

*Alliances, Affinities,
and Solidarities
in the Global
Cold War*



WORLD SOCIALIST CINEMA

MASHA SALAZKINA

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World Socialist Cinema

CINEMA CULTURES IN CONTACT

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Masha Salazkina



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CONTENTS

<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiii
<i>Introduction</i>	1
1. Setting the Stage for Soviet and Afro-Asian Solidarity at Tashkent	23
<i>Tashkent Festival as Cold War Soft Power</i>	24
<i>Selection Process</i>	26
<i>Festival Audiences</i>	27
<i>Music and Dance as Cultural Diplomacy and Lived Experience</i>	29
<i>Festival as a Cultural State of Exception</i>	31
<i>The Bandung and the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR</i>	32
<i>Euphoria of the Thaw and Decolonization in the Soviet Union</i>	34
<i>International Film Festival Circuit in the Soviet Bloc</i>	36
<i>1960s Socialist Internationalism</i>	38
<i>Emergence of Cuba as a Third-Worldist Leader</i>	39
<i>Soviet Central Asia in the Afro-Asian Cultural Network</i>	40
<i>Soviet Imperial Legacies, Socialist Universalism, and World Culture</i>	42
<i>Cinefication of the Soviet East</i>	45
<i>Film Import-Export in the Soviet Union</i>	47
<i>Soviet Film Culture of the Late 1960s</i>	48
<i>1968 in World Film Culture</i>	49
<i>Conclusion</i>	51

2. Tashkent 1968	53
Overview	53
<i>India's Participation: Prehistory</i>	54
<i>Chinnamul and Indian Independent Cinema</i>	54
<i>K. A. Abbas, Raj Kapoor, and the Success of the Indian Mainstream in the USSR</i>	55
<i>India's 1968 Festival Selection</i>	57
<i>Japan's Participation: Prehistory</i>	58
<i>Japanese Cinema on the Global Film Circuits</i>	59
<i>Japan's 1968 Festival Selection</i>	62
<i>Egypt's Participation: Historical and Cinematic Contexts</i>	64
<i>Other Arab and North African Cinemas</i>	68
<i>Carthage and Tashkent: Tahar Cheriaa</i>	68
<i>Festival Selections: Algeria, Morocco, Lebanon, Jordan</i>	70
<i>The Palestinian Film Unit</i>	72
<i>Sub-Saharan African Cinema at Tashkent: Historical Background</i>	73
<i>Soviet-African Cinematic Exchanges</i>	75
<i>The Sub-Saharan Festival Selection</i>	79
<i>Conclusion</i>	81
3. Tashkent 1972–1980	83
<i>Global Geopolitical Developments</i>	83
<i>Changes in Soviet Cultural Policies and Their Impact on Festival Programming</i>	86
<i>Soviet (Re)Orientation toward Popular Cinema</i>	87
<i>Nonfiction Modalities</i>	88
<i>South Asia: Intersecting Histories, Shared Spaces, New and Old Styles</i>	90
<i>Cinemas of Bangladesh and Pakistan</i>	92
<i>Palestinian Cinema</i>	95
<i>Iraqi, Syrian, and Afghan Cinemas</i>	98
<i>Iran and Turkey</i>	100
<i>Africa: New Voices, New Geographies of Struggle</i>	101
<i>Latin American Cinema: Late Arrival</i>	103
<i>New Latin American Cinema: Exclusions and Alliances</i>	104
<i>Cuba and (Tri)Continental Politics</i>	106
<i>Other Latin American Cinemas, Old and New</i>	107
<i>Chilean Cinema and Modes of Solidarity</i>	108
<i>Conclusion</i>	111

4. Tashkent Festival Critical Discourses	114
<i>Roundtable Discussions</i>	114
<i>Cinema at the Festivals: Art, Education, or Entertainment?</i>	116
<i>Geopolitics of Film Monopolies</i>	121
<i>Cinema as a Weapon</i>	124
<i>(Socialist) Realism and the Question of National Culture</i>	127
<i>Popular Cinema vs. Political Avant-Gardes</i>	130
<i>The Filmmaker's Social and Institutional Role</i>	134
<i>Sexuality on the Screen</i>	136
5. The Woman Question at Tashkent and World Socialist (Women's) Cinema	143
<i>Parandzha and the Woman's Question in Soviet Central Asia</i>	145
<i>International Women's Diplomacy between Second and Third Worlds</i>	148
<i>Melodrama in World Socialist Cinemas</i>	151
<i>Gender Politics from the Soviet Thaw to Late Socialism</i>	152
<i>Gendered Discourses and Practices at the Festival</i>	154
<i>Stardom at Tashkent</i>	155
<i>Women's Cinema in World Socialist Cinema</i>	164
<i>The Nouba of the Women of Mount Chenoua</i>	167
<i>Wings</i>	168
<i>Socialist Women and the Double Burden</i>	170
<i>Some Interviews on Personal Matters</i>	171
6. World Cinema of Socialist Industrial Modernity	176
<i>The Geographies and Temporalities of Socialist Modernity</i>	177
<i>Socialist Industrial Development</i>	179
<i>Industrial Documentary: East and West, North and South</i>	181
<i>The Spectacle of Socialist Industrial Modernization</i>	183
<i>A Culture of Experts</i>	186
<i>Film Essay on the Euphrates Dam</i>	188
<i>Building the High Dam</i>	191
<i>The First Soviet-Egyptian . . .</i>	192
<i>People on the Nile, 1968</i>	194
<i>People on the Nile: Take 2</i>	197
<i>The Two Versions: What Changed?</i>	198
<i>Saving the Nubian Monuments</i>	201

7. Cultural Heritage in World Socialist Cinema	205
<i>A Politics of the Past</i>	205
<i>Heritage Cinema</i>	207
<i>Heritage Cinema at Tashkent</i>	209
<i>Epics and Socialist World Heritage Cinema</i>	213
<i>Central Asian Epics and National Heritage</i>	214
<i>Central Asian Heritage and Internationalism</i>	218
<i>Al-Biruni: Millennial Celebration</i>	220
<i>Abu Reyhan Biruni: The Film</i>	223
<i>Shahnameh</i>	226
<i>The Rustam Trilogy and Its Antecedents</i>	230
<i>The Rustam Trilogy: The “Asian” Aesthetic</i>	232
<i>Shahnameh’s Ambiguities</i>	236
<i>Specific Universals of Socialist World Heritage Cinema</i>	240
8. World Socialist Cinema of Armed Struggle	242
<i>The People’s War</i>	242
<i>The Marxist Worldview and the Violence of (Socialist) Modernity</i>	244
<i>The Fight for Peace</i>	246
<i>1970s Soviet War Films</i>	248
<i>Japanese Antiwar Epics</i>	250
<i>Yamamoto’s Men and War Trilogy</i>	253
<i>Cinemas of the Anti-imperialist Military Hot Spots</i>	255
<i>Vietnamese Revolutionary Cinema</i>	256
<i>Stop Genocide: Bangladesh Liberation War Cinema</i>	259
<i>Women as War Heroes: The Birangona</i>	264
<i>Concrete Universals of Socialist War</i>	266
<i>Tragic Endings</i>	268
<i>Conclusion</i>	272
<i>Notes</i>	275
<i>Bibliography</i>	329
<i>Index</i>	357

ABBREVIATIONS

AAFF	Afro-Asian Film Festival
AAPSO	Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization
AFF	Southeast Asian Film Festival
AIPWA	All India Progressive Writers Association
ANC	African National Congress
CCM	National Film Institute in Morocco (Centre Cinématographique Marocain)
CFFP	Comptoir Français du Film Production
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
ERP	Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (Argentina)
ETK	Experimental Creative Studio of Mosfil'm (Eksperimental'naiia tvorcheskaiia kinostudiia)
FAMU	Film Faculty of the Prague Academy of Performing Arts (Filmová a televizní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze)
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FD	Films Division (India)
FEKS	The Factory of the Eccentric Actor (Fabrika ekstsentriceskogo aktiora)
FEPACI	Pan-African Federation of Filmmakers (Fédération panafricaine des cinéastes)
FESMAN	The World Festival of Black Arts (Festival mondial des arts nègres)
FESPACO	Panafrican Film Festival of Ouagadougou (Festival panafricain du cinéma de Ouagadougou)

FESTAC	Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture
FIAPF	International Federation of Film Producers Association (Fédération internationale des associations de producteurs de films)
FIPRESCI	International Federation of Film Critics (La fédération internationale de la presse cinématographique)
FPA	Federation of the Motion Picture Producers Association of Asia
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique)
GOCT	General Organization for Cinema (Iraq)
GOERLO	State Commission for Electrification of Russia (Gosudarstvennaia kommissiia po elektrifikatsii Rossii)
ICAIC	Cuban Film Institute (Instituto Cubano de Arte e Industria Cinematográficos)
ICRT	Cuban Institute of Radio and Television (Instituto Cubano de Radio y Televisión)
IDHEC	Institute for the Advanced Cinematographic Studies of France (l'Institut des hautes études cinématographiques)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPTA	Indian People's Theater Association
JCC	Carthage Film Festival (Journées cinématographique de Carthage)
JCP	Japanese Communist Party
LIKI	Leningrad Institute of Film Engineers (Leningradskii institut kinoinzhenerov)
MID	Soviet Ministry of International Relations (Ministerstvo inostrannykh del)
MIFF	Moscow International Film Festival
MITI	Ministry of Trade and Industry (Japan)
MPAA	Motion Picture Association of America
MPLA	People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (O Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola)
MPCC	Japanese Motion Picture Promotional Corporation
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NCLA	New Latin American Cinema (Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano)
NSS	National Security States
OCIC	International Catholic Office of Cinema (Office catholique international du cinéma)
ONCIC	Algeria's National Office for Film Commerce and Industry (l'Office national pour le commerce et l'industrie cinématographique)

OPSAA	Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization
OSPAAAL	Organization of Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America
PAIGC	African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde)
PANAF	First Pan-African Cultural Festival
PCI	Palestinian Cinema Institute
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFU	Palestinian Film Unit
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
RAPP	Soviet Association of Proletarian Writers
RGALI	Russian State Archive of Literature and the Arts
SADUM	Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Central Asia (Dukhovnoe upravleniie musul'man Srednei Azii i Kazakhstana)
SATPEC	Tunisian Company for Cinematic Production and Expansion (Société anonyme tunisienne de production et d'expansion cinématographique)
SCINFOMA	Film Section of the Ministry of Information of Mali (Service Cinématographique du Ministère de l'Information du <i>Mali</i>)
SCPB	Southern Cinematography and Photography Branch
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republics
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organization
TASS	Soviet News Agency (Telegrafnoe agenstvo Sovetskogo Soiuza)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USIA	United States Information Agency
VGIK	Moscow Film School (Vsesoiuznyi Gosudarstvennyi Institut Kinematografii)
VNIIC	The All-Union Scientific Research Institute for the History of Cinema (Moscow)
WIDF	Women's International Democratic Federation
ZAPU	The Zimbabwe African People's Union

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Introduction

In early October 1968, more than 240 guests from forty-nine African and Asian countries, as well as a smaller number of European and American observers, descended on the city of Tashkent, the capital of the Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan. The occasion was the first Tashkent Festival of Cinema of Africa and Asia. In addition to filmmakers, actors and actresses, critics, and other cultural producers, there were film trade representatives, ministers, and dozens of embassy officials from African and Asian countries. There, they would interact with each other, their Soviet hosts, and local audiences; they would explore Tashkent, as well as other Central Asian cities, factories, collective farms, and places of culture; but, most important, they would watch hundreds of films screened in spacious movie halls, some designed especially for this event.¹ In 1966, the city had experienced a devastating earthquake that left three hundred thousand Tashkenters homeless. All but one movie theater had been destroyed. The 1968 festival was a powerful testimony to the successes of Soviet modernization, with Tashkent once again serving as a showcase for international visitors, as it had on other occasions in its history.² After 1974, the festival would expand to include Latin American cinema and, in 1976, change its official title to the Tashkent Festival of Cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Every even year from 1968 until the dissolution of the Soviet Union—with the exception of 1970, when a cholera epidemic broke out in Asia and the festival was canceled—hundreds of guests would make this journey to Tashkent. From 1972, the festival would take place from late May to early June, lasting ten days, with press conferences and roundtable discussions every morning, followed by between two and four film screenings in the official program at the Tashkent Palace of the Arts, which seated around two thousand spectators, and additional screenings—of documentaries, shorts, films outside the official program and the “market” selection, intended for distributors but also open to the public—in other movie theaters around the city. By 1974, the guests stayed at Tashkent’s first four-star hotel, The

Uzbekistan, where all festival participants could be accommodated. Even with such an intensive official program, most guests still praised Tashkent's laid-back festive atmosphere, which allowed ample time for socializing and discussion, as well as singing, dancing, and flirting. Participants' recollections often feature enormous trays of locally grown fruit at every event, not only the official receptions but also dinners at the local organizers' homes, as well as improvised eateries set up in street alleys, which often were open late into the night. This informality, singled in many festival participants' memories with a strong erotic charge, signals it as the space of cultural exception, as much at odds with the ideological objectives of the event as it was with the official norms of either the host country or most of the guests'.

Alongside filmmakers such as K. A. Abbas, Ousmane Sembene, Souleyman Cissé, Mohamed Slim Riad, Fumio Kamei, Kobayashi Masaki, and stars like Raj Kapoor, Nargis, and Magda, among the guests were also the film historian Jay Leyda and his wife, Sylvia (Si-Lan) Chen. In her memoirs, written in the 1980s, Chen recalls her experience of attending the festival. Comparing it to the Moscow International Film Festival, which she says was "not greatly different from others," she highlights Tashkent's unique festival character, all of it "out of the ordinary."³ She briefly mentions the "surprises" among the screenings: a "modestly effective film from Turkmenistan"—likely *Makhtumkuli* (Alty Karliev, 1968)—"something good from Kirghizia"—probably *The Sky of Our Childhood* (*Nebo nashego detstva*, Tolomush Okeev, 1966)—"the first film from Bangladesh"—here conflating the first and second editions, as 1972 included films by Zahir Raihan, who did, however, attend the 1968 festival but as part of the Pakistani delegation.⁴ She singles out Ousmane Sembene as "a real discovery" for both herself and Leyda, whose career the historian and critic would follow enthusiastically in subsequent decades.⁵ But most of Chen's recollections center on a different aspect of the festival: the receptions where, amid "lots of wine and oriental food . . . everyone was dancing."⁶ There Chen was delighted to reunite with her former teacher Tamara Khanum (fig. 1.1), a celebrated Armenian-Uzbek performer and musician, who served on the festival's jury. Chen's recollections capture the thrill of spontaneity in the midst of a highly choreographed event as she describes how, at the closing reception held at the Uzbek film studio, "the skilled drumming caught me up in the excitement of the occasion. I jumped onto the stage; the drummers got more excited, and I was dancing my Uzbek dance again!"⁷

This brief episode at first glance tells us as much about Si-Lan Chen as the festival itself. A Sino-Trinidadian dancer and political activist, Chen was the daughter of the leftist first foreign minister of Republican China, exiled to the Soviet Union with his family in the 1920s. She began her dancing career in Moscow, where she met her future husband, Jay Leyda, in 1933. This was soon after her passionate affair with Langston Hughes, who was in Moscow for the making of the movie *Black and White*. When that project failed, Hughes traveled around the country, spending



FIGURE 1.1. Tamara Khanum with the Indian delegation (*far left*: S. Sukhdev) at the second edition of the Tashkent festival, 1972. Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.



FIGURE 1.2. Tamara Khanum dancing, 1939. Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.

several months in Uzbekistan: for most nonwhite foreign visitors, as early as the 1930s, Central Asia—or, as Hughes himself called it, the USSR's own “dusty, colored, cotton-growing South”—was both a showcase and a test of the racial equality in the Soviet Union, attracting much interest and attention.⁸ Chen herself spent time in Central Asia just a year prior, as part of her dance tour, performing at the Opera Theater in Tashkent and learning Uzbek folk dance from Khanum, who was one of the first women to perform unveiled in Tashkent in the 1920s (fig. 1.2). It was Hughes's writings about her (published in the US Popular Front journal *Theater Arts* in 1934) that brought Khanum her international recognition.⁹ By the late 1960s, Khanum, who epitomized the liberation of Soviet Central Asian women, was an important cultural ambassador, having performed abroad in Afghanistan,

India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Burma, Vietnam, and other countries, with a repertoire of songs in eighty-six languages.¹⁰ Chen's own artistic practice and travel trajectories reflected similar commitment, her dance bringing together the different facets of her own identity, experience, and ideology: at once Caribbean, Chinese, Soviet, and internationalist.¹¹ And the Tashkent festival was in many ways the cinematic equivalent of such artistic internationalism.

Thus, from Chen's brief recollections of the festival emerge the contours of earlier intertwined histories—of internationalist solidarities and transracial affinities, of personal bonds and institutional connections, of multifaceted artistic expressions and political commitments, and the role that gender played in shaping these histories. These same genealogies were also foundational for this new phase of Soviet efforts to lead cultural internationalism that the Tashkent festival represented and whose cinematic reach this book seeks to reconstruct.

Chen's husband, Jay Leyda, was also an important part of this *histoire croisée*. As one of the first foreigners to study at the Moscow Film Institute (VGIK) in the 1930s, his educational trajectory prefigures that of many of the VGIK alumni from Asia, Africa, and Latin America—Sembene among them—who were featured during the twenty years of the festival. By the late 1960s, Leyda had become known as a translator and popularizer of Sergei Eisenstein's work, as well as the first English-language historian of Soviet and Chinese cinemas.¹² For him, the festival offered a rare opportunity to (re)establish contacts and exchange ideas with some of the key emerging film critics and historians of Asia and Africa—Tahar Cheriaa from Tunisia, Samir Farid from Egypt, Iwasaki Akira from Japan, Paulin Soumanou Vieyra from Senegal, and Guy Hennebelle from France. The Tashkent festival, then, was not only an important site for showing films but a crucial space for the articulation of shared discourses on cinema that was rooted in a profound belief in the power of international solidarity behind the filmic apparatus to achieve socialist and decolonialist ends.

But Chen's perspective allows us a glimpse into a more ineffable aspect of this history: the unmistakable gendering of artistic and intellectual spheres, the peculiar blurring of official staging of cultural diplomacy with joyful spontaneity and powerful affective bonds, and unexpected cinematic juxtapositions, blending names and titles that are very familiar to most contemporary film scholars with those whose very existences have been largely written out of mainstream cinematic history. As this book reconstructs the geopolitical and artistic networks the festival engaged, as well as the shared cinematic forms it promoted, it also seeks to attend to the affective affinities and ambiguities, contradictions, and erasures as equally constitutive of this history of global cinema culture.

As a Soviet-organized event, the Tashkent festival was always inaugurated and interspersed with official speeches given by various representatives of the state cultural bureaucracy and the Communist Party. Yet those held surprises, too. The opening address in 1968 was given by Sarvar Azimov, chairman of the festival's



FIGURE 1.3. Sarvar Azimov at the opening of the first Tashkent festival, 1968. Photo from author's private collection.

Organizing Committee (fig. 1.3). Azimov was a highly accomplished Uzbek writer and scholar, an active participant in the Afro-Asian Writers' Association, and a key political figure in Uzbekistan (as deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and minister of foreign affairs of Uzbek, SSR). In 1968 he was on the brink of starting what would turn out to be a remarkable diplomatic career: the following year, he would be appointed as the Soviet ambassador to Lebanon, where he would conduct the first official diplomatic meeting with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), making him a major mediator for Soviet-Palestinian relations in the course of the 1970s. He would continue to play this role even after his 1974 transfer to Pakistan, where he would serve as a trusted confidant of the Bhutto family, thus acting as a Soviet link within the complex and shifting political nexus between the Middle East and South Asia.¹³ His presence points to the degree to which this film festival served as a node within a network of the multifaceted geopolitical alliances between the Soviet Union and the decolonial world.

Although his speech in 1968 was hardly memorable, in his reflections on the occasion of the tenth edition of the festival, Azimov gives a remarkable account of the festival's origins. He describes a meeting at the III Afro-Asian writers conference taking place in Beirut in 1967 at the house of Kamal Jumblatt, the founder of the Progressive Socialist Party of Lebanon, the chair of the 1960 Afro-Asian People's Conference, and a renowned supporter of Palestine.¹⁴ There, according

to Azimov, Fairuz, the famous Lebanese singer and movie actress, together with Mulk Raj Anand and Sajjad Zaheer, the founding members of the Indian Progressive Writers Association, voiced the need for a film festival that would bring together Soviet film achievements with those of the developing world and suggested that Tashkent would be the perfect place for such an event to take place on a regular basis. Such a festival would be a celebration, not a competition—"a film school where everyone would be both a teacher and a student."¹⁵ This, Azimov concludes, was the spirit of Tashkent as it got manifested in all the subsequent editions of the festival from 1968 on.

Azimov's recollections, different as they may seem from Chen's, are equally revealing of yet another crucial aspect of the mythology, genealogy, and historical trajectory of the Tashkent festival, one that positions itself outside the Soviet Union. It is presented as rooted in the earlier experiences of anticolonial internationalism and the popular front (personified by Raj Anand and Zaheer) and marked by its shared commitment to a socialist and Palestinian cause across the Arab world (embodied in Jumblatt). Like Chen's account, this narrative places cinema in the broader network of cultural production with music and literature; women in these accounts are almost exclusively politically committed star performers (such as Fairuz). Azimov also affirms the utopian horizon for the creation of the Tashkent festival in distinction from the norms of the film festival circuit. Here the emphasis is not on competition but solidarity (no awards, participation of both established and brand-new film industries) and education ("a film school"). He places particular emphasis on the festival's affective powers ("a celebration," "the spirit of Tashkent"), albeit construing this as inseparable from geopolitics in their most concrete institutional (state-level diplomacy, party-affiliated) sense.

The "spirit of Tashkent," which is so frequently mentioned by the Soviet organizers of the festival, also refers to the city's history—from the ancient role of Central Asia as the civilizational crossroads forming part of the trade routes of the Silk Road to Tashkent's long-standing status as a showcase city of the Soviet East's socialist modernity and "tourist magnet for the Asians, Africans and Latin Americans who traveled to the region on government and cultural exchanges."¹⁶ Soviet policy makers had long exploited its geographic location to create a convenient entry point for Asian visitors, with the city's airport boasting direct flights to Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, and what is now Sri Lanka. Via a Moscow transfer, it was connected with many cities around the world and, crucially (for the purposes of the festival), with the nascent airflight infrastructure of Africa.¹⁷ It was the site for the first Afro-Asian writers Congress (in 1958), which had originally included the first iteration of an Afro-Asian film festival—a crucial moment in the exercise of Soviet "soft power" vis-à-vis the new "neutralist" bloc of nations.¹⁸

One of the hosts of that earlier festival was Kamil Iarmatov; an ethnic Tajik, he was one of the first Central Asian actor-filmmakers who studied at VGIK in

the 1930s, becoming by the late 1940s one of the main figures at the Uzbek film studio. He was also a prominent early participant of the Afro-Asian film circuit, having already participated in the week of Afro-Asian cinema in Beijing in 1957 and playing one of the key organizing roles for the film festival as part of the Writers Congress in 1958.¹⁹ A tireless promoter of Tashkent's position as the center of internationalist Afro-Asian culture, Iarmatov was one of the official organizers of the 1968 festival as well, and in the months leading to the festival's opening, he had been dispatched to Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt to ensure their participation in the upcoming event. Iarmatov's *Riders of the Revolution* (*Vsadniki revoliutsii*, 1968), a historical epic depicting the establishment of Soviet rule in Central Asia, was the opening film of the festival. Another movie of his, a lavish historical melodrama *Poem of Two Hearts* (*Poema dvukh serdets*, 1966), would go on to win an award in an international film festival in Cambodia in December 1968. Unlike the politically heavy-handed *Riders of the Revolution*, which failed to impress either domestic or international audiences, *Poem of Two Hearts* (also shown as part of the market selection at Tashkent) became one of the Soviet Union's most successful international film exports that year, being sold for commercial exhibition in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Sri Lanka, and Morocco.²⁰ Indeed, Iarmatov's mark as a filmmaker was the dramatization of stories from the Islamic Golden Age: *Alisher Navoi* (1949), a biopic of the fifteenth-century Turkic poet and statesman; and *Avicenna* (1958), a biopic on the life of the Persian polymath philosopher. As we will see, this emphasis will be emblematic of many of the festival's international selections as well, activating a sense of shared cultural legacies while also providing plenty of film import-export opportunities. Although set in the distant past, these were without a doubt highly political films: as Iarmatov was proud to recount, during a visit to Vietnam he learned that *Alisher Navoi* was the first Soviet film to be screened in Indochina and was intended to serve as an inspiration "to the partisans, Ho Chi Minh's comrades, who were fighting the French colonialists."²¹

We will see how the strands, which are already visible in its first edition—from the importance of Palestine to the legacies of the Islamic Golden Age, from the involvement of film critics and educators to women's visibility as dancers and performers, and from the intertwining of entertainment genres and radical cinematic histories—will shape not only the history of the Tashkent festival but become paradigmatic for the world socialist cinema that crystallizes around it. On the most fundamental level, the biographic trajectories of these artists, writers, and filmmakers illustrate Rossen Djagalov's claim about the close relationship between the cultural and political spheres, a historical condition shared by Soviet and Afro-Asian cultural elites, of which the festival itself was a powerful manifestation.²² It also helps us understand how the intertwined agendas of postcolonial national heritage, internationalist anti-imperialist solidarity, and commercial and popular audience preferences from the very beginning of the festival constructed an

assemblage that foreshadowed its subsequent development while also testifying to its ties to an earlier epoch of cinematic socialist internationalism.

World Socialist Cinema investigates the intersection of these entangled histories—personal, artistic, and political—as they emerged in the Tashkent festival during the crucial decades from the 1960s to the 1980s. This formation resists many of the categorizations, both geographic and formal, that we have come to accept in film scholarship, and as the first step toward coming to terms with this history, the book undertakes the ambitious goal of examining not only the material networks but also the forms—artistic, cultural, discursive, ideological—that were broadly shared across film cultures of the Global South and former Soviet bloc. In so doing, it necessarily evokes the affects, ideologies, and social structures that provided common references and moments of recognition for those millions across the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, as well as much of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The relations within this space were highly uneven, the motivations for participation greatly varied, and agents often perceived and narrated them differently. Yet taken together, the festival constituted a major site where ideological and aesthetic positions and worldviews were articulated and negotiated, and a different kind of world cinema began to take shape.

As Djagalov and Razlogova have argued, the Tashkent film festival's combination of ambitious geographic scope and its unique format served to make it the key forum for Second and Third World cinemas, providing the latter with a major site for interconnectivity and expanded room to maneuver while offering the former its major window on the cinemas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.²³ Yet beyond the official declaration, the status of the festival throughout its existence was uncertain. An event focusing on Asian and African cinemas seemed to many Soviet critics and filmmakers in 1968 like a diversion from more pertinent conflicts taking place in the socialist bloc (notably Czechoslovakia) and the Soviet film industry, signaling a turn away from the emerging serious (auteur) cinema and toward, as they saw it, "tasteless entertainment from the under-developed countries" that would corrupt Soviet audiences' taste and push domestic cinema further toward "low" entertainment genres.²⁴ Nor did the festival's numerous Asian, African, and Latin American participants necessarily share the sense of its importance: it did not make or break cinematic careers, lacking the European publicity of the Moscow film festival, while at the same time, to many committed Third-Worldist filmmakers, it was too redolent of Soviet hegemonic ambitions and commercial goals. For some, the film selection was not militant enough, whereas others had a decided preference for Western-style auteur cinema, for which Tashkent was, indeed, a poor showcase. Despite such reservations, most participants kept coming back, year after year, as the festival continued to grow.

From a historical perspective, however, Tashkent comes across as a vibrant space in which ideologies, both political and aesthetic, and power hierarchies competed for dominance—more of a contact zone than a neutral "friendship zone," as

it was referred to in Soviet parlance.²⁵ The sheer quantity and variety of invitees from film cultures around the world created a fascinating instability of the hegemonies at play. Such heterogeneity and instability lend themselves poorly to both national(ist) narratives and internationalist histories of militant political cinema, which dominate accounts of this period in film scholarship. As such, the book also constructs a different geography of knowledge, one that resists the Anglo-Atlantic Eurocentric canon of film history or Area studies compartmentalization.²⁶ This shared sphere produced a different, situated notion of humanist universalism that overlapped at times with the notion of socialist internationalism and at other times departed and deviated from it. Irreducible to North-South, East-West, Orientalist or Cold War binaries, these networks borrowed and transformed epistemological models across various divides in complex and interconnected ways. Placing cinematic production that constituted these networks in relation to each other, therefore, produces a powerful shared body of work—one I term *world socialist cinema*—a unique historic cinematic formation through which to explore the cultural and political dynamics of the era.

As much as they were shaped by the total Cold War order, the transnational and transcontinental movements at the center of this study were directed at transforming it. But they operated under the consensus that socialism—however differently understood, imagined, or practiced—should form the shared horizon of that transformation. This horizon was for some a dream worthy of struggle and self-sacrifice, while for others it manifested itself as oppressively real negotiations with the demands of the state. For some, it opened new opportunities; for others, it delivered something other than what it promised. Moreover, socialism as discussed in this book did not lend itself to a single definition, existing in different forms in terms of both the specific economic and social state organization (for countries under state socialism) and ideological orientation (for example, in terms of its inclusion in national constitutions or regional formations—such as Nehruvian socialism, Arab socialism, or African socialism).²⁷ The neoliberalism that pervaded all discussions of socialism in the post-Cold War era discredited it as, at best, naive or opportunistic. As a result, all the cultural production associated directly with it has been largely discussed as either propaganda or, should it have any artistic value, as implicit or explicit dissent. For works produced outside the socialist bloc, connections to socialism, either as ideology or as production mode, have been systematically downplayed or subjected to a similar set of Cold War binaries. In contrast, I argue that carefully reconsidering both the promises and realities of global socialism in all its complexity and the body of films it produced reconfigures how we must think of history and the geography of cinema, at the very least.

This book singles out just one period within this longer history, taking as its starting point the mid-1950s and as its ending point the late 1970s. The mid-1950s saw the activation of the decolonialization process in most of the world, which

could be summed up, emblematically, with the Bandung Meeting and the formation of institutionally articulated, nonaligned Afro-Asian solidarity networks. The relation of these networks to the socialist bloc was further impacted by the Cuban revolution and the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party resolution on the principle of peaceful coexistence. Two other factors—the Vietnam War and the 1967 Israel-Arab War—also helped define this relationship, forming the background for the fateful events of 1968, which happened to be the first year of the Tashkent festival of the cinemas of Asia and Africa. I am taking this festival as the center of gravity for a specific configuration of world socialist cinema—one of many, sometimes overlapping, sometimes competing socialist cine-geographies, to use the term from Eshun and Gray.²⁸ Its contours were in many ways determined by Soviet Cold War geopolitics, but its specific ideologies and aesthetics need to be considered in the context of its multiple local conditions and developments, which often extended far beyond Soviet vision or understanding.

The Tashkent festival foregrounded a shared awareness on the part of socialist and postcolonial nations of cinema's multiple social and cultural functions—as political motivator, agent of international solidarity, purveyor of cultural diplomacy and national or regional cultural identity, and acknowledger of cinema's explicit potential in education in its broadest political and epistemological senses. Yet such centrality of cinema for an analysis of solidarity and socialism more generally in some ways goes against an established scholarly tradition of associating socialism with literary culture as the “hegemony of the intelligentsia.”²⁹ Régis Debray makes the starkest version of this argument in his 2007 essay “Socialism: A Life-Cycle,” which goes as far as to directly connect the decline of socialism with the rise of audiovisual media: “The collapse of the graphosphere has forced [socialism] to pack up its weapons and join the videosphere, whose thought-networks are fatal for its culture.”³⁰ While there is little doubt that most socialist cultures in the twentieth century had an intimate relationship to literature and literacy—from placing it as the highest cultural form in terms of cultural prestige to sharing a certain popular penchant for, say, public recitations—this study is part of a larger body of scholarship that demonstrates how for much of the twentieth century, audiovisual media was crucial to the construction of socialist internationalism and cosmopolitanism.³¹ And by midcentury, in particular, cinema in the socialist world had come to occupy a rather privileged role, especially when it comes to international cultural diplomacy, and nowhere more so than in its relationship to the Third World.

There are many reasons for this: cinema's industrial/technological basis, its collective production mode and mass and public consumption, and, finally, its profitability were all integral to this status, as was cinema's global appeal. As an industrial art, cinema came to emblemize technological progress, a triumph of modernization—whose very existence, let alone international visibility, spoke to the success of the alternative (socialist) modernization model, and in its global

circulation, it was akin to space exploration, albeit more accessible. Its collaborative mode of production was a fitting model for collectivism, which socialism celebrated, and a fitting experiment in new economic organization of labor. Its mass and public consumption made it particularly fitting as a mode of social and political (as well as, of course, aesthetic) education; it was also a good showcase for the state. For most socialist economies, which invested in the cultural public sector, by the mid-twentieth century it also had become one of the most profitable sectors, especially through film import and export.³² At the same time, for newly independent postcolonial states, international visibility through festivals and coproduction was often the only road to financial viability of the new medium. Even in countries where socialist and leftist cultures opposed the state, independent film production and exhibition through alternative, noncommercial channels was typically tied to leftist politics (not least by opposing economic hegemonies controlling the film industries), often leading to increased international collaboration—which the Soviet bloc eagerly extended.

Beyond these reasons, there is much to be said about the affective impact of cinema and its world-making potential. Paul Gilroy's account of the role of records in shaping a transnational cultural and political Black consciousness provides a good model for thinking of the affective force of cultural objects and technologies: "For a spell, plastic discs stuck with colored paper—'records'—furnished unlikely and unanticipated vectors for a restless, traveling sensibility. They became part of counter-national culture-making, and their history extends arguments about the role of communicative technologies in augmenting and mediating forms of social and political solidarity beyond the imagined communities achieved via the almost magical agencies of print and cartography."³³

While cinema, unlike music records, had closer ties to both official cultures and nation-states, its narrative and audiovisual heterogeneity allowed it to conjure new affective communities and forms of solidarity. As Łukasz Stanek, following Édouard Glissant, argues for the view of transnational socialist architecture as a form of "socialist worldmaking," I similarly posit cinema in its transnational iteration as providing powerful and often unexpected imaginaries of future communities.³⁴ Through its variety of cinematic forms—from travelogues and industrial documentaries to popular genre films and art cinema—the history of the Tashkent film festival provides a unique glimpse into this process and an opportunity to discern some of its formations.

