system, as a cultural and aesthetic entity and as a projection screen for dreams of freedom and success, it turns out that structural similarities outnumber the differences by far.

Post-1989 Perspectives
on the Cultural Cold War

10 Problematic Things

East German Materials after 1989

» *Justinian Jampol*

In 1990, during the height of the *Wende*, transition from the old to the new was reflected not only in the realm of lightening-paced political changes, but also, and significantly, in the world of things. In that year, East Germans disposed of 1.9 million tons, 1.2 tons per individual. This was three times the per capita rate in West Germany for the same period.[1] The next year, in 1991, Eduard Schreiber produced the documentary film *Östliche Landschaft* (Eastern Landscape), recording the experiences of a man who manages a dump in the recently deceased German Democratic Republic (GDR). In the climactic scene, the manager spots a sullied state flag of the GDR partially sticking out in a pile of garbage. Tugging the flag from the trash heap, he holds it up for the camera before letting it fall back to the ground. That the GDR was now relegated to the 'dustbin of history' appeared to be quite literal and served to reinforce the notion in the West that East Germans recognised their cultural products as garbage along with state-sponsored communism. This approach to understand the East through its material culture, in fact, emerged much earlier through Cold War rhetoric; the East German cityscape was often described as being 'gray', 'soulless', and 'anti-modern',[2] while East German goods along with their packaging and advertising campaigns were naïve, simplistic, cheap and simultaneously irreverent.[3]

In the process of the *Wiedervereinigung*, the West German political system replaced the existing government and political structures of the East. Except for fringe groups that have been widely dismissed, the replacement of the SED (*Socialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*) in East Germany has never been seriously challenged. Just as political unification rapidly took hold, the material cultures of East

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1 Anna Martin, Barbara Hammerschmitt, Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundresrepublik Deutschland, Zeitgeschichtliches Forum Leipzig (ed.), *Einsichten: Diktatur und Widerstand in der DDR* (Leipzig: Reclam, 2001), p. 22.

2 Katherine Pence and Paul Betts (eds.), *Socialist Modern: East German Everyday Culture and Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), p. 14.

3 Georg Bertsch, Ernst Hedler and Matthias Dietz, SED *Schönes Einheits Design*, (Cologne: Taschen, 1990).

and West began to come together. *Baumarkt*, the popular West German-based construction superstore, provided the standard for household commodities, Western brands raced to set up shop in the East, and the D-Mark took its place as the official currency of the 'new' Germany. Yet, even as this material unification progressed post-haste, the way in which original materials from the GDR were handled on an official level, led to grumbling and outright protest in parts of the *Neue Länder*. Unification involved not only elimination of the old political structures in public life, but erasing East German street names, tearing down buildings and monuments, and completing the process of disposing of consumer products that had begun with the East Germans themselves in 1989 and 1990. The Unification Treaty of 1990 made clear that such a selection process of preservation and destruction was going to be part of the procedure of reunification.[4] The question of what was culturally significant to merit preservation, what was not and, significantly, who was empowered to make this selection, set the stage for several pitched battles in the public arena about the meaning of the material legacy of the GDR in the post-Cold War era.[5]

In one well-known controversy from the 1990s, former East Germans objected to the elimination of the once ubiquitous *Ampelmännchen* streetlight that instructed pedestrians in East Germany of when to cross the street (a green figure stepping forward while holding up his hat) and when to wait (a red figure with legs pushed together and arms stretched out). This figurine that was once common on the streets of eastern Germany was replaced with its Western counterpart, inspiring accusations of colonisation by the West and the brazen and insensitive manner by which the former GDR was absorbed into the new, larger West Germany. This was followed by the debates and protests surrounding the future of the *Palast der Republik*, arguably the most important East German landmark, which was ultimately dismantled in the 2000s. The cultural-political struggle expanded to the art world when in 1999 an exhibition in Weimar presented East German artwork backed with garbage-bag-like material and hung flea-market-style one on top of the other, eliciting comparisons with the infamous Nazi Degenerate Art exhibition in 1937. In some cases, cultural institutions, mostly under new management, de-accessioned large collections of East German material culture or sent them to be stored in off-site warehouses where they were often rendered inaccessible. Political developments since 1990 have led to the use of the bemused term *Ostalgie* to explain seemingly irrational attachment to the objects of a regime that had during

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4   See Article 35-2 of the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany, 'Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik über die Herstellung der Einheit Deutschlands', 31 August 1990.

5   For more about some of these debates, see Rainer Eppelmann, Bernd Faulenbach and Ulrich Mählert (eds.), *Bilanz und Perspektiven der DDR-Forschung: Im Auftrag der Stiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Kultur* (Paderborn/Munich: Schöningh, 2003).

the *Wende* been literally thrown away.[6] Thus, the ensuing tension and disagreement between East and West has decidedly not been about the struggle of communism versus capitalism – liberal democracy clearly won the day – but has occurred within the realm of culture over the hue of the new German identity, in which the way material culture is presented and dealt with has played a central role.

Beginning even before the *Tag der Deutschen Einheit* (Day of German Unity on 3 October 1990), material objects in East Germany, especially consumer goods, were often seen as simply products of a totalitarian regime in which all decisions, power and production was concentrated at the top and consumed by those at the bottom. This approach seemed to explain, albeit simplistically, the sub-par quality of many objects and the state's inability to provide the quantity and status of goods in the West, the SED having to resort to repressive tactics in order to maintain its rule. But something else belies the explanatory use of objects to understand the GDR as well as the emergence of *Ostalgie*. Material culture is important. While the GDR as a political entity is extinct, its memory, and especially East German culture, has survived as codified visual images and cues. The GDR in popular memory is reflected and transmitted in exhibitions, archival collections, memorials and even films.[7] They contribute to the shape of the official narrative and how East Germany and East Germans are understood within reunified Germany. Further, objects' critical role in the *Aufarbeitung* following 1990 is rooted in their importance during the time of the GDR. While it is certainly the case that East Germany's proximity to the West (and access to West German television and advertisements) gave rise to the Tantalus-like symptoms of desire for the unreachable, it is also the case that consumer culture was, as Paul Betts and Katherine Pence describe, 'characterised by a surprising amount of conflict and texture.'[8] In fact, it is precisely in the realm of consumption and 'things' that scholars have found the SED made concessions to demands, individual power was exerted (described as '*Eigen-sinn*'),[9] and an East German cultural identity was formulated and transmitted.

Using sources that include objects and oral history (informing the relationship between things and their users), in addition to archival texts, scholars are uncovering and exploring nuances of daily life and places of power and dissent that are perhaps not as visible through the use of one type of source alone. By dynamically combining the information and stories that text and objects describe and

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6   'Ostaglie' is derived from a combination of 'Ost', meaning East, and 'Nostalgie', or nostalgia.

7   Movies such as *Sonnenallee* [1998] and *NVA* [2005] attracted large audiences across Germany, while *Goodbye, Lenin!* and most recently, *Das Leben der Anderen* [2006], attracted high box-office revenues and equally high domestic and international critical acclaim.

8   Betts and Pence, *Socialist Modern*, p. 6.

9   This term is difficult to translate into English; it can be described as referring to the sense of one's own individual interests and concerns. See Alf Lüdtke, *Eigen-Sinn: Fabrikalltag, Arbeitererfahrungen und Politik vom Kaiserreich bis in den Faschismus* (Hamburg: Ergbnisse Verlag, 1993).

evoke, 'things' have become rich historical sources that enable unique perspectives into multifaceted aspects of the past. However, material objects of the GDR are maintained by a few key archives and museums, which provide critical access to users, including students and scholars of East Germany. Walter Benjamin, who formed his own personal archives, was keenly aware of the 'strategic calculation' and 'ethos of an archivist' that is central to the construction of posterity.[10] Even as East German cultural history and scholarship is burgeoning, creating a strong need for broad archival collections of material culture, existing archives have been influenced and shaped in the wake of an emerging official history of the GDR and contemporary approaches to the complex issues of the past. Such decisions affect the historiography of the GDR and how this past is understood.

'Things' and the Legacy of the Cold War and the *Wende*

The significance of things in the post-1989 era is inexorably linked to the role that 'things' played during the Cold War. Indeed, the Cold War was, in many ways, a battle of things. Capitalism and communism offered competing strategies for the dispersal of wealth and goods. Western capitalism, based on Adam Smith and market principles, clashed against Eastern communism, rooted in Marxism and the refiguring of the liberal concept of ownership and distribution of resources. At the centre of this battle were *Waren* (commodities). In the first line of *Das Kapital*, Karl Marx focuses on the central role of the commodity as the leitmotif: 'The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as "an immense accumulation of commodities", its unit being a single commodity. Our investigation must therefore begin with the analysis of a commodity.'[11] The concepts of ownership and the meaning of commodities in a social and cultural context were debated throughout the struggles of the forty-five year history of the Cold War. The infamous 'Kitchen Debate' between Soviet Premier Khrushchev and then Vice-President Nixon highlighted the political role of the commodity, or 'thing', as both sides argued over the quality and accessibility of their commodities within the sphere of everyday culture as applied to gender roles, accessibility of luxury and leisure. Western powers consistently mocked East European quality standards, indicating that the inability of communism to provide for its citizens proved the ideological superiority of capitalism.[12]

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10   Benjamin's interest in the politics of building archives is described in Esther Leslie, Ursula Marx et al. (eds.), *Walter Benjamin's Archive: Images, Texts, Signs* (London/New York: Verso, 2007), p. 1.

11   Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Das Kapital* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 1.

12   See Fedor Mikhailovich Burlatsky, *Khrushchev and the First Russian Spring: The Era of Khrushchev through the Eyes of His Advisor* (New York: Scribner's, 1991); William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: Norton, 2003).