In its understanding of such worldmaking, *World Socialist Cinema* offers a history of world cinema rooted largely in cinematic expressions and experiences of the world beyond its Euro- and US-centric circulatory networks. I approach this world cinema as a powerful extension of the ideals and practices of twentieth-century socialism, broadly conceived: as an expression of official ideologies and a tool for disseminating and mobilizing belief systems and, at the same time, as a reflection and mediation of collective experiences, as well as a way of constituting

communities through both filmmaking and film viewing. The close and interdependent relationship between the state and film production and exhibition within socialist cinema, as well as cinema's costly industrial apparatus, made it much more subject to top-down processes. Yet its collective mode of production and consumption, the democratic nature of its reach, the indexicality and heterogeneity of its formal structures, to say nothing of the strength of its visceral and affective impact, made cinema a powerful interface with genuinely popular culture, both reflecting and asserting the agency of the people, validating their experiences and contributing to the way communities are formed.

The bulk of my analysis is focused on the most active years of the Tashkent festival—from 1968 to the end of the 1970s, when global art cinema becomes the dominant mode of transnational cinematic culture, while TV and video become the dominant modes for global popular audiovisual circulation; mediatic shifts that in many ways displaced “militant anticolonial” cinema and global popular cinema alike. During this time, we witness the 1973 oil crisis, which for many of the countries I focus on here meant “oil boom” signaling, as the famous saying in Arabic goes, *al-fawra mahal al-thawra*, “‘the spurt’ (meaning oil) in place of the revolution,” with the end of the Non-Aligned Movement and the rise and fall of the New International Economic Order (first drafted in Algiers in 1974).³⁵ Many historians trace the collapse of the Soviet economy—and, consequently, all of the socialist world's economies—to this period.³⁶ The mounting anxiety among progressive forces during this period testifies to the disconnect between the politico-cultural capital of the Soviet bloc by the mid-1970s (whether in sciences, arts, or geopolitical strategy) and the loss of prestige of the socialist model in the Global South.³⁷

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan not only eroded the goodwill toward the Soviet bloc as a liberating force; more generally, it signaled a profound loss of faith in the nation-state-based model for emancipation in the Global South. In many ways, both the Islamic revolution in Iran and the emergence of the humanitarian NGO structure as the privileged global engine of aid can be seen as responses to this crisis of legitimacy (already prefigured within the theoretical formulations of post-1968 Marxism of *autonomia* and other antisystemic movements around the world). Thus, even though the Tashkent festival continued through the 1980s, and some important examples of what I call world socialist cinema (especially Syrian and Lusophone African films) continued to circulate almost exclusively within this network, the late 1970s serves as an obvious boundary to the story narrated here.³⁸

The specific geographic contours of global socialist cinema as presented in this book are thus dictated as much by the book's being centered on Tashkent as by its specific periodization. A direct consequence of this is the absence of China and the larger cinematic and ideological sphere with which it becomes associated in the period of the 1960s and 1970s. While Chinese cinema was quite actively integrated in the global socialist cinematic circuits of the 1950s and into the early

1960s, after the Sino-Soviet split and the advent of the cultural revolution, it came to occupy a rather isolated position vis-à-vis many of the cinematic developments described herein; thus, while China actively participated in the Afro-Asian solidarity network in the immediate post-Bandung years, engaging in coproductions and exporting films all over the socialist bloc, by the late 1960s, when so many of the tricontinental networks fully developed their cinematic apparatus (both in the sense of developing their own film production and formalizing the relationships through festivals and meetings), China largely withdrew itself from this general process. At the same time, even in its absence, as this book does explore, it continued to exert considerable push and pull on the alliances and solidarities of the socialist Global South.

At the same time as Chinese cinema exited the Soviet exhibition circuit, the cinemas of Mongolia and the Korean National Democratic Republic continued to be actively represented through international socialist networks, always participating in Tashkent and many other festivals within the region. The lack of attention given to these cinemas in my account is a reflection of a relative inaccessibility of primary sources and a lack of scholarship, which would have allowed me to reconstruct the respective cinematic and cultural contexts of their contributions, given my total lack of linguistic and cultural knowledge of these areas. It remains an exciting field to be explored by other scholars. Overall, in my discussions of films and national film industries, some are prioritized because of the greater visibility of their presence at these international circuits, either for the reasons of their dominance (as with Japan, India, and Egypt) or for their ideological importance (as with relatively small but politically resonant output by Vietnamese, Palestinian, Bangladeshi, and Chilean filmmakers). But availability of sources, especially films themselves, remains a serious problem, reflecting the tragic state of film preservation of much of world cinema. The difficulties of finding 1970s films by Iraqi, Afghani, or even Moroccan filmmakers prevented me from an in-depth discussion of their works, even as they were prevalent at the Tashkent festival. This is even more the case with nonfiction films. My choice of focusing on specific films was an attempt to find a sweet spot between their availability, the degree to which they reflect dominant trends at the festival, and their relative absence from English-language scholarly discussions.

It is also important to state that while my discussion of the key issues and topoi constituting world socialist cinema certainly extends to all of the socialist bloc cinemas, Eastern and Central European film cultures had their own distinct intersecting histories of affinities, solidarities, and alliances with Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Karlovy Vary and Leipzig, in particular, were important hubs of the broader festival network I describe here, and while I occasionally mention them, they certainly deserve separate investigation. Polish, Czechoslovak, and Hungarian films loom large in many of the memoirs of the international participants of these festival networks, and their role and the place they occupy in relation to the

cinematic formations, which emerge out of Tashkent, also deserve to be addressed in greater depth. In general, Eastern European countries had their own distinct and complex role within the cinematic field of global socialism. These dynamics were always further complicated by an ambiguous or antagonistic relationship to Soviet cultural and political hegemony, as well as much greater claims on European identity, which further transformed their self-understanding vis-à-vis decolonial nations. Yugoslavia's unique status as one of the founding members within the Non-Aligned Movement certainly placed it within a very distinct position in relation to Asian, African, and Latin American cinemas (including a special relationship with China, which continued after the Sino-Soviet split), and Romania and Albania's geopolitics placed them in a considerably different situation vis-à-vis the kinds of cultural constellations the Tashkent festival embodied. There is no doubt that research focusing specifically on these relationships is much needed and, hopefully, forthcoming.³⁹

As a result, in my identification of shared tropes and problems across global socialist cinemas and my suggestion of certain developments, I focused on what emerged most clearly from the corpus of films with which I was working—leaving out many other possible cinematic formations within global social filmmaking that deserve to be fully explored on their own terms. A more comparative analysis of global commercial film genres—such as comedies, westerns, spy thrillers, or melodramas—which could take into account the global geographies of socialist filmmaking, while not sufficiently represented at Tashkent to focus on in this book, would constitute an important further venue for research in order to reconstruct conventional notions of “world cinema.”⁴⁰ Some of these formations certainly bridge the Cold War divides and competing film festival networks. For example, in the 1970s, the general sense of disillusionment shared by cultural elites/intelligentsia across the socialist bloc and the Third World was probably nowhere more visible than in auteur cinema of the period, with its alienated heroes in the films by Andrei Tarkovsky, Youssef Chahine, Satyajit Ray, Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, and Krzysztof Kieślowski. Given that these directors already enjoy full cultural and scholarly legitimacy in the West, through festivals and increasingly through criticism and cinematic canons as they emerge from university curricula and film scholarship, they largely fall beyond the scope of this work. Focusing on such socialist articulations of art/auteur cinema would create a narrative continuous with the dynamics and developments within the cinemas of Western Europe or the Anglo-Atlantic in a way that would have been more familiar to the reader, consistent with how we usually learn and teach these historical developments within a traditional film studies curriculum as rippling effects of the movements and waves (often originating in France, Italy, or the US).

Without negating the importance and validity of such a narrative, this book follows a different trajectory. By approaching this history “from the South,” and bringing together the former Second and Third Worlds into a shared cultural

and cinematic space, this book argues implicitly for the historical exceptionalism of the liberal Western, Euro-Atlantic (especially North American) cultural forms, therefore decentering the assumptions of their primacy, as well as bringing cinematic developments from the rest of the world into focus instead of relegating them to the marginal or secondary position implied by most accounts of film history.

My position is driven not only by ideological concerns of decolonizing film studies, although this certainly has always been one of my broader objectives. My retrospective focus on film history stems from our contemporary vantage point, characterized by the overwhelming global dominance of neoliberal racial capitalism and continuously reemerging forms of nationalism. Yet it has also become increasingly clear that the Global North is no longer the sole driving force of the most important movements and developments, politically, economically, and cinematically. And just as so many headlines herald the end of the American Empire, Hollywood struggles to maintain its dominance, and the global film market is increasingly reoriented by other growing economic and political hegemonies, we have a chance to consider the prehistory of some of these developments and attempts to both conceptualize and bring into existence cinematic networks independent of US or European film industries and taste formations. At the same time, we have an opportunity to look back to the moment when the victory of global capitalism did not yet appear inevitable, with an eye to activating a genealogy that could open up new possibilities for solidarities and alternatives—but one that does not disavow failures, contradictions, and problems that constitute this history. In short, I ask readers to keep in mind that what I offer here is an invitation to a conversation in hopes of triggering enough interest for others to pursue the many venues that I was unable to attend to in this book.

As I mentioned earlier, the narrative of the book falls into two parts, each governed by slightly different methodological goals. The first is focused on the history of the Tashkent International Festival of the Cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s. The second expands on that history, shifting from the examination of networks to the discussion of overarching cinematic tropes and specific films. This second part draws on a larger body of films, of which the festival selection was exemplary, to reconstruct some of the main features and preoccupations of the particular configuration of world socialist cinema that emerges from it. As a transition between the two parts, the book attends to one particular iteration of world socialist cinema that was rendered largely invisible at Tashkent but, I argue, presents an important corrective to it: a body of work made by socialist women filmmakers. Although it was mostly extraneous to the cinematic networks mobilized by Tashkent, a closer look at some of these films externalizes many of the connections and contradictions of world socialist cinema's practices and ideologies, thus serving as a dialectical transition between the two parts of the book and setting up the themes of the final three chapters.

Thus, if the first part of the book draws out the dynamics of this cinematic space and the specificities of the networks, movements, and individual participants, as well as historical developments and ideological positions that animated it, the second part focuses largely on the films and their representational regimes. Building on the wealth of historical detail provided in the first four chapters, the concluding three advance an analysis of the specific cinematic formation that the festival projected, as a shared vision of the world whose contours defy national boundaries. I identify three topoi characteristic of world socialist cinema as seen from Tashkent: industrial modernity, cultural heritage, and armed struggle. In each case, I offer an overview of their historical, political, and economic significance, and the range of genres and aesthetic modes they engendered, before moving on to a closer analysis of a small number of representative films.

Chapter 1 draws out the historical background (with its various political, as well as cinematic, developments) to the first Tashkent festival in 1968. These developments include the intense international exchange brought about by the Bandung conference and the Soviet Thaw, as reflected in new cinematic networks in those states foregrounding Afro-Asian solidarity, paralleled by the rapid development of Soviet Central Asian film culture. The latter emerged as a privileged site in the Soviet cultural relations with the Global South. The chapter provides an overview of the circulation of political cinema from Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the existing network in this period, leading up to the first edition of the Tashkent festival in 1968.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed overview of the film programming at the 1968 edition of the festival, identifying many of its key participants, both Soviet and international, and major films presented at the festival, while placing them in relation to their respective national and regional cinematic contexts. The films are discussed synchronically, in relation to the other festival selections, and diachronically, as reflecting the history of cinematic ties with the socialist bloc and foregrounding some future developments.

Chapter 3 offers a more condensed version of the programming choices in the 1972–78 editions, reading them in relation to geopolitical changes and cinematic trends as represented at the festival. Together, these first three chapters make the case for the uniqueness of Tashkent in bringing together filmmakers and cinemas that are rarely discussed in relation to each other, highlighting both their shared concerns and their aesthetic and political divisions.

Chapter 4 shifts away from programming to discourses, speeches, roundtables, seminars, interviews, and publications that formed an integral part of the Tashkent experience and the key problems and issues that emerge from these discussions.

Building on one of the topics of frequent festival discussions—the denunciations of representations of sexuality in bourgeois cinema—chapter 5 focuses on the overlapping discourses on the “women’s question” and their reflection in cinematic socialist and Third-Worldist spheres as an alternative to Western liberal feminism. The glaring absence of female directors and critics at the festival,

on the one hand, and the construction of female stars as cultural ambassadors, on the other, demonstrates the complex dynamics of gender politics of the Tashkent festival space. As an alternative iteration of world socialist cinema, the chapter offers a discussion of several films made by women directors: Larisa Shepitko's *Wings* (*Kryl'ia*, USSR, 1965), Assia Djebar's *The Nouba of the Women from Mount Chenoua* (*La Nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua*, Algeria, 1977), and Lana Gogoberidze's *Some Interviews on Personal Matters* (*Neskol'ko interviiu po lichnym voprosam*, USSR, 1978). Concluding with an analysis of Gogoberidze's film (as the least internationally known), the chapter proposes women's cinema as a limit case of world socialist cinema—albeit one largely excluded from the Tashkent festival circuit—a cinema capable of offering a distinct and crucial perspective on the politics of emancipation.

Part 2 shifts from the festival selection to a consideration of a larger body of cinematic work that constituted world socialist cinema. My approach privileges two constitutive dialectics: (1) modernization and tradition; (2) war and peace. Chapter 6 centers on films dealing with industrial modernization and development as an integral part of the socialist ethos expressed in cinema: a Syrian documentary by Omar Amiralay (*Film Essay on the Euphrates Dam* [*Film-Muhawalalah 'an Sadd al-Furat*], 1970) and a failed Soviet-Egyptian coproduction about the building of the Aswan High Dam directed by Youssef Chahine (*People on the Nile* [*al-Nass wa'l-Nil*], 1968 and 1972).

Chapter 7 addresses another aspect of world socialist cinema's engagement with modernity: the (re)construction of cultural heritage, which takes its expression through the genres of ethnographic films, literary adaptations, and historical epics. I focus on two films: a Soviet Uzbek production of a biopic of al-Biruni, the early modern Islamic polymath (*Abu Raikhan Beruni*, Shukhrat Abbasov, 1973) and a multipart adaptation of the classic Persian epic *The Shahnameh*, made in Tajikistan by Boris Kimiagarov (*The Legend of Rustam* [*Skazanie o Rustame*], 1971; *Rustam and Sukhrab* [*Rustam i Sukhrab*], 1972; and *The Legend of Siavash* [*Skazanie o Siavushe*], 1976). I will explore the complex constructions of different imaginaries of past communities and the way these films negotiate different conceptions of "world cultural heritage" across various national, liberal, postcolonial, and socialist internationalist frameworks.

Chapter 8 concludes the book with a discussion of the cinema of armed struggle as constitutive of the Cold War discourse on peace within global socialism. After a brief discussion of the Soviet reception of the Japanese Left's antiwar commemorations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the iconography of Vietnamese revolutionary cinemas, the chapter concludes with a reading of *Stop Genocide* (1971), a documentary detailing the Liberation War of Bangladesh made by a communist-affiliated filmmaker, Zahir Raihan. My analysis identifies the specificities of the representational regime of international war documentaries, while also drawing out its internal contradictions, in particular in relation to the representation of women.

The unusually broad scope of this project necessitated a particularly multifaceted and flexible methodology. Soviet published sources and some archival materials allowed me to reconstruct the Tashkent festival's programming and discourses. But the book changes lenses, as it were, quite frequently: it shifts from historical narratives of international Cold War geopolitics to overviews of specific national and regional film industries and cultures (in both cases synthesizing a large number of secondary sources), to the descriptions of the inner workings of the festival and details of its programming choices, with sporadic discussion of specific films. Textual analysis emerges more centrally in the second part of the book, and the choice of films I take as my examples there was dictated by a combination of their paradigmatic status for the cinematic topoi they illustrate and the simple question of availability.

But neither the geopolitical nor the institutional or textual analysis proved sufficient to trace the various contacts and relationships among the participants of the exchanges, which formed the networks the book seeks to reconstruct. I therefore rely heavily on memoirs, (auto)biographies, and letters by the filmmakers, artists, and functionaries. Alongside the film critical press coverage of the festivals, these primary sources form the bases for some of the biographical sketches of the many cultural figures whose trajectories I see as in many ways paradigmatic of the international cultural milieu this book describes. They are often of figures who may be considered "minor characters" within our auteur-oriented universe of film studies: many of them are cultural bureaucrats, writers, actors, or filmmakers who are not well known outside their national cultural histories. Their stories provide an important dialectical counterpoint to the "grand" histories of the Cold War film sphere, illustrating and complicating the dynamics depicted in the films themselves.

Finally, to address what I regard as affective affinities, I had to rely at least to some degree on personal impressions and memories, including many online and social media postings, as well as personal conversations. When trying to talk about their experience with the festival participants from different countries, I found that formal interviews contributed little to the official accounts of the festival gathered from archival and published sources. But through informal conversations "off the record," I found that many of the anecdotes and personal memories of the festival resurfaced. These were often crucial for my own understanding of the complex dynamics governing these spaces and experiences, even if they were often recounted with an understanding that they would not be cited. While this methodology presented a certain challenge to the traditional modes of scholarly documentation, it informs many of the speculative aspects of my analysis throughout the book. As such, my analysis stems from knowledge produced not only through theoretical investigations or my own personal experiences (as is the case for much contemporary feminist and queer scholarship) but through others' recollections and personal anecdotes whose accumulative shapes allowed for certain interpretive leaps.

The book's ambitious geographic scope, combined with its attention to detail (such as names, titles of films, and their production and cultural background), may come across equally as dizzying for readers as they did for this writer, especially as I expect many will be encountering a number of the films and filmmakers for the first time. I anticipate that in chapters 2 and 3, most scholars will be drawn to the discussions of their own geographic areas of research; therefore, my goal was to retain at least to some degree the relevant information so as to offer some discoveries for area specialists, while at the same time making the less-familiar topics as accessible as possible.

It is my hope that despite the high demands that such transnational scholarship places on readers, they will be willing to venture into unfamiliar territories with me. But if not, the specific sections they will find relevant will differ from one reader to another, while still adding up to the overall understanding of the book's argument and goals. While the idiosyncratic format of the Tashkent film festival was motivated by its highly strategic political and economic stakes for both its Soviet organizers and its participants, the festival's hybridity resonated with the participants' understanding of the multiplicity of functions of cinema in the world. Thinking about such an extremely heterogeneous selection of films—produced in different countries on different continents, under quite varied industrial and political conditions, and belonging to different modes, styles, and types of filmmaking—as one body of work is a risky gambit. Yet despite these crucial differences, reading these films together as part of an ongoing transnational dialogue allows us to see the global socialist world of the Cold War, whose cinematic contours this book reconstructs.

As the title of the book suggests, I approach both the Tashkent festival and world socialist cinema as spaces that reflected and produced powerful collective affinities, alliances, and solidarities across various divides. I see these three modalities of connectedness and relationality as operating simultaneously yet not necessarily in sync with each other. The existence of both the Tashkent festival and the broader cinematic sphere it represented was first and foremost a result of historical alliances—the actions, movements, and organizations that deliberately crossed not only national but broader geopolitical lines across the Global South and the Soviet bloc (as well as the Global North). Soviet cultural policy toward the Third World was expansive enough to create room for a wide range of strategic alliances that could adapt to changing (geo)political and economic needs. The ideal of nonalignment, crucial as it was for the development and practice of both national self-definition and internationalist solidarity across the Global South, often remained less a reality than an orientation, a horizon. For a host of powerful reasons, the anti-imperialist Left from the Global South found it difficult to entirely avoid affiliations with the “actually existing socialist” countries—whether it was Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia, Cuba, or China. These affiliations came in the form of aid, military support, training of specialists, or other forms of cultural exchange.⁴¹

Most of these alliances were heavily mediated by state institutions and other top-down structures, yet these official channels often produced possibilities for more informal and unstructured kinds of artistic and intellectual dialogue. Nor were these efforts necessarily dictated by the superpowers. As the editors of *Alternative Globalization* demonstrate:

This new globalization should correctly be seen as a project of the USSR and other socialist states, and yet its actual shape cannot be attributed to the designs of Moscow or to any one actor alone. As was the case with prewar internationalism, the project was contested and plural from the outset. Furthermore, this new globalizing impulse did not take shape in isolation from the postwar capitalist order, which remained a source of emulation and trade; nor can it be considered separately from postcolonial efforts to create a nonaligned world order independent of the two superpowers and the former colonial empires. Rather, we can understand postwar state-socialist globalization as a process shaping and shaped by these other projects of connectivity.⁴²

The same dynamic played out on the level of cultural activities, in cinema in particular. The specific alliances, both highly strategic and frequently shifting, continued to be visible at the festival both on the level of programming and discourses, as this book will explore.

More ephemeral than alliances, cultural affinities often functioned on the level of structures of feeling and affects rather than as traceable influences or similarities, yet they took a symbolic shape that resonated through transnational cultural reception. Akin to what Michael Herzfeld famously termed “cultural intimacy,” these affinities were manifested as the experience of familiarity or proximity: “a recognition of those aspects of a cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality.”⁴³ We see plenty of illustrations of such “common sociality” in the accounts of the relationships that formed in the course of the festival years, cutting across the hosts, foreign guests, and film audiences. Such affinities and intimacies were sometimes experienced as intensely political and other times as not political at all, and they did not exclude the mutual perception of each other’s cultures as foreign and exotic, nor did they eradicate racial and other hierarchies. In and of themselves, they can be seen as more symptomatic than transformative (although they could be seen as having a potential toward solidarity). But at the same time, the very ephemerality of such affinities lent them a certain resistance to political ideologies as they often contradicted the broader ideological structures that underpinned them. This very unruliness allows for these affinities to outlive some of the political ideologies associated with them, adapt to changes, and continue to present further possibilities—as well as particular challenges—for any vision of solidarity.

The rhetoric of internationalist solidarity—both actual and potential—was, indeed, the governing logic that organized the official exchanges between the Second and Third Worlds, solidarity that was intended to be forged through and

supported by cultural expression and artistic production at events such as the Tashkent festival. Unlike affinities, solidarities move beyond a shared sensibility to a formation of a (new) collectivity with a possibility of shared collective political action. And unlike alliances, which I understand primarily in strategic and functionalist terms (as means to specific ends), solidarities are mutually transformative and, therefore, open-ended. For many of the artists in this book, film was both an expression of collectivities and a way to form them for the sake of real social and political transformation directed against oppression and inequalities. Solidarity for them entailed transformative relationality, not sameness or position of equality—necessary precisely across uneven relations of power and geographies. As David Featherstone asserts in his discussion of this notion, “the forging of links in opposition to common enemies . . . can open up new political terrains and possibilities. This allows new conceptions of political subjects and actors to emerge.”⁴⁴

It is clear that such solidarities could not emerge automatically, just by virtue of the festival's existence (as the Soviet organizers would often assume), and one should be suspicious of such assumptions given the evidence of persistent racism toward all nonwhite foreigners and a continuous (and often institutionally created and supported) sense of superiority of Western cultural models in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Yet, as this study demonstrates, both the possibility of transformation and a shared sense of history motivated the artists and intellectuals who form the core of my story, even if any conceptualizations of new political subjects and actors emerging from this experience are destined to remain speculative in the face of the collapse of both the Non-Aligned Movement and the socialist bloc as such. Flawed and contradictory as these dynamics were, however, I am not ready to leave these histories behind. Far from any recuperative logics, this book is motivated by the belief that interrogating this past is crucial to overcoming the interlocked epistemologies of the Cold War, ethno-nationalism and colonialism (with white supremacy and racialized capitalism as their direct correlatives)—epistemologies that still powerfully shape our present day, despite the apparent demise of state socialism or official colonial ownership structures.

From the more modest position of the discipline of film and media studies, these histories represent an alternative to the established narrative of film history. Their exclusion from our collective memory has resulted in a skewed image of the complex dynamics and social and political functions played by cinema in the twentieth century. A redrawing of this cinematic history and its geography—as a record of encounters, travels, and a fragile and at times short-lived but nonetheless powerful shared vision of the world—allows us to position the cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America in relation to those of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc as constituting radically different contours of what we can think of as world cinema. A careful (re)consideration of this history, among other things, helps interrogate the function of cinema/media in the construction of solidarity, whose future is made ever more complex but also pressing now that

globalization and the migration “crisis” have further redefined the global experience of neoliberal racial capitalism. All the more pressing is Sune Haugbolle’s call: “If we as intellectual, political, and social historians want to produce locally embedded global histories of the Left, we have to travel with these people and follow them out of our comfort zones if necessary.”⁴⁵

I hope this book can be an invitation to travel out of our comfort zones together and to begin mapping a different conception of world cinema, remaining equally attentive to the scars and dreams that mark this history.

Setting the Stage for Soviet and Afro-Asian Solidarity at Tashkent

From 1968 to the late 1980s, the Tashkent Festival of Cinemas of Asia and Africa (and, after 1976, Latin America) was the venue where one could see the greatest number and widest variety of films representing the world beyond Europe and North America. The figures, cited in Soviet media, are impressive. The first edition of the festival showcased seventy-two feature fiction films and forty-four documentaries from forty-nine countries of Asia and Africa, hosting a total of 240 guests from more than fifty countries. By 1976, 109 countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America—as well as various stateless organizations (UN, UNESCO, Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Patriotic Forces of Chile, the organization representing the Chilean communists and socialists in exile)—presented 210 films. The subsequent, fifth edition featured as many as seventy public events—roundtable discussions and press conferences—in addition to film screenings, reportedly attended by more than two hundred thousand people.¹

Yet these numbers do little to give us an accurate idea of the Tashkent festival's uniqueness. Taking place over the course of a week, with all screenings open to the public (many of them taking place in the two-thousand-seat Palace of Culture), the festival featured a highly eclectic selection of films. Its goal was to showcase as many types of cinematic expressions from Asia, Africa, and Latin America as the participating countries were willing or able to offer. As a result, the festival selection combined fiction and documentary; militant political filmmaking and commercial genre films (ones deemed sufficiently progressive by Soviet standards); institutional nonfiction (newsreels, travelogues, industrial and educational films); independent productions; combat documentaries made on location; and lavish musical melodramas. This eclectic selection stood very much apart from the developments at the international (European) film festival circuit, where the promotion of individual auteurs was gradually becoming the norm during that exact period,



FIGURE 1.1. Hotel Uzbekistan: festival logo and slogan in French, Spanish, and English. Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.

solidifying the specific aesthetic criteria we now think of as “art cinema.”² Many of the cinematic categories included at Tashkent, such as commercial genre films, wouldn’t be shown on the European festival circuit. Others, such as industrial, ethnographic, or educational nonfiction, would be assigned to their own specialized festivals. Instead of reinforcing existent and continuously widening political-aesthetic divisions across commercial, state-produced, and independent cinemas (or between Brechtian cinema of political modernism and Lukácsian realism, or “Cinema du Papa” and the New Wave cinemas), at Tashkent the Indian megastar Raj Kapoor shared space and screen time with the Bengal modernist Mrinal Sen, avant-gardist Med Hondo with old-fashioned realists like Tewfiq Saleh or Yamamoto Satsuo, and PLO combat films with UNESCO-produced ethnographic documentaries. Diplomats and bureaucratic officials participated at roundtable discussions alongside political exiles from various global battlefronts—all in the name of “Peace, Progress, and Freedom of the Peoples,” the festival’s slogan (fig. 1.1).

TASHKENT FESTIVAL AS COLD WAR SOFT POWER

The heterogeneity of the Tashkent festival as a cultural space and a contact zone was reflected in the multiplicity of roles it performed. The festival’s *raison d’être* was to serve as a tool of cultural diplomacy and an attempt at exercising Soviet soft power in Asia, Africa, and Latin America through cinema. Yet the motivations, ideas, and experiences of the festival participants—hosts, guests, and audiences—did not always coincide with the Soviet state’s vision, producing effects that, while not necessarily conflicting with the official framework, often bypassed or exceeded it.

Contrary to an assumption that the selection of films at such a festival must display pro-Soviet propaganda, here there was little need or expectation of it; neither was this a site where a specific film aesthetic or ideological formula (socialist-realist

or otherwise) was especially demanded. From the viewpoint of the Soviet organizers, the very existence of the festival, with its considerable geographic scale and reach, was in itself a sufficient demonstration of the success of its ideological goals, which included positioning the Soviet Union—and its public-sector film industry—as the model for cultural development worldwide and “an indicator of economic and political progress,” as David Engerman observes in relation to a similar logic running through self-assessments of Soviet economic aid of the period.³

Nor were the oft-repeated slogans of affinities and solidarities at the festival entirely a projection of the Soviet state. In addition to the importance of the sense of a shared cultural heritage and other articulations of regional unity (whether pan-Asian, -Arab, -African, or Latin American), most of the participants of the festival shared a sense of the heightened social and political function of cinema, however differently their specific political beliefs may have been. For most of them, politicization of cinema was not antithetical either to the medium’s aesthetic value or to its entertainment potential (as was commonly assumed in film discourses in the West at the time). The notion of an independent national cinema in a postcolonial context was itself already a necessarily political concept. For most of Tashkent’s guests the ability to represent one’s own national culture (as against the one imposed by the colonial or neocolonial gaze) on global screens awarded their productions with an understandably heightened sense of a cultural, social, and political mission. This was even more evident in countries that were still undergoing active struggle—whether with colonial or neocolonial forces, internal or external. Film-making in these conditions was a highly politically charged and potentially dangerous act, raising the stakes of every utterance. Ironically, this experience resonated with the everyday life of Soviet (and other socialist) filmmakers, whose proximity to a state apparatus meant that, paraphrasing Denise Youngblood, no film could ever be “only” a movie—creating further affinities between the Soviet and Third World filmmakers, even if some of them could only be voiced indirectly.⁴

For the foreign participants of the festival, the Soviet position vis-à-vis the US hegemony, both in the realm of realpolitik and in the global film market, was also a crucial factor for making strategic alliances. For many African, Asian and Latin American countries, the creation of an independent national cinema depended on the kind of political stability and economic development that Soviet aid could offer, whether on the official state level or specifically in terms of infrastructure and training, or both. Thus, many film industries and cultural institutions were eager to take advantage of the possibilities offered by the Soviet bloc: possibilities of exchange and collaboration, of building greater distribution and exhibition networks, and of learning from filmmakers and institutions with whom they may not otherwise have come in contact.

And at Tashkent, just as in real geopolitics of aid, participation did not entail exclusivity: the festival committee accepted films that had already been entered into other festivals, as well as films that had already been commercially released and had their initial run. These films were shown in the so-called informational

section of the program, but this distinction was secondary. The festival did not have a real competition program; instead, it awarded many prizes from Soviet and international organizations such as All-Soviet and Soviet republics' creative unions, the Soviet Peace Committee, Afro-Asian solidarity organizations, international friendship societies, and almost all the main journals and newspapers from Uzbekistan. The list of these awards was long, a concession to the film producers' desire for acquiring credentials within the global system of film distribution, where such recognition was important, especially for younger film industries. For most of its existence, the Tashkent festival continued to be an event eagerly anticipated by local audiences, providing the vibrancy and excitement of a cosmopolitan film culture and being fully appreciated by its participants for the warmth and generosity of the hosts and its endless stream of food, drinks, music, and dancing—in addition to providing possibilities for exchange and networking, formal and informal.

SELECTION PROCESS

If the festival itself was meant to be a spontaneous celebration of both cinema and solidarity, the preparation for it was a highly controlled serious state business. Particular attention was given to the selection of Soviet films to be screened as part of its market section: this was determined at meetings of the top-level committee at Goskino (the central Soviet state organization governing cinema), its *kollegiia*, which included Goskino's top officials as well as representatives from the Communist Party and Sovexportfilm (the state agency in charge of film import and export). This committee approved all the big decisions in all areas of cinematic apparatus and its broader ideological framework: from the thematic plan, to financing targets, import-export selections, international festival participation, and the organization and financing of international coproductions. Its main ideological focus with regard to international relations was using cinema as a form of political outreach, specifically through the distribution of Soviet films abroad, whether through commercial or noncommercial sectors. The Tashkent festival was identified as a particularly important site for attracting foreign distributors from Asia, Africa, and Latin America and, more generally, for drawing international attention to Soviet cinema. The committee was considerably less attentive to the selection of foreign films, which were largely handled by the festival's organizing committee and members of the Filmmakers Union.⁵

Rossen Djalalov describes in detail the Soviet institutional aspects of the organization of the festival's first (1968) edition, the combination of the ideological and commercial pressures faced by organizers, and their efforts in reaching out to the largest, most diverse number of participants.⁶ To determine the selection of foreign films represented at the festival, in the months leading to it the Soviet festival, organizers sent two- or three-person delegations to the Asian and Middle

Eastern countries to persuade the cultural establishment to participate in selecting the films to be screened. In addition to Goskino and Sovexportfilm officials, these delegations usually included Central Asian filmmakers involved in their republics' filmmakers' unions. They were tasked with establishing contacts with filmmakers and helping to select films, actors, and directors to represent each country. The process varied depending on the location. In India and Japan, for example, the delegation would approach commercial studios and individual artists and cultural figures with invitations to participate in the film festival and together view the films for potential inclusion. In countries where the state played a more decisive role in film production and distribution, local cultural ministries often reserved the final say on what films and figures would be chosen to participate, sometimes allowing input from festival organizers, sometimes not. In other areas, invitations were issued on the basis of having seen a film or established contacts at one of the other international film festivals.⁷

Ultimately, specific selections depended not on Soviet organizers but on the various cultural and political actors who represented the cinemas of their countries. The selection committee also exercised relatively little censorship, especially in the early years of the festival, when organizers were particularly concerned with establishing new connections and providing the broadest possible coverage at the festival. Archival records available from the late 1970s and early 1980s reveal few cases when films offered for inclusion were rejected outright—whether for depictions of violence (Japan), eroticism (Brazil), or religion (Lebanon) deemed excessive by the Soviet viewing committee.⁸

The relatively lower level of vigilance of ideological aspects of the festival mirrors the dynamics of Soviet films' import selection: films from capitalist countries, especially Europe and the US, were closely examined at official meetings at the highest levels and were often censored, whereas even on their commercial release, films from Asia, Africa, and Latin America received a considerably lower level of scrutiny.⁹ As setting up international coproductions became increasingly important for the Soviet film industry in the 1970s, that also emerged as a major institutional goal at the festival, which meant even more attention to the convivial atmosphere as a way to attract further cooperation.¹⁰ Overall, despite its clearly defined ideological and commercial stakes, Soviet control over the Tashkent festival experience was less intense than might be otherwise assumed.

FESTIVAL AUDIENCES

If the Tashkent festival was primarily oriented toward an international public, it was also very much about the local audience, who were welcomed into enormous screening venues at low prices, allowing for the maximum number of spectators. Seminars and discussions were also open to the public. This was significant as an ideological gesture, as Elena Razlogova notes in her discussion of the Afro-Asian

film circuit of the previous decade, constructed deliberately in opposition to Western festivals (which tended to be a lot more exclusive), as well as, for example, the Asian Film Festival (which was oriented toward industry insiders).¹¹ The festival was a major cultural event for Tashkent's residents, shaping generations of moviegoing audiences' experience of cinema. It transformed, however fleetingly, the flow of life in the city, creating a powerful symbolic opening to the world through the screenings, as well as through the presence of the foreign delegations and their daily engagement with the city and its inhabitants. If the festival has been largely forgotten by film historians, it is still vividly remembered by its audiences, as evidenced by enthusiastic and nostalgic memoirs on various social media.

As with all things related to the Soviet Union, it is worth underscoring the scale of such events and the sheer number of people they involved, which, consequently, speaks to their impact. Given that the larger festival movie theaters seated approximately twenty-five hundred people, the Egyptian delegation's claim in 1974 that their films were seen by at least twelve thousand viewers is probably no exaggeration. The festival films were also shown in other locations around Central Asia and the rest of the USSR, and often the filmmakers would travel with the screenings. For example, in 1974 the Afghan, Iraqi, and Bangladeshi delegations went from screenings in Tashkent to Dushanbe, Tajikistan, where they met representatives of the Tajik film studio to discuss possible coproductions and reported an enthusiastic audience reception. Critics from Afghanistan were particularly happy to see how thrilled the audiences in Tajikistan were to watch films "in a language they could understand."¹² In addition to providing a glimpse into Soviet practices of language dubbing, these moments speak to the transnational cultural affinities such cinematic experience represented.

Given the limitation of international TV programming and the virtual absence of international travel possibilities in the Soviet world, it is hard to overestimate how exciting the panorama of the world presented at the festival was to its audiences, making for the popularity of even the documentary film selection. In addition to the films, the presence of foreign guests created a powerful impact on the people in Tashkent. When visitors from all over the world (including such enormously popular stars as the Kapoors) were seen on the streets of Tashkent or talking to audiences after screenings and at events, both formal and informal, they temporarily disrupted the otherwise prevailing Soviet sense of cultural isolation, injecting a rare element of cosmopolitanism into ordinary life.¹³

Dzhasur Iskhakov, who volunteered for the festival in the late 1970s, describes the intensity of the festival preparation process "on the ground": in anticipation of the arrival of international guests, the roads and building facades were renovated, as were movie theaters and hotels. The train taking festival guests on a scheduled jaunt to the ancient city of Samarkand was especially equipped with the newest train cars and amenities such as new pillows and sheets (these being sleeping compartments, which were, normally, much more spartan), and the



FIGURE 1.2. The festival celebration spills out onto the streets. Photo from author's private collection.

train's conductors were selected for their youth and good looks. Banners were hand-drawn, and competitions and rehearsals took place for the many musical and dance events, which formed a crucial part of the festival program.¹⁴ While this may evoke the Potemkin village, the local participants viewed it as an opportunity to spruce up the city, as a genuine celebration and as an expression of hospitality and conviviality directed at their exciting guests.

MUSIC AND DANCE AS CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

Performing arts—music and dance—were especially prominent and were incorporated into the festival both formally and informally (fig. 1.2). At their airport arrival, guests were greeted by musicians playing typical Uzbek wind musical instruments, *karnays* (pipes of four to five meters), giving unforgettable performances, which would continue to accompany the festival celebrations.

Virtually every night there were concerts, enormous events held at concert halls at the opening and closing of the festival, as well as smaller performances at hotels and restaurants, where guests were taken every evening for dinners. Music performers were also invited as parts of national delegations. For example, for the 1968 edition, the organizers were hoping to bring Fairuz, the great Lebanese singer, to the event, but she was unable to attend, so they settled on Sabah, another famous actress-performer.¹⁵ Egyptian and Indian delegations were especially famed for including musicians and dancers—some directly connected to the film industry, others brought in as part of the delegation. In 1968, for example, Hemant Kumar, a famous playback singer and music director, was a guest of the festival. Guests also sometimes broke into impromptu performances at the many meals and receptions held both at restaurants and at the homes of local filmmakers such as Latif Faziev, Kamil Iarmatov, and Ali Khamraev (a practice that would have been impossible in Moscow, where all interactions with foreign guests were limited to official public areas), which would inevitably turn into parties with everyone singing and dancing.

This aspect of the festival is much commented on in reviews and memoirs of the participants. The 1968 review of Ambros Eichenberger, then vice president of the International Catholic Office of Cinema (OCIC), compares Tashkent favorably to the newly minted Teheran festival of 1967, damning the latter as a “luxurious ghetto” in comparison to the opportunities for “genuine human contact” provided in Uzbekistan. He says that he “has never been at a festival where there was as much dancing and—yes!—eating. . . . A true celebration!”¹⁶ The 1972 festival review in the Madras newspaper *Movieland*, “Tashkent Fete—An Eye-Witness Report,” hit a similar tone: “It was a real treat to hear Nargis, Simi, Sukhdev and others sing and dance with real zest and enthusiasm. Even Nageswara Rao [who was almost seventy] joined the dancing. It was a rare sight to see Americans, Africans, Arabs, Indians, Japanese dancing to Uzbek rhythm.” And Bombay-based *Cine Advance* similarly reports on the celebration of Nargis’s birthday in Tashkent, where “the Egyptian star Zubeda [*sic*], the Lebanese artiste Silvana, who was incidentally the real ‘oomph’ girl of the Festival, Simi, Sukhdev and others danced on occasion.”¹⁷

Such use of music and dance as ways to generate publicity, as well as forms of cultural diplomacy, is, of course, not unusual. Classical music and ballet (as much as circus and cinema) served as privileged forms of Soviet soft power abroad, underscoring socialism’s cultural gains.¹⁸ Domestically, the folklore of various Soviet republics was routinely showcased in all state celebrations. By the 1970s, such performances were perceived as some of the most ossified and inauthentic cultural practices. Yuri Slezkine famously called them “one of the most visible and apparently least popular aspects of Soviet official culture.”¹⁹ Afro-Asian folkloric performances for Soviet audiences were in some ways continuous, intended to present an authentic shared folkloric culture in opposition to the West’s manufactured entertainment industry. In the 1960s and 1970s, the growing popularity of Western youth culture associated with rock and roll, especially—but not at all exclusively—in urban centers like Moscow and Leningrad, created anxiety within socialist cultural bureaucracies. Folklorically inflected popular music from the Third World was intended as an official alternative to such ideologically dangerous manifestations.²⁰

But while in many ways imposed and supported from above, many popular expressions of folk music and dance in the Soviet 1960s and 1970s did accrue genuine grassroots support through amateur groups (including but not limited to school children).²¹ But even more important, traditional music and dance were simply part of everyday life: independent from its official manifestations, they formed an essential part of any informal celebration or family gathering, where traditional music was often performed and folk singing took place alongside pop music and dance. Beyond official cultural diplomacy, the emphasis on music and dance at Tashkent was an extension of genuine local cultural practices of hospitality and celebration. Moreover, singing and dancing (as well as impromptu

poetry recitations) proved to be an important point of cultural affinity with the guests from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, most of whom had a similar relationship with their own traditional culture—something that set them apart from Western European participants, as Eichenberger's quote demonstrates. Indeed, the prominence of music and dance at the festival distinguishes Tashkent from most European film festivals, aligning it, instead, with such Afro-Asian events as Dakar, Algiers, and Lagos arts festivals, where formal and informal artistic performances served similar complex functions.²²

FESTIVAL AS A CULTURAL STATE OF EXCEPTION

Blurring the otherwise clearly drawn boundaries between official and unofficial, international and domestic spheres, the Tashkent festival was a clear exception for Soviet norms of the time. The Soviet Union was notorious for indicting informal contacts between locals and foreign visitors. Breaking this rule could lead to serious official consequences. At the Moscow film festival, to discourage spontaneous exchanges, spaces were demarcated in terms of access, and no deviation from the assigned zones and scheduled events was allowed. At Tashkent, volunteers, translators, and other local participants were also given clear instructions, and the presence and involvement of the "curators" from the party and the KGB was certainly part of the organization of the event. Yet, in addition to the official "excursions" (such as visits to landmark farms, factories, or museums), foreign guests were allowed relatively free movement around the city, still accompanied by their local hosts but with considerably less punitive control from the authorities. As a result, foreigners often found themselves making impromptu trips to informal kebab and tea houses (which technically occupied a gray zone between legal and illegal businesses, as many were held in people's yards or homes) organized by local festival participants as a way to introduce the guests to the "local flavor" (*kolorit*) and demonstrate the famed "Eastern hospitality."²³ While all Soviet participants were strictly warned by "curators" not to let foreign guests see any drunkenness, dirt, or poverty, local volunteers, many of whom were students, and participating filmmakers were easily convinced and even eager to give their guests a more authentic experience of the city and a taste of local customs.²⁴ This was often done precisely as a way to offset the overly official, highly ideological ossified tone of many such events—something that Soviet participants were even more sensitive to and intolerant of than some of their guests. And it clearly did result in an atmosphere that was conducive to the "genuine human contact" referred to by Eichenberger—with musical and dance performances being part of this informal exchange, as well as a confirmation of shared cultural practices and norms.

As a result, in many ways the festival succeeded in operationalizing its utopian vision as a site in which alliances, affinities, and solidarities were actually forged and nourished. This took place, on the one hand, through its film programs,

which succeeded in creating a shared mediatic sphere, a symbolic space of cultural and political projections and imaginaries. On the other hand, its live events—discussions, seminars, informal exchanges, and performances—produced a social space of direct interpersonal and intercultural encounters, affective bonding, and political organizing. While the live aspect, being immediate and ephemeral, is historically difficult to trace, the mediatic left a record of a shared body of cinematic work. Some of these films came to occupy an important role in the history of world cinema as we know it; others are known only by “area” specialists; others are remembered fondly by audiences but ignored by critics and historians; yet others disappeared entirely as minor casualties of wars, geopolitical turmoil, and neoliberal neglect.

But before we take a closer look at this shared body of socialist world cinema, the rest of this chapter reconstructs the simultaneous and often conflicting historical, political, and cultural forces that shaped the Tashkent festival and the institutional infrastructures that allowed it to operate as a unique contact zone of Soviet bloc and Third World film culture. To assess the significance of Tashkent as the location for Afro-Asian solidarity, I draw out the dual impact of the Bandung and the 20th Communist Party Congress on the cultural relations between the Soviet Union and the Afro-Asian sphere. I discuss the role of festivals in this changing international terrain and the development of Central Asian and Transcaucasian film industries of this process, placing them within the intersecting contexts of the socialist and Third-Worldist film festival circuit of the 1960s.

THE BANDUNG AND THE 20TH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE USSR

The two defining moments of this shared history are the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung and Khrushchev’s subsequent reorientation of Soviet international policy. The first allowed for the development of the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organization and the Non-Aligned and Tricontinental movements. The second shaped the political context for the Soviet organizers’ conception of the Tashkent festival, where the outgrowths of those two moments converged.

The Bandung conference was held in Indonesia in April 1955, headed by Indonesian president Sukarno and Indian president Nehru. With representatives from twenty-nine countries, this meeting, coming at the height of the first Cold War confrontation between the Western nations and the socialist bloc, was a watershed moment, both symbolically and in terms of its impact on global politics. It signaled to both Cold War superpowers the emergence of another geopolitical force sufficiently powerful to significantly impact and reorient their international agendas. The Bandung moment was defined by a shared anticolonial (and in some ways anti-Western) pan-Asian vision that was ideologically oriented toward statist and nationalist economies within prosocialist and antiwar nation-states.²⁵ It heralded

the formation of a new community, united in its pursuit of decolonization and its consequences—national sovereignty, autonomy from the Global North, and solidarity. Symbolically, it embodied the shared sentiments and experiences of international solidarity and laid foundations for the formation of what Vijay Prasad termed the *project of Third-Worldism*.²⁶ Even as it proved to be full of internal contradictions and tensions (between nationalism and internationalism; between the different conceptions of its underlying goals and methods of achieving them; between different attitudes toward race), the Bandung nonetheless provided a powerful and complex shared ideology, which shaped the cultural production of the area, including cinema, for decades to come.

This moment also coincided with and was in many ways responsible for the post-Stalinist Soviet turn toward the “developing world” as manifested at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR in February 1956. Alongside his famous “secret speech,” which denounced Stalin’s cult of personality, Khrushchev, as part of the congress, also announced the return to Lenin’s vision of global historical development and heralded the arrival of the new era (of decolonialization) “when the peoples of the East play an active part in deciding the destinies of the whole world, and when they have become a new and mighty factor in international relations.” Hence, the report pledged to support, “free of any political or military obligations,” the newly liberated postcolonial nations, “although they do not belong to the socialist world system.”²⁷ The Soviet Union followed up by cosponsoring a UN draft declaration—the “Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples”—denouncing colonialism in all its forms and demanding immediate independence for all subjugated peoples. Most Western powers abstained in that vote, which served to increase the credibility of the Soviet leader in the eyes of the rest of the world. Political support was extended not only to communists but to wider coalitions of leftist antiwar activists. And in line with this expanded vision of antiwar alliances, even one of the defining features of the Leninist ideology, the need for a *revolutionary* transformation as a path to socialism, was now negotiable, with other forms of transition to socialism becoming acceptable for future Soviet allies, thus considerably opening its “zone of friendship.”²⁸

Given the enormous impact of these cultural developments, it is tempting to entertain the notion of a Bandung cinema, especially as the leaders of the movement—Egypt, India, China, and Indonesia in particular—were, indeed, also the homes of the most significant film industries (after Japan, and along with the Philippines) of the nonaligned world, with significant circulation all over Asia and, increasingly, Africa.²⁹ Anticolonialism and anti-imperialism moved from the level of clandestine militance and became a matter of state and cultural agendas. And while nationalist and nation-building cinematic discourses were particularly dominant in the context of newly independent postcolonial nations, their cinemas in the subsequent decades broadly reflected this emphasis on progressive social

values. Economically, this was manifested through the growth of public-sector film industries in the Arab world and Africa in the post-Bandung era. In India, while allowing a robust (and largely politically progressive) private sector for the film industry, the state-run Films Division documentary film production became a clear extension of national(ist) ideologies.

At the same time, the anticommunist Western bloc also used state instruments such as the US Information Agency (USIA) to intervene in film production and distribution, creating a particularly strong network connecting Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, South Vietnam, Singapore, and the Philippines but active all over Asia (as well as, subsequently, Africa and Latin America).³⁰ In the face of these developments, the Bandung spirit of autonomy and solidarity was *de facto* aligned with Soviet cinema in opposition to the monopolies of US and Western European film circuits, creating networks that extended to the Soviet bloc as uniquely capable of providing support in anticolonialist cinematic endeavors.

The implications of these developments on Soviet culture were equally significant. Eleonory Gilburd argues persuasively for impact of the policy of peaceful coexistence on the legitimization of the notion of cultural relations within Soviet international policy, justifiable through the commitment to peace and decolonization, which she describes as opening new “spaces for translation, exhibition, and creativity.”³¹ Gilburd’s insight is particularly pertinent to the dynamics of the creation of a shared global socialist film culture through the emergence of the phenomenon of the international festival. Festivals, with their ties to youth culture as an unexpectedly powerful mode of conducting soft power, lent an aura of spontaneity to the slogans of socialist internationalism, reconnecting to the kind of cosmopolitanism that was stigmatized under Stalin. While these festivals extended to all areas of cultural activity, including literature and the visual arts, they quickly found their most popular and durable manifestation in film exhibition practices.

EUPHORIA OF THE THAW AND DECOLONIZATION IN THE SOVIET UNION

The largest and most successful of the international events in the Soviet Union was the Sixth World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow in 1957, a two-week-long celebration that brought more than 340,000 foreign guests from 131 countries to the Soviet capital. Experienced as an expression of euphoria over the Thaw and a new spirit of international cooperation, mutual understanding, peace, and friendship—the slogans under which the event was organized—the festival dispelled the Soviet reputation for dourness and rigidity. Asian, African, and Latin American delegates formed part of the celebrations, and the issue of colonialism was raised repeatedly during the festival: there was a political rally against the bloodshed in the Middle East and fireworks and bonfires (!) in support of

independence for “colonial peoples.”³² There was also a five-day-long debate conducted among cinema students on the topic of “Heroes in Film” and a showing of 230 films from all over the world, which served as the first step in the foundation for the Moscow film festival. It awarded one of its top prizes to a Japanese film, Imai Tadashi’s *The Darkness at Noon* (*Mahiru no ankoku*, 1956)—setting the trend within the socialist bloc’s film culture, whose impact would be evident in the programming of the Tashkent festival.

The Youth Festival inaugurated and demonstrated powerfully the cultural and affective impact of festivals as true popular celebrations meant to create a temporary suspension of cultural and political boundaries. Perhaps not as radical as Bakhtin’s notion of the carnival, this festival and others really did disrupt the normalized social and political regime: as Gilburd points out, even the regular visa regime was suspended, requiring only a special festival entry permit, accorded to almost anyone who applied.³³ Given the way that passport and visa regimes absolutely defined the geopolitics of the Cold War, this exceptional generosity speaks to the uniqueness and remarkable symbolic weight of this event, and it prefigures the flexibility with visas awarded to, in particular, Arab and African guests of the socialist film circuit, including Tashkent, which would be crucial to their participation.³⁴ The Youth Festival planners’ attempt to create a new “softer” image of Soviet socialism to foster a shared and very broadly conceived (pro)socialist internationalist public space was carried out so successfully that it marked an era.³⁵ Although none of the later manifestations of Soviet internationalism ever quite lived up to this early euphoric phase, Soviet cultural policy certainly succeeded in rousing popular enthusiasm toward Africa, Asia, and Latin America and a desire for cultural exchange.

The 1959 Cuban revolution was another event that generated a profound cultural resonance in the Third World and the socialist bloc. It was concrete proof that the revolution in the traditional sense, as an uprising of the people, could become a reality—a notion that had great impact all over Asia, Africa, and especially Latin America but had all but disappeared from the routinized contemporary socialist world. Thus in the Soviet bloc, the iconography of the Cuban revolution allowed people to find (however temporarily) in Anne Gorsuch’s words, “socialist inspiration and emotional meaning” in other countries’ revolutionary uprisings.³⁶ Following the Year of Africa, with wide coverage of the African independence movement all over the socialist world, on February 15, 1961, in protest of the assassination of Congolese prime minister Patrice Lumumba, a six-thousand-strong protest was staged in front of the Belgian embassy in Moscow.³⁷ As officially sanctioned as they were, such events expressed an authentic, grassroots feeling of solidarity, which was formative for Soviet culture of the 1960s, leading up to the Tashkent festival.

The enthusiasm for the promise of a better future for the Global South as both a surrogate for and extension of the cultural and political opening of the Soviet bloc mixed easily with cinephilia and excitement over all things foreign. Film festivals,

in particular, would prove to mobilize audiences' love of cinema as a powerful sensory and aesthetic form into a mode of social practice. Absorbing various cinematic cultures into a shared hybrid one, film festivals could offer a stable cultural space of exchange for the newly independent or (post)revolutionary cinemas as a promise of the new progressive global order to come.

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL CIRCUIT IN THE SOVIET BLOC

Many Asian, African, and Latin American filmmakers were attracted to the overall infrastructure of film culture in the socialist bloc—its educational institutions, its distribution and exhibition system, its geopolitical openness to emerging cinemas. It provided both an important model for development and an opportunity for a different network for international circulation. Socialist film festivals actively promoted such an understanding of their function. Already by 1950, the selection of Karlovy Vary—the socialist bloc's first international film festival—included China and India and celebrated Mexican cinema with many awards, an example soon followed by Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, Egypt, and Japan.³⁸ In contrast to Western European festivals, by 1960, almost half of the countries represented at Karlovy Vary were from Asia, Latin America, or Africa.³⁹

Another feature of Karlovy Vary that further promoted the vision of a socialist film festival as a space of cultural and geopolitical exchange was its Open Forum: starting in 1958, it included a series of seminars with discussions, which ranged from issues in aesthetics and creative processes to international distribution and infrastructural problems. Bringing together filmmakers and various cultural figures (artists, scholars, and writers) from both sides of the Iron Curtain, as well as a sizable number of Asian participants, the forum reenacted the debates within contemporary cinema on realism, style, emergence of "New Cinemas," and the social and political function of art. From its very beginning, the festival included film critics and historians on the jury: George Sadoul (who also contributed to the organization of the festival in the 1950s), Guido Aristarco, Umberto Barbaro, Jerzy Toeplitz, and others. The diversity of participants allowed for some lively disagreements outside of orthodox socialist framing, in which ideological positions were crystalized and factions formed.⁴⁰

The centrality of discussions and seminars was a novelty for film festivals at the time.⁴¹ Karlovy Vary's Open Forum underscored cinema's role in public culture beyond the marketplace, taking up issues of politics and development over stylistic innovation or technique (a feature of socialist film culture to which I will return in chapter 4). The international marketplace was, indeed, also part of the festival and a motivating factor for most national cinemas to participate in it. In fact, this is why in 1955 it applied to become a member of the International Federation of Film Producers Association (FIAPF). Even so, its international scope was considered secondary to its public, more cultural, and political manifestations. These

conflicting agendas, in the words of Jindřiška Bláhová, “could be pursued under the umbrella of political consensus and shielded by the new impulses of Cold War cultural diplomacy as well as the festival motto ‘For the noble endeavors of the humankind, for the lasting friendship between nations.’”⁴²

Starting in 1962, Karlovy Vary included a special symposium: Young and Emerging Cinemas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.⁴³ In its first edition, it included fourteen participating countries.⁴⁴ The festival also awarded a large number of “thematic” prizes, including the International Prize of Peace, International Prize of Labour, the Prize of the Struggle for Freedom, the Prize for the Struggle for Social Progress, the Prize of Friendship between Nations, the Prize for the Struggle for a Better World, the Prize for the Struggle for New Man, and the Prize for the Efforts Made to Create the New Man, as well as other nonstatutory prizes by various organizations.⁴⁵ The festival also accepted animation, reflecting that mode’s high standing within Eastern European film culture. In other words, Karlovy Vary was a prototype of the way socialist film festivals were to be conceived and organized.⁴⁶ From 1959, it would alternate with the Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF), which would play a similar function.

MIFF was a major event in the life of Soviet capital, widely covered by the press.⁴⁷ A “category A” festival, it had three competitive programs: feature films, documentary, and short films. But it also included retrospectives and an out-of-competition section with films that had already been screened at other festivals. Those were often Western films, including some that, although critically or commercially successful, had no chance of gaining wider commercial distribution in the USSR owing to their costs or ideology, or both.⁴⁸ Other cultural events and discussion seminars were traditionally held in Moscow immediately following the festival. For many film-producing nations, the Moscow festival, alongside Karlovy Vary, was the premier socialist bloc site for displaying their films. Over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, the competition sections of both Moscow and Karlovy Vary became increasingly more aligned with the Western conception of auteur cinema—albeit with a strong ideological (socialist or progressive) bent, while their documentary and short film sections were generally more explicitly political and more geographically diverse.

Unlike Karlovy Vary and Moscow, the Leipzig Documentary Film Week (Leipzig Dok) took place on a much smaller scale, dedicated solely to shorts and documentary production and with a clearer ideological remit. Set up originally to showcase socialist film production in response to the festival growth on the other side of the Iron Curtain, by the late 1950s it turned to a broader geography, including films from Egypt, Korea, Vietnam, and Uruguay, and quickly established a reputation as a major site for the exhibition of international(ist) revolutionary nonfiction cinema.⁴⁹ Already in 1961, both Cuban and Algerian documentaries were at the center of the festival program, with filmmakers and producers from both countries present, creating long-lasting ties among them.⁵⁰ Of particular consequence to the filmmakers from the Global South was the Solidarity Fund,

which was affiliated with the state-run GDR Solidarity Committee responsible for financing aid to the Third World, with its prize for revolutionary cinemas. First named after Dziga Vertov, then after Joris Ivens, who spearheaded this initiative, and finally after 1971 (once Ivens's Maoism effectively earned him expulsion from the socialist bloc) retitled the Combatant Camera Award, it included a cash prize, black-and-white film stock, and an 8 mm movie camera.⁵¹

1960s SOCIALIST INTERNATIONALISM

The Combatant Camera Award at Leipzig speaks to the intensification of Cold War politics leading up to the Tashkent festival's creation and its geopolitical and ideological complexities. The first major shift took place in 1961, when the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence," aimed at deescalating the relationship with the US post-Cuban Missile Crisis, was advanced at the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). This notion was put into question by many Non-Aligned countries and deepened the Sino-Soviet split, forcing communist parties of the world to take sides. This was particularly consequential since Khrushchev's increased support for many of the newly independent noncommunist states in Asia and Africa often came at a cost to their oppositional communist parties, creating further rifts.⁵²

As Jeremy Friedman shows, "according to Chinese sources, in the year 1960 Soviet loan guarantees to 'nationalist' (nonsocialist developing) countries eclipsed loan guarantees to socialist countries by over 50 percent."⁵³ The Soviet support at the time came largely through technical and economic aid, which by 1961 had reached almost 2.5 billion rubles (roughly \$2.64 billion) and covered Afghanistan, India, and the United Arab Republic, as well as Iraq, Guinea, Ghana, Indonesia, Ceylon, Ethiopia, Mali, and Pakistan.⁵⁴ The aid clearly served the Soviet Union's geopolitical objectives rather than emerging anti-imperialist struggles. The Soviet Union was trying to win neutral countries away from not only Washington but China as well. For instance, while the Soviets had largely stood on the sidelines for the Algerian revolution, when Algiers subsequently emerged as one of the key centers of the anti-imperialist movement, Khrushchev committed to increase the amount of Soviet aid to the country. It included loans, technological and logistical support, and military assistance to Ben Bella's government, strategically timed to coincide with Algeria's hosting of the Bandung meeting, which was roiled by the Chinese delegation actively trying to ban Soviet participation.⁵⁵

In 1964, another shift took place in Soviet politics as Khrushchev came under increasing attack from within the CPSU for his poor handling of both international policy (the humiliation of the Cuban Missile Crisis) and the domestic economic sphere (his unsuccessful agrarian reforms). He was forced to resign, making way for Leonid Brezhnev as the general secretary of CPSU, a post he would hold until his death in 1982. Although the overall tenor of the policies toward Asia, Africa,

and Latin America did not change significantly under Brezhnev, the policy of peaceful coexistence was ideologically muted, while Soviet foreign aid policy gradually shifted toward military aid as tensions increased all over Asia and Africa owing to the Vietnam War, the India-Pakistan War of 1965, and the fall of Sukarno in Indonesia.⁵⁶

The decisive event for African international politics, which had repercussions for Third-Worldism, was the 1966 coup in Ghana that overthrew Kwame Nkrumah with CIA support. While it undermined the earlier optimism about “African socialism,” of which Nkrumah was a leader, and led to Ghana’s breaking ties with the Soviet Union, it also pushed left-leaning African leaders to pursue more radical alternatives (whether allying with China, as was the case in Tanzania, or the Soviet Union). Nkrumah’s fall also cleared the way for one of his critics, Amílcar Cabral, whose advocacy of the central role of the revolutionary vanguard in the national liberation movements sparked a more active stage in their struggles against Portugal, driving them closer to Cuba and the Soviet Union.⁵⁷

EMERGENCE OF CUBA AS A THIRD-WORLDIST LEADER

The Sino-Soviet split of the early 1960s created a genuine crisis within the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organization (OPSAA), which developed out of the Bandung. The split eventually resulted in China’s *de facto* withdrawal from the organization, followed by its expulsion of the pro-Chinese liberation movements. While these developments incited some opposition from Chinese-aligned Cuba, they nonetheless opened the space for Cuba’s growing status as a Third World leader. This new status was most clearly manifested culturally in the Tricontinental Conference, which took place in Havana in January 1966. With Tricontinental, Cuba not only formally extended OPSAA into Latin America (OPSAAAL) but also took charge of defining the shifting conception of internationalism.

The vision that emerged was at once more radical in its open support of guerilla armed struggle around the world and in its emphasis on transracial (rather than class-based) solidarity, while foregrounding the racialized aspect of the global anti-imperialist struggles, including those within the US.⁵⁸ The scale and ambition of the Tricontinental Conference, which included 512 delegates from eighty-two countries, as well as almost three hundred observers, endowed Cuba with an undeniable aura as a global cultural model.⁵⁹ Robert Young notes that “not since the early days of the Comintern had any organization proposed an international global alliance against imperialism.”⁶⁰ The Soviet Union tried to catch up to Cuba, strategically employing the conference’s emphasis on race, where Sharof Rashidov, the solidly orthodox head of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, delivered “an impassioned speech” describing the ethnic diversity of the representatives of the Soviet cultural and political apparatus through his own personal history.⁶¹ Yet,

as Anne Garland Mahler's account of the conference affirms, "Even as the Soviet Union paid for the transportation of many of the delegates from Africa and the Middle East to Havana, and even as the Soviets were largely subsidizing Cuba in this moment . . . as the ideology and discourse of Tricontinentalism would be developed in propaganda materials in the coming years, the Soviet Union would continue to occupy a marginal position."⁶² The difference between Cuba and the USSR was visible even in the design of the posters and Tricontinental magazine, which drew heavily on the pop art and aesthetics we associate with the psychedelic "Western" 1960s youth culture, with cartoon strips, bold and striking imagery, and visual humor, in contrast to the Soviet socialist realism-infused style of the time.⁶³

In an effort to regain its credibility in the eyes of its African and Asian allies, in 1967, following the Tricontinental Conference, the Soviet Solidarity committee agreed that it was necessary to expand its activities and organize more public events, conferences, and seminars, especially for foreign students, on issues of major concern to the Afro-Asian states. At the top of the list were Vietnam, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and liberation struggles in Africa.⁶⁴ Here, too, the Soviets were lagging behind Cuba, whose internationalist films quickly became a major inspiration for politically committed filmmakers worldwide.⁶⁵ The posters for these films were designed by the artistic director of Tricontinental, Alfredo Rostgaard, helping articulate a shared style.⁶⁶

As we will see, the Tashkent festival certainly sought to fulfill that same role but operated within a space where Soviet primacy was still less contested. This geography was particularly pertinent in the aftermath of the Six-Day War in Egypt, when Israel attacked Egypt preemptively and then its neighbors (Jordan and Syria), using its Western-supplied military to inflict a crushing defeat on the allied Arab combatant countries, taking control of the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. Soviet military support for Egypt during and after the Six-Day War signaled the seriousness of its commitment to aid the otherwise "Non-Aligned" nations and to the Palestinian cause, which, as much as Vietnam, united the Left in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. And unlike the earlier era, by the late 1960s, this commitment increasingly meant military support combined with "soft power."⁶⁷ Given its geography, Central Asia—and Tashkent in particular—would play an increasingly important role in this process.

SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA IN THE AFRO-ASIAN CULTURAL NETWORK

The crucial role of Central Asia in Soviet international policy and cultural diplomacy emerged in the 1950s. Masha Kirasirova details how in response to both the Chinese and Western accusations of Soviet colonizing attitudes toward its own racialized minorities, the Soviet Union undertook "a large-scale redistribution of influence and responsibilities for work with foreign countries among Soviet

Central Asian and Caucasian peoples.”⁶⁸ This meant elevating Central Asia’s party elite, creating new routes for advancement within Soviet cultural diplomacy. The direct involvement of Central Asian (and Caucasian) cultural elites was seen by Soviet leadership as a way to gain ideologically acceptable entry into the non-aligned Afro-Asian circuit.⁶⁹ This was particularly important given that China used racial rhetoric in its demands for the exclusion of the Soviet Union (as well as Yugoslavia) from Afro-Asian alliances. As both Egypt and Algeria, leading voices in the movement, had their own racialized divides between their hereditary elites and Indigenous populations, these tactics proved unsuccessful.⁷⁰ But in response, Tashkent provided a perfect location for a Soviet demonstration of cultural and historical affinities, which placed Central Asia at the crossroads of Asian civilizations.

The emphasis on cinema was a crucial part of this new positioning. It fit in particularly well within the modernization ethos and emphasis on technology and industry that were crucial for the logic of “catching up to the West,” a logic that directed both socialist and postcolonial states’ development. Moreover, as the Soviets knew well, film was a popular cultural form that transcended levels of literacy and, as such, was particularly effective for both the creation of a national identity and projecting it internationally. Thus, showcasing the vitality of Central Asian and Transcaucasian film industries through their international exhibition and events such as the Tashkent festival integrated Soviet cinema into the Afro-Asian cultural sphere on terms that emphasized their shared affinities while at the same time demonstrating the successes of Soviet modernization.

As Elena Razlogova recounts in her work, the Afro-Asian cinematic network began to take shape during this very period, and the Soviet Union was eager to play a key role in the process.⁷¹ Thus, expanding from the Asian Film Week in Beijing in 1957, the first Afro-Asian Film Festival (AAFF) took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in 1958, with subsequent meetings in Cairo in 1960 and Jakarta in 1964. While assigning key importance to these festivals as “the earliest articulation of ‘cinematic Third Worldism,’” Razlogova describes the stiff official protocol combined with the technological and cultural incompetence of the organizers of the Tashkent session and its evolution through the early 1960s from the popular cinemas of the Bandung powers toward the revolutionary anti-imperialist cinemas represented by Vietnam and China.⁷² She concludes that this festival cycle was indeed foundational for the subsequent Tashkent Festival of Cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America as conference organizers learned from the logistical mistakes of the earlier organizers and developed the vision of the festival as a venue for presenting a wide range of industrial South-South connections alternative to Hollywood’s domination.⁷³

The strengthening of the role of Central Asia as a site for potential affinities was a response to the failure of Soviet cinema to achieve a dominant position at the Cairo and Jakarta Afro-Asian events. Masha Kirasirova cites the official report, which offered the following recommendations for moving forward:

1) participate in yearly Afro-Asian festivals by sending films and filmmakers from Central Asia and the Caucasus; 2) expand cultural relations with Eastern countries by organizing film premieres in the foreign East with delegations of directors and leading actors from Central Asia and the Caucasus; 3) increase production of co-productions dramatizing Eastern legends and tales that would be familiar to peoples of the East using the best creative powers of Central Asia and Caucasus; 4) increase the total number of Soviet films shown in the East, especially in Central and South Africa; 5) exchange documentary films with countries of the East; and finally, 6) produce more documentary and short films about the accomplishments of peoples of Central Asia and Caucasus, including a series of films about the lives of Muslims in the Soviet Union for distribution in countries of the foreign East.⁷⁴

We will see how many of these recommendations were, indeed, fulfilled as part of the Tashkent festival's history.