In response, the Soviet Bloc governments' official commitment to heavy industry at many points wavered. Communist leaders found themselves promising higher standards of living to the populace as discontent rumbled throughout Eastern Europe. This gave rise to 'Goulash communism' in Hungary with the former hardliner János Kádár promising Hungarians the best of both worlds – accessibility to consumer products while fulfilling the morally superior goals of communism. In the 1970s Czechoslovakia tolerated a burgeoning black market, encouraged consumption and redirected state funding to the production and importation of consumer electronics. And in the 1980s East Germany's debt levels were reaching new heights; the SED increased production of its luxury products, from Meissen porcelain to cocktail dresses, and ordered tens of thousands of VCRs from Japan to meet growing demands. Making matters worse for the ruling Socialist Unity Party, East Germany shared the same language and historical background as West Germany, which served as the benchmark for material satisfaction. While the Berlin Wall kept physical interaction between the two sides to a minimum, the imposing reinforced concrete slabs could not prevent radio and television waves from reaching the East.[13] East Germans could see and hear advertisements for products that were unavailable or scarce.

For those in the West who could favourably compare their plight with those 'other' Germans in the East, the *Wende* would seem a logical conclusion to the narrative of the Cold War. There was no need to visit archives or the museum to understand the GDR; one could simply go to the flea markets dotting Eastern Germany and see the physical consequences of the communist system, which to the Western eye appeared cheap and of inferior quality. In the same way that many East Germans developed misconstrued perspectives of the universal availability of wealth in the West, many West Germans visited East German grocery stores and saw first-hand shoddily produced consumer goods and formulated perspectives that saw East Germany as a society of deprivation and backwardness. For further proof, one needed only to watch West German television and see East Germans streaming into Western stores, buying up Western goods. Indeed, 'the well-publicized day-trips of wide-eyed East Berliners feverishly spending their "welcome money" on West German cigarettes and video recorders apparently substantiated long-standing Cold War images of East German bankruptcy, unfreedom, and consumer want.'[14]

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13   There was an exception to this. In the most eastern areas of Saxony, there were communities that were unable to get Western radio and television. They were derided by other East Germans as belonging to '*Das Tal der Ahnungslosen*' or, 'the valley of the clueless'.

14   Betts and Pence, *Socialist Modern*, p. 7.

Even before the lines of those waiting for their *Begrüßungsgeld* (welcome money) reached their long snake-like shapes, endless jokes and quips about material culture and scarcity of goods in the quickly deteriorating GDR emerged. For instance: 'how do you double the price of a *Trabi*? Fill it with gas!'[15] The *Trabi* as the 'Ossie's Mercedes' played and continues to play a central role in the popular understanding of the GDR.[16] But just as East German consumer items were degraded and junked, East German objects never meant to be bought and sold were transformed into commodities. Spray-painted pieces of the Berlin Wall, displayed and hawked in polyethylene bags, offered tourists and passers-by physical reminders of the infamous concrete and iron reinforced barrier, commemorating the enormous change and victory of the West.[17] They seemed to provide an opportunity to come to terms, face-to-face, with the unseemly and often conceptually abstract Iron Curtain. Thus, the Wall in its original form as a terrible and impermeable barricade that separated East and West, commemorated 'reunification' and freedom from tyranny in tangible form when it was divided up into innumerable parts and sold.

The perception of East Germany's lack and poor quality of consumer products was equated with the lack and poor quality of cultural life. Similar to East German products, East German culture could be understood as having been manufactured by a centralised economic and political system and imposed on those below – East German citizens who, according to the emerging official historical narrative after 1990, crashed through the Berlin Wall to escape from this grey world of 'cardboard *Trabis*', banal propaganda, and the Stasi.[18] In this way, Joes Segal explains 'that the complexity and ambiguity of historical reality was replaced by a well-ordered universe of clear-cut borders and oppositions: West versus East, democracy versus totalitarianism, Good versus Evil. In such a universe, there is no place for open dialogue and mutual understanding.'[19] This use of a conceptual framework that focused on hierarchies of power provoked a strong tendency towards thinking of the GDR in dichotomous categories, and this was reflected in prevalent termi-

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15   Documented in Ingo Franke, *Das große DDR-Witz Buch. 500 kommentierte DDR-Witze* (Forchheim: Media Enterprise Franke, 2002).

16   The DDR Museum in Berlin encourages visitors to sit in a *Trabi* in order to 'experience East Germany'.

17   The Berlin Wall has become an important tourist attraction, especially for Americans for whom the Berlin Wall also belongs to the narrative of overcoming the communists in the Cold War. 'Ostalgia Ain't What it Used to Be: Tourists Want to See More Berlin Wall', *Der Spiegel Online*, 4 March 2008, available online at http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,539223,00.html (accessed 1 November 2010).

18   Ina Merkel, 'Consumer Culture in the GDR, or How the Struggle for Anti-modernity Was Lost on the Battleground of Consumer Culture', in Susan Strasser and Matthias Judt (eds.), *Getting and Spending: European and American Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 282.

19   Joes Segal, 'Ideological Borders and German Art at the Beginning and the End of the Cold War', *ARS: Journal of the Institute of Art History of Slovak Academy of Sciences* 40, no. 2 (2007), p. 266.

nology; the GDR was de-legitimised/ de-authorised (e.g. *Unrechtsstaat, Diktatur, totalitärer/ autoritärer Staat, rotes Preussen, Erziehungsdiktatur*), which in turn left only the options of agreement or rejection.[20] Shades of grey or the possibility of a middle ground or overlap between the two were thus structurally impossible.[21] East German civil society had been flattened after the fact, leaving little conceptual space for the recognition of an East German identity and culture that was not inexorably fused with the narrative of repression and the total control of the SED. It is also a political approach that has removed the necessity to preserve East German 'things' which have increasingly been used by scholars to explore and to understand the nuances and intricacies of life in the GDR.

'Things' as Scholarly Sources versus Political Instruments

The growing significance of *Alltagsgeschichte* (everyday history) paralleled the burgeoning interest of the material culture of the GDR as a scholarly source. A concept that first emerged in the 1970s, *Alltagsgeschichte* focuses on the qualitative investigation of ordinary peoples' lives; their work, domestic life, culture and social life. Studies often explore consumption, use, manipulation and retransmission of objects. Particularly in the last five years, historians, German studies scholars and cultural anthropologists have used the study of objects and their relationship to the user in order to formulate interdisciplinary approaches with which to address subjects such as individual action, routine behaviours and the relationship between power and culture. For example, Judd Stitziel records how women's groups successfully pressured the SED to provide more fashionable clothing and in higher quantities.[22] Ina Merkel, Katherine Pence, Paul Betts, Lothar Mertens, Annette Kaminsky and Phillip Heldmann explore the politics of consumption

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20　'The approach towards delegitimisation conveys a tendency to reduce value judgments about the political system of the GDR or about real existing socialism to either acceptance or rejection. Therefore it conveys a tendency towards thinking in terms of black and white, which in turn is related to defamation or to prejudice and exaggeration. (...) Especially during the years after 1989, time and again one encountered "exaggerations with a nucleus of truth" – statements which overstate or absolutise certain aspects, concealing contradictory aspects.' Quoted in Lothar Fritze, 'Delegitimierung und Totalkritik. Kritische Anmerkungen nach 15 Jahren Aufarbeitung der DDR-Vergangenheit', *Sinn und Form*, 5 (2006), p. 643- 659. The magazine *Sinn und Form* has a long tradition in Germany. It was founded in 1949 by Johannes R. Becher and Paul Wiegler and is published by the Academy of Arts (*Akademie der Künste*).

21　For example Georg Bruce, *Resistance with the People: Repression and Resistance in Eastern Germany, 1945-1955* (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003); Richard Bessel and Ralph Jessen (eds.), *Die Grenzen der Diktatur: Staat und Gesellschaft in der DDR* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996); Anna Funder, *Stasiland* (New York: Granta, 2003).

22　Judd Stitziel, *Fashioning Socialism: Clothing, Politics and Consumer Culture in East Germany* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2005).

and the character of power in the GDR.[23] Several studies of *Eingaben* have looked at the thousands of letters that were written to government agencies to improve goods or make others available. Jonathan Zatlin investigates the role of the East German automobile, the Trabant, as a 'vehicle of desire,' pointing to the dynamic economic negotiations that occurred in order to acquire an automobile.[24] These studies of consumption in the GDR use artefacts and material culture as historical records to investigate subtleties of power and desire in the GDR. They also reveal the extent to which individuals could look out for their own interests and achieve a level of personal satisfaction even within the restrictive boundaries and limitations of communist structures. This was the East German *habitus*, the living space where ideas, desire, and activities collide, within limits that are 'set by the historically and socially situated conditions,'[25] to form a place of recognition and cultural identity. Josie McLellan explores the role of '*Das Magazin*' and ways in which the state publishing houses provided erotic images to meet the demand of the East German population even though such materials were initially discouraged by the SED.[26] Eli Rubin investigates the role of plastics in everyday life in the GDR and the debates surrounding the government's politicisation of the material and East German citizens' responses.[27]

As interest in this field is increasingly becoming transatlantic and includes the scholarly use of objects, there are a handful of archives around the world that specialise in the everyday material culture of the GDR. I am the director of one

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23 See Ina Merkel, *Utopie und Bedürfnis: Die Geschichte der Konsumkultur in der DDR* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1999); Katherine Pence, *Rations to Fashions: Gender and Consumer Politics in Cold War Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Lothar Mertens, *Unter dem Deckel der Diktatur: Soziale und kulturelle Aspekte des DDR-Alltags* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2003); Annette Kaminsky, *Wohlstand, Schönheit, Glück. Kleine Konsumgeschichte der DDR* (Munich: Beck, 2001); Philipp Heldmann, 'Negotiating Consumption in a Dictatorship: Consumption Politics in the GDR in the 1950s and 1960s', in Martin Daunton and Matthew Hilton (eds.), *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America* (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2001).

24 Jonathan Zatlin, *The Currency of Socialism: Money and Political Culture in East Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

25 Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 95.

26 Josie McLellan, 'State Socialist Bodies: East German Nudism from Ban to Boom', *Journal of Modern History* 79 (March 2007), p. 48-79. See further Josie McLellan, *Anti-Fascism and Memory in East Germany: Remembering the International Brigades* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2004).

27 Eli Rubin, 'The Form of Socialism without Ornament: Consumption, Ideology, and the Fall and Rise of Modernist Design in the German Democratic Republic', *Journal of Design History* 2 (2006), p. 155-168. Also see his article 'Plastics and Dictatorship in the German Democratic Republic: Towards an Economic, Consumer, Design and Cultural History', *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 38 (2006), p. 89-98 and 'The Order of Substitutes: Plastic Consumer Goods in the *Volkswirtschaft* and Everyday Domestic Life in the GDR', in David Crew (ed.), *Consuming Germany in the Cold War* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), p. 87-121.

such archive, the Wende Museum located in California.[28] There is a small private collection in Bereklauw in the Netherlands. In Monnickendam, also in the Netherlands, there is a specialised archive, *Sammlung zur DDR-Alltagskultur* (Collection of East German Everyday Culture). In addition, several German museums maintain large collections of materials that, under certain circumstances, are accessible for research. With a collection of over 50,000 everyday objects,[29] one of the largest institutions of this type in Germany is the *Dokumentationszentrum Alltagskultur der DDR* located in Eisenhüttenstadt (formerly Stalinstadt), near the Polish border in Germany.

National and regional archives, as Dario Gamboni attests, have historically reflected 'state-controlled politics of memory.'[30] They are spaces in which memory is shaped from the echelons of government rather than from private initiative. This is structurally the case as most cultural institutions, especially in Europe, are state-funded. Foucault identifies archives as the representative collection of government stories in which archives instrumentalise materials in support of a master narrative and identity.[31] Since the building of a German national identity following 1945, archives and museums have been on the frontline in this process of memory production as they are the practical link between history and the presentation (and common understanding) of history. Archives thus influence this understanding by allowing and disallowing access, and museums differentiate what is worthy of safeguarding and what is not. Director of the *Dokumentationszentrum*, Andreas Ludwig, underscores that 'like archives, museum collections are pre-interpreted and structured collections of objects. Only what has been collected can be displayed, what has been neglected remains invisible.'[32]

As historical objects began to be thrown away in the early 1990s, archivists and curators, especially those in the former East Germany, often advocated preserva-

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28 The Wende Museum's collection of over 100,000 objects includes political art, film, historical documents and artefacts from the entire Eastern Bloc, in addition to maintaining a large collection of everyday objects from the GDR.

29 The *Dokumentationszentrum*'s collection specifically focuses on household goods, consumer products, and other objects of the everyday in the GDR.

30 Dario Gamboni, *The Destruction of Art: Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), p. 35.

31 In *Archaeology of Knowledge,* Foucault links the material remnants of a past time and place to the values and priorities of that society in order to understand areas of discrepancies and how things are ordered. He uses this as a basis to explore laws and the scope of cultural and political acceptability, for instance, what can and cannot be said. Archives are, in a sense, places where collective behaviour and expression are defined and disseminated. Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (New York: Pantheon, 1982), p. 125-129.

32 Andreas Ludwig, 'Discursive Logics in the Material Presentation of East German History, Exhibitions and History "Ten Years After".' Paper given at the conference "Ten Years After German Unification", 2 December 1999, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, p. 15.

tion. This is not only because things were part of the material record of the GDR, but also in order to ensure, as Gamboni has testified, the 'historically necessary confrontation with the object.' Founded in 1993, the *Dokumentationszentrum* solicited donations from across the former East Germany, asking citizens of the ex-GDR to send to the Museum items that they thought reflected their experiences in the defunct German socialist fatherland. The Märkisches Museum in Eastern Berlin was one of the first institutions to specifically collect things from everyday life. That is, the institution that treated East German material culture as an important historical record was an important cultural institution during the existence of the GDR. An advertisement posted around Berlin streets by the Museum in the early 1990s was entitled '*Bevor es zu spät ist…*' (Before it is too late…). The text read: 'The political history of the GDR is over. At the same time, for those directly affected an important phase in terms of cultural history is finished. Therefore the Märkisches Museum in Berlin is looking for typical examples of everyday life in the GDR.' They wanted 'items of living culture and household goods, children's culture and toys, personal hygiene, leisure and recreation, foodstuffs and additives, clothing and fashion, school and education, political-ideological propaganda.'[33] These were precisely the kinds of materials that might be used by scholars to investigate aspects of everyday life, and the points at which individual aims and expressions differed from and even challenged the SED.

A first attempt at officially dealing with the GDR past came only a few years after the *Wende*. In 1993, the Enquete Commission was initiated by the Bundestag to investigate the East German political system, to help shape the official history of the GDR and to provide guidelines for federally-supported cultural institutions. The Commission's approach, according to Paul Betts and Katherine Pence, was 'set up to investigate the "history and consequences of the socialist dictatorship in Germany", in order to identify and eliminate the GDR's apparent illiberalism.'[34] The commission seemed to deem the GDR to be a totalitarian state in which all aspects of life were controlled by the SED. By its conclusion in 1998, the Commission had produced multi-volume reports to record its impact, which included the creation of the cultural institution and museum *Zeitgeschichtliches Forum* in Leipzig (an auxiliary of the *Haus der Geschichte* in Bonn), which, according to its promotional materials, focuses on 'Repression, Widerstand und Opposition in der zweiten deutschen Diktatur.'[35]

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33   The original text reads: 'Die politische Geschichte der DDR ist abgeschlossen. Gleichzeitig endet für uns Betroffene ein wichtiger kulturgeschichtlicher Abschnitt. Das Märkische Museum Berlin sucht aus diesem Grunde typische Zeitzeugen des DDR-Alltags.'

34   Pence and Betts, *Socialist Modern,* p. 4.

35   Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundresrepublik Deutschland, Zeitgeschichtliches Forum Leipzig (ed.), 'Einsichten', p. 16. See also Daphne Berdahl, 'Re-Presenting the Socialist Modern: Museums and Memory in the Former GDR', in Betts and Pence, *Socialist Modern,* p. 345.

The influential Enquete Commission was followed by the establishment of a second, more definitive attempt to develop official guidelines for the implementation of GDR history through cultural institutions. The Sabrow-Commission, headed by Martin Sabrow of the *Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung*, was initiated in December 2004 by the Federal Representative for Culture and Media Christina Weiss.[36] She first envisioned this '*Geschichtsverbund*' as a 'new instrument, which Weiss characterized as a network, aimed at explaining and portraying the complex reality of a socialist society...'. Sabrow involved in the project accomplished scholars, including representatives of victims groups, members of the press and well-known civil leaders from the former GDR. The Commission 'visited all important memorial sites, museums and archives in East Germany, spoke to dozens of experts and analysed to which extent documentations represented a realistic image of repression, opposition and everyday life in a communist dictatorship.' The Commission found that the area of everyday life and the areas of negotiation between state and society, loyalty and resistance, were largely missing from both the historical dialogue and the cultural institutions that dealt with the GDR.

At the end of the Commission's work, the committee members presented a report of recommendations to Bernd Neumann, who had replaced Weiss as the new Federal Representative for Culture and Media (reflecting the change in political leadership from the Social Democrats (SPD) to the Christian Democrats (CDU) that had occurred in the interim). As if to foreshadow Neumann's reaction to the report, he had changed the name of Weiss' '*Geschichtsverbund*' to '*Geschichtsverbund SED-Unrecht*' – the Historical Committee of SED Unrighteousness. Thomas Schaarschmidt reports, 'the balance clearly shifted towards repression and terror. The commission's demand for taking account of everyday life and partial loyalty, the '*Bindungskräfte*', was almost totally ignored (...) Surprisingly even opposition and resistance were hardly mentioned.'[37] While Sabrow was attacked in some corners for being an SED apologist, former civil rights leaders in the GDR defended the report as being necessary and fair. However, the GDR was to officially continue to be considered a totalitarian state in which culture, consumer products and everyday life were completely subsumed and dominated by the state. Further, while sections of the report that called for greater attention to everyday life were deleted, other sections that compared the fascist and communist regimes were strengthened. In May 2008, Neumann's final report was accepted by the Bundestag and given the official stamp of approval. The latest report from the office of the Secretary of State for Cultural Affairs provides the basis for directing government funding to federally-funded institutions. Institutions that follow the guidelines are

36   See Thomas Schaarschmidt, 'Die Debatte um das Votum Expertenkommission zur Zukunft der DDR-Aufarbeitung (2004-2007)', *Vortrag Bernauer Strasse*, 17 December 2007.

37   Ibid., p. 8.

granted significant money (in fact, more than had previously been allotted) while those that do not, can be excluded.

In addition to the influence of government guidelines over cultural institutions, the remit of collecting institutions and access to East German material culture is affected by logistical and practical issues. Every archive and museum has a collections scope and acquisitions policy. 'Collections focus' is a central component of the work of a particular organisation as its collections policy reflects the underlying purpose of the collecting institution. Objects and archival materials that fit within the predetermined collections scope are preserved while those falling outside are often 'de-accessioned' – removed from the collection. An institution's guidelines for what is preserved and what is not, are based on a number of factors, including the mission and objective of the institution. This is a sign of institutional maturity; those institutions around the world that maintain too broad of a spectrum invite criticism for casting their nets too wide and failing to focus and specialise. Indeed, funding agencies as well as visitors criticise collections without a theme or overarching narrative. This narrative is not static and in fact changes according to a myriad of influences including new research, trends, changing interests of visitors, personnel at the institutional level and the aims of funders. As the mission changes, so does the character and shape of the institution's collections. For instance, the *Kulturhistorisches Museum* in Magdeburg maintained a large collection of pedagogical materials from the GDR, which were on display before 1989. Its mission after the *Wende* understandably changed focus to serve the community and present a more 'accurate' overview of the cultural life of Magdeburg. The cost burdens involved in maintaining collections of materials no longer relevant to the institution often must take priority, especially in the case of tight budgets. This is a logistical decision that is often made by the institutions' staff rather than by authorities or government officials. But as the meaning of the objects in the collection changes from didactic tools to historical records, fewer institutions are available to take over responsibility for maintaining such collections. Many smaller institutions in the East whose mission remains focused on the material culture of the GDR and could feasibly take possession of the homeless collections, according to Schaarschmidt, 'lack public funding, a professional approach, and cooperation with related institutions.'[38] The result is that historical materials important for scholarship often disappear or are no longer accessible for historians.