Overall, the extension of the Soviet film industrial infrastructure—and its *de facto* decentralization—into Central Asia was crucial for both the Soviet film industry's recovery from its postwar crisis and Soviet international policies. As Artemy Kalinovsky demonstrates, "Over the course of the 1950s Central Asia became the frontline region in the ideological battle for the Third World," and effective representation of vibrant and autonomous cultures of the Soviet East in cinema was crucial for the creation of a positive image of the Soviet Union abroad, especially in Asia and Africa, as a truly anti-imperialist and anticolonialist force.⁷⁵ In Kalinovsky's compelling articulation, "the wave of decolonization occurring beyond the USSR's borders provided the impetus to complete the 'decolonization' of the Central Asian republics within a Soviet framework."⁷⁶

SOVIET IMPERIAL LEGACIES, SOCIALIST UNIVERSALISM, AND WORLD CULTURE

It is tempting to assume that the relationship between the Russo-Soviet center and its Central Asian republics merely refracted its older colonial models of governance. Yet its distinctiveness is well worth reflecting upon—especially as it fully manifested in the status of Central Asian cinema both within the Soviet film industry and in its international projection, at the Tashkent festival. Michael Rouland summarizes the relationship between the Soviet "center" and Central Asian cinemas: "From the arrival of film projectors at the end of the nineteenth century through the dynamic pre-war years and until the collapse of the Soviet Union, cinema in Central Asia benefited from significant Soviet investment and suffered from its ideological control."⁷⁷ The highly developed and accomplished Central Asian and Transcaucasian cinemas aptly demonstrate the impact of such investment. All too aware of the potential weakness of a new postcolonial nation, many cultural and political elites in Asia and Africa viewed the Soviet model of a multinational postrevolutionary state as an intriguing alternative. Even as they were

tied to nationalist ideologies, this vision resonated with the many attempts during that period to create multinational—that is, pan-Arab or pan-African—models of governance.

Such models were also consistent with the Soviet policy of promoting—and in many cases, actively creating—“national cultures” within its republics (many of which, historically, did not have a unified national identity before their annexation by Russia or within the Soviet Union). Promoting the creation of a national consciousness was crucial to the original Leninist plan as a way of addressing the problem of underdevelopment with its absence of the industrial proletariat as the motor of world revolution. In the conditions of underdevelopment, national culture would both encourage modernization and occupy the role of the revolutionary vanguard.⁷⁸

Thus, while many of the postcolonial Asian and African state ideologies in the 1960s were rooted simultaneously in nationalist and internationalist (or at the very least, regionalist) orientation, their Central Asian counterparts were likewise “doubly assimilated” into their respective national republics and Soviet identities (themselves articulated as a form of internationalism).⁷⁹ As we will see, the Tashkent festival thus clearly foregrounded the imperative of “triple assimilation” for Central Asian cinemas as national, Soviet, and Third World–internationalist, a position that resonated with many other participants’ sense of their postcolonial (rather than colonial) condition.

Beyond such symbolic operations, the economic and legal structures of ownership within socialism, even in its Soviet incarnation, did offer, at least on the surface, a reversal of colonial accumulation and serfdom.⁸⁰ Especially as Russian serfdom was not racially based, the Soviet state confronted its colonial legacies through a distinctively Marxist model. Unlike European colonial cultural technologies, which served to crystalize the categories of the colonizers and the colonized as opposites, as Francine Hirsch demonstrates, the Soviet assimilation model instead “used them to eliminate these oppositions—to ‘modernize’ and transform all the lands and peoples of the former Russian Empire, and bring them into the Soviet whole.”⁸¹ The post-Stalinist opening of the Khrushchev era further reshaped notions of universalism, moving away from Leninist-Stalinist class determinism toward what is frequently described as a liberalization of the Thaw.

The combination of the early Soviet class-based universalism of the Marxist model with the liberal universalist one, which entered the country with its post-Stalinist cultural opening, may appear particularly troubling for our contemporary understanding of the decolonial project (as liberalism’s foundational assumptions have been shown repeatedly to be interconnected and directly complicit with the colonial project and racial capitalism).⁸² Yet the structure that emerged in the 1960s was quite distinct. Within the Soviet context, the liberal elements (foregrounding individual experience, the private sphere, personal artistic vision, the cult of authenticity) were grounded in a decidedly nonliberal economic,

legal, and political reality, necessitating a notion of personal rights and freedoms dialectically mediated through the practices of the collective. The contours of what constituted such a collectivity became increasingly ambiguous and porous, its only definition coming through its orientation toward building socialism; much of the rest appeared culturally negotiable, at least in theory.

The utopian dimension of this worldview was emblemized by space exploration, which seemed to point to a community that was not only global but extended into the cosmos itself (a utopian image, whose dependency on the militarization and the global arms race in retrospect is particularly striking). This cosmic orientation coincided with the Soviet entry and participation in intragovernmental agencies such as UNESCO. As Gilburd demonstrates, Soviet cultural institutions of the 1950s and 1960s were oriented toward the goal of a “common world culture,” providing a vision of “the original and permanent unity of mankind.” The term *civilization* in this particular Soviet context, according to Gilburd, was connotatively distinct from its meaning in the West: it was not acquired through adopting Western models but rather accumulated through “generational continuity, history and heritage.”⁸³ Thus the Soviet version of world literary heritage early on included the *Mahabharata* and *The Shahnameh* alongside the *Iliad*. Underneath the cultural differences was one shared world heritage corresponding to the universal of a common humanity in its broadest and most utopian sense.

This common humanity—with its progressive and reactionary cultures as parts and stages within this shared world civilization—was understood to be moving toward the ultimate stage of the commons, that of communist society. Within this worldview, modernization, with its technocracy and rational management, was legitimate only as a path to communism, meant to merely accelerate the already-existing progressive elements of world heritage. Thus, Soviet cultural modernization projects of the 1920s and 1930s—such as deveiling and rejecting traditional kinship structures (arranged marriages or polygamy) in the Muslim republics—were presented as a necessary and natural, if accelerated, phase of collective socio-cultural development, not an eradication of traditional culture.

Films, in particular, were called on to separate those elements deemed regressive (i.e., not leading to the ultimate victory of communism and the creation of world commons) from national heritage without devalorizing it. Ultimately, despite the considerable investment in the promotion of this world culture, including its non-Western iterations, the socialist evolutionary framework of global development, with its stages of modernization, both created new hierarchies and reinforced many old ones. Soviet culture (cinematic or otherwise) never completely overcame many imperial legacies, transforming them in ways that were significantly different from Euro-American neocolonial models. Paradoxically, it was the cultivated status of the Soviet Union as a fierce critic of (capitalist) modernity and a powerful embodiment of its alternative (socialist) modality that allowed for the exceptional successes of its state-supported cinematic apparatus, while simultaneously leading

to the gradual loss of faith in the state as a viable structure for creative commons, especially on the part of the creative cadres themselves.⁸⁴ This very contradiction allowed for additional affinities and intimacies across postcolonial Asia, Africa, and Latin America in a way that further integrated Central Asia into the Afro-Asian cultural sphere, making the Tashkent festival a unique agent of this shared imaginary. This role, however, was only possible in the context of the development and growth of these film industries and cultures—a process the Soviets had referred to since the 1920s as *cinefication*.

CINEFICATION OF THE SOVIET EAST

In the 1950s, the Soviet film industry was slowly emerging from its crisis of low productivity, the so-called film famine (*malokartinë*): from only seven films produced in 1951, by 1957 that number increased to ninety-seven.⁸⁵ In its postwar economic recovery, the Soviet Union lagged behind Japan (whose film production peaked at 547 in 1960) and India (with 305 films produced in 1960), making Soviet cinema more of an ideological model than an industrial cinematic power. While film production throughout the Soviet Union picked up considerably in the 1960s, the demand for cinema in the country was so massive that production capacity (especially because of the shortage of film stock) could not keep up. Expanding cinefication into the republics was therefore not only ideologically but economically necessary—leading to considerable investment in the building and modernization of studios and cinematic networks of the Central Asian republics and Transcaucasia and the training of local cadres of filmmakers during the Khrushchev era. Combined with the cultural and political opening discussed earlier, this investment resulted in a veritable explosion of film production from those regions. Thematically and formally distinctive in their exploration of both their respective national and regional cultures and their relationship to modernization and socialism, these productions resonated strongly with Third World film cultures, as the Tashkent festival will aptly demonstrate.⁸⁶

By the early 1960s, however, the ideological significance of these films, as well as their local popularity, meant Central Asian film studios were pressured to satisfy the demand for films by increasing their production, which meant a rapid expansion of the whole cinematic apparatus. Kirasirova describes this process in important detail, and it is worth quoting her at length:

Because of the international significance of the production and consumption of Central Asian and Caucasian films, responsibility for the subsequent development of national film industries was turned over to the highest-level Party administrators. In Uzbekistan, the First Secretary [of the Central Committee], Sharof Rashidov, personally requested updates on the progress of Uzbek “cinefication” and film production. On August 26, 1964, the head of the State Committee of the Uzbek Council of Ministers responsible for cinematography (and the future minister

of culture of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic), Azizhon Kaiumov, reported to Rashidov about Uzbekfilm's expanding group of qualified cadres including 18 new graduates of Moscow's VGIK and Leningrad's film school.

In 1965, the Uzbek Ministry of Cinematography had planned to build 34 new movie theatres, to train 250 film technicians, and to increase the number of film-screening halls to 2223 by 1970, paying special attention to the countryside. In the Samarkand region alone, film audiences increased by 1.625 million from 1964 to 1965, and the proceeds from ticket sales increased by 295,000 rubles.⁸⁷

While Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Georgia remained, until the USSR dissolved, the leading Republican studios in terms of production and overall symbolic importance within the system, similar initiatives to increase film production and significantly boost film culture took place all over the Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics in the 1960s. And while VGIK in Moscow remained a crucial center of education and formation of future Soviet (and Third-Worldist) filmmakers, the Soviet Filmmakers Union provided support for the establishment of the Advanced Screenwriting Courses as an additional venue for formal film education. It was designed to attract established literary talents to cinema, providing impetus for greater collaboration between literature (which in the early 1960s Soviet Union reflected the lively artistic culture of the Thaw) and filmmaking. Its third cohort (1965–67) included thirty young writers from the republics, including two guaranteed spots per each Central-Asian republic—a development that had significant impact on Central Asian cinema.⁸⁸

As a result of all these developments, the mid-1960s saw the production of some of the classics of national cinemas of the region: Bulat Mansurov's *The Contest* (*Sostiazanie*, Turkmenistan, 1963); Melis Ubukeev's *White Mountains* (*Belye gory*, Kirgizstan, 1965); Elyor Ishmukhamedov's *Tenderness* (*Nezhnost'*, Uzbekistan, 1966); Shaken Aimanov's *Land of the Fathers* (*Zemlia ottsov*, Kazakhstan, 1966); Ali Kharmaev's *White, White Storks* (*Belye, belye aisty*, Uzbekistan, 1966); and Tolomush Okeev's *The Sky of Our Childhood* (*Nebo nashego detstva*, Kirgizstan, 1966). Combining elements of the Thaw culture of the Soviet 1960s with its emphasis on the authenticity, lyricism, and personal expression with stylistic features of both neorealism and international New Wave cinemas, these films led the new cinematic movement of "poetic cinema" in the Soviet Union.

Kirgiz cinema of the 1960s, in particular, came to be referred to as "the Kirgiz miracle" as Okeev's *The Sky of Our Childhood* came to signify for many young Central Asian filmmakers the kind of cinema that could truly speak to their cultural and national sensibilities and experiences in a way that Soviet cinema, until then, had completely failed to do. These films were foundational for marking the growth of cinematic national consciousness of the Soviet Central Asian republics, negotiating persistent tensions between the realities of socialist modernization and an authentic Indigenous exploration of their local and regional heritage.

Despite increasing censorship taking hold in the late 1960s, there was an undeniable shift in the artistic production within the republics. The sheer number of

productions allowed for the articulation of a wider range of genres and styles. The culture of the regions also underwent a transformation through the construction of theaters and other screening venues. To give just one example, in 1965 in Tajikistan there were six mobile children's movie theaters using buses (ZIL-158) as a way to provide service to preschool-age kids directly at daycares and the newly built high-rise housing projects in Dushanbe, Kulabe, Kurganstub, and Leninabad.⁸⁹ Even though the largest-grossing Soviet films were still Russian-language films, made at one of the Russian (and occasionally, Ukrainian) studios, starring popular actors, most of whom were based in Moscow or Leningrad, local film cultures were more mixed.⁹⁰ As the new generation of VGIK-educated Central Asian filmmakers returned to their "home" studios full of enthusiasm for the kind of new national cinema they were eager to make, the approval of audiences in Moscow or Leningrad was not a main concern.⁹¹ The national ("All-Soviet") film festivals founded during that time also became an important venue, allowing republican filmmakers to meet and see each other's films, creating personal relationships and exchanges that would prove crucial for the emergence of the New Cinemas at those republican studios.⁹²

FILM IMPORT-EXPORT IN THE SOVIET UNION

At the same time that the Soviet film industry reached its furthest peripheries in terms of both production and exhibition, it also came to rely increasingly on cinematic import-export relationships with Third World regions. With the intensification of the Cold War, the early 1960s Soviet film exports to capitalist countries declined radically, so expanding the market to Asia, Africa, and Latin America was a particularly pressing—and ultimately successful—strategy. For imports, the excitement of all things foreign, which burst out with the Thaw (and continued for the duration of the Soviet Union's existence), came to define both popular and elite cinematic tastes—tastes that, albeit in different ways, extended beyond the Euro-Hollywood canon.⁹³

As Marina Kosinova and Kristin Roth-Ey, among others, have demonstrated, film imports were highly profitable, especially those from Asia and Latin America. Even in the postwar Stalin period, film exhibition in the Soviet Union included a proportionally large number of foreign films. Alongside the so-called Trophy films taken from Germany at the end of the war, Soviet audiences enjoyed many non-Western films: from the late 1940s, at least one Mexican, Egyptian, Argentinian, and Japanese film a year, as well as several Indian and, until 1965, many Chinese films, added up to a fairly large percentage of total product and accounted for an even larger share of revenues.⁹⁴ The international film festival circuit was key to crafting business deals with international distribution companies.

The asymmetry between the rapturous reception of foreign films in the USSR and the reception of Soviet film exports to Western countries was stark. Soviet films, once they were purchased abroad, had, generally speaking, a very limited

exhibition run, and Western film distributors insisted on a one-to-one agreement, where for every Soviet film purchased by a European or North American company, the Soviet Union had to reciprocate with an equivalent purchase. The framework differed in the case of developing countries. With them, the Soviet Union could trade in-kind goods. As a result, Soviet exports to developing countries increased dramatically from the 1950s into the 1960s, accounting for a large part of Soviet film export. By the early 1960s, Sovexport was active in twenty-five countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where it controlled Soviet distribution within commercial exhibition. Other kinds of screenings of Soviet cinema were organized by cultural organizations (such as friendship societies) and embassies. These screenings were often retrospectives, including films from earlier periods, which were more popular than the more contemporary selections.⁹⁵

But while the classics, such as films by Eisenstein, were always in demand—especially within film society movements growing all over Asia, Latin America, and even the US—it became apparent that the contemporary selection of Soviet films sent abroad had to meet some of the cultural and ideological specificities of the host countries. The opportunity to take advantage of cultural affinities among the countries of the Soviet and “foreign” East required a knowledge of film and sensitivity beyond the scope of the normal Soviet trade representative abroad. For this reason, establishing informal contacts leading to cinematic exchanges and deals with foreign film institutions and individuals was relegated to the newly created Union of Soviet Filmmakers, while Sovexport continued to fully control commercial film import and export (and the party often had the final say in making decisions), and both of these organizations played a role in the Tashkent festival selection.⁹⁶

SOVIET FILM CULTURE OF THE LATE 1960s

Thus, during the Thaw, film production all over the Soviet Union experienced a boom. Film culture underwent significant internationalization through the Moscow film festival, special exhibition series (the so-called weeks of various national foreign cinemas shown around the country), the overall increase of film imports and exports, coproductions, filmmakers’ traveling the world, and translations of texts for publication in newly founded specialized film magazines and journals. At the same time, the end of the Thaw signaled a much stricter ideological party control and restructuring of Soviet film institutions. While the relationship between film production and the state became increasingly complicated, film exhibition was at its height. Thus, in 1963, in response to the need for greater control over the growing sector, the State Committee for Cinematography—a stand-alone department responsible directly to the party—was formed (it was later reorganized in 1966 and 1972 as Goskino). Its purview included virtually all aspects of cinematic culture (except import-export, which remained under the auspices of the Ministry

of Trade). One of its many functions was administering the “thematic plan” for production—planning not only how many films were to be produced each year at each of the film studios but also their genres and themes. Film projects were adjudicated on the basis of the “literary scenario” submitted for the committee’s approval for the inclusion in the following year’s thematic plan.⁹⁷ The filmmakers at the republican studios faced additional bureaucratic obstacles as they had to go through an extra layer of approval and institutional scrutiny, which could be even more conservative than those in Moscow.

The broad dynamic intensified in 1968, as Soviet reactions to the Prague spring incited the intensification of ideological struggle. Valerii Fomin, a leading contemporary Soviet film historian, describes this moment:

Precisely the sixties, especially toward their middle, were the “Golden Age” of Soviet cinema. Everything was in movement, everything was growing. And this energy of shared dynamism was blocked at the very moment when our cinema was at its height. The fateful turning point was in 1968. It’s that year when the record number of films and projects were put to death. This mass, bloody reprisal did not fail to have consequences—the dynamism of filmmaking was broken, it slowed down. In an effort to avoid the death hold of censorship, Soviet cinema retreats toward film adaptations of literary classics, hides behind parables, science fiction, or “foreign themes.” But in vain!⁹⁸

Even acknowledging the exaggeration behind Fomin’s emphatic claims (“bloody reprisal,” “put to death”), it is clear that 1968 was a highly contentious year, full of strife within the Soviet filmmaking community, as political and artistic positions began to crystalize through clearly marked subcultures in filmmaking circles.⁹⁹ From this perspective, the opening of the Tashkent film festival appeared to many as a diversionary tactic, disconnected from what was of the utmost importance to the cinematic and cultural community. Seen from the outside, it may have looked like a final gasp of the Soviet Union’s efforts to retain its geopolitical status, equally disconnected from the arrival of a new kind of radical global politics we now associate with that iconic year.

1968 IN WORLD FILM CULTURE

To position the festival more precisely vis-à-vis these global developments requires us to draw out the meaning of this moment for global cinematic cultures—especially those that intersected directly with Tashkent’s.¹⁰⁰ Despite its now almost-ubiquitous connotation, from the non-European position “1968” does not always function as a shorthand for the new political culture. As Susana Draper notes, “The moment of ’68 is a figure saturated by projections and evaluations: *point of origin, watershed history, democratizing instance, historical failure*. However, the more we look and read, the more its contours, its dates, its coherence are blurred.”¹⁰¹ Indeed, the resonances of the Long Sixties around the world had different temporalities,

and many of their manifestations and pressure points could be more importantly located before or after 1968, as in the 1967 War in the Middle East or the 1966 CIA-backed coup in Ghana.

At the same time, student-led uprisings in Paris and the events of the Prague Spring together delivered the final blow to any possibility of considering the Soviet Union the center of the international(ist) movement. Even though very few Soviet allies from Africa, Asia, or Latin America openly condemned the invasion, even fewer publicly supported it. And despite the lack of public outcry from Third-Worldist allies, Soviet reputation was significantly tarnished as the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia fully manifested what was already tacitly understood about the Soviet attitude toward smaller nations in its sphere, as well as its tolerance of dissent. The events of 1968 in Paris, Prague, and Mexico City heralded a definitive shift to a new, horizontal way to think about politics and the production of culture. A key notion in this shift was that of independence, challenging the political and cultural relationship to both the party and the state, as well as the rejection of the superpowers, best exemplified by Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino's canonical manifesto "Towards a Third Cinema," which denounced the Hollywood model's reach within even socialist film production.¹⁰²

Unsurprisingly, within the Soviet bloc, Solanas and Getino's cinematic embodiment of these ideas—*The Hour of the Furnaces* (*La hora de los hornos*, 1968)—was screened at Karlovy Vary but never in the Soviet Union. Nor was the notion of Third Cinema, with or without direct references to the manifesto, ever acknowledged in Soviet film criticism and history. Thus it was certainly not Tashkent but rather the Pesaro festival in Italy that was embraced by militant Latin American filmmakers as a meeting place for filmmakers "committed to the construction of the revolutionary cinema."¹⁰³ That same year, the Cuban delegation openly joined forces with the French in protesting the organizers' of the Leipzig festival silencing dissenting voices in response to the events in Prague.¹⁰⁴ Their protests did not, of course, prevent Cuban filmmakers from participating and accepting awards both in Leipzig and Karlovy Vary or from attending the Tashkent festival as guests that year. But they did clearly signal their allegiances.

The exuberant reception of *The Hour of the Furnaces* at the Pesaro festival in 1968 has acquired legendary status in the heroic narrative of that year. Pesaro's nomination as a festival of "New Cinemas" resonated strongly with the moment, mapping the new cinematic developments onto the rhetoric of "newness" and generational turnover associated with the "Global '68" mentality (even if, in fact, many of the main cultural actors were in their fifties or older). What most of these New Cinemas shared with the so-called originary movement—that is, the French New Wave—is their rhetorical rejection of the "cinema du papa." What counted for "old" was different in each particular context. For many, it was commercial cinema, whether of one's own nation or Hollywood; for some, in the Eastern bloc, it meant (socialist) realist cinema; for others, it was cinema of the public

sector or “independent cinema” of the previous generation or, as in the case of Africa, colonial cinema. Often, all of these different referents were rhetorically equated. But the notion of marking a generational difference necessitated both the invention of a new formal language and a new politics, even if New Cinema filmmakers often heatedly disagreed on the content of the new politics and the form of this new aesthetic.

The emergence of this “New Cinema” was often rooted in cinephilia, materially realized in film societies, cine-clubs, film journals, museums, and film schools.¹⁰⁵ This was as true for Brazil and Egypt as for France. Incidentally, the (re)discovery of Eisenstein and Vertov as formative influences on the New Cinemas globally is a consequence of their forming the canon of such alternative film exhibition sites (often as the only explicitly political films within this canon). In the socialist bloc, in the relative absence of alternative venues such as cine-clubs or independent journals, film schools functioned as the major conduits of cinephilia. Film schools were often the spaces where a new generation of filmmakers encountered films that inspired their own formal experimentation. The schools provided new filmmakers with spaces for developing and articulating these ideas of “newness.” Other times, various experimental production units, either as part of the main film industry or even in such unlikely spaces as the army, served a similar function in forming the new generation of Eastern European and Soviet practitioners of New Cinemas.¹⁰⁶

By the late 1960s, the ideology of the New Cinemas often demanded the rejection of those formative institutional spaces and the creation of new ones, often via new film festival circuits. For Latin America, this solidification of different national movements (Cinema Novo in Brazil, Cine Liberación in Argentina, Grupo Ukamau in Bolivia, Cine Independiente in Mexico, ICAIC productions in Cuba) into something recognizable as the New Latin America Cinema crystalized in the 1967 and 1969 editions of the Viña del Mar Festival in Chile and in Merida, Venezuela, in 1968.¹⁰⁷ And for Africa and the Arab world, the 1966 Carthage Film Festival for African and Arab cinemas (FCC), the 1969 Pan-African Film Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO), and the 1972 International Festival for the Young Filmmakers in Damascus marked similar developments.

CONCLUSION

The Tashkent film festival, although founded in 1968, never became a central part of the scene I have described. Yet its repeated antiwar, anti-imperialist rhetoric (with both Vietnam and Palestine at the center of the imaginary geography it projected) appears to be sufficient to create consensus among the left-leaning participants from Asia and Africa (and soon Latin America as well), including those aligned with the New Left, just as it was for communist parties internationally.¹⁰⁸ As a result, Tashkent was not affected by the boycotts against the Soviet invasion

in Prague, and the event took place as planned. In many ways, the 1968 Tashkent festival, rather than heralding the arrival of New Cinemas, provided a snapshot of the state of a wide range of film institutions globally, which were not usually seen in one place elsewhere.

Overall, despite the expectations of 1968 as the year of radical youth culture, the first edition of the Tashkent festival presented the constellation of socialist world cinema as primarily that of “the fathers.” The photographs and documentary footage are quite telling in this respect, showing mostly middle-aged men, mostly in suits (although some in local traditional attire), mostly nonwhite (although the Black African representatives still visually stand out): an image seemingly rather removed from the iconography of “The Global Sixties” focused on European and American youth. Unlike the “groovy” graphic design and posters accompanying, for example, the Tricontinental Conference in Cuba in 1966, the press coverage of the 1968 Tashkent festival placed greater visual emphasis on the diversity of “traditional cultures” represented there—with images of local dress, traditional musical instruments, and ethnic diversity surpassing by far any explicitly political or youth-oriented imagery.¹⁰⁹

Another aspect of the festival was its participants’ single-minded commitment to cinema. While television is often discussed as a competing force in most contexts, and engagement with intermediality becomes defining for the radical avant-gardes of the era, Tashkent’s discussions may seem somehow archaic in their assumption of the stability and primacy of film as an object and a cultural practice.¹¹⁰ The same is true for their general adherence to the principles of narrative cinema, at least in fiction (documentary selections were more varied—although still dominated by traditional forms). Narrative conventions and modes represented by the films at the festival did, indeed, vary a great deal (just as they did on the European Art Cinema festival circuit of the time), and so did their ideological positions—both in terms of aesthetics/style and politics. But looking at the festival selection as a whole, it is easy to see a predominance of a certain humanist, social-realist strand, at least within fiction cinema. The exact contours of this mode were broader and more inclusive than what our persistent association of the Global Sixties cinemas, with their Brechtian self-reflexivity and montage as the only mode of oppositional cinematic practices, would lead us to believe.

To explore these differences, the next chapters turn to the festival program in its first decade in some detail, drawing on the specific transnational contexts of circulation and reception between the Soviet Union and participating regions. Taken together, the films presented at the festival form a distinct cinematic sphere: a particular configuration of world socialist cinema. This cinema’s internal coherence was exemplified by the Tashkent festival, but it extended far beyond the festival contours, as the concluding chapters of this book will demonstrate.

Tashkent 1968

OVERVIEW

It is worth lingering on the first (1968) edition of the Tashkent festival as a vantage point from which to assess specific configurations of the transnational circulation and reception histories of the participating regions by looking at the films and figures that dominated it. Not surprisingly, the biggest share of films and participants in 1968 came from the largest film industries: Egyptian, Indian, and Japanese delegations, as well as the Soviet host's own Central Asian and Transcaucasian. Yet Algeria, Ghana, Guinea, Iraq, Iran, Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia, North Korea, Malaysia, Syria, Lebanon, Mongolia, Senegal, Somalia, and Tunisia all had at least one feature-length fiction film included in the program. Predictably, the documentary and short film program was considerably more diverse, with many more African countries (many of which had severely underdeveloped film industries) represented. In terms of the global geography this selection represented, only the exclusions of Israel and South Africa were nonnegotiable—not only as a demonstration of Soviet geopolitical commitments but to ensure the participation of the rest of the progressive Arab world and Africa. China's involvement remained under discussion, with the committee going back and forth on whether it should be invited. In the end, China never participated in the festival (unlike Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which initially declined the invitation but then sent in films anyway and remained an active participant in subsequent editions as well).¹

The fiction film program was dominated by Arab realist cinema of social critique, largely via productions from nationalized film industries. The Japanese delegation was represented, for the most part, by the Japanese political cinema of the "Old Left." There were also quite a few genre films providing entertainment but with a "humanist" and social message—whether from Egypt, India, or Japan.² The Central Asian program was split between historical epics and contemporary poetic cinema: the former represented by either adaptations of literary classics or by adventure films that, while broadly following cinematic conventions of the

genre of the western (the so-called Easterns), adopted to a more socialist-realist bent, depicting the establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia.³ The more lyrical Central Asian films on contemporary topics explored the conflict between tradition and modernization.⁴ The documentary selection in the first edition was indicative of the thematics and styles that would dominate the festival in later years: from the focus on the struggle against imperialism through the dual prism of the war in Vietnam and the plight of Palestinian refugees (explored in greater detail in chapters 3, 4, and 8), to autoethnographic and newsreel nonfiction simultaneously celebrating modernization and local cultural traditions (which will be discussed in chapters 6 and 7).

INDIA'S PARTICIPATION: PREHISTORY

The Indian delegation at the 1968 Tashkent festival was the largest in terms of number of films, participants, and celebrities—a trend that continued in the 1970s, with the Indian delegation also staying longer than others and being the beneficiary of special invitations, receptions, and photographed tours. As Sudha Rajagopalan has shown, this privileged relationship goes back to the late 1940s, when the celebrated Soviet director Vsevolod Pudovkin visited India. The trip laid the groundwork for the distribution of the first two Indian films widely screened in the USSR, *Children of the Earth* (*Dharti Ke Lal*, 1946), the directorial debut of Khwaja Ahmad (K. A.) Abbas, and the Bengali film *The Uprooted* (*Chinnamul*, 1950), directed by Nema Ghosh—the choice that, in retrospect, defined the parameters of the relationship between the two film cultures for decades to come. Both films were in many ways reflective of politics and aesthetics of the Indian People's Theater Association (IPTA), which supported them. IPTA's own origins go back to the internationalism, antifascism, and anticolonialism of the Indian Progressive Writers' movement of the 1930s, whose politically engaged, socially conscious aesthetics had an enormous impact on all the artistic and intellectual life of India. The term *association* in IPTA's title is perhaps too restrictive a word to accurately describe what was actually a wide-reaching movement that sponsored popular theater productions all over the country, blending local/regional vernacular folk musical, artistic, and literary traditions with progressive (a combination of Nehruvian and communist) ideology, which lent itself successfully to cinema—and to exchanges with the Soviet Union.⁵

CHINNAMUL AND INDIAN INDEPENDENT CINEMA

Paradigmatic of a the more experimental direction within IPTA aesthetics, *Chinnamul*—with its sound-image montages creating what Bhaskar Sarkar refers to as a “polyvocal texture, engaging multiple subjectivities, attitudes and modalities”—departed significantly from the established cinematic narrative and representational formulas, thus appealing to the legacies of the 1920s Soviet

avantgarde.⁶ Ghosh, an IPTA activist and member of the Calcutta Film Society was, indeed, an admirer of Early Soviet cinema and was eager to travel to the Soviet Union, where he spent two months apprenticing filmmaking with the Soviet masters upon his film's release. But it appears that far from advancing his cinematic career, his association with the Soviet Union created political problems when he returned to India, forcing him to move to Madras. His second film, *Yonder Lies the Path* (*Paathai Theriyudhu Paar*, 1960), the first Tamil language film to be released in the USSR in 1964, made little impression in either country.⁷

Yet *Chinnamul's* experimental aesthetics, low-budget location shootings, and use of nonprofessional actors anticipated the rise of independent cinema in Bengal. Ritwik Ghatak, who would come to be recognized as the originator of Indian Parallel Cinema, had been involved in the film's production. Entrusted by the Communist Party to accompany Pudovkin during that important 1949 visit, Ghatak would also become an important mediator between Early Soviet and Indian Parallel Cinema as Bengali cinephiles were some of the first to see the Soviet montage classics: *Battleship Potemkin* (*Bronenosets Potiokin*, Sergei Eisenstein, 1925) was the first film screened at the Calcutta Film Society in 1947, five years before Eisenstein's and Pudovkin's works were included in the First International Film Festival India in Mumbai, where it was seen by larger Indian audiences. In the course of the 1950s and 1960s, in addition to various informal political screenings around the country (such as those conducted through the Society of Friendship with the Soviet Union), the Film Society Movement further cemented Early Soviet cinema's presence in India.⁸ And Indian Parallel Cinema, while profoundly shaped by local artistic and political forms, would as a result frequently reference Pudovkin's and Eisenstein's techniques.⁹

K. A. ABBAS, RAJ KAPOOR, AND THE SUCCESS OF THE INDIAN MAINSTREAM IN THE USSR

If *Chinnamul's* Soviet screening points toward future developments in Indian independent filmmaking (which would feature prominently at Tashkent throughout the 1970s and early 1980s), the other film chosen for Soviet exhibition, Abbas's *Children of the Earth* heralded the future success of the socially minded commercial Hindi cinema. Abbas's artistic trajectory is also linked to IPTA, as one of the founders (in 1942) and leading figures. By 1949 Abbas was already well known as the screenwriter of *Lowly City* (*Neecha Nagar*, Chetan Anand, 1946), a film based on Maxim Gorky's play *Ne dne* and influenced by Pudovkin's and Eisenstein's cinematography. The film won a Cannes prize but found no distribution in India. Indian government was even less eager to export abroad what it saw as an IPTA-influenced negative portrayal of India as a backward country.¹⁰ Abbas had to lobby for the permission to have his films distributed in the USSR through India's Information Minister and went so far as to plead his case directly to Nehru.¹¹ And after many months of diplomatic negotiations, in 1954 Abbas led the official delegation

as part of the first Indian film festival in Moscow, which included Raj Kapoor and Nargis, as well as the director Bimal Roy and actor Dev Anand, all at the height of their popularity in India. The films that were reported as particularly popular with Soviet audiences were Roy's *Two Acres of Land* (*Do Bigha Zamin*, 1953), Chetan Anand's *Aandhiyan* (*Storms*, 1952), Abbas's *The Wayfarer* (*Rahi*, 1952), and Kapoor's *The Vagabond* (*Awara*, 1951). It was reported that millions of viewers lined up to see these films, with *Awara* drawing 63.7 million viewers in 1954, making it the highest grossing domestic and foreign film of the decade.¹² Contrary to Indian officials' concerns, IPTA-associated Indian films were the perfect package for Sov-exportfilm: combining elements of political and social consciousness, required by the Soviet censors, with colorful markers of cultural authenticity, such as music, dance, poetic language, and performance style, which appealed to movie-starved Soviet audiences.¹³

The visit resulted in the signing of an agreement of friendship and cooperation between Soviet and Indian film industries, kicking off the socialist audience's love affair with Hindi popular cinema, which extended all the way to China.¹⁴ Soviet-Indian cinematic ties would go beyond film reception to film production, with the first of many Soviet-Indian coproductions, *Pardesi/Khozhdenniia za tri moria*, codirected by Abbas and Vasili Pronin and starring Nargis, even nominated for the Cannes Palme d'Or prize in 1958.¹⁵ Roy, Kapoor, and Anand, as well as Mehboob Khan (the director of *Mother India* [*Bharat Mata*, 1957]) and Satyajit Ray would all serve on various juries of the Moscow film festival between 1959 and 1969.