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38   Ibid., p. 5

Museums and the Last Thing

1989 marked not only the end of a historical era in Germany, but also the beginning of a new past. While the political Cold War is over, the attitudes towards and approaches to the culture of 'the other' that emerged during the bipolar conflict serve as the basis for the continuing debates between East and West, as well as being part of the area of conflicted spaces of memory and identity.[39] Objects of the GDR and their instrumentalisation are weapons in the struggle for cultural hegemony and the goal of achieving a common past and present. However, East German material culture also belongs to the historical record and is a critical resource for scholarship and research purposes. These two roles – political instrument and scholarly source – have often come into conflict with one another even as they are inexorably intertwined. From the Cold War to the *Wendezeit* and the initial *Müll-phase*, which saw East Germans purging themselves of their material past followed by attempts to come to terms with the things of their former lives, cultural products contain cultural meaning and historical significance and thus have important political value and use, which has at times been prioritised over other possibilities. New memorials are being built commemorating victims of communism[40] and grant-awarding organisations have been established to support projects and initiatives related to the examination of communist oppression.[41] On the other hand, a sculpture such as Nicolai Tomsky's infamous Lenin in Berlin was removed (which had been unveiled to great fanfare in 1970), as interest in such material culture, especially that of consumer products, became increasingly dismissed as being simple nostalgia (referred to as *Ostalgie*), discouraging the preservation of the objects as historical materials.[42]

The crimes of the East German gerontocracy and its destructive secret police are not only well-documented in the state archives, but there are also personal testimonies, films and texts that provide first-hand, often emotionally gruelling accounts of the damage that was caused in the name of the German 'workers' and peasants' state.' While this is clear, many important histories have emerged over

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39   In October 2007, *Der Spiegel* conducted a study that found that '67 per cent of both Eastern and Western Germans felt they had different identities from their counterparts. When their parents' generation was asked the same question, 82 per cent said Eastern Germans were different from Western Germans.' 'Germany Still Divided 18 Years after the Fall of the Wall', *Der Spiegel*, 9 November 2007.

40   See Schaarschmidt, 'Die Debatte', p. 3.

41   The brochure of the *Stiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur* states that the organisation 'aims to testify to the injustice of the SED-regime and its victims, to further the anti-totalitarian consensus within our society as well as to strengthen democracy and German unity.'

42   It is interesting to note here that the paper records of the GDR have been fastidiously preserved, archived and in the case of the Stasi files, even restored at great cost. Material culture, unlike paper, can be dismissed as 'junk', 'propaganda', or the all-encompassing 'Ostalgie', providing rationale for destruction.

the past five to seven years that have seriously undermined the appropriateness of using the totalitarian model to understand the GDR. Instead it is treated as a complex place of negotiation, compromise and *Eigen-Sinn*, which reflects the presence of agency on the part of East German civilians and the ways in which the SED was forced into episodes of accommodation and even retreat. Such scholarship has been based on a number of sources, including archives, museum collections and even artwork exhibitions. Access to such sources is critical to the constant *Aufarbeitung*, or working through the past.

Yet, the historiography of the GDR is in part shaped through funding processes that support or deny funding to German institutions according to the extent to which an applicant institutions' collections and mission coincide with what is deemed to be a 'positive function for society.' This positive function, in the case of reunified Germany, is the creation of unity and a shared identity that preserves the post-war narrative of victory over tyranny.[43] But history always has many facets and portholes of analysis, which do not always correspond to any one narrative. The evidence can often be found in the 'thing', the remnants of what was left behind. If East Germany is understood as a totalitarian regime, then 'things' that were produced by that regime are not facets of nuanced information, but rather are representations of the power and ambition of the SED, serving as evidence of repression. This approach does not provide the strong rationale needed to preserve broad collections of material culture, especially if this material does not speak to issues of power and repression. On the contrary, such material artefacts hold the risk of suggesting that there was a culture beyond the reaches of the dictatorship, which would implicitly question whether the regime was actually totalitarian in the first place. In this case, an archive of material culture is simply unnecessary. Rather than maintaining collections of material culture, they are de-accessioned from institutions or made unavailable. And even in the case that items are preserved and made accessible in order to tell the story of repression, quantities of items, especially consumer goods, are unnecessary because they all tell the same story. Practicality then dictates that these objects, which require space and funding, are not retained.

At the same time, not everything can or should be kept by museums. Curators, working in tandem with scholars, must ultimately decide which materials are most useful to serve as sources of information now and in the future with the knowledge that once materials are excluded, they might be permanently discarded. The selection process is thus one that requires compromise and a representative approach. This is common to cultural museums around the world which

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43   'Erinnerung: Einheitsdenkmal kommt auf Berliner Schlossplatz'. *Die Zeit*, 12 March 2008.

often prioritise samples over comprehensive collections.[44] And while surely the decisions of curators are always political constructions, reflecting the approach and desires of an individual or the institution, a collections policy that allows for the possibility of individual activity and agency offers more possibilities and is conceptually and practically less limiting than a policy that emphasises the existence of omnipotent government control.

Material culture of the GDR and the way it has been alternatively collected, thrown away, exhibited and derided, reveals the extent to which the history of East Germany is still thoroughly conflicted and has not yet found consensus. It also reflects the central role that East German things have played and continue to play in the struggle to form this consensus. Thus, these objects belong not only to the historical record of the past, but also, and especially, to the ongoing political contests of the present. And in the next decades, these contemporary conflicts will themselves become part of the post-*Wende* history. Scholars are meanwhile using East German artefacts as references and critical sources of information and will increasingly require access to diverse sources to produce scholarly works and try to make sense of a country that was born nearly sixty years ago, only to die off forty years later. It is unclear what the final analysis will be – how East Germany will come to be understood, whether the totalitarian paradigm will become further entrenched, or perhaps whether in the coming years, East German history will be reappraised altogether. It is also unclear what role the material record of the GDR will play in the formulation of a constantly developing German identity and the character of German-German relations. Whatever the answers to these questions, it is clear that material culture and its objects will continue to perform an integral part in the process of coming to terms with the past, the political debates of the present and tomorrow's historiography of the GDR.

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44   The Wende Museum's collections policy, for example, calls for retaining representative samples of menus from the GDR. It is impossible and unnecessary to collect every available menu; the Museum's collection of over 300 examples provides a general overview of what food was served (when, where and to whom). The menus are currently being used by historian Paul Freedman (Yale University) as sources for a new book project which seeks to understand the distribution (and political and cultural significance) of foods in the GDR according to time period, location, patronage and other factors. In other cases, the Museum's collections policy is formulated in the negative. The Museum actively seeks those items which are not found in other public collections. For instance while there is no need to retain copies of Erich Honecker's autobiography *Aus meinem Leben*, which can be found in numerous libraries around the world, the Museum maintains a large collection of East German amateur pornography, which was officially discouraged, but was prolific. Such materials, which are now difficult to find, are historically valuable sources. See Josie McLellan, '"Even under Socialism we don't want to do without love": East German Erotica', in Uta Balbier, Cristina Cuevas-Wolf and Joes Segal (eds.), *East German Material Culture and the Power of Memory*, Supplement 7 of the Bulletin of the German Historical Institute, Washington DC (2011) , p. 49-65.

11 (Dis)Connecting Cultures, Creating Dreamworlds

Musical 'East-West' Diplomacy in the Cold War and the War on Terror

» *Harm Langenkamp*

Those who visited Washington DC, in the weeks surrounding Independence Day 2002 might have stumbled upon an 'orientalised' National Mall, transformed as it were into a caravanserai reminiscent of the world exhibitions of earlier times, replete with artists, actors, musicians, cooks, craftsmen, nomads and merchants flown over from what were announced as 'Silk Road countries.' 'Once again the Silk Road is a living reality,' then Secretary of State Colin Powell observed at the opening ceremony to the Silk Road Folklife Festival, a high-profile event hosted by the Smithsonian Institution. 'Once again the nations of Central Asia are joining the nations at either end (...) on a path to a better future to all.'[1] Powell's speech did not need to spell out who was to be held responsible for blocking that 'path to a better future to all' as suggested by the temporal adjunct 'once again'. From the vantage point of the 'free world' (to put it in Cold War terminology), those nations had in their recent history been disconnected from the global network by Soviet communism, and now, just over ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Islamic fundamentalism appeared as the new force that hampered them in their allegedly natural propensity to peaceful collaboration.

Powell's presence at a festival timely subtitled 'Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust' seems anything but disinterested, nor were the facilitative assistance and financial support that his department extended to the festival's organisation.[2] In need of a charm offensive at a time when the Bush administration was 'liberating'

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1   Colin L. Powell, 'Remarks at the Opening of the Silk Road Festival', 26 June 2002, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs. Partly published in 'Aga Khan and Colin Powell Open 'Silk Road' Festival in Washington,' *PR Newswire*, 27 June 2002. See <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-87815174.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).

2   Apart from a fund of $75,000, assistance was provided in managing the bureaucracy involved in getting everyone and everything from Central Asia and the Caucasus to Washington in time. 'U.S. Department of State Supports Silk Road Festival', *M2 Presswire*, 24 June 2002. See <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-87717614.

Afghanistan from 'terrorists' through the universal language of bombs, the State Department seized the opportunity to invite fourteen prominent journalists from twelve 'Silk Road countries' (Afghanistan excluded) to witness with their own eyes the 'U.S. respect and appreciation for Muslim cultural heritage' displayed at the festival. Although a hardly subtle tactic of cultural diplomacy when juxtaposed with the Patriot Act issued in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, which made immigrants and visitors from many Islamic countries *a priori* vulnerable to suspicion, the State Department officials must have been pleased when one 'Silk Road' journalist lauded 'the overriding American ideas of hard work, freedom, and equality' that shone through everywhere he went, while another one admitted he came to realise why America was reacting as it did in launching the war on terror after a visit to Ground Zero.[3]

Indeed, although planned long before Al-Qaida's murderous assault, the Silk Road Festival provided an easy occasion to act upon the plethora of reports that in the wake of 9/11, and the ensuing retaliatory invasion of Afghanistan, urged US policymakers to revive what since the official ending of the Cold War had been a neglected cultural diplomacy programme.[4] The need to combat the 'forces of darkness' of today and regain the dampened goodwill of the global community was felt even more imperative once an intercepted letter from Osama bin Laden to Taliban leader Mullah Omar demonstrated that 'the enemy', for the purpose of 'creat[ing] a wedge between the American people and their government,' combined its 'campaign of terror' with a 'propaganda strategy.'[5] Eventually, facing enduring criticism on its Enduring Freedom campaign in Afghanistan, its (in hindsight) illegitimate intervention in Iraq, and the prisoner abuse scandals at Abu Ghraib, Bagram and Guantánamo Bay, the Bush administration evoked America's past struggle against the 'Soviet threat' to legitimise its much criticised war on terror, and fully recognised that the time had come to 'look anew at our institutions of public diplomacy

html> (accessed 13 August 2010). Other leading sponsors included the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Ford Motor Company, Siemens, ExxonMobil, Sony Classical and the National Endowment for the Arts.