As Rajagopalan observes, the popularity of Indian cinema was founded on Kapoor's star persona, as well as the winning formula of Hindi melodramas, which combined an emphasis on the personal and lyrical (much-valued during the Thaw) with an embrace of social humanistic values, enhanced by exotic and attractive settings, music, and dance.¹⁶ Within the Indian context, Kapoor's real power as a celebrity actor and filmmaker had a definite political dimension, with both his and Abbas's roles as cultural diplomats grounded in their significant pedigree in Nehruvian India. Raj's father, Prithviraj, had close ties to Jawaharlal Nehru and his whole family and held positions within the Indian Parliament.¹⁷ Both Kapoor and Abbas enthusiastically advocated Nehru's vision and ideals of nationalist populism and mixed-economy.¹⁸ Neither committed socialists or communists, they represented the ideological status quo of the Indian film industry of the 1950s, Bombay's as much as the other regions, where private studios positioned themselves as allies of Nehru's quasi-socialist vision for the country. Even the studio mogul responsible for launching cinematic careers of most Hindi stars of the period Mehboob Khan's logo featured the hammer and sickle without causing much notice or controversy. And in the course of the 1950s and 1960s, virtually every film made by Abbas and Kapoor, as well as many by Roy (along with films by Satyen Bose, Nitin Bose, and other politically committed 1950s Indian filmmakers, who came out of IPTA or New Theatres in Calcutta), gained distribution in

the Soviet Union. The exchanges were reciprocal: in 1962 alone, there were Weeks of Soviet Cinema organized in twenty cities of India, and in 1966 another large retrospective of Soviet film classics, including many films that had previously not been seen abroad.¹⁹ And this is how the popular Indian cinema of the 1950s became a staple of socialist film exhibition from Eastern Europe throughout Eurasia, at the same time as Ray's *Song of the Road* (*Pathar Panchali*, 1955) came to stand as the symbolic entry of Indian cinema to the West.²⁰

INDIA'S 1968 FESTIVAL SELECTION

Despite the vibrant Indian cinematic culture of the earlier decades and its high visibility on the global socialist film circuits, however, by the late 1960s, as Rini Bhattacharya Mehta puts it, "the nationalist social form, buoyed possibly by an initial postcolonial enthusiasm for dialogue with the nation-state, had exhausted itself."²¹ In many ways, the Indian film selection at the 1968 Tashkent festival demonstrates the transition period from the glory days of Nehruvian socially conscious films of the 1950s, exemplified by Roy and Kapoor, to the 1970s so-called Angry Young Men era, when Indian popular cinema would again acquire a truly global scale, albeit with progressively diminishing elements of socialist ideology. As Parag Amaldi asserts in the context of the emergence of Indian Parallel Cinema, "After the deaths of Bimal Roy, Guru Dutt and Mehboob, and the decline of V Shantaram and Raj Kapoor, there seemed to be little hope left that the commercial film industry could satisfactorily address the world-view of a literate middle-class audience."²²

At the same time, a thriving cosmopolitan film culture was developing at the intersection of the state and the independent sphere taking place around state institutions like the Film Institute of India (1960, later renamed the Film and Television Institute), the National Film Archives of India (1964), and supported by emerging funding bodies such as the National Film Development Corporation of India. The Films Division of India, the state body in charge of producing newsreels and documentaries—which were screened before every commercial feature, thereby amounting to considerable cumulative exposure, if not popularity, for Indian state-sponsored nonfiction—also underwent a series of transformations in the 1960s, providing support for some of the most interesting Indian documentaries of the period.²³ The Film Societies movement blossomed all over the country and was crucial for the synthesis of cinephilia and New Left political ideologies, which manifested themselves in different iterations of the Indian New Cinemas, although it wasn't until the early 1970s that the movement would truly break into the international view (including the Soviet bloc cinematic circuit). But even sites such as Film Societies were not free of the state's direct involvement, with Mrs. Indira Gandhi personally taking great interest in cinematic matters, serving as a vice president of the Federation of Film Societies for all of India and, in that capacity, even helped obtain permission to exhibit to their members uncensored

films imported from abroad. The screenings of film societies included the classics of Soviet, French, German, and Hollywood cinema—but also Japanese films, such as Shindo Kaneto's 1952 docudrama *Children of Hiroshima* (*Gembaku no ko*), which became important for the reception of Japanese cinema in the Soviet film culture as well, demonstrating an emerging shared cinematic canon.²⁴

In 1967, a new agreement was signed between the Soviet Film Export Agency, and the Indian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Ministry of Trade, reaffirming reciprocity in film trade.²⁵ Thus, when the Soviet delegation went to India to promote the Tashkent film festival and secure India's participation in it, they relied on already constituted formal and informal ties in place, and, unlike the case in some other regions, possessed some basic knowledge of the industry, as well as the assurance of the enthusiasm of Soviet audiences; indeed, films at the first festival mostly reflected the established networks, which made for a controversy-avoiding selection.²⁶

But the Soviet delegation also explicitly stated that their goal was to represent as wide a range of film production—both in terms of geography and form—as possible. As a result, in addition to the more traditional fare, it included K. S. Gopalakrishnan's *Love or Wealth* (*Panama Pasama*, 1968), a Tamil film; another participant was Malayalam Ramu Kariat.²⁷ With his background in Kerala's People's Arts Club (an artistic extension of the Communist Party in Kerala, similar to IPTA), Kariat was a natural fit for Tashkent, and he remained an enthusiastic participant of the festival throughout the 1970s. Emerging Bengali Parallel Cinema was represented by Tarun Majumdar's *Young Wife* (*Balika Badhu*, 1967) and Tapan Sinha's *One's Own People* (*Apanjan*, 1968). Traditional melodramas, these films offered elements we associate with neorealism's more authentic representation of local culture through dialogue and attention to social and political realities. The time for an introduction of more radical strands of Indian cinema would have to wait until the 1972 edition, by which time Indian Parallel Cinema would reach mainstream.

JAPAN'S PARTICIPATION: PREHISTORY

The other prominent film industry represented at the festival was, of course, Japan's. Soviet-Japanese cinematic ties go back even further than the Soviet-Indian ones. As Anastasia Fedorova explores in detail, the first exhibition of Japanese films took place in Moscow already in the 1920s, and in the early 1930s a sizable number of Russian films was commercially screened in Japan (excepting those banned by the political censors, a group that included the most famous of early Soviet cinema).²⁸ The Japanese socialist and communist parties provided much of the intellectual and ideological impetus for these developments: notably, the All-Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts, of which the Proletarian Film League of Japan or Prokino (1929–34) was part. Prokino engaged in an active dialogue

with the Soviet film community and openly adopted the Soviet documentary style as its political, aesthetic and production model, which was further facilitated by the translations of the writings of Soviet filmmaker-theorists into Japanese. Film critics like Iwasaki Akira (who, alongside Imamura Taihei, would play a key role within the leftist film culture after the Second World War) were shaped by and contributed to the dissemination of these ideas. A member of Prokino, documentary filmmaker Kamei Fumio studied filmmaking from 1929 to 1931 in Leningrad with Grigorii Kozintsev, Sergei Iutkevich, and Fridrikh Ermiler, bringing back to Japan a lifelong dedication to Soviet documentary montage ideals that served as an important token in postwar Japanese culture.²⁹ In turn, Kamei's *Woman Walking Alone on the Earth* (*Onna hitori daichi o yuku*, 1953) was chosen as one of the first Japanese films to be widely screened in the Soviet Union in the 1950s, paving the way for many other leftist Japanese filmmakers representing the same formation—such as Imai Tadashi and Yamamoto Satsuo, who would become regular presences on the socialist bloc screens.³⁰

Unlike that earlier period, however, the immediate postwar Japanese film industry was tightly controlled by the US, which censored anything that could be considered anti-American or procommunist. Japanese Communist Party members were expelled from their jobs, and since film industry was considered especially visible by the occupation authorities, the purge significantly affected the major studios, with more than a hundred studio employees fired. Many of the purged filmmakers joined independent film production companies set up by unionists who had left the studios just prior to the purge in response to ongoing labor disputes.³¹ For a brief period (most of the filmmakers returned to the major studios by the early 1960s), these companies allowed for low-budget, socially aware, and politically progressive films to be produced under a collectivist ethos that was in strong contrast to the free-enterprise studio system. They brought together a wide range of talented filmmakers, the so-called independents, whose aesthetic resonated with other realist movements of the period—from Italian neorealism to early Brazilian Cinema Novo and Indian parallel cinema. The independents included communists such as Imai, Yamamoto, Shindo, Toyoda Shiro, Yoshimura Kozaburo, and Yamada Tengu, as well as other filmmakers who, while not driven primarily by their political beliefs, were generally frustrated by the artistic and ideological rules laid down by the main studios, such as Kurosawa and Taniguchi Senkichi.

JAPANESE CINEMA ON THE GLOBAL FILM CIRCUITS

Presented as the West's discovery of Japanese cinema, Kurosawa's *Rashomon*'s 1951 win of Cannes' Palm d'Or and the Oscars' Best Foreign Language Film takes on another significance within this broader context. Just as what Ray's film did for India, *Rashomon* made Japanese cinema "legible" to the (Western) European cinematic establishment by foregrounding art cinema's emphasis on the subjectivity

of the individual artistic vision, which was easily subsumable in the discourse of freedom of expression as a key value of the “Free World.” For a Japanese critic like Iwasaki, steeped in earlier political avant-garde aesthetics, however, it was *Rashomon*’s antiutopian relativism that created the film’s appeal for Western audiences, a quality that Iwasaki saw as being at odds with Kurosawa’s “innate humanism,” to say nothing of the political engagement of the independents.³²

So while *Rashomon* came to define Japanese cinema in the eyes of the US-aligned West for years, within the socialist film circuit it was represented instead by Imai, Shindo, Yoshimura, and Yamamoto. Their films were purchased and widely seen all over the USSR and Eastern Europe—as well as recognized by European Marxist film scholars such as George Sadoul, who was referring to this larger group of Japanese filmmakers when in 1955 he claimed that when it comes to realism, “among capitalist cinemas, Rome is a worthy competitor of Tokyo” (and not the other way around).³³ As in the case of India, Japan’s film canon came to be constructed differently based on the geopolitical alignments: in the West, festivals, critics, and subsequently scholars consistently privileged studio-auteurs like Ozu, Mizoguchi, and Naruse, while in the socialist bloc, the independents Shindo, Imai, Fumio, Yamamoto, and Kobayashi were screened and celebrated.³⁴ Kurosawa overlapped both spheres, owing at least in part to his passion for Russian literature and culture, which motivated his close ties to the Soviet Union (culminating in his coproduction of *Dersu Uzala* in 1975).³⁵

Outside the Socialist sphere, independent films have been largely discussed as foregrounding politics over style, but within Soviet critical reception, they were seen as setting aesthetic standards, their poetic qualities highlighted.³⁶ These films had considerable aesthetic impact on Central Asian filmmakers in particular. Thus Khodzhauli Narliev, a Turkmenian filmmaker associated with the poetic school of Central Asian cinema, attributed the style of his films (several of which would be screened at Tashkent) to Shindo’s famously dialogue-less *The Naked Island* (*Hadaka no shima*, 1960), which he saw at the Moscow film festival in 1961, where it won the Grand Prix.³⁷ Several other filmmakers and critics cite this film as an important inspiration for the poetic realism of the 1960s Central Asian cinema.³⁸ In turn, *The Naked Island*’s success in Moscow allegedly saved Shindo from bankruptcy, since after the festival he was able to sell his film in sixty-one countries.³⁹

Beyond their ties to the Soviet Union, the independents’ commitment to anti-imperialism also led them to actively participate in the Afro-Asian film festivals of the 1950s and early 1960s, allowing them to enter into dialogue with other politically minded filmmakers all over Asia, from China to India. Japan’s geopolitical association with the US, however, made its participation in the Afro-Asian solidarity complicated. On the one hand, Japan was a participant in the Bandung meeting, yet on the level of official policy and mainstream cultural sectors, certainly including the film companies, its alignment with the US made it the center of a different kind of pan-Asianism: that of an anticommunist “Free Asia.” The Japanese film

industry was the founder of the Federation of the Motion Picture Producers Association of Asia (FPA) and the Southeast Asian Film Festival (AFF), the region's first and largest annual pan-Asian film event, which included also Hong Kong, Thailand, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, and eventually South Korea; a formation that, as Sangjoon Lee demonstrates, was an extension of the CIA-funded Asia Foundation, whose aim was "to protect 'free Asia' from the invasion of the communist force throughout the cinema."⁴⁰ In fact, most AFF participants were ardent pro-American and anticommunist film executives supported, partially or fully, by the American government.⁴¹

Commercially, especially after the success of *Rashomon* on the European market made clear the potential financial earnings from Japanese film exports, the film studios were keen to expand their market farther into Asia, with India especially in their sights. For the studio system, Japan's participation in Bandung and Afro-Asian movements promised potential extension of its commercial film market across Asia through genre films, many of which were implicitly or explicitly pro-American or anticommunist.⁴² For the progressives, on the contrary, it meant the possibility of establishing new horizontal relationships with Asian (and African) countries as a way to overcome Japan's own legacy of imperialism. And for the socialists and communists it was an opportunity to form solidarity against continuing Western (especially US) political and economic power in the region, joining the liberation movements as an act of political resistance.⁴³ Peaceful coexistence for the Japanese was an especially powerful slogan, reconciling many potentially conflicting ideologies by placing Japan at the forefront of the antiwar movement in its role as the only victim of the atomic bomb, followed by the US occupation. For progressives, who opposed the Japanese imperialism that led to the war, it also meant positioning themselves on par with the other Bandung participants as a semicolonized Asian state with uneven development (a sharp division between the peasants, the workers, and the urban elites). This became the official position of the Japanese Communist Party.⁴⁴

This was the broader ideological motivation that led Yamamoto to participate in the Jakarta 1964 Afro-Asian festival. In his final communiqué, he vowed "to support the liberation movement of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and to make use of films, the weapon in our hand, to this end." And on receiving an invitation from Vietnamese filmmakers he met at the festival, Yamamoto got involved in the making of one of the first Japanese films on this topic: *Vietnam* (Masuda Kentaro/Koizumi Takashi, 1968).⁴⁵ Although Japan was within the US sphere, it was the only foreign country that had a TV station working in Vietnam for the duration of the war (and after): Japan's Nihon Denpa News (NDN). Ho Chi Minh had personally granted it permission to have a representative office in Hanoi in 1961, which allowed these Japanese filmmakers in the course of the 1960s and 1970s to record 1,510 rolls of 16 mm film at a total length of around six thousand meters (now included in the documentary series *Memoirs of Vietnam* [*Ky uc Viet*

Nam]).⁴⁶ Yamamoto's antiwar epic *Men and War* (*Senso to ningen*, 1970–73), which was screened to great success at the Tashkent festival in the 1970s, goes back to this experience: it was in Vietnam, he claims, that he was struck by the continuities between US aggression and Japan's actions against China during WWII.⁴⁷ As we will see in detail in chapter 8, this was a position very much embraced by the Soviet film institutions. But it also provided affinities with the anti-imperialist orientation of many of Tashkent's other foreign participants, further solidifying their networks of solidarity.

But as the 1960s progressed and Japan's economic miracle drastically lifted the country into the top echelon of world economies, the Japanese New Left, the founding members of which had split from the Communist Party (JPC) in the 1950s, no longer saw Japan as an equal partner in Afro-Asian alliance, approaching it instead as part of the First World and extending to it the corresponding ideological critiques.⁴⁸ These differences further mapped on to aesthetics as the new generations (both the Japanese New Wave and the more radical political filmmakers) opposing the traditionalist humanist neorealist mode of the "independents." The Sino-Soviet split further exacerbated these divisions, leading to another split within the JPC between the pro-Chinese main wing and an "alternative" (pro-Soviet) wing Voice of Japan Comrades' Society (*Nihon no koe*).⁴⁹ By 1968, the politically radical artists and intellectuals were considerably more in line with their counterparts in Western Europe (and Latin America), while the older generation remained affiliated with the JPC and its Soviet and broader Afro-Asian solidarity networks.

JAPAN'S 1968 FESTIVAL SELECTION

In 1968, the complicated dynamics of the Japanese Left had to be confronted by the first Tashkent selection committee sent to Japan, where it also had to negotiate among three competing film consortia, all of whom were interested in exclusive participation at the festival. One was the Japanese Motion Picture Promotional Corporation (MPCC), which included the five major studios and distribution channels headed by Nagata Masaichi, who helped found the Federation of the Motion Picture Producers Association of Asia (FPA) and the Asian Film Festival. The MPCC had a close working relationship with the Japanese government, through the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Trade and Industry (MITI), and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and prior negotiations with it took place on the level of Soviet Ministry of International Relations (MID), which meant that MPCC's participation in the Tashkent festival was linked to further trade relations and therefore strategically important.⁵⁰ For Japan, as its participation at the Asian Film Festival progressively declined in the course of the 1960s, hopes for active distribution in Europe, despite the initial promise, didn't bear fruit, and its film industry entered a period of malaise. The MPCC was thus incentivized to expand its market outside the "Free Asia" realm.

Rivaling the MPCC and the five studios was the independent group of producers, the Japanese Film Revival Society, led by Yamada Kazuo, a film critic and Japanese Communist Party (JCP) militant with long-standing ties to the Soviet Union. Starting in the 1950s, Yamada had been a regular contributor to the Communist Party newspaper *Akahata*, as well as a writer for *Godo Tsushinsha*, a film industry newspaper. Although he went freelance in 1962, he kept his industry ties, making him one of the few film critics with the breadth to discuss cinema from an industry perspective, albeit a highly critical one. He was also the president of the Eisenstein Cineclub and an organizer of the International Cinema Library, a company that in the 1960s and 1970s distributed movies from the Soviet Union, Latin America, Vietnam, and other countries for the Japanese cinephile market. He quickly became a familiar figure on the Moscow and Tashkent festival circuit (as well as subsequently the Havana Festival for the New Latin American Cinema).⁵¹ Yamada was known to be an outspoken critic of the Asia Film Festival (AFF), calling it a direct extension of NATO and a propaganda outlet for “American wars of imperialist aggression in Asia.”⁵² In his exchanges with the Tashkent organizers, in hopes of dissuading them from working with the MPCC, Yamada repeatedly stressed the role Nagata played in the AFF, which was about to take place in Seoul. As Baskett notes, to exclude the participation from politically radical producers, the AFF “limited each member to five film entries, which corresponded exactly to the number of the major Japanese film studios, thereby effectively locking out any possible influence by the independents.”⁵³ Yamada’s concern in finding out that the Soviet organizers were dealing with the MPCC was that it would resort to similar insider tactics. Instead, he generously offered for the Japanese Film Revival Society to take over the entire selection process.⁵⁴

Another group whose participation was solicited by the Soviets was the Screenwriters’ Guild of Japan, presided over by Yagi Yasutaro, who was a regular collaborator of Shindo and Imai and associated with the “other” Communist Party, the Voice of Japan (as well as a range of non-Communist Party affiliated filmmakers). The guild had just co-organized a highly successful Soviet-Japanese symposium on cinema in Moscow in May 1968, and its participation had been confirmed prior to the Soviet delegation’s trip. Yamada tried to dissuade the Soviets from this decision by pointing out the guild’s anti-JCP position. Perhaps surprisingly, even though the JCP officially condemned the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, no such matters were raised by Yamada.

In the end, maximally broad representation of Japanese cinema was a priority to festival organizers. The fact that it was scheduled exactly at the same time as the AFF in Seoul was, apparently, a coincidence, which was battled away by the Soviet planners (who did, however, reschedule their festival to accommodate the Carthage film festival, in which many leftist Arab and African filmmakers took part). The AFF itself became the scene of political/ideological conflict. As Sangjoon Lee details, its 1966 Seoul edition ended in scandal after the Best Director award was

given to none other than Yamamoto for *The Witness Seat* (*Shonin no isu*, 1965), resulting in festival jurors being summoned to court and interrogated by the National Intelligence Service for “violation of the anti-communist laws.”⁵⁵ As this episode demonstrates, Yamamoto’s films in the course of the 1960s were produced both inside and outside the studio system; thus, *Shonin no isu* was submitted to the festival by Daiei Studios (one of five major studios forming the MPCC), while his submission to the Tashkent festival just two years later, *The Slave Factory* (*Dorei kojo*, 1968), was independently produced. In the end, Soviet organizers succeeded in bringing films and representatives from all three film consortia to Tashkent. The heads of the five studios each got to choose two films, and five more films were selected from independent studios.⁵⁶

The most striking feature of Japan’s selection was its exclusion of any New Wave or radical Japanese filmmakers of the time, who by then had become quite visible internationally. Instead, many of the former “independents” who dominated at Tashkent had returned to the leading studios, and much of their output had become more commercially driven, attracting domestic publics at the festival, as well as Soviet audiences (who greatly enjoyed genre films such as *Snow Woman* [*Kaidan Yukijoro*, Tanaka Tokuzo, 1968] and *Black Cat* [*Kuroneko*, Shindo Kaneto, 1968]). Yet the background of these directors also spoke to their experience of opposing the hegemony of the commercial film production of both Hollywood and the mainstream Asian film industry on a broad scale, given the fact that in 1968, Japan was still the leading film producer in Asia. This history could thus be construed as a bridge between the experiences of the newly independent African countries and those of the more highly developed Asian industries. And the anti-war outlook of older directors such as Yamamoto allowed for further synergies with the increasingly militant anti-imperialist position of the other delegations at the festival, giving Japan a continuously important presence at Tashkent.

EGYPT’S PARTICIPATION: HISTORICAL AND CINEMATIC CONTEXTS

A similar set of factors also characterized the Egyptian selection at the festival. The prominence of Egypt (with nine fiction films included in the 1968 program) was no doubt boosted by the status of its film industry as the most successful in the Arab world. But it was also due to fact that, after considerable Soviet military support in the devastating Six-Day War, in 1968 Nasser announced a series of pro-socialist economic reforms that aligned the country even more closely with the Soviet Union. Egypt was also the second-largest recipient of Soviet aid at that time (India being the largest).⁵⁷ But despite its massive showcase at Tashkent, Egyptian cinema in 1968 was, like the rest of the country, in crisis, with production in 1967 dropping to its lowest point since 1940.⁵⁸ When the film industry was partially nationalized in the early 1960s, it was primarily meant to control the distribution

network, thus undermining the import of Hollywood films, which still accrued the largest share of distribution. While foreign imports, the taxes and fees from which provided important support for the industry, decreased dramatically, Egypt no longer had the resources to increase production to meet demand.⁵⁹ The state tried to find markets for Egyptian movies abroad through film commissions in Latin America and around Asia, as well as encouraging participation in film festivals in Europe and the Eastern bloc.

The overall history of Soviet films on Egyptian screens seems to be rather full of fiascos, from the cancellation of the 1957 festival of Soviet Cinema after its opening film, Pudovkin's *Mother* (*Mat'*, 1926), was deemed too politically subversive, to the overall lack of attendance at Odeon, one of Cairo's largest movie palaces, which was rented out by the Soviets as an extravagant cultural extension of the Soviet-Egyptian military alliance through the 1960s. Most films were shown there without translations, which likely further limited viewership.⁶⁰ More successfully, Soviet films with Arabic subtitles were regularly shown on Egyptian TV, speaking to greater cultural impact than Odeon's poor attendance would suggest, as further evidenced by the success of Kozintsev's *Hamlet* (*Gamlet*, 1964), a film that resonated with the Egyptian audience in the aftermath of the war as a political allegory, as analyzed by Margaret Litvin.⁶¹

In the meantime, the Egyptian state's intervention in film culture did succeed in creating a vibrant, cosmopolitan and highly politicized sphere, receptive to international exchanges. Contributing to it was the creation of the High Cinema Institute in Cairo in 1959, the first film school in all of the Arab and Islamic worlds, as well as the activities of the Cairo Film Society. These developments generated a cadre of filmmakers and critics steeped in serious professional and aesthetic training, as well as a new cinephile public who attended a wide range of film screenings, read translations and publications of film criticism, and participated in public film discussions.⁶² Egypt's active role on the international film festival circuit created further opportunities, and the Moscow film festival served as an important bridge there: the new head of the Cinema Institute served on its jury in 1963, and Youssef Chahine, who started teaching in the institute from its inception, was also a regular.

And although he is now largely considered an auteur associated with the European art cinema circuit, Chahine was one of the filmmakers who had a strong reputation in the Soviet Union going back to the release of *Struggle in the Valley* (*Sira' fi al-Wadi*, 1954) in the USSR in 1956. Chahine's *Jamila, the Algerian* (*Jamila, al-Jaza'iriya*, 1958) was an indisputable success when screened as part of the first Moscow International Film Festival in 1959. *Jamila's* star and producer Magda claimed that "when it was shown in the Soviet Union ambulances had to be brought to carry those who have fainted because of the heavy congestion."⁶³

While such claims appear to be part of the mythology (common also among the Indian stars, whose memoirs abound with similar stories) about the wildly

enthusiastic Soviet audiences of foreign films, especially in the 1950s, there is no doubt that the Moscow screening was a significant event for Chahine and Magda. Against protests by the French, it not only solidified Chahine's international reputation as a political anticolonial auteur; it also opened new markets for him within the socialist festival circuit. Despite what is often claimed in scholarship on Chahine, the film did not get any awards at the festival, nor was it included in the official program.⁶⁴ For the directors of the Moscow festival, who were applying to receive accreditation from the Paris-based International Federation of Film Producers Association (FIAPF), the importance of France's role in the cinema world could not be ignored.⁶⁵ Yet by 1959, it was also clear that the lack of Soviet support for Algeria was having a negative impact on its status vis-à-vis the Afro-Asian solidarity network. Thus, a compromise was reached: a different film by Chahine, *Forever Yours* (*Hubb lel-Abad*, 1959), was entered into the official competition, while *Jamila* enjoyed a lively public screening as part of the festival. In subsequent years, several major Egyptian productions, including Chahine's *Saladin* (*Al-Nasir Salah al-Din*, 1963) and Salah Abu Seif's adaptation of Naguib Mahfouz's *The Beginning and the End* (*Bidayyah wa Nihayah*, 1960), were screened as part of the MIFF, while films by Tewfiq Saleh and Kamal El Sheikh were shown as part of a regularly held Weeks of Egyptian Cinema in Moscow.⁶⁶

By the mid-1960s, bureaucratic inadequacies, logistical problems, and censorship of political dissent (including the more left-leaning radicals) soured the relationship between filmmakers and the Egyptian film industry. While the state privileged patriotic realist films, the industry relied for commercial success on films not so different from the prenatalized era (with melodramatic plot structures, recognizable stars, and popular music), leaving artists with little room to maneuver. The crisis reached its peak in the aftermath of Egypt's tragic defeat in the Six-Day War, when more than thirty thousand Palestinians fled to Egypt (and the work of displaced Palestinian filmmakers, as well as other Arab filmmakers' support of the Palestinian cause, became one of the focal points of the Tashkent festival, starting with its 1968 edition).⁶⁷ The defeat brought about the loss of faith in Nasser and Nasserism, as well as the distrust of the state-controlled media, with its false early claims of victory.⁶⁸ In February 1968, Nasser sent troops onto the streets of Cairo against a civil protest, ending any possibility of a renewed connection between the new generation of Egyptians and Nasser's vision of the nation or, by extension, a state-supported cinema as its expression.

Following the protests, a collective of young filmmakers, technicians, students, and critics formed the New Cinema Group, which disavowed its ties with conventional Egyptian cinema. Their manifesto, written in 1968 and discussed at the first Alexandria Festival for Young Directors in 1969, would be the first call for a renewal and reinvention of Arab cinema along the lines of other international New Cinemas, and the collective would make its connections first with other Arab filmmakers at the 1972 Damascus Film Festival for Young Directors and

later joining similar movements originating in Africa and Latin America in Algiers in 1973.⁶⁹ Like many other New Cinema manifestos, its reinvention was articulated in explicit opposition to commercial filmmaking, calling on the models of neorealism, European New Waves, and British Free Cinema in combination with local vernaculars, turning to Latin America, Japan, and India for models of engaged filmmaking.

Like virtually everywhere else in the world at this period, the informal film networks created through cine-clubs and film societies nurtured the new generations of filmmakers and critics. Their cinematic canons, however, were in stark opposition to Nasserite-era visions of cinema. In line with this divergent ideology, the Soviet films screened by the Cairo Cine-club, which served as one of the centers for the new movement, were either early montage classics by Eisenstein and Pudovkin or films by Andrei Tarkovsky and Sergei Paradjanov coming through the Western film festival circuits.⁷⁰ This art-cinema orientation was quite antithetical to the kind of filmmaking advanced at Tashkent, making such contacts of little interest to young Egyptian filmmakers. As a result, the selection of Egyptian films was largely taking place on the state level, and this meant effectively excluding the New Cinema Group from the festival.

As the division widened between mainstream films and the oppositional New Cinema, so did the animosity toward the Soviet bloc, which came from all sides of the political spectrum. This left some of Egypt's most notable Egyptian filmmakers, like Chahine and Saleh, in a somewhat ambiguous situation: while these two were avatars of the kind of realist Egyptian cinema of the late 1950s and early 1960s that the New Cinema Group rejected, they were also critical of the late Nasserite regime and, later, opposed Sadat's pro-American turn. In fact, Saleh would leave Egypt for Iraq and Syria in the 1970s, and his participation in the Tashkent festival during that decade would be listed under these countries.

On the whole, the 1968 Tashkent selection of Egyptian films provided a compelling overview of Egyptian cinema's immediate past, reading like a comprehensive history of the best of "films with a purpose" of the public sector of the 1960s.⁷¹ Popular genre films were also screened, such as Fatin Abdel Wahab's and Husayn Hilmi al-Muhandis's "women's" films.⁷² The most visible Egyptian participant that year was Magda, who was publicizing her own directorial debut, *Whom Do I Love* (*Man uhibb*, 1966). Her presence served as a perfect link between the more explicitly political internationalist vision of Egyptian cinema symbolized by Jamila and the more conventional melodramas that were so successful in the Soviet Union; indeed, the USSR was one of the few countries where *Man uhibb* earned commercial distribution. Chahine's absence, instead, was due to the problems with his Soviet-Egyptian coproduction (which chapter 6 explores in detail).

The 1968 Tashkent meeting turned out to be the last one of the era of Soviet-Egyptian rapprochement. Nasser's death in 1970 marked a turning point, after which Egypt officially moved further away from socialism and its internationalist

ties. In 1972, the Sadat government expelled the Soviet advisers (who had been there since well before the Six-Day War). Surprisingly, the changed climate did not seem to affect the mutually profitable film import-export flow: in the early 1970s, Soviet film imports to Egypt exceeded those from the US (many of them being the popular “Easterns” from Central Asia), while throughout the 1970s, Egyptian popular films were screened in Soviet movie theaters to great acclaim—both trends reflected in the subsequent selections of the Tashkent festival.⁷³

OTHER ARAB AND NORTH AFRICAN CINEMAS

Even beyond Egypt, the first festival program would lay the foundation for what came to be a substantial and engaged relationship with the Arab cinemas throughout the 1970s and early 1980s that was one of the distinguishing marks of the Tashkent festival. One of perhaps the most significant results of the Soviet delegations’ visits to the countries of Asia and the Middle East in preparation for the festival was their realization that its original planned dates conflicted with the Carthage film festival (*Journées cinématographique de Carthage*, hereafter JCC). Wisely, the Soviets decided not only to change the timing of their festival to accommodate this but also to provide direct transportation from Carthage to Tashkent for the participants and guests (and after this first session, Tashkent festival would change its dates to May or early June).⁷⁴ Had the planners decided otherwise, most of the primary Arab and African filmmakers and cultural critics would not have been able to attend. Soviet adaptability on this issue signaled their understanding of the cultural and political primacy of the Carthage event for Africa and the Arab world.

CARTHAGE AND TASHKENT: TAHAR CHERIAA

The JCC was founded in 1966 under the auspices of the State Secretariat of Culture and Information of Tunisia by Tahar Cheriaa, the festival’s head and Tunisia’s most prominent film critic. For a brief period between 1964 and 1969, Tunisia’s national policy was in line with the explicitly socialist orientation of other newly independent countries, which placed cinema under the state mandate, bringing together distributors, filmmakers, and cultural critics in charge of its organization. Unlike Egypt and Algeria, Tunisia did not develop its public-sector cinema by dictating from above but rather via the initiative of the filmmakers themselves.⁷⁵ Tunisian Company for Cinematic Production and Expansion (SATPEC) was founded in 1964 and after 1968 was given legal monopoly over not only production but also imports and distribution of foreign films in Tunisia. The SATPEC-run film studio Gammarth was also completed in 1968.

These actions, however, proved largely symbolic, ignored by both the Western companies and Tunisian independent producers.⁷⁶ And the founding of the

Carthage festival took place in amid the struggle for the national ownership of both production and distribution of cinema in Tunisia, lending urgency to its vision of creating and supporting a cinematic network of independent African and Arab states. By its second edition, in 1968, the global crises of the period (the Six-Day War, the intensification of the Vietnam War, the Prague Spring) compelled a more explicitly political focus, for which the JCC would become known. In line with radical cinema of the time, the JCC and its organizers articulated a view of cinema as an instrument serving the struggle for the cultural and political independence of the Third World. Rejecting the title of an “international festival” or any association with the FIAPE, the JCC remade itself as a forum for films from Arab African countries (although its cultural program would continue screening films from the US as well as the USSR and Cuba), its goals clearly anticipating the resolutions of the Third World Cinema Committee to further extend and radicalize this cinematic network by facilitating cultural and economic cooperation between the independent film producers of the Third World.⁷⁷

The JCC’s most internationally acknowledged contribution is probably its helping to launch the Pan-African Film Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO) and the Pan-African Federation of Filmmakers (FEPACI), founded in 1969 as part of the Pan-African Cultural Festival in Algiers but officially inaugurated only in 1970 at the third edition of the JCC. The Ouagadougou festival was scheduled to alternate with the JCC and included many of the same filmmakers. This relationship was a radical gesture, symbolically dissolving the long-standing difference between North and sub-Saharan Africa, enabling a more direct relationship between the Arab and sub-Saharan cinematic communities, as well as the similarly long-standing divisions between the Maghreb and Mashriq.⁷⁸ And from 1968 onward, there was an important overlap between the selections of the Carthage festival—including its prizes—and that of the Tashkent festival. The film figures from both sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab world—among them Saleh, Sembene, and Paulin Vieyra—were all familiar faces at both festivals, and their films were presented regularly at both.