3 Brochure 'The Department of State's *Silk Road Tours*', U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, July 2002. The invited journalists came from China, Mongolia, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Georgia, Armenia, Syria, Turkey and Italy.

4 Quoted from the opening paragraph of the report of the State Department's advisory committee on cultural diplomacy, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy* (September 2005), p. 1. See also Harvey B. Feigenbaum, *Globalization and Cultural Diplomacy* (November 2001), an issue paper commissioned by the Center for Arts and Culture, an independent organisation dedicated to deepening the national conversation on culture and cultural policy; *Arts & Mind: Cultural Diplomacy amid Global Tensions* (2003), a report based on a conference presented by the National Arts Journalism Program, Arts International and the Center for Arts and Culture.

5 President George W. Bush quoted from this letter in his speech 'National Strategy for Combating Terrorism', *Washington Transcript Service*, 5 September 2006. See <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P1-128325484.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).

[in order to] confront hateful propaganda, dispel dangerous myths and get out the truth [about America].'[6]

In this contribution, I argue that the State Department's investment in the Silk Road Festival more than recalled the cultural diplomacy tactics devised in the Cold War for the purpose of 'containing' the perceived enemy, the Soviet Union. More specifically, I interpret the George W. Bush administration's public diplomacy programme as a convergence of two strategies that, during the Eisenhower era, were institutionally separated, namely, cultural preservation and cultural exchange. The first strategy, cultural preservation, used to be a concern of a state-private network including the Ford Foundation (FF) and the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), the worldwide association of intellectuals united in their concern to defy communist intrusions in the 'free world' – that is, united until the mid-1960s revelations of CIA funding severely damaged the organisation's credibility as well as that of the Ford Foundation, which had served as one of the CIA's most important conduits for infusing resources into the ideological tug of war for the 'hearts and minds' of non-aligned intellectuals throughout the world.[7] The second strategy, cultural exchange, emanated from the minds of Eisenhower's officials as well as civil organisations seeking to secure wide domestic support for an emphatically internationalist policy aimed at establishing political, economic and cultural alliances with those parts of the world that needed to be retained for the 'free world'.[8]

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6   Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State, 'Karen Hughes Nominated as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy', *International Wire*, 14 March 2005. See <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P3-807765011.html> (accessed 13 August 2010). In a speech addressed at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University, President Bush stated: 'At the start of this young century, America is once again engaged in a real war that is testing our nation's resolve. While there are important distinctions, today's war on terror is like the Cold War. It is an ideological struggle with an enemy that despises freedom and pursues totalitarian aims. Like the Cold War, our adversary is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent – and they lack the resolve to defend our way of life. Like the Cold War, America is once again answering history's call with confidence – and like the Cold War, freedom will prevail.' 'Remarks by President Bush on the Global War on Terror', *PR Newswire*, 10 April 2006. See <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-144393049.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).

7   For in-depth studies of the CCF and/or the FF, see Pierre Grémion, *Intelligence de l'anticommunisme: le Congrès pour la Liberté de la Culture à Paris, 1950-1975* (Paris: Fayard, 1995); Michael Hochgeschwender, *Freiheit in der Offensive? Der Kongress für Kulturelle Freiheit und die Deutschen* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998); Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 2000); Volker R. Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe: Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Giles Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA and Post-War American Hegemony* (London: Routledge, 2002). Moving beyond state-dominated, 'top-down' interpretations of international relations, the concept of the 'state-private network' refers to the interaction between the state and private groups in the pursuit and projection of foreign policy objectives. See Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford, *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network* (London: Routledge, 2006).

8   For an elaborate discussion on the role of civil society in the Cold War, see Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press,

Although united in their aim to counter Soviet expansionism, these two modes of 'cultural intervention' reflected roughly two conflicting views on the essence and merits of 'good' culture. Whereas the ccf intellectuals wished to contain art, music and literature against outside influences, manipulations and utilisations that they associated with what they condescendingly called the 'lowbrow' or 'middlebrow', the State Department precisely employed culture for education and self-fashioning, allowing it to be adapted as much as necessary to gain maximum profit through goodwill and support for its Cold War policy. As one of today's most prevalent metaphors for intercultural integration, the 'Silk Road' represents a similar expedient 'dreamworld' to that created by the Eisenhower administration in the 1950s – a fully interconnected world predicated on the liberal values of freedom, tolerance and mutual understanding, that is, a world free of anti-American sentiments and religious-inspired violence. Whereas the latter served to secure domestic consensus for us political and economic interventions in the then decolonising or non-aligned parts of Africa and Asia, the former deftly obscures the geopolitical game played in the Caucasus and Central Asia, the competition over which has anything but lessened after the collapse of the Soviet Union enabled them to 'join once again the nations at either end.'

Opposing the Hybrids: The Politics of Cultural Comparison and Preservation

In 2000 the us Congress observed that '[t]oo often, u.s. assistance to underdeveloped nations is either invisible to all but a handful of bureaucrats or appears to benefit us at the expense of the recipient country.' Therefore, it mandated the State Department to divert $1,000,000 out of available funds to create an Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation (afcp), a programme that would promote 'another side of America,' one that is 'non-commercial, non-political, and non-military.' By assisting 'eligible' countries in preserving their historic sites, manuscript and museum collections, and traditional forms of music, dance and language, the United States could show to the world its 'commitment to understanding and preserving the heritage of others.' Introduced as 'a new approach to American public diplomacy,' the still-running programme invites us ambassadors in less-developed countries to submit proposals for heritage preservation projects with awards based on such criteria as the importance of the site, object, or form of expression, the country's need, the impact of the us contribution and 'the anticipated benefit

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2003). For an analysis that includes non-governmental organisations as well, see Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002).

to the advancement of US diplomatic goals.'[9] Although the sense in which this type of public diplomacy deviates from other approaches is not explicated, its novelty arguably resides in its endeavour to attain its goals merely through funding, and not through sending off eminent US citizens with a mission to demonstrate what it means to be an American. In fact, one could see the AFCP programme as a state endorsement of a public diplomacy strategy that until then was exclusively administered by private foundations or, in some cases more accurately, by what were *assumed* to be private foundations.

The investment in cultural heritage preservation might be traced back, for instance, to the Ford Foundation (FF). Especially at the time when the Vietnam War, civil rights movements and revelations about covert CIA interventions in Africa, Asia and Latin America shattered faith in liberal universalism in favour of cultural relativism, FF administrators considered investment in local heritages as a tactic of soothing those who criticised the American modernisation programmes for being too one-sidedly focused on economic and political development at the expense of the indigenous traditions they sought to sustain.[10] As part of a large-scale programme to boost cultural activity in the enclave of the 'free world', West Berlin, the Ford family's philanthropic organisation lent its support, for instance, to the establishment of an institute devoted to the 'study of practical means of integrating the musical achievements of Asian and African cultures into world culture [as well as] the continuation and preservation of authentic [musical] traditions (...) in an effort to oppose the influence of hybrid forms of music.'[11] The initiative to what in 1963 would emerge as the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation (IICMSD) followed from a conference of ethnomusicologists, music historians and composers pertaining to the 1961 Tokyo East-West Music Encounter, one of the festivals organised by émigré composer Nicolas Nabokov in his capacity as secretary-general of the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

The rationale of the Institute was informed by a deeply ingrained suspicion among intellectuals of so-called 'mass culture'. As for music, this suspicion found

9   Senate report on the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, 2001, 106th Congress, Second Session, Calendar no. 703, Report 106-404, 8 September 2000, p. 138; Patricia S. Harrison, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, introduction to *The Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation 2001 Report*, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (2001), p. 2.

10 Kathleen D. McCarthy, 'From Cold War to Cultural Development: The International Cultural Activities of the Ford Foundation, 1950-1980', *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 116, no. 1 (1987), p. 106-9.

11   Introduction to the 'Annual Report of the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation', November 1965. Nicolas Nabokov Papers (hereafter NN), Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin: Box 13, Folder 8.

vocal expression in the work of the Indologist Alain Daniélou, one of Nabokov's closest colleagues. Throughout his versatile career, Daniélou devoted himself to the cause of 'the art of music' in what in 1952 was coined as the 'Third World'. The effects of Western-style modernisation projects on musical traditions in Africa or Asia, Daniélou argued, amounted to nothing less than the desiccation of their 'source of constant renewal,' if not just 'collective brainwashing and cultural genocide.' Confronted with their colonisers' culture industry, local musicians found their traditions reduced from a craft to a 'depersonalized, standardized, canned product,' frozen by means of recording practices for 'wide commercial circulation.' Worse even, instead of 'the difficult art of our great performers,' they started to imitate those 'Western musical experiments and popular music forms,' humbly trying to 'make it not too unpleasant and to produce something remotely resembling (...) tangos and rock 'n roll, for this is the ritual music that can propitiate the gods of today.'[12]

Echoing Adorno's litany over the impact of the 'culture industry' on artistic excellence and expressiveness, Daniélou deplored the hybridisation of Third World 'high culture' by 'mass culture' into what social critic Dwight Macdonald called 'a tepid, flaccid Middlebrow Culture that threatens to engulf everything in its spreading ooze.'[13] More than just turning up his nose at the aesthetic tastes of the middlebrow consumer, the highbrow critic reproached the middlebrow consumer for being too blinded by sentimental visions of 'a truly classless society' to see how much its simplified adaptations of highbrow culture, rendered palatable for popular education and entertainment, actually resembled those with which totalitarian regimes deliberately dissolved a 'pluralistic society' into 'an amorphous mass' incapable of critical thinking.[14] Indeed, Nabokov more than once explained the twin rise of the Soviet Union and its 'culture industry' as the empowerment of Russia's pre-1917 *petite bourgeoisie*, which institutionalised a value system that demanded art to be comprehensible for 'the people'.[15] If the professionalisation of folk music traditions, according to Stalin's edict 'nationalist in form, socialist

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12   Alain Daniélou, 'Problems of the Preservation of Traditions', typescript, 1958. Records of the International Association for Cultural Freedom, formerly the Congress for Cultural Freedom (hereafter CCF/IACF), Joseph Regenstein Library, University of Chicago: Series III, Box 15, Folder 11. This paper formed the basis of a report commissioned by UNESCO's International Music Council that Daniélou wrote in collaboration with Jacques Brunet: *The Situation of Music and Musicians in Countries of the Orient*, trans. John Evarts (Florence: Olschki, 1971).