The Soviet delegation to the 1968 JCC consisted of representatives of Georgian and Uzbek film studios, as well as a member of the selection committee for the Tashkent film festival.⁷⁹ In turn, Cheriaa, the founder and driving force behind the JCC, also attended the 1968 Tashkent festival: he was one of the many radical Third-Worldist cineastes who fully supported the nationalization of the national film industries (especially the distribution networks) and was dedicated to promoting cooperation of the progressive film industries across the region as a bulwark against the economic monopoly of the West in the international film market. For him, a sustained exchange of ideas and analysis based on the experience of socialist countries globally was “not only useful but . . . perhaps even necessary and inevitable.”⁸⁰ He was, however, openly critical of the way the Soviet bloc took advantage of its strategic position as a superpower to get the most

favorable conditions for the distribution of its own films abroad, thus contributing to the domination of foreign markets to the disadvantage of the local cinematic production.⁸¹

Cheriaa, like many other radical Third-Worldists, was weary of Soviet efforts to intervene in the relationships among the progressive Arab and African cinemas. He ultimately wanted a strong Third World community to reverse the power relations with both the West and the socialist bloc. This was the justification allowing only Arab and African films to officially take part in the Carthage competition: "let others be guests—like the Arab and African filmmakers are at Cannes or Berlin," a sentiment certainly shared by many filmmakers of the period.⁸² Yet he, like many others, saw participation in the Soviet bloc's festival circuit as an important opportunity to extend global networks, to make connections and discuss the critical issues of concern to Third World film industries for which the Tashkent festival provided a forum.

Moreover, in Cheriaa's view, Soviet and Eastern European cinemas offered an example of viable film industries that could stand up against the pressures of their more established and richer Western counterparts. It was particularly true in terms of the infrastructures for film exhibition: all socialist bloc countries had a considerable advantage in terms of the sheer number of screens per capita (much greater than in Egypt or Lebanon, let alone Tunisia or Iraq).⁸³ Combined with the affordability of movie ticket prices, the number and accessibility of exhibition venues generated extremely high national moviegoing rates even in countries without a particularly strong film industry (such as Bulgaria).⁸⁴ For Third World filmmakers, the very possibility that a group of previously geopolitically peripheral countries after the Russian Revolution could create the conditions for not only developing vibrant film cultures but for fully controlling its own spaces of production, distribution, and exhibition, effectively competing with the Western monopolies, was a source of inspiration. With the exception of Egypt (and, to some degree, Lebanon), other Arab and African countries were all in the early stages of development of their national film industries. In 1966, when the Carthage festival was founded, Tunisia had just produced its first feature film through SATPEC, Omar Khelifi's *The Dawn (Al-Fajr)*.⁸⁵ Syrian and Iraqi cinemas followed a parallel course.⁸⁶ During the 1970s and 1980s, Tashkent, alongside the JCC, became one of the only places in the world where these films could be seen.⁸⁷

FESTIVAL SELECTIONS: ALGERIA, MOROCCO, LEBANON, JORDAN

The Algerian film public sector, ONCIC, was represented in 1968 by Mohamed Slim Riad's *The Road (Al-Tariq)* and *The Winds of the Aures (Rih al-Awras, 1966)*, by Lakhdar-Hamina, who had studied cinema in Prague; this film had also been screened at the Moscow film festival the year before, to great acclaim. Algerian postrevolutionary cinema by the late 1960s was quite established, and its situation

was in many ways a model for the region: when the film industry was nationalized, the country had 440 movie theaters, more than England or Egypt, and three times more than Morocco and Tunisia combined, and box-office sales provided enough basic financing for national production and international coproduction alike.⁸⁸ Even more undisputed was Algeria's symbolic status as the "Mecca of Revolution," the center of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the originary point of Tricontinental connections; it played a key role in mediating among these various developments.⁸⁹ By the late 1960s, Algeria's cinematic connections extended to Latin America, with both Argentina and Cuba its key interlocutors, often via the Pesaro film festival and through engagement with Italian and French leftist production companies and activists, as well as through the JCC.⁹⁰ These contacts led to the establishment of the Third World Cinema Committee, whose meetings in the early 1970s alternated between Algiers and Buenos Aires, headed on the Algerian side by Abdelaziz Tolbi and Lamine Merbah.⁹¹ Like the Egyptian New Cinema collective, the filmmakers represented at the Third World Cinema Committee stood in opposition to the mainstream representatives of their national film industries.

These industries, in the meantime, developed an extensive relationship with the Soviet Union; in fact, the Algerians, along with the Syrians, represented the largest percentage of Arab and African students at VGIK in the Soviet period.⁹² Soviet film festivals—Tashkent in particular—became a major showcase for mainstream Algerian cinema. Stylistically, these films varied from spectacular epic style, associated in particular with Lakhdar-Hamina, to the films that were more popular with Algerian audiences, which showed continuity with popular genres, such as Ahmed Rachedi's "blockbuster war film" *The Opium and the Baton* (*L'Opium et le Bâton* [*Al-Afiyun wa-al-'Asa*], 1971) and Tewfik Fares's western-cum-adventure film *The Outlaws* (*Les Hors-la-loi*, 1968), as well as some examples of cinema *djdid* or New Cinema—such as Amar Laskri's *Patrol from the East* (*Dawriyyah nahwa al-Sharq*, 1973) and Sid Ali Mazif's *The Nomads* (*Les Nomades*, 1975). The thematic focus on the War of Liberation was extremely common for Algerian cinema of the period, which fit in comfortably with the historical epic/war genre that was so popular in Tashkent throughout the 1970s (as I will explore at length in chapter 8).⁹³

Moroccan cinema took a slightly different arc from that of either Algeria or Tunis, as its National Film Institute (CCM) was established earlier, in 1947. It specialized, however, almost entirely on documentary production, while commercial cinema remained in private hands. The country's first feature, *To Live* (*Al-Hayatu kifah*, 1968), by Ahmed Mesnaoui and Mohamed Tazi, was presented at the 1968 Tashkent edition, beginning a tradition for Moroccan filmmakers that extended through the 1970s. Antoine Mechawar's *Arab Medicine* (*La médecine chez les Arabes*, 1968), which came to Tashkent after winning the silver Tanit at the JCC, was an important and rare example from the Interarab Centre for Cinema and Television in Beirut. The center had become an important venue for the consolidation of cinematic activities in the region (often under the auspices of UNESCO).⁹⁴

The Jordanian entry into the nonfiction selection at Tashkent, *Exodus 1967* (*Al-Khourouj* 67, 1968), directed by the Supervisor of the Film Section of the Jordanian Ministry of Information in Amman, Ali Siam, however, stands out for a different reason. More than its significance for the cinema of Jordan, it is notable as an early example of Palestinian cinema in exile as the film's cinematographer was Hani Jawhariyah, one of the founding members of the Palestinian Film Unit.

THE PALESTINIAN FILM UNIT

The Palestinian Film Unit (PFU) was founded in Jordan to allow young Palestinians to film the revolution as it was unfolding. Subsequently moving to Lebanon, it rapidly crystallized into a Fatah-supported movement, divided among several groups with slightly divergent political orientations but united in their goal of documenting their experience and creating a new mode of filmmaking as “a revolutionary praxis growing out of armed struggle.”⁹⁵ Over almost two decades, between 1968 and 1982 (when the PLO was forced to leave Beirut), Palestinian filmmakers, almost all of them in exile, joined by other progressive Arab and some international supporters, produced a body of films and texts that both came out of and contributed to the revolutionary struggle and the creation of a national cinema—in the abeyance of its nation-state. Like Vietnam's, the Palestinian struggle was in some sense “hypervisible” to the world through the eyes of outsiders, most often from the Western point of view—even when that vision was meant in solidarity or out of humanitarian impulse. The filmmaking by the Palestinians, even more than that of the Vietnamese, was driven by both the right to self-determine the representation of a people, faced with extreme dispossession, and the need to advance the revolution. Both goals were ideally achievable only by the people themselves.

Yet while the Vietnamese struggle was autonomously administered by the Vietnamese, the Palestinian struggle and its cultural expression was, by necessity, embedded in a tight network of regional and international movements (as well as states). This was in large part because of the brute fact of Palestinian dispossession, as well as the broader geopolitical alignments of the Arab world of the 1950s and 1960s as anti-Zionist. The anti-US imperialist stance associated with support for the Palestinian movements also positioned them squarely within the Cold War divide. This shaped the geography of both the production and the circulation of Palestinian revolutionary cinema once it emerged in 1968 and, in Nadia Yaqub's words, “operated interstitially within emerging public sector cinema industries within the Arab world, as well as through co-productions and solidarity networks.”⁹⁶

The openness of the Soviet bloc to this issue was an important factor in film interchanges between the progressive Arab states and the Soviet Union. Moreover, since many Palestinian filmmakers' travel documents did not allow them to move freely in an Arab world that was divided politically, and Western countries likewise

often created obstacles to entry, the Soviet bloc visa regime was more favorable to them, making it easier to attend the festivals in Leipzig, Karlovy Vary, Moscow, or Tashkent. As a consequence, such festivals and special screenings became one of the more reliable spaces for international exhibition of Palestinian and Palestine-themed cinema. As Yaqub attests: "As the decade [1960s] drew to a close, a regular international circuit for Palestinian films had come into being. The authors of substantive new works could hope for screening at Leipzig, Tashkent, Carthage, Krakow, Damascus, and Baghdad, and perhaps the Moscow film festival. In some cases, festival screenings were followed by regional screenings and/or broadcasts on television in host countries."⁹⁷

The first example of Palestinian filmmaking represented at an international festival, *Exodus 1967*, was made while the original members of the Palestinian Film Unit (including Jawhariyah) were working as camerapersons for Jordanian television, dividing tasks between documenting Palestinian military resistance and creating some of the Jordanian documentary production.⁹⁸ As a result, the film is hardly an example of the militant filmmaking typical of the Film Unit: moderating its politics to celebrate King Hussein of Jordan's intervention at the UN following the Six-Day War, his call to condemn the Israeli aggression and to demand the return of the occupied lands (the position of which the Soviet Union was notoriously sympathetic). But even if the film is complicit with the rhetoric of King Hussein's heroism and Jordan's progress under his rule, its footage documents unflinchingly the devastation caused by the war, drawing attention to the dispossession and experience of refugees in a way that is recognizable from the PFU's films. Siam and Jawhariyah's better known film from the same period, *Jerusalem, the Flower of All Cities* (*Zahrat al-Mada'in*, 1969), set to Fairuz's famous song, had to wait to be screened at Tashkent as part of the Jordanian program in 1976. By that time, from 1972 onward, the PLO and the more politically radical (Marxist-Leninist) Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) had regular representation at the festival, and Palestine would remain at the center of both cinematic representations and political discourses at the festival.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN CINEMA AT TASHKENT: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Even more than for their Arab counterparts, the late 1960s was a pivotal moment for sub-Saharan African cinema, marking its arrival on the international scene as a continental phenomenon. The development of filmmaking itself was inseparable from that of the festival circuit, which was explicitly designed to support it. As Lindiwe Dovey remarks, these festivals "burst onto the scene in the 1960s as significant acts of cultural and political resistance, liberation and self-empowerment, inspiring discussions and debates about Africa, African film, African filmmakers, and African aesthetics on African soil."⁹⁹ Between 1966 and 1970, such

events included the 1966 World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar (Senegal) and the 1969 Pan-African cultural festival of Algiers in Algeria, both of which featured film screenings and participating directors. As we have seen, this was also the foundational moment for the two long-standing film festivals in Africa—the JCC (Carthage) and FESPACO (Ouagadougou). The Pan-African Federation of Filmmakers (FEPACI) was established, spearheaded first as part of the UNESCO-sponsored roundtable on African film and television at JCC '68, just a few days prior to the Tashkent opening, and inaugurated at the next JCC session in 1970.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the presentation of sub-Saharan Africa at Tashkent comes in the crucial moment when, on the one hand, the organizational urgency for the filmmakers and producers was directed toward the creation of an African-specific network and African audiences, and, on the other hand, it also became possible to demonstrate the vitality of this cinema internationally.

As Rachel Gabara points out, the scholarly tendency to focus on African feature films has resulted in ignoring a whole body of documentary work produced in the early 1960s, such as Paulin Vieyra's *A Nation Is Born* (*Une nation est née: La République du Sénégal*, 1961), which won a prize at the inaugural Symposium of Young and Emerging Cinemas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America at Karlovy Vary in 1962, therefore recasting the historical time line of African filmmaking.¹⁰¹ These were the films that found early exhibition venues within the Soviet sphere, culminating in Tashkent's African program. The breadth of Tashkent's range of cinematic forms constituting the festival program (which included institutional and state-produced nonfiction) is precisely what allowed for a particularly extensive showcase of African cinema. And Soviet willingness to cover the expenses of the invited guests assured the unusually wide participation of African filmmakers and functionaries and their warm reception.¹⁰² And the festival offered a particularly useful forum for establishing international networks. Given the urgency of establishing cultural infrastructure free from colonial legacies, in the late 1960s and early 1970s many sub-Saharan African filmmakers shared Cheriaa's conviction that the way to economic independence was through partial or full national control of the film industry, in particular its distribution.¹⁰³ The Soviet bloc offered more accommodating platforms through which to explore such possibilities than the largely private European or American studio and distribution system—especially as it offered training in the technical, artistic, economic, and administrative aspects of filmmaking.

With the exception of South Africa, colonial state organizations (Colonial Film Units, French government film commissions, and the like) had traditionally governed sub-Saharan African film production. Feature fiction filmmaking had no precedent within that preexisting infrastructure, thus setting it up in postcolonial states requiring considerable support, not only for production but also artistic and technical training. While some basic training had been offered through the British Colonial Film Unit, and IDHEC in France offered job training to African film students, there had been little to no film educational opportunities or schools



FIGURE 2.1. Claude-François de Korgou, filmmaker from Niger, signing autographs at the Fourth edition of the festival, 1976. Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.

based in sub-Saharan Africa. Filmmakers were outspoken about the problem of African cinema's inevitable dependency on international support and cooperation, given the lack of proper infrastructural development.¹⁰⁴ Since the late 1950s, the Soviet Union had offered massive "unconditional assistance" for the development of professional cadres for Asian and African comrades, which included fully funded scholarships and special language training programs (fig. 2.1).¹⁰⁵ While Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow became the destination educational institution for students from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the Moscow Film School VGIK was likewise offering opportunities for international study, which were taken up by around one hundred students from Africa between 1960 and 1989. Leningrad film school (LIKI), Film Faculty of the Prague Academy of Performing Arts (FAMU) in Prague, the School of Documentary Cinema of GDR, and the National School of Cinema in Lodz, Poland, also accepted students.¹⁰⁶

To avoid becoming too dependent on any one side (West or East) for assistance, most African postcolonial states adopted the strategy of diversifying their sources of support.¹⁰⁷ A good example of this is Senegal, a nation that was far from being within the Soviet sphere. Léopold Sédar Senghor, the head of the Senegalese state, was a staunch opponent of socialist reforms and was supported largely by France and the US. For Senegalese filmmakers, however, the Soviet bloc was often the better choice, a respite from France, with its soft power over newly decolonized Francophone Africa, and a promise of a more egalitarian society. Unlike French institutions, their Soviet counterparts offered a clean slate with considerably more financial assistance and no explicit expectation about the outcome of training or later control over the cinematic production of the African filmmakers they supported.

SOVIET-AFRICAN CINEMATIC EXCHANGES

Thus, by 1968, key figures of the emerging African cinema had already established contacts in the Soviet Union: the most important were Guinea's Bob Sow (Sowfu) and Senegal's Ousmane Sembene and Paulin Soumanou Vieyra. A special intermediary role was also played by Sarah Maldoror. Maldoror was French, of Guadelupe parentage, and would make her most famous films in Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, and

Congo-Brazzaville, funded by the national liberation movement of Mozambique, FRELIMO. These filmmakers had already achieved successful artistic careers before their arrival in the Soviet Union (Sow and Vieyra as filmmakers, Sembene as a writer, and Maldoror as a theater actress and director in France). They did not therefore pursue a full course of study at VGIK (which took at least five years), but they did attend classes and conduct internships (or *stage*) in Soviet film studios, which gave them an opportunity to gain direct filmmaking experience.

Sow was one of the first cineastes to take advantage of this option: in 1959, less than a year after Guinea achieved independence, he, as the head of Guinea's newly nationalized film industry, went to Moscow to practice filmmaking under the supervision of Alexander Medvedkin. After this, he returned to Guinea, where he resumed his role as head of distribution for the State Film Company, Syli-Cinema.¹⁰⁸ His job was sourcing films directly from distributors, mostly from the socialist bloc, to be screened in both private and public sectors, thus effectively supplanting the two French companies that controlled distribution before Guinean independence.¹⁰⁹ Thus, Sovexportfilm and its Eastern European equivalents played a crucial role in resolving the problem of control over distribution, famously deemed the first step toward achieving independence of the African film sector.¹¹⁰ Sow died in the 1970s, after years of mediating between Guinean film production and the Soviet Union, leading to Guinean students becoming, along with Ethiopia's, the most numerous at VGIK.¹¹¹

Vieyra was another key institutional figure in the Soviet-African nexus. Film scholar and filmmaker as well as an important producer in his role as head of a national newsreel service, *Actualités Sénégalaises*, and one of the cofounders of both FESPACO and FEPACI, his experience in the Soviet Union dated back to the 1957 World Festival of Youth and Students. In his account of the festival's film screenings and discussions in his 1969 volume *Le cinéma et l'Afrique*, Vieyra describes their formative impact on him as a filmmaker and critic. He visited the Soviet Union again in 1962, this time as a cameraman documenting the Senegalese prime minister Mamadou Dia's visit to Moscow, Leningrad, and Tashkent (as well as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary), which allowed him to reconnect with his friend Sembene, who was studying in Moscow during that period.

Both Sembene and Vieyra repeatedly articulated the importance of the Soviet film sphere as the meeting place for African filmmakers and artists and the opportunity to see the films of his African colleagues. In his book, he favorably compared the festival in Moscow to an African film festival in Lille in which he participated just a few months later, contrasting both the "Soviet kindness and hospitality" and the wide range of countries represented there to the openly paternalistic (toward its African participants) tone of the Lille event and its implicit prohibition of political discussions.¹¹² Vieyra was a regular participant at Tashkent, where he claimed to have had his first chance to see films from Ghana and Somalia in 1968 and, in 1972, to have seen the celebrated *Soleil O*, by Mel Hondo.¹¹³ This claim is striking



FIGURE 2.2. Ousmane Sembene with Tamar Khanum at the Afro-Asian Writers Conference, Tashkent, 1958. Photo from author's private collection.

since Vieyra was extremely active on the African film festival circuit in Europe and, alongside Cheriaa and Sembene was directly involved in the establishment of FESPACO. Yet many of the films he discusses in *Le cinéma africain*—and, in doing so, laying the foundation for African film history discourses for generations to come—he saw first in Tashkent.¹¹⁴

If Sembene saw himself first as a writer, Vieyra could be rightfully called the first historian and critic of sub-Saharan African cinema.¹¹⁵ Both were attracted by the broadly based literary and artistic curriculum of the Soviet film schools and were keen to promote criticism and history as a crucial part of film culture. In his published work, Vieyra not only surveys the broadest range of African cinematic expression of the time but often offers uncompromisingly sharp critiques of African films he sees as failing in their aesthetic pursuit.¹¹⁶ As Dovey notes, in his earliest writings, Vieyra somewhat surprisingly singles out Czech films as exemplary for their “human qualities: youth, freshness, spontaneity,” and for the “singular power of their images” and their “psychological and emotional density.”¹¹⁷ Evidencing the importance of aesthetic criteria for the early development of African cinemas, as well as the wide range of international styles that shaped it, Vieyra’s writing underscores a truly cosmopolitan cinematic formation. Transcending the ideological position by which these foundational figures of African cinema are usually discussed, their openness and exposure to a wide variety of international cinemas was ultimately greater than that of many of their more celebrated Western counterparts, and their active participation at the socialist bloc’s film circuit further allowed for a considerably broader global outlook.

Vieyra’s collaborator and friend Ousmane Sembene was without a doubt the most visible figure in establishing and maintaining the Soviet-African nexus. The Soviet view of the two is expressed in a volume dedicated to the cinemas represented at the Tashkent festival: the section on Sembene bears the title of “Father of African Cinema” and on Vieyra “The Pioneer of African Cinema.”¹¹⁸ Originally sent to Prague by the Communist Party of France, of which he was a member, Sembene participated in the 1958 Afro-Asian Writers Congress (fig. 2.2), together with Mario Pinto de Andrade, Angolan poet and politician, who was the founder of the Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and its first president, and

his Mozambican counterpart—the poet and FRELIMO politician Marcelino dos Santos. Sembene knew de Andrade from Paris, where as the editor of *Présence Africaine* he had published Sembene's first story; they were part of the same communist literary circle involved in political organizing of Africans in France around the liberation struggles in Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and Cape Verde (Sembene founded the Marseille chapter of PAIGC in 1958).¹¹⁹

In *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism*, Rossen Djagalov gives a compelling account of the Afro-Asian Writers Congress in the creation and promotion of Soviet-Afro-Asian cultural dialogue and draws out the continuities between the 1958 literary event and its accompanying film festival and the 1968 Tashkent film festival.¹²⁰ After his participation at the Writers Congress, Sembene returned to Moscow in 1962 to be trained at the Gorky Film Studio, where he spent nine months under the tutelage of Mark Donskoi, who also led the workshops at VGIK that Sembene attended. During the 1960s, Sembene continued not only to make films (and write novels), but also, alongside Cheriaa and Vieyra, played a key role in the creation of the pan-African cinematic networks: as president of the Jury at Carthage in 1968 and a leading figure in both FESPACO and FEPACI. Given these roles, his participation in the events organized in the Soviet Union further demonstrate their importance for the endogenous African film industry. At Tashkent he presented *The Money Order* (*Mandabi*, 1968), his first feature film made in Senegal in the Wolof language—but funded by the French National Cinema Center and coproduced with his own company, Domirev, and Comptoir Français du Film Production (CFFP).¹²¹ *Mandabi* quickly became an international sensation, winning the special jury prize at Venice the same year and shown around the World as the prime example of cinema emerging from sub-Saharan Africa.

As the most widely internationally recognized African filmmaker of that period, he toured widely in Europe and the US, successfully navigating the Cold War divides. In a 1972 *Film Quarterly* interview, he remarked that he didn't speak of his experiences in Russia when in America, just as he didn't speak of his American experiences when in Russia—pointing to a sort of diplomatic code that kept him internationally connected.¹²² This was generally true, but he was always outspoken on the subject of imperialist wars and the US's role in them; thus, in a 1973 interview with *Jeune Afrique*, when he was asked about the future of Africa, he responded: "The thing that I hope for above all is that the Vietnam War ends. I can no more forget Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique, South Guinea, or the Palestinians. Behind all of it one finds American power. I think Africa can change many things in all of these conflicts. It would be enough to not keep silent."¹²³

Similar motivations led Maldoror to accept a scholarship to study filmmaking in the USSR: together with Sembene, she was part of Donskoi's VGIK workshop in 1961 and 1962.¹²⁴ Maldoror had already established a reputation in French theater as one of the founders—along with Ivorian filmmaker Timité Bassori, Ababacar Samb Makharam, and Toto Bissainthe—of the first Black theater company in

France: Les Griots.¹²⁵ In addition to studying Russian and attending VGIK workshops, she also served in Moscow as assistant director on Donskoi's film *Hello, Children! (Zdravstvuite, deti!)*, 1962), an antiwar tear-jerker set at the famous Soviet international summer camp in Crimea, depicting the friendship of a group of children with a Japanese girl suffering effects from the nuclear explosion at Hiroshima. As the film included a multiracial cast of young actors, it is easy to imagine Donskoi's motivation to include Maldoror on the work crew. After her two-year stay in the Soviet Union, Maldoror joined the pioneers of the African liberation movements in Guinea, Algeria, and Guinea-Bissau alongside her partner (and MPLA leader) de Andrade. In Algeria she worked as an assistant to Gillo Pontecorvo and William Klein. Her first short, *Monangambee* (1968), was funded in part by Algeria and received an award at the Carthage film festival, as did her first feature, *Sambizanga* in 1972 (filmed in Congo, with the participation of Congolese militants), which was also screened in Tashkent in 1974.

Maldoror's achievement was quite unique: she was not only the only African woman filmmaker at that time but also a committed pan-Africanist-internationalist, whose goal was to make the African liberation struggles visible, on par with Vietnam, to the rest of the world.¹²⁶ Her political position in Angola was openly aligned with the MPLA's Marxist-Leninist (and Soviet-supported) orientation of the struggle. As Marissa Moorman asserts in her discussion of *Sambizanga*: "By 1966, three nationalist organizations, mentioned earlier, were fighting against the Portuguese in Angola. Anticolonial sentiment may have been unequivocal but the implications of this in terms of national rule and national affect were not. Therefore, when *Sambizanga* won the grand prize at the Carthage film festival in 1972, it was not only a show of support for the Angolan independence struggle generally but for a particular interpretation of that struggle and for the MPLA as the legitimate representative of the Angolan people."¹²⁷

In the heated moment of armed struggle preceding the 1975 victory, international solidarity through consciousness-raising was an important focal point for these African revolutionaries fighting not only *against* colonialism but *for* socialism—and for this, Tashkent provided a perfect forum, making Maldoror its perfect spokesperson.

THE SUB-SAHARAN FESTIVAL SELECTION

Overall, Tashkent's selection represented a much wider geographic range than is usually represented in the English-language histories of African cinema. Guinea was represented, among others, through VGIK alumnus Costa N'Diagne, whose 1966 graduation film, *Men of the Dance (Les hommes de la danse)*, was awarded the Gold Antelope at the World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar. This coincided with a watershed moment in pan-African politics, the coup in Ghana that overthrew Kwame Nkrumah and reversed his prosocialist policies, creating a rift between

the more right-leaning, US-aligned states (such as Senegal) and the leaders of the radical African left (the so-called Casablanca bloc).¹²⁸ One of the manifestations of this conflict was a diplomatic crisis between Ghana and Guinea, after the Ghanaian government held a group of in-transit Guinean diplomats hostage. As Senegal sided with the new Ghanaian government, Sekou-Toure, in protest, chose to boycott the Organisation for African Unity meeting, as well as the festival in Dakar (broadly associated with the *négritude* movement that Senghor had helped form).¹²⁹

As repercussions for his film's entry to the Dakar festival against his country's boycott, Diagne was unable to work for almost a year after his return to Guinea, but he came to officially represent Guinea with two films at Tashkent: *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (1968), which had been screened in Carthage and Leipzig the same year and *Eight and Twenty*, a documentary on the celebration of the eighth anniversary of Guinean independence. A Guinean feature (based on a popular theater play) *Sergeant Bakary Woolen* (*Le Sergent Bakary Woolen*, 1966), by Mohamed Lamine Akin, rounded out the Guinean selection. Unfortunately, both Guinean filmmakers fell victim to the state repressions following the November 1970 attempted coup against Sekou-Toure; both returned to the Guinean film industry only by the 1980s.¹³⁰

Yet the Soviet leadership of the Tashkent festival deliberately overlooked these rifts and issued invitations to all three nations: thus, Senegal, Guinea, and Ghana were all represented at the 1968 Tashkent festival. Ghana submitted its second feature film—the first one directed by a Ghanaian—*No Tears for Ananse* (Sam Aryeetey, 1965), which was also submitted to Locarno the same year. Unlike many other African countries, Ghana had inherited a considerable film (and television) infrastructure from colonial times, as well as a trained cadre. It nationalized its film industry early, in 1957, through the Ghana Film Industry Corporation.¹³¹ Moreover, even more than other African nations, since its independence Ghana “diversified” the geography of its filmmakers’ training. Thus, Aryeetey, for example, was trained initially at the colonial Gold Coast Film Unit, then in England, and on return worked and eventually led the Film Corporation, despite the fact that the organization lost much of its original ambitions after Nkrumah’s fall.¹³²

The documentary program also included some of the first films made in independent Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Libya, Dahomey (now Benin), and Uganda. The most widely commented on of the documentary films was perhaps Chad’s French-educated Eduard Saily’s “Third Day” (“Le troisième jour,” 1967)—a fifteen-minute black-and-white film without any dialogue or voice-over, depicting the state of mind of a mourning fisherman.¹³³ It was also notable for Malian Souleymane Cissé’s international festival debut, *Source of Inspiration* (*Source d’inspiration*, 1968), made while Cissé was still a student at VGIK, undergoing the full course of study after his initial one year-*stage*. On returning to Mali with his graduate degree in 1969, he was hired as a film director by the Film Section of the Ministry of Information

of Mali (SCINFOMA), where he produced more than thirty newsreels and several documentary films. In 1972 he made his first independent film, *Five Days in a Life* (*Cinq jours d'une vie*, 1972), which together with *The Sanke Celebration* (*Fête du Sankè*, 1971) was shown at Tashkent 1972. Cissé had to wait for recognition in the West for another decade and a half, when his film *The Light* (*Yeleen*, 1987) won the Jury Prize at Cannes, heralding a new interest in sub-Saharan African cinema. Recognized internationally as a global art cinema auteur, Cissé nonetheless made clear in his interviews that to gain that status, he had to make compromises to make African filmmaking acceptable to Western audiences. He discussed the difference between *Yeleen* and his earlier, more explicitly political films: "After I made *Finyé* and *Baara*, I was labeled a political filmmaker, some said my films are too didactic. But an artist should have the freedom to experiment with theme, content, and narrative strategy. As my own experiences have shown, what you narrate may also put you into trouble. Sometimes, in order to survive a hostile environment, one is forced, not necessarily to disarm, but to construct a narrative that is not too political nor devoid of pungent criticism of the system."¹³⁴ In a reversal of the (neo)liberal modality with which Cissé came to negotiate in the late 1980s, films at the Soviet film festivals were expected to be explicitly political, although the extent to which they allowed for any "pungent criticism of the system" is highly debatable, to say the least.

CONCLUSION

Most films at the festival, regardless of their origins, explicitly addressed social realities of postcolonial contemporary experiences, creating dramatic tension out of class structures and inequalities. Very few films fall into the category of "cinema of denunciation"—that is, directly focused on exposing structures of economic or political oppression. Most of the others explored the tension between "the old" (understood alternatively as either traditional culture or the remnants of the colonial regime, or neocolonial forces) and the emergence of "the new" (the modern, often socialist, state), often framed within the individual or family unit. This describes not only the public-sector films of Arab and African countries but also "independent" Japanese films or Central Asian poetic cinema. In the historiographies of their respective national cinemas, these films often fall under the "socially engaged" or "social realist" or "humanist realist" label. They range in their acceptance or rejection of the codes of conventional language of commercial (Egyptian—or Bombay-based—or Hollywood-esque or Stalinist socialist-realist): some fully embrace it in the service of legibility and popular reach; others experiment with new codes (often ones associated with the "New" or New Wave" cinemas) to convey greater authenticity in their portrayal of social and cultural realities and subjective experiences of them ("poetic realism"). Considered overly didactic and dogmatic in film histories, not easily positioned either in relation to

“low” popular culture or to the more formally experimental art cinema, they have tended to be overlooked in scholarship on world cinema.

As we will see, while the 1968 edition of Tashkent presented a much more conservative and, as a result, harmonious body of films, the cultural New Left of the late 1960s came to manifest itself more visibly at the festival in following decades, disrupting this harmony. In this coverage of the whole sweep of socialist cinema, the Tashkent festival truly becomes a rare showcase of the power and vitality of the left-oriented cinemas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Tashkent 1972–1980

GLOBAL GEOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Although the Tashkent festival was designed to meet every two years, the 1970 edition had to be canceled due to a cholera epidemic. Thus, four years passed between the first and the second installments, which could have taken the air out of the enterprise. Instead, the 1972 edition was a success: it was larger in scale and marked the big changes that had taken place in the world. From that point on, the festival would continue taking place every two years throughout the 1970s and 1980s, until the fall of the Soviet Union. It was, however, the 1970s that remained the liveliest period in the history of the festival—vividly reflecting the decade that would prove decisive for the geopolitical developments of the global Cold War and the aspirations of the socialist Third World.

The early to mid-1970s seemed to offer simultaneously the signs of a shifting global balance of power from the Global North and a growing militarization and violence in the Global South. Soviet-US relations reached a *détente* against the backdrop of the end of the war in Vietnam, which resulted in a notable increase in trade between the socialist bloc and the West; the OPEC oil embargo placed many of the Non-Aligned countries (such as Algeria and Iraq) in an unprecedented position of power and led to many of the European countries taking a pro-Arab stance vis-à-vis Israeli occupation; the Carnation Revolution in Portugal ended forty-one years of dictatorship in the midst of intensifying liberation efforts in all the former Portuguese colonies; and the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration for the Establishment of the New International Economic Order, despite US opposition toward such global “redistribution” of wealth.

In a significant series of nuances to the policy of *détente* with the US announced at the 24th CPSU Congress on Peace, Soviet military support was significantly increased for the liberation struggles in Africa; ties with India, Syria, and Iraq were tightened; and the Soviet Union became the chief superpower sponsor of Palestinian liberation. By 1973 Brezhnev joined Tito in calling for recognition

of legitimate nation rights of the people of Palestine, and in 1974, the PLO opened an office in Moscow—tacitly amounting to the Soviet recognition of the PLO as a legitimate a state actor.¹ In contrast, Egypt's definitive shift toward the US, and the US-backed military coup in Chile, strengthened reactionary forces throughout the Southern Hemisphere.

Another change was in the Soviet relationship with South Asia. When Pakistan tried to suppress the Bengali independence movement with mass slaughter in March 1971, Indira Gandhi's government, faced with the mass exodus of millions of Bengali refugees, turned to the Soviet Union for both military and diplomatic support. Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan, supported by India and the Soviet Union, brought the two countries into further political alignment, solidified through the signing of an Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, ending India's formal position of nonalignment. Despite the continuing tensions between them (and the US support of Pakistan), since both Pakistan and Bangladesh after its independence came to be headed by prosocialist leaders, for much of the 1970s both countries also maintained close cultural and political contacts with the Soviet Union. This shift was reflected in the increased number of entries from South Asian cinemas at the Tashkent festival in 1972 and subsequent editions throughout the decade.