13   Dwight Macdonald, 'Mass Cult and Mid Cult', *Partisan Review* 27, nos. 2/4 (1960), p. 203-33, 589-631.

14   Theodor W. Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. Jay M. Bernstein (London: Routledge, 1991). For various specimens of 1950s criticism on consumer culture, see Bernard Rosenberg and David M. White (eds.), *Mass Culture: The Popular Arts in America* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1957).

15   Nabokov, 'Music under Dictatorship', *The Atlantic Monthly* 169 (January 1942), p. 94-99; 'Music under the Generals', *The Atlantic Monthly* 187 (January 1951), p. 49-54.

in content,' attested according to Soviet officials, ethnomusicologists and composers to the 'natural' advance of those traditions into the Soviet dreamworld, for Nabokov and Daniélou this practice evoked a nightmarish prospect in which no single music could emerge unaffected from the indiscriminate taste of the middlebrow.[16] To their mind, multiculturalism, crossovers, middlebrow culture and the Soviet doctrine of socialist realism were all equally suspicious of corrupting the only culture that they deemed worthy of consideration and preservation, 'high' or 'authentic' culture.[17]

This concern to contain both communism and middlebrow culture makes one think of the consistent comparative principle underpinning CCF seminars on the 'Third World.' These were conducted under a programme of international and regional activities aimed at addressing 'the most burning ideological problems of the present time,' funded with a grant of $500,000 from the Ford Foundation, called 'The Problems of Progress.'[18] In practice, this principle operated to compare a particular 'problem in progress' (for instance, changes in the system of art patronage or the challenges that traditions face in a modernising society) within different countries and, most importantly, within different social infrastructures. As such, it could serve two ends: first, by deliberately considering communist countries in the study of common 'problems', the comparative principle answered to those who criticised the CCF for being 'communophobic' – a charge that kept haunting the organisation from the first day of its existence; second, as it addressed a 'problem' to which liberal and communist policies had developed obviously widely divergent solutions, it could still guarantee the CCF agenda of showing 'difference', leaving it up to the reader to decide what social ideology provided the best remedy to the 'problems of progress.' Needless to say, as it does not need to be spelt out which social ideology guaranteed progress from the CCF perspective, the seemingly disinterested investment in comparative research might be interpreted as a strategy to lure non-aligned intellectuals from the 'Third World' away from Soviet overtures on a key theme they all struggled with, namely, the tension between tradition and modernisation.

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16 Victor Vinogradov, 'The Study of Folk Music in the U.S.S.R.', *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 12 (1960), p. 74; Nabokov, 'La Musique en Russie Soviétique et dans les Pays Limotrophes'. NN: Box 45, Folder 1.

17 For a fuller account of the 1950-60s 'free world' discourse on culture and politics, see Ian Wellens, *Music on the Frontline: Nicolas Nabokov's Struggle against Communism and Middlebrow Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

18 Michael Josselson to Malcolm Muggeridge, 17 October 1957. CCF/IACF: Series II, Box 243, Folder 3; 'Summary of Programme to be implemented with a Ford foundation Grant[:] 'The Problems of Progress – An International Inquiry by the Congress For Cultural Freedom'. CCF/IACF: Series III, Box 95, Folder 9.

Embracing the Hybrids: The Politics of Cultural Exchange

Anyone claiming to safeguard freedom, democracy and diversity puts himself in a vulnerable position – a conventional wisdom which the Soviet Union did not fail to confront its ideological opponent with. In his 1949 defence of a renewed liberal democracy against its rivals to the left and to the right, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., had to admit that '[t]he sin of racial pride still represents the most basic challenge to any attempt to contain communism by way of propagating American values.' Indeed, '[t]he shocking racial cruelties in the United States or in most areas of western colonialism (...) gives communism a special prestige for African or Asiatic intellectuals who have had to suffer under discriminations of colour in the West.' Therefore, if the United States intended to lend credibility to its claim to leadership in the 'free world', it should bridge the embarrassing discrepancy between rhetoric and practice, and 'demonstrate a deep and effective concern with the racial inequities' within its boundaries.[19]

That Nabokov recognised America's discriminatory treatment of its non-white population to be an Achilles heel might appear from his decision to include Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein's *Four Saints in Three Acts* (1927-8) in the programme of the 1952 *L'Œuvre du xxe siècle* festival in Paris, the ccf's first cultural event designed to counteract Soviet influence on French public opinion. Writing to the president of the Farfield Foundation, one of the conduits for channelling cia funds to the ccf, Nabokov's assistant advised that 'for psychological reasons the entire cast of *Four Saints* should be American Negro' in order to 'counter the "suppressed race" propaganda and forestall all criticism to the effect that we had to use foreign negroes because we wouldn't let our own "out".'[20]

From the cold feelings the ccf intelligentsia entertained towards middlebrow culture, one might infer that Nabokov would not have been amused to see his protégé from the *Four Saints*-cast, soprano Leontyne Price, appear a few months later in Robert Breen's renewed production of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, the first specimen of middlebrow entertainment sent abroad by the State Department as part of its overt – and quite haphazard – campaign to refute Soviet claims of American decadence and racial injustice.[21] He must have been equally suspicious of the

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19   Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1949), p. 190-1, 230, 235.

20   Albert L. Donnelly, Jr., to Julius Fleischmann, 15 November 1951. ccf/iacf: Box 2, Folder 7.

21   In addition to the sponsored tour to West Berlin and Vienna in 1952, the Department of State, using the President's Emergency Fund, supported an eleven-week Mediterranean and a sixteen-week Central and South American tour in 1955. Later that year, the Soviet Union invited Breen's company for a tour to Moscow and Leningrad. For an analysis of the contradicting ambitions and perceptions involved in the *Porgy and Bess* campaign, see David Monod, 'Disguise, Containment and the *Porgy and Bess* Revival of 1952-1956', *Journal of American Studies* 35, no. 2 (2001), p. 275-312; idem, '"He is a Cripple an' Needs my Love": *Porgy and Bess*

Eisenhower administration's decision to substitute jazz (that 'prototype of all the mass arts' as one critic of popular culture called it[22]) for highbrow culture at the centre of the American Cold War effort, a change of tactics that had become inevitable as the dismantling of colonies and the formation of the civil rights movement gathered momentum from the mid-1950s onwards.

Acutely aware of the need to disassociate itself from the imperialist model of hegemony in order to compete with the Soviet Union over the allegiance of decolonising nations (including their markets, natural resources, industrial infrastructure and strategic locations), the Eisenhower administration invested considerably in conveying an image of the United States as a harmonious nation accommodating a diversity of ethnicities, races, nationalities and religions, and devoted to the 'preservation of freedom [and] the well-being of the world community.'[23] For those involved in translating the government's objectives into efficient cultural diplomacy, it was clear that this objective was hardly served with a strategy predicated on the elitist assumption that the waging of the Cold War had to be left to statesmen, generals and secret agencies. A successful counteroffensive against Soviet intrusions in the 'Third World' depended on the extent they managed to appeal to the rapidly growing and diversifying middle-classes at home and abroad. To win not only the minds but also the hearts of uncommitted peoples abroad and indifferent audiences at home, the 'free world' would have to come up with an equally 'inspirational concept' of a world revolving on solidarity and social justice as the Soviet government claimed. To put it in the words of one official, the 'cold war' needed to be turned into a 'warm war' by 'infusing into it ideological principles [that] give it meaning.'[24]

The Eisenhower administration took up the challenge of making US foreign policy meaningful to those Americans who still clung to an isolationist mentality. On 11 September 1956, the President inaugurated the People-to-People Program. Designed to encourage American citizens to share knowledge, experiences and

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as Cold War Propaganda', in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, eds. Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (London: Frank Cass, 2003), p. 300-312. Nabokov admired Gershwin, whom he had met in the early 1930s, for his 'genuine song talent,' but he did not think that his attempts to move beyond Tin Pan Alley into the world of 'serious' music had a lasting value: 'The ones that deal with song, like *Porgy and Bess*, are as lovely as Offenbach and Johann Strauss, but the purely instrumental concert compositions suffer from an abundance of secondhand rhetoric and outworn harmonic clichés.' Nabokov, *Bagázh: Memoirs of a Russian Cosmopolitan* (New York: Atheneum, 1975), p. 197.

22   Milton Klonsky, 'Along the Midway of Mass Culture', *Partisan Review* 16, no. 4 (1949), p. 362.

23   Francis O. Wilcox, 'The Citizen's Responsibilities in International Affairs', *The Department of State Bulletin*, 15 July 1957, p. 104.

24   'Memorandum by Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Raymond A. Hare) to Under Secretary of State (James E. Webb)', Policy Planning Staff Files, 5 April 1950, in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Vol. 1: 1950 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), p. 220-221.

friendship with peoples of different nations on a direct and personal level, the programme sought to orchestrate private initiatives of a philanthropic nature in a non-governmental organisation in order to 'get people together and to leap governments – if necessary to evade governments – to work out not one method but thousands of methods by which people can gradually learn a little bit more of each other.'[25] How important such a united grassroots engagement was to Eisenhower appears from his exasperated remark upon hearing that the Ford Foundation had turned down a funding request for his programme. If private organisations failed to support friendship building with the rising nations of the world, he warned, 'we as a nation are doomed to a very bad future.'[26]

In contrast to the CIA/CCF/FF network's clinical rhetoric of containment, the sentimental rhetoric of integration by which the People-to-People Program was promoted, articulated what Christina Klein described as the 'middlebrow imagination.'[27] Instead of merely conjuring the spectre of the Soviet bogeyman to mobilise domestic support for continued US intervention in global affairs, 'People-to-People' made an appeal to Americans' sense of responsibility. True, the Soviets posed a 'threat to our civilization,' one State Department official reasoned, but the wretched people of the world, who did not have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of freedom and democracy, needed the commitment of each 'free' citizen to confront that threat.[28]

From the middlebrow perspective, words about respect for cultural diversity only derived their meaning from the actions they inspired: supporting Japanese children orphaned at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, providing food supplies and medicines to famine-stricken India, founding schools in inaccessible areas, investing in local businesses, spreading books and magazines, or simply spending money in local economies as a tourist – these were the tangible expressions of commitment to the well-being of the 'Third World' that had to legitimise US political and economic expansionism. From the highbrow perspective, the unbridled sense of egalitarianism of the middlebrow recalled too much the pre-war Popular Front movement to be acceptable. The cultural diplomacy programmes inspired by the

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25   President Eisenhower, 'Remarks at the People-to-People Conference', 11 September 1956. President Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers (hereafter DDE), Speech Series, Box 16. Eisenhower Center and Library, Abilene, Kansas.

26   'Memorandum of Conference with the President', 10 October 1957. DDE, Diary Series, Box 27, October 1957 Staff Notes (2). Suspicion of competition, combined with a feeling of being unacknowledged for its contribution to exchange programmes, kept the Ford Foundation (as well as other foundations) from supporting the People-to-People Program. See Eisenhower's 'Note for Files', 11 October 1957. DDE, Administration Series, Box 29, P-t-P Inc.

27   Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, p. 85.

28   Robert Daniel Murphy, Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs, 'Education and Responsibility in World Affairs', *The Department of State Bulletin*, 8 July 1957, p. 76; Christian Herter, Under Secretary of State, 'The Durability of the Atlantic Community', *The Department of State Bulletin*, 22 July 1957, p. 135-136.

prospect of an interconnected 'free world' encouraged a mode of engaged cultural exchange that would irrevocably lead to the very process of hybridisation that, in the opinion of Nabokov and Daniélou, was to be opposed 'at all costs.'

Eisenhower's efforts to assert American influence on the global stage vindicated the highbrow's anxieties for cross-cultural contamination, just as the production of 'hybridised' music already did at home. Marketed under the label 'exotica' as lounge music for the cocktail bar or the suburban living room equipped with the newest high-fidelity stereo sets, artists like Les Baxter, Martin Denny, Arthur Lyman, Korla Pandit and Yma Sumac evoked a wide range of exotic dreamworlds that shaped the Westerner's perception of the real world outside his territory. Although the development of the tourist industry enabled precisely those who could afford listening to exotica to experience Africa or Asia at first hand, most of them are likely to have kept perceiving the people they encountered in terms of difference instead of sameness: as primitive, feminine, mystic, erotic, all qualities that were musically defined by exotica.[29]

Regardless of whether 'People-to-People' really established those emotional bonds between West and East it called for, it sufficed to secure Eisenhower's central objective, convincing voters of the need to spend tax money on reinforcing America's economic, political, military and cultural stature in the world *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union. To what extent it managed to deflect charges of American imperialism and racism, however, is quite another story. In order to emulate the successful cultural campaigns of the Soviets, State Department officials acknowledged that mere (re)presentation of discriminated groups in a form that was developed by, and for, the very social class responsible for their marginalisation in the first place (as in the opera *Four Saints*) was not enough: the form itself needed to be recognised as *of* and *for* those who had been traditionally denied participation in America's hegemonic conception of cultural diversity. Finally, observing the ease with which African American jazz artists like Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Dizzy Gillespie managed to connect with a wide variety of audiences not particularly known for their warm feelings toward the United States, they recognised in jazz the appropriate form for securing their interests in the global arena.[30]

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29   For a similar argument pertaining to tourist photography, see Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, p. 115-117. On exotica, see Philip Hayward (ed.), *Widening the Horizon: Exoticism in Post-War Popular Music* (Sydney: John Libbey, 1999).

30   On the process that led State Department officials to embrace jazz artists as US ambassadors, see Penny M. von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), esp. p. 27-31.

Jazz appeared the ideal candidate not only for being the ultimate expression of African diasporas, but also because by the mid-1950s it was sufficiently universalised (that is to say, appropriated by the white culture industry) to be acceptable to those who wished to hear jazz as part of a unique and colour-blind American culture. Combined with its participatory quality as repeatedly commented upon by journalists and officials witnessing the State Department tours, this capacity to contain the various, and often contradicting, aspirations of officials and musicians proved that jazz was more suitable than any other form of highbrow art to connect with peoples who, having liberated themselves from the yoke of their European colonisers, had to be made to see in America a 'friend' instead of a new imperial power – a mission all the more urgent when African and Asian states convened at the 1955 Bandung Conference and openly proclaimed their refusal to align with the United States, the Soviet Union, or any other 'imperialist' power.

Once enlisted in the State Department's apparatus for managing the overseas perception of America's domestic race relations, jazz performers became diplomatic symbols of racial equality in a country that was still legally segregated in black and white. Ironically, the jazz diplomacy tours shared this schizophrenic mission with the Soviet doctrine of socialist realism, which equally expected artists to convey a culturally 'integrated' reality not yet achieved. Nonetheless, in defiance of the State Department's wish to promote the jazz tours as indicative of progress in American race relations, for Armstrong, Gillespie and Ellington, their role as American ambassador enabled them to articulate their longing for a non-segregated America.[31] This was a *subversive* longing, for again, within the United States, discriminated groups experienced near to nothing of the amiable image that the Eisenhower administration flaunted to the outside world. In a dynamic reminiscent of the United States Information Agency (USIA), whose propaganda was for export only, and even prohibited by law from distribution within the United States, State Department officials attempted to shield the jazz tours from audiences at home in order to avoid eliciting dissent from the conservative wing.

This reluctance – or inability – on the part of the Eisenhower administration to extend its dream of 'a world united in its respect for freedom and human dignity' to coloured communities at home reveals as much the political expediency of its internationalism as a blind spot in its self-perception. Where foreign policy concerns had prompted Truman to act upon the civil rights cases that had come before the Supreme Court, Eisenhower, far more committed to his relationship with white southerners than to the principle of racial equality, supported much weaker civil rights legislation, and even reversed the relatively easy access to the White House that prominent black Americans had enjoyed during the Truman

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31   Ibid., p. 23, 79-91.

years.[32] It would take the arrival of Kennedy for the Unites States to make an overt commitment to racial equality, hence sounding for Duke Ellington the bell of true 'harmony, brotherly love, common respect, and consideration for the dignity and freedom of men' that he had missed under Eisenhower.[33]

Sweet Sounds of Freedom in the War on Terror

The events of 9/11 reinvigorated the rhetoric of containment and integration dating from the Truman and Eisenhower era. While right after the attacks President Bush let the world know there was no toleration of neutrality in the war on terror ('You're either with us or against us'), Patricia Harrison, then Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, initiated the Citizen Diplomats and CultureConnect Program, which once again sent off Americans to 'those areas in the world where underemployment and lack of education make [young people] susceptible to the siren song of radical extremists.' By offering 'a vision of life beyond the narrow boundaries of despair,' the programme was to dispel the 'distorted view of Americans and American values' with which this specific group was supposedly inflicted. Replicating Eisenhower's People-to-People rhetoric, Harrison emphasised that 'to have dialogues with people from different cultures and background [is] to break down the fear that prevents us from connecting with one another,' which will eventually 'lead us to a more peaceful world (...) where people understand that the United States (...) constitutes a force for good, freedom, [and] human rights.'[34]

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32 Mary L. Dudziak, 'Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative', *Stanford Law Review* 41 (1988-1989), p. 61-120; Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), esp. p. 86-88.

33 Ellington, 'The Race for Space', in Mark Tucker (ed.), *The Duke Ellington Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 296.

34 Keynote address by Patricia S. Harrison, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, to the opening plenary of the Annual Meeting of the National Council for International Visitors, 25 February 2004; also by Harrison, the lecture 'The Importance of Alumni in Building International Understanding' delivered at the East-West Center, Honolulu, 14 November 2003. For a survey of the diplomatic efforts the State Department initiated in the wake of 9/11, see Harrison's statement before the House Committee on Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, 'The 9/11 Commission Recommendations on Public Diplomacy: Defending Ideals and Defining the Message', *Congressional Testimony*, 23 August 2004, available at <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P1-98318583.html> (accessed 13 August 2010). In September 2006, the CultureConnect programme was replaced by the Global Cultural Initiative, another 'major new initiative to coordinate, enhance and expand America's cultural diplomacy efforts worldwide.' 'Mrs. Laura Bush Launches Global Cultural Initiative to Enhance U.S. Cultural Diplomacy', *M2 Presswire*, 26 September 2006. See <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-151903362.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).

One of the high points of this People-to-People-inspired programme was the much-celebrated collaboration between the us and Iraq National Symphony Orchestras, which resulted on 9 December 2003, exactly eight months after Saddam Hussein's statue had been toppled from its pedestal in Baghdad, in a joint concert at the John F. Kennedy Center, Washington dc. Secretary of State Powell, who attended this timely event together with fellow architects of the Iraq intervention, President Bush, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, praised the Iraqi musicians for 'embody[ing] the diversity of [their country] and the unity that comes from sharing a dream, the dream of performing the music they love in freedom,' and for 'testify[ing] to the power of the arts to keep hope alive even under the cruellest oppressor'[35] – a message reflected in that musical emblem of liberal heroism that opened the concert, Beethoven's '*Egmont* Overture'. In the weeks after the concert, Harrison proudly imparted to her audiences the successes of this cultural exchange – how members of the Iraqi orchestra had been overwhelmed by the response from Americans hugging, welcoming and crying with them.[36] In a time of unrelenting critique on its Iraq policy, the State Department could not have wished for more with such a vigorous culture-connecting apparatus as this joint orchestra, as well as – to quote once more from Powell's eulogy – 'the music of hope' it produced, 'the sweet, sweet sound of freedom.'