In the same year as the Soviet-Indian treaty of 1971, the Soviet Union also signed a treaty with Egypt that ensured further Soviet military support. For Sadat, it was a ploy to appease and gain the loyalty of the Egyptian military, on which the regime depended; for the Soviets, it was a way of "sweetening the pot" in the face of Sadat's increasing orientation toward the US.² Infuriated by the public defeat in Bangladesh, Nixon dramatically increased US aid to Israel in 1972; in a counter-move, the Soviet Union intensified its efforts in the Middle East by strengthening its ties to Libya and signing a treaty with Iraq in 1972.³ In June 1972, Sadat made his move by expelling all Soviet military from Egypt. Although Egypt remained fully dependent on Soviet military aid during the disastrous Fourth Arab-Israeli war in 1973, as a token of goodwill toward the West, Sadat reversed most of Nasser's reforms, leading to reprivatization of the country and all its sectors. With Egypt's increasing turn to the US, Soviet support of Palestine became more important to much of the Arab world, and this alignment was reflected at the Tashkent festival and its predominance of films in support of Palestine (whether produced by the PLO or the other Arab nations) throughout the 1970s. The intensifications of ties with Baathist Iraq and Syria, alongside rapid development of their national film industries, led to their overall increased presence at the festival as well, taking center stage by its 1974 session but already visible in the 1972 edition. Afghanistan's 1973 coup d'état, supported by the country's Communist Party, led to closer ties with the Soviet Union, which was also reflected in the festival's selections.

The period would also prove decisive for Soviet support of the African liberation movements. The 1969 AAPSO Khartoum Conference, with representatives

of fifty-six countries and twelve international organizations, recognized Soviet-supported movements (MPLA, FRELIMO, PAIGG, ANC, ZAPU, and SWAPO) as the authentic representatives of African liberation, creating international publicity for their support. In their reports on the Khartoum conference, Soviet delegates emphasized that the liberation movements, at this point under the influence of the Vietnam model, were moving from political to armed struggle and advised that Soviet assistance would be crucial for the success of these movements and Soviet international standing.⁴ Soviet support of the African liberation movements of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau gave special status to emerging cinemas from those countries, which the Tashkent festival increasingly showcased.

In Latin America, too, the Soviet Union was advancing a changed policy. After 1968, Cuba gradually entered the period that became known as “The Gray Five Years,” when, under pressure from the Soviet Union, Cuba’s former embrace of the Tricontinental revolutionary vanguard was replaced by the intensification of its cultural bureaucracy that scrutinized both artistic production and artists’ personal lives.⁵ The 1970 electoral victory of Allende in Chile further reoriented the more mainstream socialist and communist parties of the continent toward alignment with the socialist bloc, while Pinochet’s coup only intensified the relationship between the exiled Chilean leftists and the Soviet bloc. Mirroring these developments, the festival expanded to Latin American countries, a movement that was reflected in the name change in 1976.⁶

We will see how these developments found their expressions on Tashkent festival screens, lists of participants, and topics of its creative discussions. Solidarity documentary filmmaking continued to be highly visible in the 1970s: Tashkent screened Bangladeshi, Chilean, and subsequently Chilean diasporic films, as well as socialist bloc films made in support of ongoing anti-imperialist conflicts and even some European films in solidarity with US Black radical movements. Moreover, while Palestine and Chile were represented after the Pinochet coup by the PFLP/PLO and Chilean Patriotic Forces, both the UN and UNESCO also participated with film selections, thus exceeding the usual nation-state entities. Overall, the festival’s official geography came to be more clearly defined: by 1972, the Soviets invited all the Asian and African countries with the exception of “reactionary regimes” of South Vietnam, Taiwan, South Africa, South Korea, Israel, and South Rhodesia. Both Hong Kong and China continued to be significant absentees. At the same time, many more countries from virtually all parts of the world were represented: in addition to the already established participants and increasing number of Latin American newcomers, films from Tanzania, Uganda, Gambia, Niger, and Yemen were included in the program for the first time in 1972, followed by a further increase in the representation of sub-Saharan African cinema in subsequent editions. Iran and Turkey, despite their alliances with the US, both increased their participation as well, making a strategic decision to expand their international cinematic reach.⁷

The geographic expansion of the festival program made more visible the bifurcation of “mainstream,” auteur, and militant avant-garde cinemas, with corresponding segmentation of audiences; Tashkent, here, was mirroring the global changes in film cultures. An older idea of politically progressive and yet genuinely popular film, which helped shape filmmaking in India of the 1950s or Egypt of the 1960s, became harder to imagine in the 1970s. The festival found itself often supporting a kind of middle position, which was already visible in its inaugural sessions. The heterogeneous mix of films generated increasing critiques from its more outspoken guests yet remained broad enough to sustain its own complex equilibrium.

CHANGES IN SOVIET CULTURAL POLICIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING

Throughout the 1970s the festival continued to expand its geographic representation. The number of participating countries increased from 49 in 1968 to 109 in 1976, while the number of films doubled from 105 to 210.⁸ The 1972 edition of the festival in many ways “caught up” to the spirit of 1968, with the masterpieces of Third-Worldist cinema and the participation of its key figures: Med Hondo, Mrinal Sen, Sandhu Sukhdev, Kassem Hawal, Souheil Ben Barka, Patricio Guzmán, and Miguel Littín, as well as Ousmane Sembene and Pauline Vieyra. The presence of these politically radical artists corresponded at least in part to the intensification of the anti-imperialist rhetoric of the Soviet Union. Its official cultural policy was expressed in the 1972 CPSU resolution “On Literary-Artistic Criticism” and its follow-up “On the Measures of Further Development of Soviet Cinema,” which called for art that engaged in ideological struggle and countered the so-called creative borrowings from the West that perpetuated bourgeois ideology in art.

The new head of the recently reformed Goskino, Filipp Ermash, gave a definitive speech in 1973 in which he reiterated the lack of tolerance for so-called bourgeois liberalism.⁹ As a result, the Soviet cultural bureaucracy asserted even more ideological control of film production and criticism, with distribution and exhibition of Western (US, British, and Western European) films coming under increased scrutiny. This created further space for those cinemas from Africa, Asia, and Latin America that employed an explicitly anticapitalist or anti-Western vernacular. Commercial film exchanges with “noncapitalist countries” also remained the better deal for the Soviet Union (as they were paid for through barter rather than “hard currency” and were reliably popular with Soviet audiences).¹⁰ After SovInFilm—an organization created to oversee and support the development of international coproductions—was created in 1966, its efforts to establish coproductions with European countries faced a series of difficulties, drawing attention from the KGB.¹¹ In response, the party issued a document in 1970 urging the film industry to apply more rigorous ideological criteria in such projects and redirect its efforts toward socialist and developing countries—efforts that would be fully



FIGURE 3.1. Latif Faziev (Uzbekistan) and Umesh Mehra (India) at the fifth Tashkent festival (1978) discussing plans for their film coproduction *Adventures of Alibaba and Forty Thieves* (*Alibaba Aur 40 Chor*, 1980). Photo used by permission of Sputnik.

realized only by the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, with several high-profile Soviet coproductions with India, Turkey, Japan, and Mexico, among others.¹² The Tashkent film festival presented perfect opportunities as a hub for these networks of exchange, placing even greater emphasis on their political ideological dimensions, while at the same time creating pressure to support more commercially driven film exhibition opportunities (fig. 3.1).

SOVIET (RE)ORIENTATION TOWARD POPULAR CINEMA

At the same time as the intensification of its program's political rhetoric, and considerably more controversially, the Tashkent festival in the 1970s continued its inclusion of popular genre films. In the Soviet Union, as in most other parts of the world, as TV-watching became more dominant (including the popularity of made-for-TV films), moviegoing declined. In part as a response to economic pressures, and in part as a political compromise, Goskino's solution was to favor "lighter" fare, which was not only profitable but tended to raise considerably fewer ideological objections and thus minimized conflicts between the film studios and the Communist Party.¹³ Similar logic was in place for film imports: as "serious" films came under increasingly closer scrutiny, and therefore ran a higher chance of being declared at odds with the official ideological position at any given moment, in the course of the 1970s film exhibition in the USSR came to be dominated by Italian and French comedies (deemed acceptable owing to the reliability of their respective communist parties), as well as Indian, Egyptian, and Mexican genre films—and the Tashkent festival was a crucial way to nurture such commercial ties.¹⁴

As a result, the 1970s Soviet cinematic sphere, in Kristin Roth-Ey's words, was characterized by "increased complexity, differentiation, and resemblance to the cinemas of the capitalist West . . .," where we see "a steady segmentation . . . into

high/low, elite/mass, art-house/mainstream zones, with different films, different audiences and even different venues.”¹⁵

In this context, “serious” foreign films were shown primarily in Moscow and Leningrad in special venues, as part of festivals, retrospectives, or “weeks of foreign cinema,” while commercial film imports were more generally driven by popular demand for genre films—mirroring the segmentation of film cultures in much of the rest of the world.

Tashkent was, indeed, the main festival that could facilitate both import and export of films with great commercial potential. The festival served as a reliable site for acquiring commercial films from Asia and, increasingly, Latin America for Soviet film exhibition; it also promoted sales of Soviet, especially Central Asian, films, which had the potential to be more attractive as commercial exports to Asian and Middle Eastern countries. For many leftist critics and filmmakers at Tashkent, however, a socialist festival foregrounding the very cinema they associated with the capitalist, albeit non-Western, hegemonies was a stab in the back. For some, traditional narrative and style were more objectionable than the dogmatic didacticism of some of the militant films (or the numerous industrial documentaries) or the obvious geopolitical divergencies among the groups at the festival. Yet, from many accounts of the Tashkent festival, it appears that the local audience was genuinely enthusiastic about most festival films, attending the screenings in large numbers (even if, at times, also openly expressing their dislikes). The general curiosity and hunger for all things foreign, combined with a cultural formation in the 1950s and 1960s that promoted non-Western cinemas in the Soviet Union, prepared Tashkent audiences to give a chance to the wide range of cultural and national forms and cinematic modes presented, even if their preference for commercial cinema was clearly marked. An overview of programming in the course of the 1970s—reflective of the changes within each regional cinema’s selections compared to the first edition of the festival—brings out both the conflicts and the compromises achieved in Tashkent’s construction of the field of world socialist cinema and its constitutive affinities, alliances, and solidarities.

NONFICTION MODALITIES

The increased politicization of the period was most visible in the expanded non-fiction selection of the festival. Combat documentaries and reportages from the hot spots of the Cold War and ongoing liberation struggles were a crucial part of the festival program throughout the 1970s. Reflecting cinema’s broader cultural and political role, however, documentaries about national liberation (Vietnam, Algeria, Iraq, Angola, Bangladesh) were presented next to (auto)ethnographic films and travelogues (India, Morocco, Lebanon, Iran) to underscore the fact that independence allowed for the recovery of threatened cultural heritage. These latter films have often been disparaged for their complicity with colonial forms of

heritage preservation or exploitative economies of tourism, invested in projecting the continuous and unbroken civilization in the face of colonial ruptures, imperialist wars, and the transformations of industrial modernity. While perceived by some radical filmmakers as reactionary, they nonetheless shared the postcolonial political imperative to self-represent and to reconstruct the past from its traces in everyday culture, historically denied through colonialism and (neo)imperialism.

Juxtaposed—and at time overlapping—with this genre were nonfiction films praising modernization and progress through industrial/agricultural accomplishments from locations as different as Korean People's Democratic Republic and Tanzania. The OPEC embargo that briefly flooded oil economies with cash was particularly visible in the industrial documentaries from Mali, Ghana, and Zambia—as well as Algeria, Iraq, and Peru. Equally constitutive of postcolonial state agendas, as chapters 6 and 7 of this book discuss, both industrial and ethnographic/travelogue films were effectively integrated within the vision of modernity they put forward. Often state-produced, their cinematic style varied from poetic or narrativized depictions to analytical studies to basic newsreel reportage with a traditional voice-over.

One classic type of newsreel—a reportage of the visit of a foreign dignitary—became a standard film type throughout Tashkent's existence. Easily overlooked by scholarship, it is worth asking what function was satisfied by this obsessively recurring genre in the context of a festival dedicated to internationalism. When shown in a more traditional setting (as when newsreels were screened in movie theaters before the main feature, which was common practice around the world during that period), the newsreels tended to get absorbed into the cinematic flow, often undermining their significance. When they were screened as separate—and, indeed, for some countries the only—entry, their features stood out more distinctly in the context of other similar representations staged by the festival. As such, these films intentionally drew attention to particular diplomatic configurations as manifestations of “international friendship between the peoples,” and in the course of the festival there were many articulations of the particular geographies and solidarities they were meant to assert. When shown at Tashkent, their ideological function was to affirm either a country's alignment with the Soviet Union or to underscore regional or global solidarity-making. In other words, they affirmed the “anti-imperialist harmony of the socialist bloc and the non-aligned nations” in such films as Algeria's newsreel on Castro's visit in 1972 or Guinea's coverage of the guests at the pan-African festival in Algiers or Gambia's reportage on the visit of Liberia's president.¹⁶

Far from being empty political displays, together they foregrounded the emergence of a shared bloc, corresponding to the 1973 formulation of the New International Economic Order (NIEO) at the UN: a plan to reshape the global economy to redress the global distribution of wealth, especially as it was derived from the economies of extraction from the Southern Hemisphere.¹⁷ Even such seemingly



FIGURE 3.2. Soviet, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Indian actresses at the third edition of the Tashkent festival (1974). *Left to right:* Sujata (Bangladesh), Svetlana Svetlichnaia (USSR), Vyjayanthimala (India), Margarita Terekhova (USSR), Shamim Ara (Pakistan), Liudmila Gurchenko (USSR), unknown woman, Liudmila Saveleva (USSR), Farida Akhtar Babita (Bangladesh). Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.

pedestrian films as reportages of visiting foreign government officials performed an important symbolic work of inscribing specific national projects within a broader set of global geopolitical and economic relations. Their exhibition collectively educated audiences in a new global imaginary intended to create solidarity in the shared Third World project. The Soviet Union was eager to capitalize on this process by including itself in this geography—both through the festival itself and through the geopolitical trajectories projected in the films it screened.

SOUTH ASIA: INTERSECTING HISTORIES, SHARED SPACES, NEW AND OLD STYLES

One important redefinition of a cinematic geography at the festival was offered through its 1970s South Asian selection, bringing together films that even to this date are rarely discussed in relation to each other. The event of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Nepalese, and Sri Lankan films sharing screens at the Tashkent festival (and their stars, filmmakers, and critics participating at the various events, together) situates the intersecting history of a vast area through which individual filmmakers moved and different film languages, styles, and discourses migrated and mixed (fig. 3.2). Uniting some of this diversity is the fact that these editions

of the festival coincided with the high point of state-funded and institutionalized cinema in Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Throughout the subcontinent, the state's involvement often took the form of disciplining film production by encouraging what was perceived as a modern orientation toward a middle-class humanism (sometimes with a short-lived leftist worldview) in rivalry with the highly successful entertainment model of the Bombay film industry. Yet what emerges from seeing the films together is not so much the overarching top-down state agenda as the persistent cross-referencing of shared methods, styles, forms, and sources, escaping the clear lines dividing "entertainment" from "realism," distinct nationalist narratives from intertwined histories.¹⁸ As such, the mid-1970s Tashkent South Asian selection marks a unique and short-lived moment when these various cineastes were engaged in similar projects across divergent religious and ethnic lines (as well as across the Sino-Soviet split), sharing physical and symbolic space at the festival.

Thus, Sri Lanka's entries at the festival were also presented by the newly formed National State Film Corporation in the course of the 1970s, notably with films by Mahagama Sekera (*The Crossroads/Thun Man Handiya*, 1970), K. A. W. Perera (*Lasanda*, 1974), and Dharmasena Pathiraja (*Coming of Age/Eya Dan Loku Lamayek*, 1975). The Sri Lankan version of the Ramayana, which screened in 1976, further emphasized the shared cultural heritage of the region. The festival also became important for the emerging Nepalese film industry, with the head of the newly government-created Royal Film Corporation proudly presenting its first productions with documentaries celebrating Nepal's dance traditions in 1976 and in 1978 showcasing the first Nepalese color film, *Kumari* (Prem Bahadur Basnet, 1977), based on a popular short story taking place in the Indigenous Newar community. Most likely, this was the first time Nepali films were ever screened at an international film festival.¹⁹

The South Asian film programming at Tashkent continued to be not only the largest but also the most diverse. Some of the participants, especially its Indian delegation, were familiar faces: K. A. Abbas, Sunil Dutt, Nargis, Raj Kapoor, and his son Rishi; Nargis even celebrated her birthday in Tashkent in 1972, at an impromptu celebration where the Egyptian dancer Zubaida performed for her while "gifts after gifts [were] arriving at Nargis' table."²⁰ The Indian press reports extolled the unpolluted atmosphere of Tashkent, with quotations from Indian participants who described their time there as "a ten-day escape into the Garden of Eden," while more subtly wondering about the lack of films from Hong Kong or Singapore at the festival. These underlined the ascent of the Indian film industry to the largest film producer in the world, overtaking Japan.²¹ And Kapoor's *Bobby* (1973), written by Abbas, was as successful with USSR audiences as those far beyond Tashkent as the highest grossing film of the year in India and one of the top grossing Indian films of all time.²² The film was a rare Tashkent selection that appealed to the global youth pop culture of the time, with its fresh-faced teenage stars, outrageous "Western" fashions (abundant in bell bottoms, enormous collars

and patterned ties, cut-off tops, miniskirts, and hot pants), hot colors, and a range of exotic locations in which a conventional romance unfolded.

But the real change from 1968 is in the number of inclusions of independent and more explicitly political cinema—first evidenced in by Mrinal Sen's entry of *Interview* (1970) in the 1972 program. The film rebelled against the more conventional narrative mode of many of the fiction films presented at Tashkent and the kind of Indian cinema Soviet audiences were accustomed to. *Interview's* plot—involving a man who cannot get a Western-style suit to go to a job interview—with its self-referential style and its violent montage sequences, was a far cry from traditional melodramatic narratives with song-and-dance numbers. Moreover, as the film formed part of the Calcutta Trilogy dealing with the Naxalite movement (a radical movement that opposed the United Front government of Bengal, which came out of the 1967 alliance of the pro-Moscow and Maoist branches of the Communist Party of India), which was openly critical of the Soviet Union, the film's politics were also potentially explosive within the Soviet context. Of the many Tashkent participants, Sen was also one of the most outspoken critics of the conservatism of Soviet film culture and the festival itself, and he voiced his opinions loudly during Tashkent's "creative discussions" and press conferences.²³ But despite these critiques, Sen remained a cherished guest, and the eighth (1984) Tashkent festival even included a retrospective of the director's films, claiming him as one of the most important "international discoveries" of the festival.

CINEMAS OF BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN

A much lesser known part of the South Asian selection of the Tashkent festival was the cinema of Bangladesh, which became the focus of attention in 1972, after the Soviet-supported victory of Bangladesh in the Liberation War of 1971. The best-known Bangladesh-themed entry to Tashkent that year was actually not one made in Bangladesh but the Films Division of India (FD)'s *Nine Months to Freedom: The Story of Bangladesh* (1972), made by renowned leftist documentarian Sandhu Sukhdev (nicknamed Comrade Sukh for his political position), an avid and highly enthusiastic Tashkent participant.²⁴ The documentary combines footage shot by Sukhdev in the midst of the independence war with images of the massacre, interviews, and political and media analysis of the event provided by voice-over and montages of stills, newspapers, and international TV coverage. At the festival, it was screened together with another Films Division production: *For Freedom for Democracy* (S. M. Junnarkar, 1972), an eighteen-minute montage of excerpts from Indira Gandhi's speeches before and after India's involvement in the war in Bangladesh.²⁵

But more important was the festival's inclusion of *Stop Genocide* (Zahir Raihan, 1971), the first film made by a Bangladeshi filmmaker to address the topic of the Liberation War in the international festival circuit.²⁶ Raihan was a veteran art

director whose fiction film *Taken from Life* (*Jiban Theke Neya*, 1970), also shown at Tashkent in 1972, faced serious opposition and censorship in Pakistan as it used allegory to decry the military dictatorship of Ayub Khan. It was immediately recognized as the first film to articulate the spirit of Bangladeshi independence.²⁷ But it was his nonfiction *Stop Genocide* that made the biggest splash at Tashkent (as discussed in detail in the concluding chapter of this book). Raihan was also celebrated at Tashkent for his advocacy of nationalizing the Bangladesh film industry—a plan left unrealized after Raihan tragically disappeared in Dhaka several months after the country declared independence.²⁸

The Tashkent festival of the 1970s turned out to be the site where virtually all Bangladesh's significant fiction productions of the period were screened and where many of its most important stars and directors appeared. At the same time, Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan presented an interesting problem for a festival so attached to national categories: how was one to categorize films that were included in the previous session as representative of Pakistani cinema if they were made in what is now Bangladesh or by Bangladeshi filmmakers? Soviet festival reviewers solved that problem by leaving the assessments of Pakistani and Bangladeshi film histories as constructed by the filmmakers themselves. Thus Syed Hasan Imam and Alamgir Kabir traced the cinema of Bangladesh to the 1950s and the film corporation in Dhaka, pointing out the success at the 1959 Moscow film festival of Ajay Karda's *The Day Shall Dawn* (*Jago Hua Savera*, 1959), based on Faiz Ahmad Faiz's story, as foundational for the national cinema, connecting it to Calcutta's "realist school" (i.e., the work of Satyajit Ray). Similar claims for understanding Bangladesh cinema were made for films made by Baby Islam, Subhash Dutta, and Aatur Rahman Khan, whose *Nawab Sirajuddaula* (1967) was screened at the Tashkent festival in 1968 (then representing Pakistani cinema), as well as Raihan's. The change of national identity was articulated through the divide between, on the one hand, cinema of social significance associated with realism (while also combining elements of local [East Bengali] folklore and culture) and, on the other hand, the "commercial Urdu-language films made at the Lahore studio" (West Pakistan).²⁹

In his account of Pakistan's cinematic history, Fareed Ahmad, who after 1974 became a leading figure at the National Film Development Corporation of Pakistan, avoids any mention of the Dhaka studio, tracing the main lines of Pakistani national cinematic identity as going through its competition with Bombay-based Indian films, on the one hand, and its state-supported attempt to develop serious—that is, "realist"—cinema, on the other.³⁰ Soviet coverage of the festival promoted such narratives, while omitting pertinent facts that might complicate the constructions of such national histories as autonomous, distinct, or mutually hostile. It ignored, for example, that the language of many of the films made at the Dhaka studios (including all those screened in the Soviet bloc) was Urdu or that Ajay Karda took Pakistan's side during the Liberation War and represented

Pakistan at several Tashkent festivals. It overlooked the fact that Indian cinema was banned from official screenings in Pakistan from 1965 on (censoring even Soviet-Indian coproductions) and that much of Bangladesh's post-Independence cinema, as well as Pakistan's, did follow the Bombay-based commercial formulas—which included many of the films presented at Tashkent.³¹

Thus, the actual programming of the festival showed the cinema of South Asia in its intertwined complexity, which spilled over occasionally into controversy: such as when Sen openly shamed festival organizers by saying that he was disappointed by the anti-Marxist films presented there, illustrating this claim by referring to the standing ovation that saluted the Pakistani film *Dolls of Clay* (*Mitti Ke Putlay*, Nadeem Baig, 1973), which he denounced as cinematically and politically conservative. Although there was no official response to Sen's provocation, his opinion was shared by many other filmmakers and critics, as is evident from the press reviews.³² This example demonstrates the difficulty of disentangling the stylistic/cinematic polemics (at the festival and elsewhere) from their geopolitical contexts. There is little doubt that Sen, a Bengali, scarred from the historical trauma of Partition and fully conscious of the recent Pakistani military atrocities in Bangladesh, was hostile to Pakistan.

As a devoted—but unorthodox—Marxist, Sen was likewise suspicious of the new leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his touted program of “socialist” initiatives—land reforms and the nationalization of key industries—which enjoyed a popular mandate as a gesture of breaking with the military regime of the past.³³ The creation of a state film organization, National Film Development Corporation of Pakistan, was an extension of this program, and its participation in international events such as the Tashkent festival signaled the warming of Pakistan's relationship with the socialist bloc. Indeed, Bhutto cultivated his status as a Third-Worldist leader independent of US influence, cultivating his relationship with the socialist bloc and supporting Afro-Asian anti-imperialist liberation struggles, and “for the first time in Pakistan's history, socialist countries and national liberation movements were officially represented as friends of the Pakistani people.”³⁴ The connections between the Tashkent festival and Bhutto's Pakistan were presumably particularly strengthened when Sarvar Azimov, the Uzbek writer and diplomat, the chairman of the Festival Committee in 1968, was appointed Soviet Ambassador to Pakistan in 1974, where he was considered a major confidant of the Bhutto family, staying at his post until 1980.³⁵

Films like *Dolls of Clay*, screened at Tashkent in the mid-1970s, were supposed to be indicative of Bhutto's prosocialist cultural program, as was the promotion of progressive Urdu poetry (which had been widely translated in the Soviet Union throughout the 1960s), and the widespread use of socialist iconography.³⁶ The rapid political trajectory of Bhutto's “socialism” into military dictatorship would certainly prove Sen right, and its populist cinematic manifestations (including Baig's film) were certainly far removed from the kind of revolutionary Marxist

analysis that Sen's own work entailed. At the same time, Sen's comments were likely also a disguised attack against India's own versions of cinematic populism through a kind of "progressive" cinema that nonetheless retained most formal and ideological elements of commercial filmmaking, something that the Parallel Cinema movement in India—with Sen as one of its leading figures—opposed strenuously.

But if South Asian film selection at Tashkent throughout the 1970s often served as a site for regional divisions, the widely exhibited pro-Palestinian cinema made all over the Arab world during the same period, instead, remained an uncontested site of transnational unity and solidarity.

PALESTINIAN CINEMA

In 1972, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP, the Marxist-Leninist faction of the PLO) presented its first works at the festival: Iraqi-born Kassem Hawal's *The Hand* (*Al-Yad*, 1970), funded by the Syrian Nation Film Organization (which funded fifteen Palestinian films between 1969 and 1974) and *The Cold River* (*Al-Nahr al-Barid*, 1971). As the Soviet press reported, the Palestinian filmmakers, Hawal among them, arrived with undeveloped prints of their films in their suitcases.³⁷ The festival's role as an entry point for Palestinian cinema's international circulation was no doubt facilitated by the same Sarvar Azimov, who, between chairing the organizing committee of the first edition of the festival in 1968 and transferring to Pakistan in 1974, served as a Soviet ambassador to Lebanon, where in 1969 he famously organized a meeting with Yasser Arafat—the first official diplomatic meeting of a Soviet official with a representative of the PLO, ensuring Azimov's status throughout the 1970s as a major Soviet-Palestinian political intermediary.³⁸

Hawal was a writer, critic, and filmmaker trained at the Institute for Fine Arts in Iraq, one of the founders of the Iraqi General Organization for Cinema (GOCT), and the screenwriter for *The Night Watchman* (*Al-Haris*, Khalil Shawqi, 1968), the GOCT's first film that had been screened at both Carthage and Tashkent in 1968. Imprisoned for his political writings, Hawal fled Iraq for Beirut in 1970. There he ran a mobile cinema, screening Soviet, Chinese, and Cuban films (which he borrowed from the embassies) and writing film columns on international political cinema for the PFLP weekly magazine *al-Hadaf*.³⁹ The magazine was edited by the Marxist writer and critic Ghassan Kanafani, assassinated by Mossad in 1972, whose stories *Men in the Sun* (*Rijal fi-a-shams*, 1962), *All That's Left to You* (*Ma Tabaqqah Lakum*, 1966), and *Return to Haifa* (*A'id ila Hayfa*, 1970) would subsequently be adapted for the screen.⁴⁰ Hawal's *The Cold River* was originally screened at the Leipzig festival in 1971, making it the first PFLP film to be entered in a major international festival.⁴¹

Throughout the next decade, Hawal remained one of the most internationally visible representatives of PLO filmmaking. His next film screened at Tashkent in

1974, a coproduction with East Germany *Why Do We Plant Roses... Why Do We Carry Arms?* (*Limadha Nazra' al-Ward... Limadha Nahmil al-Silah?*, 1974) chronicles the Palestinian delegation's participation in the international youth festival in East Berlin in 1973—the same year his film *Our Small Houses* (*Buyutuna al-Saghirah*, 1974) won the Silver Dove at Leipzig. While Leipzig throughout the 1970s remained the most important venue for the international exhibition of Palestinian films, which won awards there virtually every year, Tashkent often provided an important entry point. Unlike Leipzig Dok, which focused exclusively on radical documentary, Tashkent's inclusion of fiction films and the festival's wide representation of Arab public sector cinemas allowed for a wider range of films dedicated to the Palestinian cause—films made in the Syrian or Iraqi industry by directors such as Kais al-Zubaidi or Tewfiq Saleh, whose participation at the festival further underscored the interconnectedness of the Middle Eastern networks. Hawal would occasionally return to filmmaking in Iraq in 1976 with *The Marshes* (*Les marais / Al-Ahwar*, 1976) and *Houses in This Alley* (*Maisons dans cette ruelle / Buyut fi dhalika al-Zuqaq*, 1977), screened at Tashkent in 1978 as part of the Iraqi film selection, a story of a journalist in pre-Baathist Baghdad who tries to denounce the exploitation of workers in a small neighbourhood of the city in 1967.⁴² His participation in the shared Soviet bloc's and Afro-Asian film festival circuit continued into the 1980s: *The Return to Haifa* (*A'id ila Hayfa*, 1981), the only fiction film produced by the Palestinian Film Unit (PFU), was screened (out of competition) in Moscow and Carthage in 1981.⁴³

If in 1972 the Palestinian selection at Tashkent was limited to Hawal's participation and films, by 1974 it covered the majority of Palestinian productions to date, including PFU's first film: Mustafa Abu Ali's *With Soul, with Blood* (*Bi-al-Ruh, bi-al-Dam*, 1971), an “exuberantly innovative collage of images and sounds.”⁴⁴ The film's cinematography was done by one of the cofounders of the PFU, Sulafah Jadallah, who was shot during the making of the film, causing her partial paralysis.⁴⁵ Participating at the 1974 Tashkent roundtable discussion was Mustafa's brother (and screenwriter for several of his films), Rasmi Abu Ali—an important writer and journalist and one of the broadcasters at the official PLO radio station in Cairo, Voice of Palestine. His account of the nascent Palestinian revolutionary cinema given at the roundtable at Tashkent is remarkably consistent with the formulations of this vision as laid out by the Manifesto of the Palestinian Cinema Group and the PFLP's text “The Cinema and the Revolution,” as discussed by Kay Dickinson.⁴⁶ The 1974 program also included the more narratively straightforward *Zionist Terror* (*Al-Irhab, al-Suhyuni*, Samir Nimr, 1972) and *The Urgent Call of Palestine*, by Ismail Shammout (*Al-Nida' al-Milh*, 1973), a Palestinian artist and a long-standing member of the PLO's Department of Media and Culture, who also designed the famous posters that hung at Tashkent that year. Both films had been previously screened at the Third World Filmmakers' Meeting at Algiers in 1973, as was *Scenes from the Occupation in Gaza* (*Mashahid min al-Ihtilal fi Ghazeh*, 1973), representative of



FIGURE 3.3. Samir Nimr of the PLO (left) receiving a prize for *Kafr Shuba* at the fourth edition of the Tashkent festival (1976). Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.

Mustafa Abu Ali's short-lived effort to create a unified effort across the various PLO-affiliated factions and other supports of the Palestinian cause across the Arab World: the Palestinian Cinema Group (subsequently renamed the Palestinian Cinema Institute, PCI). The group was formed in 1972 through conversations among filmmakers at the Damascus and Carthage film festivals and included the famous Egyptian film critic Samir Farid and Egyptian director Tewfiq Saleh, Tunisian Tahar Cheriaa, Jordanian filmmaker and writer Adnan Madanat, and both Mustafa and Rasmi Abu Ali, Shammout (representing the PLO's Department of Media and Culture), Hawal (representing the PFLP's Arts Committee), and another Iraqi-born filmmaker and the PFU's cameraman, Samir Nimr.⁴⁷

All of these filmmakers and cultural figures were also highly visible at Tashkent throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. In the 1976 edition, Nimr would come to represent the PCI with his film *Kafr Shuba* (1975), denouncing the Israeli military actions in southern Lebanon and its effects (fig. 3.3). Nimr studied filmmaking in Moscow and was part of the Palestinian Film Unit in Lebanon from the early 1970s; he also made several films in South Yemen—including *The Winds of Liberation* (*Riyah al-Tahrir*, 1974) and *The New Yemen* (*Al-Yaman al-Jadid*, 1975)—as part of the exchange between the PCI and Yemeni filmmakers in 1974–75, as well as *Who Is the Revolution For?* (*Li Man al-Thawrah?*, 1974), also screened at Tashkent. His intervention during the 1976 Tashkent roundtable was a moving tribute to Hani Jawhariyah, one of the founders of the Palestinian Film Unit, who had been assassinated just a few months before.⁴⁸

The 1978 edition saw a documentary made by the Jordanian Adnan Madanat, who had graduated from the university in Moscow in 1975 and joined the PCI in Beirut, which funded his *Palestinian Visions* (*Ru'a Filastiniyah*, 1977), an exploration of a refugee experience through the life and work of Ibrahim Ghannam, a Palestinian artist in Lebanon. It's a film that is ultimately more concerned with the issues of continuities of the national (Palestinian) culture and heritage than armed struggle, marking a departure from the militancy of the PCI films of the previous decade.⁴⁹ As militant Third-Worldism was beginning to lose its momentum, the film's emphasis on national heritage ultimately fit in more comfortably under

the UNESCO and other liberal (rather than radical) international initiatives, fully sharing the perspective of other postcolonial anti-imperialist filmmakers of the time. Madanat was also the author of many books on Arab cinema and the translator of many Soviet works (including Vertov's and Romm's) into Arabic.⁵⁰

The Palestinian Film Unit's (and, subsequently, the PCI's) productions at Tashkent were not only signposts of Soviet support; they also represented a different model of the social organization of filmmaking that resonated within the socialist bloc. Given the pressing circumstances of the Palestinian refugee population, the production of these films was tied to the radically different socialist infrastructure created by the PLO, with its institutions combining militancy with social welfare inclusive of education, culture, and communication/information. Starting from the late 1970s, the PCI would work jointly with the cinema section of the Palestine Martyrs Works Society (SAMED), which was set up as a vocational training program for communally owned industrial and agricultural projects designed to achieve Palestinian self-sufficiency.⁵¹ That very social infrastructure in the late 1970s became another central subject of PCI-funded films, especially those coproduced by other socialist countries—most notably, in the collaborations between the West German filmmaker Monica Maurer and Samir Nimr, such as *The Palestine Red Crescent Society (Al-Hilal al-Ahmar, 1979)*. Community ownership and horizontal political organization was both a real practice and the goal of the PCI's vision for Palestine's future, which aligned the PLO in the 1970s with the spirit of the socialist bloc beyond its geopolitical necessities or strategies. In other words, Palestinian struggles were seen not only as directed against the common enemy but also as a way toward a shared vision of the socialist future that would restore continuity with the precolonial past and imbue a just (and modernized) social and economic system with a vibrant national culture. For the participants of the gatherings like Tashkent, cinema was an important weapon and a mode for the production and mobilization of the international solidarity required to make it happen.