Soloist in the us-Iraqi concert was Yo-Yo Ma, musical member of the first batch of CultureConnect Ambassadors alongside jazz and classical trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, opera singer Denyce Graves, and former Supremes member Mary Wilson. That the world-esteemed cellist should be chosen for the delicate task of representing the 'true America' is not surprising: having built his musical career to an important degree on cultural exchanges, he was involved in the post-Cold War renaissance of governmental reflection on cultural diplomacy set in motion by the Clinton administration in November 2000.[37] Ma's most ambitious effort in this regard is the Silk Road Project, which since its foundation in 1998 has grown into a highly acclaimed enterprise that organises educative and artistic events with the stated aim of 'fostering creativity, expanding knowledge of our common world heritage, and celebrating local cultures and global connections.' At the centre of the projects stands the Silk Road Ensemble, a collective of internationally renowned musicians from the United States and 'Silk Road countries' devoted to exploring the relationship between tradition and innovation, and eager to demonstrate

35 Powell, 'Remarks at Performance of the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra', *Washington Transcript Service*, 9 December 2003. See <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P1-88352917.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).
36 Harrison, keynote address to the opening plenary of the nciv meeting, 25 February 2004 (see note 34.)
37 'President Clinton Hosts First White House Conference on Culture and Diplomacy', *u.s. Newswire*, 28 November 2000. See <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-18894993.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).

to the world the positive creativity that might result from an encounter with the unknown.[38]

Supported by a varying sponsorship including corporate businesses (like Ford Motor Company, American Express, Morgan Stanley, Hyosung, and Mikimoto), private donors, and the State Department, the ensemble regularly tours the United States, Europe and various parts of Asia to give concerts, workshops and master classes, thereby living up to Ma's dream of an integrated world drawn together by the art of music.[39] In a phrasing that almost literally repeats the foreign policy directive of the Eisenhower administration cited earlier, Ma stresses that '[w]e live in a world of increasing interdependence where it is ever more important to know what other people are thinking and feeling, particularly in the vast and *strategic* regions of Asia that were linked by the Silk Road.'[40] Of course, that Ma should use a politically charged qualification as 'strategic' does not make him a mouthpiece of US foreign policy. It indicates, however, how the average Westerner has come to imagine Central Asia, through the mediation of political and semi-academic rhetoric, as an area 'of interest'.

In both word and deed, then, the Silk Road Project is firmly rooted in the middlebrow commitment to intercultural integration and educational mission first advocated by Eisenhower's People-to-People Program. In its other stated objective, however, namely, to resist what is commonly perceived as the homogenising effects of globalisation,[41] the project echoes the ambition of the CCF intellectuals – a contradictory ambition, as the very processes of globalisation have made such ventures like the Silk Road Project possible in the first place. If Eisenhower was primarily concerned with 'connecting' as many nations as possible in order to secure the economic and political interests of the 'free world', today's middlebrow elite, in facing the consequences of globalisation, has adopted the concern for cultural preservation originally articulated by the leftist highbrow in the 1950s and 1960s.

Today, this convergence of ambitions and rhetoric reveals itself in various programmes designed to realise what UNESCO describes as the 'prospect of a more

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38 Gerri Hirshey, 'We Are the World (Cellist Yo-Yo Ma)', *Parade Magazine*, 30 January 2005. See <http://www.parade.com/articles/editions/2005/edition_01-30-2005/featured_0> (accessed 13 August 2010).

39 Yo-Yo Ma, 'Vision Statement', website Silk Road Project. See <www.silkroadproject.org> (accessed 13 August 2010).

40 Yo-Yo Ma, 'A Journey of Discovery' in the programme booklet of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, *The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust* (2002), p. 5 (my italics).

41 Philip Kennicott, 'Ancient Trade Route Inspires Ambitious Cultural Exchange: East Meets West in Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project', *Los Angeles Times*, 20 October 2001, p. F6; Thomas May, 'The Empathy of Musicians: An Interview with Yo-Yo Ma on the Silk Road Project.' See <http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html?ie=utf8&docId=562435> (accessed 13 August 2010); Yo-Yo Ma, 'Paths of Globalization: From the Berbers to Bach', *New Perspectives Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (2008), p. 19.

open, creative and democratic world [against] inward-looking fundamentalism.'[42] In addition to the cultural ambassador concept inspired by the People-to-People Program, an important strategy in promoting this ideal world is to enact it, to bring it to life for those who need to be convinced to conceive of themselves as part of a larger, supranational whole. For instance, the 2002 Smithsonian Silk Road Folklife Festival, behind which Yo-Yo Ma's organisation was one of the driving forces, encouraged visitors to look for commonalities with 'live' actors from one of the most contested areas of the globe, Central Asia. Likewise, the Silk Road Project does not aspire so much to preserve traditional music in their imagined authenticities as 'to make innovation and tradition sit down together,' live before one's eyes and ears.

Despite the overall aura of carefree collaboration Ma's ensemble radiates, it should also be pointed out that the intentions of its members are not by definition attuned to those of its founder – a discrepancy earlier observed with regard to the jazz ambassadors. This might be illustrated by the example of the Armenian musician Gevorg Dabaghyan, one of today's most renowned masters of the *duduk*, a type of oboe made from apricot-wood and native to the Caucasian region. Since at least 2002, Dabaghyan travels around the world to promote his instrument which, to put it in his words, 'reflects the passion, celebration, and suffering of Armenia [and] is considered the most Armenian of all folk instruments because of its Armenian origins and its ability to honestly express the emotions of the Armenian people.'[43] More than with Ma's noble attempt to advance transnational understanding, Dabaghyan seeks to present Armenian music to an international audience in a rhetoric that is utterly nationalist.

It is easy to expose the contradictions inherent to any articulation of idealism. To end with such a conclusion, however, would be to ignore the apparent need for dreamworlds today, even though so many of them have been shattered in the past century. It would be equally wrong to deny the enabling effects such dreamworlds can bring about, as they may inspire, for instance, initiatives aimed at familiarising global audiences with cultures commonly unknown to them. As one of those initiatives, the Silk Road Project provides a platform for cultural practices that are increasingly losing ground in their countries of origin, and it perhaps even secures artists a breakthrough into the global marketplace which they otherwise would not have achieved that easily. At the same time, however, the premise that such initiatives can modify the preconceptions people hold of each other in ways that genuinely open up the possibility for the much-desired 'intercultural dialogue' has

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42   UNESCO, Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, November 2001. See <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf> (accessed 13 August 2010).

43   See the website of Gevorg Dabaghyanat at <http://www.dabaghyan.com/en/news.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).

to be seriously questioned. After all, any glimmer of hope that might be produced by goodwill ambassadors, including the African American Muslim rappers, dancers and DJs that the State Department has been sending off since 2005 to different parts of Africa, Asia and the Middle East to demonstrate how well Muslims are integrated in US society, is only too easily dashed by the far more powerful 'evil' rhetoric employed to legitimise the war.[44] That is perhaps the ultimate defining feature of dreamworlds: they emphatically de-emphasise the presence of power which is all too present in reality.

Conclusion

The 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival staged the Silk Road myth as a multicultural live experience that is just as appealing to those who wish to conceive themselves as members of a single harmonious humanity as it is suspicious to those who see the bubble burst by the harsh reality of (renewed) geopolitical contestation over the natural resources, security zones, political constitutions and burgeoning markets of Central Asia.[45] Deeply steeped in the rhetoric, imagery and practice of integration developed by the Eisenhower administration for the purpose of securing US interests in those parts of the world that were perceived to face the 'Soviet threat' in the mid- to late 1950s, the dreamworld evoked by the 'Silk Road' at the time of the post-9/11 war on terror worked (at least until the financial crash of 2008) to sustain a neoliberal ideology that secures its hegemony through making an irresistible sentimental appeal to one's feelings of solidarity and empathy with – to quote Condoleezza Rice – 'those unlucky enough to have been born on the wrong side of [freedom's] divide.'[46]

Fredric Jameson argued that hegemony depends upon a 'strategy of rhetorical persuasion in which substantive incentives are offered for ideological adherence,' the ultimate vehicle of which is a genuine utopian vision, or 'a symbolic enactment of collective unity.'[47] In a time marked by the reincarnation of the Cold War in the

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44 In 2005 the newly appointed Under Secretary of State for Cultural Diplomacy, Karen Hughes, revived the jazz diplomacy initiative in a competitive programme entitled The Rhythm Road. This was open to performers of 'music that is quintessentially American' (jazz, blues, cajun, country gospel, hip hop/urban and zydeco) who wish 'to share America's unique contribution to the world of music' and are eager 'to promote cross-cultural understanding and exchange among nations worldwide.' See the website at <http://jalc.org/theroad> (accessed 8 November 2011). For a critical discussion of this programme see Hishaam Aidi, 'The Grand (Hip-Hop) Chessboard: Race, Rape and Raison d'Etat', *Middle East Report* 260 (Fall 2011), p. 25-39.

45 Johannes F. Linn, 'Central Asia: National Interests and Regional Prospects', *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (2007), p. 5-12.

46 Condoleezza Rice, 'Karen Hughes Nominated', 14 March 2005 (see note 6).

47 Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 290-6.

war on terror, the Silk Road concept, as a celebration of universal humanism and cultural diversity, offers precisely such a compelling vision in which today's global hegemony can imagine itself as integrated with those over whom it exercises its authority while silencing voices that do not comply with its vision, or that are at least critical of it. As long as this hegemony fails to recognise that its vision of an interconnected world is not by definition everyone's vision, that its act of connecting is one of *dis*connecting as well, it is not so much creating trust as it is sustaining a dreamworld – a divided dreamworld.

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