IRAQI, SYRIAN, AND AFGHAN CINEMAS

In the course of the 1970s, Iraqi and Syrian film industries, while often most visible through their program of films dedicated to solidarity with Palestine, took up an increasing part of the festival's program. The festival selections demonstrate with particular force the degree to which internationalist filmmaking dominated Arab cinema of the time.⁵² For example, while the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen officially participated in the festival from 1976, the first films representing the new socialist country were both made by Iraqis: *Who is the Revolution For? (Li Man al-Thawra?, 1974)*, by Samir Nimr, and *10th Anniversary of Independence (Sanawat al-'Amr, 1976)*, by Jaafar Ali.

Nimr was at this point a regular at Tashkent as a representative of the PLO, while Ali's earlier film, *The Turning* (*Al-Mun'ataf*, 1974), which screened at the 1976 edition of the festival, was officially introduced by Ibrahim Jalal, another famous Iraqi director, as "the best of what Iraq cinema [has] produced to date."⁵³ After the 1977 nationalization of the Iraqi film industry and its enjoyment of relatively abundant oil-boom funding, Iraqis produced several more features, which were screened in the Soviet Union: *The Head* (*Al-Ra's*, 1977), by Faysal al-Yasiri, and two films by Mohammed Shukri Jamil: *The Thirsty* (*Al-Zami'un*, 1972) and *The Wall* (*Al-Aswar*, 1979). These, however, were regarded by more radical filmmakers like Nimr and Hawal as Baathist propaganda "toeing the party line."⁵⁴ Both these films and Iraqi documentaries, representing a highly official version of the country's culture, with their triumphant celebration of industrialization, were screened at the festival next to much more critical films in the progressive Arab cinema canon made by Iraqis.

Alongside Nimr and Hawal, another key internationalist Iraqi-born filmmaker who participated at Tashkent was Kais al-Zubaidi. Educated in East Germany at the Babelsberg Film School, al-Zubaidi lived and worked in Syria in the 1970s. Best known for his work as an editor, his documentary short *Away from Home* (*Ba'idan 'an al-Watan*, 1969), a visit into the Palestinian refugee camp of Sbeineh, won a Silver Dove award at Leipzig that year; however, the following year, the same festival rejected his new short, *The Visit* (*Al-Ziyarah*, 1970), deeming it too experimental.⁵⁵

This experience did not, however, discourage him, and in 1974 he brought to Tashkent not only *Testimonies of Palestinian Children in Wartime* (*Shahadat al-Atfal al-Filastiniyin fi Zaman al-Harb*, 1972) but also his most experimental film to date and his first feature *The Yazerli* (*Al-Yazerli*, 1974), made in Syria under the auspices of the National Film Organization. An adaptation of a well-known novella by acclaimed Syrian writer Hanna Mina, *The Yazerli* tells the story of a young boy working at the docks through a nonlinear narrative with impressionistic point of view/subjective sequences somewhat reminiscent of American 1950s avant-garde cinema. In Syria, *The Yazerli* was banned for its "explicit sexual content" and found very little circulation beyond the socialist circuit. At Tashkent, however, it was warmly received by the Soviet critics.

Al-Zubaidi, in his interviews, perhaps surprisingly, cited socialist cinema—specifically *Ivan's Childhood* (*Ivanovo detstvo*, Andrei Tarkovsky, 1962)—as the inspiration for his film but added that because ten years had passed since Tarkovsky's film was made, he tried to "move a step up in terms of the dramaturgic complexity" of his film as a way to account for its more experimental style.⁵⁶ The film's reviews from the international critics were split: from high praise by the European and North African observers (keen to underscore al-Zubaidi's German training and musing about Godard's possible influence on the filmmaker) to Indian critics

who rated it as “the worst film of the festival,” while the Iraqi press coverage merely noted that it was the most discussed film of the festival.⁵⁷

But the real explosion of Syrian cinema at Tashkent and Moscow took place in the late 1970s and continued into the 1980s, when the many Syrian graduates of VGIK and the other socialist bloc film schools—Mohammad Malas, Haitham Haqqi, Samir Zikra, Oussama Mohammad, Abdullatif Abdulhamid, Riad Shaya, Nidal al-Debs, Wadi’ Yousef, Ghassan Shmeit, Raymond Butros, and Nabil Maleh—began their filmmaking careers.⁵⁸ Similarly, Afghan graduates of Soviet film schools Khaleq A’lil, Rafiq Yahyae, and Wali Latifi participated in the Tashkent festivals in the 1970s, which provided them with their first international exhibitions.⁵⁹

IRAN AND TURKEY

On the other end of the geopolitical and cinematic spectrum was Iran’s participation in the festival. Continuing the trend starting with its first entry, *The Tiger of Mazandaran* (*Babre Mazandaran*, 1968) by the famous crime and action movie director Samuel Khachikian, in 1972 the festival offered the viewers one of the most successful “tough guy films” of Iranian New Wave cinema: Masud Kimiai’s *Dash Akol* (1971).⁶⁰ In 1976, Tashkent’s connection with the Iranian New Wave continued with Bahram Baizai’s *Stranger and the Fog* (*Gharibeh va Meh*, 1975), a more evidently art-cinema-driven film that proved to be a big critical success in the Soviet Union. Both these films, Naficy argues, offer a nostalgic longing for the world before modernity’s disruption of the national culture, linking them ideologically to many Central Asian films from the period (as chapter 7 of this book will explore at length), whether mainstream or more formally experimental.⁶¹ Iran’s choice for the third edition of the festival, *Leyli and Majnun* (*Leyli va Majnun*, Siamak Yasemi, 1970), was a variation on this theme: a mainstream melodrama based on a literary classic of shared Middle Eastern origins. An iconic love story with Turkic, Persian, Azerbaijani, and Arab versions that has been rendered many times in Indian cinema (Hindi, Telugu, and Malay), as well as Malaysian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi, and in Azerbaijani opera and a Tajik ballet, like so many similar selections at the festival (as discussed at length in chapter 7), this heritage romance was clearly intended to appeal to the transnational pan-Asian audiences.⁶²

Turkey, whose geopolitical status vis-à-vis the Soviet Union was similar to Iran’s, also participated in the festival in the 1970s. While films by its more political or socially conscious filmmakers—such as Yılmaz Güney, Metin Erksan, or Bilge Olgaç—were screened in Moscow, Turkey’s Tashkent selection was largely limited to popular cinema, represented by celebrity actresses—like Türkan Şoray and Fatma Girik. Their presence became increasingly more noticeable in the second half of the 1970s, furthered by the success of two films, both starring Şoray: *The Girl with the Red Scarf* (*Selvi Boylum, Al Yazmalım*, Atif Yılmaz, 1977), an

adaptation of a short story by the Soviet Kyrgyz writer Chingiz Aitmatov, and the Turkish-Soviet coproduction *My Love, My Sorrow* (*Liubov' moia, pechal' moia/Bir aşk masalı: Ferhat ile Şirin*, Azhdar Ibragimov, 1978), based on the play by the great Turkish communist poet Nâzım Hikmet, who had been exiled in the Soviet Union. While showcasing the modern cultural ties between the two countries, the Turkish-Soviet cinematic exchanges also capitalized on the shared pan-Asian cultural heritage, however broadly defined, as well as on the popularity of the well-established commercial formulas.

AFRICA: NEW VOICES, NEW GEOGRAPHIES OF STRUGGLE

African cinema at Tashkent remained an important focal point and, from the viewpoint of the Soviet organizers, an undisputed success story as the number of participating countries grew from eighteen in 1968 to thirty-four in 1980.⁶³ In addition to its breadth of coverage of national film industries, the festival continued to feature the most important African auteurs of the period. In retrospect, the second edition of the Tashkent festival in 1972 turned out to be a remarkable showcase of the African classics of Third Cinema at Tashkent with Maldoror's *Sambizanga*, Sembene's *God of Thunder* (*Emitai*, 1971) (both of which had already been shown in Moscow in the previous years), and Med Hondo's *Soleil O* (1969), after that film's success both at Cannes and Locarno; the entry established Hondo as another crucial cinematic Soviet-African interlocutor.

Born in Mauritania, Hondo, like Maldoror, began his artistic life in Parisian theatrical circles, where he founded the all-Black group Griot-Shango, which he subsequently quit to pursue cinema.⁶⁴ The history of the making of Hondo's first feature, *Soleil O*, is legendary: made by an autodidact, on the weekend, with friends, using whatever film stock he could find, his film combines a striking condemnation of the racism facing African migrants in France and a political meditation on colonialism and imperialism. Formally, it was probably the most innovative film within that edition's selection: combining documentary, fiction, animation, and theater.⁶⁵ Discussed at the time in the context of the French New Wave, it in fact is closer to the New Latin American films from that period, from Glauber Rocha's *Antonio das Mortes* cycle, to Santiago Álvarez's montage sequences, and *Hour of the Furnaces'* mode of address and Fanonian analysis. Hondo himself asserted in many interviews that the film's narrative is rooted in the African tradition of storytelling, setting it apart from the French New Wave and positioning it instead in relation to the emerging tradition of African political cinema—a framing that was emphasized in the Soviet reception of his films.⁶⁶ In 1980, Hondo returned to Tashkent with his lavishly produced anticolonial musical *West Indies* (1979), where the film enjoyed by far its most enthusiastic reception outside of Africa.⁶⁷

Building on their relationship with both the JCC and FESPACO, the ties between the Soviet and African festival circuits continued to be strong throughout the 1970s. The North African selection remained consistently rich, from an always crowded Algerian program to Omar Khelifi's Tunisian films, and a surprisingly thorough representation of Moroccan cinema. Unlike the rest of North Africa, the Moroccan film industry was entirely private until some state support started in 1977, yet, despite Tashkent's bias toward public sector cinema, the festival became an exhibition venue for some of the most important films of the country's history. A special place was given to Souheil Ben Barka, a Moroccan filmmaker educated in Rome, and the nephew of Mehdi Ben Barka, one of the founders of the Tri-continental Conference, who had been kidnapped and murdered in Paris by the Moroccan and French police (assisted by Mossad) in 1965. Souheil Ben Barka's political films were not as widely represented in the European film circuit, but they quickly became staples of both Tashkent and Moscow film festivals. His *A Thousand and One Hands* (*Alf Yad wa Yad*, 1973), depicting the exploitation of carpet-weaving workers supporting the tourist industry, was screened at Tashkent 1974, and *The Oil War Will Not Take Place* (*La guerre du pétrole n'aura pas lieu*, 1975), an anti-imperialist political thriller, was shown in Moscow in 1975 and then at Tashkent the following year.⁶⁸ Over the course of the 1970s, Ben Barka would come to occupy a privileged position within Moroccan film institutions, and he would remain a steady presence on the Soviet festival circuit throughout the subsequent decades. His films were shown on Soviet television, as well as in theaters, culminating in the Soviet-Italian-Spanish-Moroccan coproduction *Drums of Fire* (*La Batalla de los Tres Reyes*, 1990), which he codirected with Uchkun Nazarov, an Uzbek director. The film is a grandiose historical epic—starring Ugo Tognazzi, Claudia Cardinale, Harvey Keitel, F. Murray Abraham, and Sergei Bondarchuk—filmed in Crimea; its release coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union and resulted in its conversion into a little-watched TV series.

Lusophone African cinema comes to the fore on the Soviet bloc festival scene in the second half of the 1970s, often framed in relation to the struggle in Angola. Although the most significant output of Angolan post-Independence cinema would be presented at Moscow, Leipzig, Karlovy Vary, Krakow, and, indeed, Tashkent in the early 1980s (and thus falls beyond the scope of this work), one of the first films made to commemorate November 11, 1975 (the day the MPLA with Cuban support declared national independence from Portugal), Ruy Duarte de Carvalho's *A Party for Life* (*Uma festa para viver*, 1975) was presented at Tashkent and Karlovy Vary in 1976. Duarte participated in the Tashkent seminar as well.⁶⁹ The Angolan government funded three pioneering production groups, Cooperativa Promocine, Televisao Popular de Angola, and Angola Ano Zero, which received support (such as filmmakers' training) from the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television (ICRT) and from the Portuguese Film Institute, which, since the Carnation Revolution, was officially anticolonialist. Angola Ano Zero, the most

politically militant of these groups, entered Francisco Henriques's *O Golpe* (1977) at Tashkent in 1978 and, subsequently, Asdrúbal Rebelo's documentaries about the lives of Angolan children and youth.⁷⁰ Lusophone African film exhibition at Tashkent (as well as at Moscow) continued into the early 1980s, alongside India, Syria, and Nicaragua, forming the backbone of the late phase of the festival.

LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA: LATE ARRIVAL

In 1976, the Tashkent festival finally officially included Latin America in its geographical denomination, after years of including its films outside the official program and its filmmakers and critics as "observers." This change opens up a question: given the global visibility of Latin American political cinema of the Global Sixties, why didn't it form a more significant part of Tashkent's shared socialist and revolutionary cinematic imaginary?

Before we get to the more complex answers to this question, it is worth mentioning two pragmatic reasons. One had to do with the festival's origins in the Afro-Asian circuit of the 1950s, which did not yet include Latin America. The other was the fact of sheer geographic distance and difficulty—and high expense—of travel, with very few direct flights existing between the Soviet Union and Latin America at the time. As Elena Razlogova demonstrates, the organizing committee of the festival advised that "because of . . . great foreign currency expenses for their travel, in 1974 we should confine ourselves to only selected representatives and films from the Latin American continent."⁷¹ Yet the following 1976 edition did open up the festival for official participation of Latin American cinemas. What is striking about the programming at Tashkent, therefore, is not so much the relatively small number of Latin American representatives and films but the selection itself. Despite the fact that the late 1960s and early 1970s constituted one of the great moments of radical political filmmaking on the continent, very few of the now-canonical Latin American militant films were screened there—mirroring the comparative absence of what we now consider the classics of the New Latin American Cinema from the Soviet screens at large. Since alliance with Cuba was at the center of the Soviet bloc's relationship with the Americas and given Cuba's dominant role in the formation of the New Latin American Cinema as a coherent project, this absence may seem especially surprising.⁷²

Yet, as we saw in chapter 1, the reception of the "canonical" films of the New Latin American Cinema in the Soviet bloc in the late 1960s and 1970s was extremely limited in its cultural and political impact, and these films' most enduring critical and scholarly reception took place in the West.⁷³ Despite the fact that radical Latin American political documentary exercised the greatest impact on political film cultures globally, its position on the state socialist film circuit, like that of Japanese radical Left cinema, suffered for being more in line with its European counterparts (who were considered Maoist or more broadly politically heretical by the Soviet censors).⁷⁴

FIGURE 3.4. The poster for The Other Cinema (UK) demonstrating the predominance of Latin American films on the British alternative distribution circuit. Photo from author's private collection.



NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA: EXCLUSIONS AND ALLIANCES

Soviet authorities, however, did not fully control this exclusionary policy. Many of the militant Latin American filmmakers, unlike their African or Arab counterparts, deliberately avoided engaging with the Soviet Union. In contrast to much of African and Arab cinema at that time, political cinema from Latin America already had a wide alternative exhibition in Europe and in the US. This reflected the cultural and, to some extent, political proximity between the Latin American and European New Left—as well as its established presence in Italy and France, very much mediated through the Pesaro festival.⁷⁵ The poster for the British independent distribution company The Other Cinema demonstrates this relationship, including three Latin American films (by Miguel Littín, Jorge Sanjinés, and Solanas) alongside French, US, and early Soviet—but notably no Asian or African—films (fig. 3.4). This was standard for the kind of political cinema circulating in the UK at the time but was similarly the case in both North America and Western Europe.⁷⁶

On a more official level, historically, except for Argentina and Mexico, all Latin American countries had broken diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union in 1946, under direct pressure from Washington. During the Thaw, the Soviet Union made significant efforts to restore these ties, but relations with Latin America were always complicated and fragmented (in part owing to the greater presence of the US on the continent, as well as the shifts in governments and frequent coups, many, of course, also US-backed).⁷⁷ If this state-level relationship and investment in the 1960s can be measured by the amount of aid and overall trade, it is noteworthy that by 1962, trade with Asia reached 636 million rubles, with Africa 265, while with Latin America (excluding Cuba), it was only 96 million. The cultural exchanges reflected this overall picture.⁷⁸ With the victory of the Cuban revolution, the Soviet Union turned greater attention to Latin America as a potential site of world revolution, and Cuba's position as the leader of the Latin American Left subsequently shaped much of Soviet cinematic relations with the rest of the continent, especially its radical cinemas in the course of the 1960s. This meant that these relations

suffered when in the 1964–69 period (the core years for the solidification of the NLAC as a movement), Soviet-Cuban relations, exacerbated by the Missile Crisis, were at their absolute worst.

The political disagreement crystalized over Cuba's refusal to go along with the rhetoric of peaceful coexistence as promoted by the Soviet Union. De facto siding with China and going against the position of many Latin American communist parties, early on in the 1960s Cuba was the leader of *foquismo*: the elevation of guerilla warfare, whose theory and practice was identified with Che Guevara. For the radical Left, including its filmmaking members, the idea that guerilla *focos* were meant to replace the party as the leaders of the revolutionary movement was infinitely preferable to party bureaucracy. As part of this vision, combat experience would galvanize solidarity between the (often middle-class and educated) vanguard and both rural and urban underclasses. This idea differed significantly from the Soviet approach, which divided the work of socialist politics between large-scale military army actions directed by the party and continuous industrialization (spheres of action where neither peasants nor intellectuals served as reliable political actors). At stake in this disagreement was ultimately the vision of the revolutionary process, of which radical filmmakers' cinematic activity was meant to be a direct extension, thus directly impacting its organization. It was also a question of alliances: many radical Latin American filmmakers by the late 1960s directly supported guerilla groups and other insurgent movements, such as Carlos Marighela's National Liberation Action in Brazil, Uruguay's Tupamaros, and the Montoneros and ERP (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo) in Argentina—movements viewed with suspicion by the Soviet Union for their spontaneity and their lack of reliance on the established and Communist Party-affiliated working class, ideological disagreements that rendered their cinematic expressions likewise problematic.

And there were, of course, broader concerns over the geopolitical influence the Soviet Union would seek to exercise—concerns that were particularly pressing for Cuba, given their increasing economic dependence. The Marxist dependence theory, which was framing much of radical Latin American thinking of the period, was largely focused on the forced creation of dependency on the “First World” countries (as Russia itself historically was part of the periphery).⁷⁹ Yet it foregrounded issues of development and modernization in a way that highlighted the potentially problematic role played by the Soviet Union in that process. The vision of New Latin American Cinema was thus predicated on an independent and non-affiliated version of the revolution it sought to advance, politically and cinematically. This meant that many filmmakers of the radical Left were uncompromisingly unmotivated to establish direct contacts with Soviet bureaucracies or accept their invitations to festivals to promote the exhibition of their films.

Ultimately, Latin American political cinema and its canon were defined at festivals that were oriented neither toward the socialist bloc nor their Afro-Asian allies: most important, at Viña del Mar, where in 1967 Brazil, Chile, and Cuba

would dominate in a scene that still included the less radical “older” cinemas of Argentina and Chile; Mérida in 1968—a festival focused on documentary (which allowed for an inclusion of Columbia, Peru, and Venezuela, which were strongest in nonfiction but that also screened Brazilian and Bolivian fiction films); and, most emblematically, the Viña del Mar 1969 edition, which shaped the classic parameters of the New Latin American Cinema (NCLA) as a coherent albeit heterogeneous movement. Aside from its opposition to the dominant imperialist cinemas, this meeting also clarified the divide between the radical revolutionary cinema and the older national cinemas in Latin America, which followed the studio model (even those that were largely progressive—socialist or communist—in their orientation). This rift would widen, aesthetically and politically, throughout the 1970s.⁸⁰ Many of these mainstream national film industries, rejected by the NCLA, were precisely the ones that would continue to rotate in Soviet circulation throughout the 1970s, thus widening the gap between the radical Latin American filmmakers and the Socialist festival circuit.

CUBA AND (TRI)CONTINENTAL POLITICS

Tricontinentalist filmmaking in support of liberation movements, with Cuba occupying the leading position, continued long after Fidel Castro turned against *foquismo* and, in conjunction with the Soviet Union, increased its military support for armed resistance in Africa and Asia.⁸¹ During the same period, Angola and Mozambique became particularly important sites for Cuban solidarity filmmaking, as part of the cultural arm of Cuban Operation Carlota, when the Cuban military threw its support into the fight for Agostinho Neto’s revolutionary government.⁸² These Cuban films, however, were not seen at Tashkent. Leipzig remained the privileged socialist bloc venue for the cinema of internationalist solidarity, with Palestine, Chile, and Angola replacing Vietnam as focal points for German (East and West), French, Cuban, and even Soviet filmmakers. Although Massip’s *Madina Boé* (1968, filmed in Guinea-Bissau) was included in Tashkent’s first edition, it appears the ICAIC reserved Leipzig as the main venue to showcase its solidarity filmmaking.

As Latin America officially entered the festival, it served as the exhibition site for some of the lesser-known Cuban films—primarily historical epics, such as Sergio Giral’s *The Slave Hunter* (*Rancheador*, 1976) and Enrique Pineda Barnet’s *Mella* (1977), which otherwise had considerably less international circulation. Although this was never stated explicitly or even suggested in print, evidently, the ICAIC did not consider Tashkent an important site for either exhibition or exchange; in fact, the only mention of that festival in *Cine Cubano*, the official ICAIC journal, which in many ways operated as a mouthpiece for the New Latin American Cinema, was a largely negative review by Massip in 1968.⁸³ Even once Cuba was officially included in the festival, in sharp contrast to expanded coverage of both Moscow

and Karlovy Vary festivals, Tashkent is not mentioned or discussed as an important site. And no key member of the ICAIC (Guevara, Álvarez, Gutiérrez Alea, or García Espinosa) ever attended the festival, further revealing often-overlooked divides in the socialist cinematic spheres of the 1960s and 1970s.

The significant difference in the scale of the two film cultures contributed to the victory of Cuban cinema as the ultimate model for leftist filmmaking worldwide. Its faster, cheaper, more spontaneous and formally more innovative productions as embodied by the ICAIC, represented a more feasible way of filmmaking for emerging industries, to say nothing of film cultures engaged in direct combat. This was nowhere as evident as in the immense prestige of Santiago Álvarez among anti-imperialist filmmakers around the world. As an expression of solidarity coming from a small embattled Caribbean nation rather than from a large superpower, such as the Soviet Union, Cuban filmmakers' relationship to anticolonial and liberation movements was certainly a more horizontal one. Perceived as free from socialist realism's dictatorial relationship between the state and artistic production, *Noticiero ICAIC* filmmakers risked themselves by traveling to the conflict zones and making films that defied stylistic conventions.

Yet while the Cuban film industry's newness and small scale positioned Cuba as a more appropriate model for many radical filmmakers, the Soviet film industry obviously had its advantages too. While actively engaged in solidarity filmmaking in the Global South, ICAIC exhibition practices were oriented overall toward European cinema, while Cuban popular tastes always favored Hollywood.⁸⁴ In the Soviet Union, in contrast, ever since the 1930s, Hollywood had had much less impact on audience formation, which translated into much greater openness in popular tastes, creating further incentives for broadly based relationships with the cinemas of the Global South. And ultimately, in spite of the undeniable internationalism of Cuba's cultural stance of the 1960s, its cinema was positioned first and foremost in relation to the Latin American sphere. This manifested most clearly in the focus of Cuba's own international film festival, founded in 1979, which focused explicitly on the New Latin America. In contrast, the Soviets could leverage their infrastructure and geopolitical connections to sponsor massive festivals, such as Tashkent, that could successfully bring together a wider range of filmmakers and films with different forms of prestige and purpose (ideological, aesthetic, and commercial).

OTHER LATIN AMERICAN CINEMAS, OLD AND NEW

With the reestablishment of diplomatic relations (which Latin American governments had severed in 1947 under direct pressure from Washington) with Colombia in 1968; Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador in 1969; Venezuela in 1970; and Costa Rica in 1971, the Soviet Union could more easily establish new cinematic contacts. These initiatives, however, took place in the absence of an established network: by 1971, Soviet film-exchange agreements existed with only Argentina, Chile, and Mexico,

while the more radical Latin American film organizations, formed in the 1960s, were either too far removed from the Soviet circuit or hostile to Soviet hegemony. In the case of both Argentina and Mexico, the dominance of commercial film exchanges with the Soviet Union created obvious problems even for pro-Soviet leftist filmmakers, who were often left outside of such established distribution structures. Given the massive popularity of Argentinian and Mexican melodramas and musicals in the Soviet Union from the 1950s through the 1980s (finally resulting in the explosion of popularity of Latin American telenovelas by the late 1980s), Soviet film distributors often looked for a “sweet spot” between audience preferences and a progressive message that would cause no troubles with the censors and be good for the box office. This kind of compromise was no longer acceptable for the 1970s political cinema in Latin America.⁸⁵

The military coups in Bolivia in 1971, Uruguay and Chile in 1973, and Argentina in 1976 made leftist filmmaking increasingly dangerous, its key players dispersing around the world. Thus the Encounters of Latin American Filmmakers in Venezuela (in Caracas in 1974, where the short-lived Committee of Latin American Filmmakers was also established; and in Mérida in 1977) heralded the reorganization—and, some would say, demise—of the New Latin American Cinema. In both meetings, the denunciation of the military coups and the brutal repression in the Southern Cone occupied a central place, and the radicalism of the previous years was replaced with an expansion of the parameters of the New Latin American Cinema—a more inclusive vision that would likewise characterize the films that arrived at the Havana festival in the following decade. These Latin American political filmmakers’ meetings recognized and ultimately welcomed the emergence of the new trends, such as state-supported cinemas under the nationalist-revolutionary regimes of Velasco Alvarado in Peru or Torrijos in Panama, as well as new cinemas in other countries (Costa Rica, Haiti, Columbia, etc.), most of them considerably less radical than their predecessors. And these were, indeed, the Latin American cinemas that spectators would encounter in the 1970s Soviet Union, including Tashkent. As a result, Tashkent in the 1970s was an exhibition space where one could see wide and highly eclectic selections of both popular and independent films from Mexico, Brazil, and, until 1975, Argentina; mainstream progressive fiction films from Peru and Bolivia; historical epics from Cuba; and documentaries from Colombia and Panama—a far cry from a traditional cinematic canon of Latin America as constructed in Euro-American film scholarship.

CHILEAN CINEMA AND MODES OF SOLIDARITY

If a combination of “progressive” state-supported film industry and commercial motivation was decisive for Soviet–Latin American cinematic diplomacy overall, the films by Chilean filmmakers (both before Pinochet, when they worked in Chile, and after, when they worked in exile) came to occupy a unique and ideologically privileged place on the socialist film festival circuit.

Throughout the 1960s, the Communist Party of Chile was the most reliable ally of the Soviet Union, steering clear of Cuba's "adventurism" (in Soviet parlance) vis-à-vis armed guerilla struggle. Other Chilean leftist groups may have been attracted to Castro's model, but the broad leftist coalition of Unidad Popular, which brought election victory to Allende in 1970, opted for alliance with the Soviet Union.⁸⁶ Allende's famous "Chilean path to socialism" was, indeed, more akin to the kind of gradualism advocated by Khrushchev and continued by Brezhnev. If, given various geopolitical factors, the Soviets could not economically aid Allende's government on the level of their aid to Cuba, they tried to make up for it in exchanges on the academic, scientific, and cultural fronts.⁸⁷ Chilean poet Pablo Neruda and Nueva Trova singer Victor Jara became household names in the Soviet bloc; the first week of Chilean cinema took place in Moscow in 1970, and both 1971 Moscow and 1972 Tashkent festivals included Chilean selections.⁸⁸

After the 1973 Pinochet coup and the fall of the Allende government, Chile became a rallying cry for the Left worldwide. The socialist bloc (along with Cuba) offered haven to Chilean exiles, which included many filmmakers, and supported the building of a considerable media infrastructure for the exiled Chilean Communist Party abroad, including a regular Spanish-language radio program, "Listen, Chile" (produced by a team of Russians and Chileans, including the documentarian filmmaker and journalist Eduardo Labarca). The leaders of the Chilean communist and socialist parties would install their offices in Moscow and East Berlin.⁸⁹ While the more established political filmmakers could mobilize their existing connections and had eager supporters in the film circles in Cuba, Mexico, and Paris, the younger generation's exilic experience was more dispersed—from Sweden to East Germany and the Soviet Union, where Sebastián Alarcón and Cristián Valdés remained after studying at VGIK.⁹⁰

The coup provoked an immense sense of solidarity in the socialist bloc that exceeded the original impact of Allende's elections. While Castro's 1959 revolution for the Soviets formed part of the euphoric atmosphere of the Thaw and was greeted as the dawn of a new internationalism, Allende's victory coincided with the aftermath of the Prague Spring and a clear sense of a cultural and political clamp-down in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe alike that further eroded citizens' enthusiasm for socialism.⁹¹ But as much as the solidarity campaigns with Chile around the socialist bloc were extremely top-down, state-organized affairs, the affective solidarity engendered by a "fascist putsch" (as Pinochet's coup was usually referred to in the Soviet press) was almost inevitable in societies where struggle against the Nazis in the Second World War and the trauma of state repressions (whether associated with Stalin for the Soviet Union or, with the Soviet state more broadly, for the Eastern bloc) were foundational for national memory and identity.⁹² If for common citizens in the socialist bloc revolutionary enthusiasm was in short supply, both antifascist and antitotalitarian sentiments were still meaningful. The former were effectively mobilized by the state structures, while the latter allowed for powerful emotional resonances, which extended even to "dissident"

cultures.⁹³ Moreover, tragic revolutionary martyrdom (embodied in Neruda, Jara, and Allende himself) and the cult of heroic melancholy resonated powerfully in the era of socialist stagnation in a way that allowed a temporary reconciliation of official positions with the cultural intelligentsia's. As a result, after the second part of Guzmán's *Battle of Chile* (along with a series of solidarity films from East Germany and Alarcón's VGIK graduation film about the coup, *The First Page* [*La primera página*, 1974]) were screened at the Tashkent 1974 festival, the film successfully entered into the Soviet cinematic canon, celebrated by official film institutions and lovers of serious political cinema.

The Chilean antifascist discourse was not missed by the Soviet cultural establishments. In 1975, a festival of antifascist cinema took place in Volgograd (former Stalingrad, the location of a key battle of the Second World War's Eastern Front) to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War. Along with German, French, Italian, and Eastern European participants discussing the legacy of the Second World War and the Holocaust, a place of honor was given the Chilean delegation, which included Victor Jara's widow, as well as Guzmán, Chaskel, Labarca, and Claudio Sapiaín.⁹⁴ The narrative of the festival constructed a clear line from the Spanish Civil War through the Second World War to Indochina and, finally, Chile. Guzmán in his comments at the festival articulated the relationship slightly differently: before Pinochet's coup, the Chilean filmmakers' only image of fascism on the screen came from Soviet films, which were not always easy to read. Now, he claimed, the Chileans had their own image of fascism—Pinochet's regime—which they had a moral duty to show to the world, particularly the rest of Latin America, where it posed an enormous threat.⁹⁵

Surprisingly, US imperialism was entirely absent from the festival discourse, as the Soviet press was careful, despite all the available evidence, not to associate Pinochet's coup with the CIA.⁹⁶ With Détente going strong, the US took part in the festival as former World War II allies—while filmmakers from Vietnam or Palestine were not invited. But the inclusion of Chile in the antifascist discourse was an effective mode of creating solidarity in that particular context.⁹⁷ At Tashkent, instead, Chilean experience was presented through an explicitly internationalist anti-imperialist ethos, making explicit links to the other entries at the festival. It was also a broader selection: Littín's *Letters from Marusia* (*Actos de Marusia*, 1975), made in Mexico, was one of the most notable films that year, but the program also included animation by Beatriz González and Juan Forch, as well as documentaries by Douglas Hübner (*Within Every Shadow There Grows a Flight* / *Dentro de cada sombra crece un vuelo*, 1976) and Sapiaín (the popular *The Song Does Not Die, Generals!* / *La canción no muere, generals!* (1975) (dedicated to Jara)).⁹⁸ Chileans at the festival—Littín, Guzmán, Sapiaín, González, Hübner, Alarcón, and Valdés—participated alongside fellow filmmakers who represented many of the embattled fronts of the Third World: Palestine, Yemen, Angola, and other hot spots of the Cold War proxy wars. These new contacts made at the socialist festivals would

then further solidify through the broader festival circuit; for example, in 1982 Lit-tín served on the jury of the Carthage festival (JCC) alongside Sen and Madanat.⁹⁹ Thus overall, Tashkent in the 1970s, became a rare space in which these filmmaking projects could be displayed together, in an affirmation of internationalist solidarity with the broadest geographical contours.

CONCLUSION

Over the course of the 1970s, in tandem with the growth of film production from and film festivals in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the Tashkent festival became larger geographically (by 1976 including 109 participating countries and organizations, including 34 from Asia, 34 from Africa, and 14 from Latin America, with 210 films screened).¹⁰⁰ The number of films from these regions at the Moscow Festival also increased. Karlovy Vary likewise showed a steady mix of European, Asian, and Latin American productions, and Leipzig showcased much of the most important political (anti-imperialist) documentary cinema from all over the world. On the surface, this would continue into the 1980s.

Yet 1979 was in many ways a turning point in the history of the Third-Worldist movement, heralding changes that couldn't but impact cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America and their relationships with the Soviet bloc. Three events in 1979—the election of Margaret Thatcher in the UK, the Iranian revolution, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—together signaled the waning of the era of both democratic socialism and Third-Worldism. Ronald Reagan, who was elected in the US in 1980, together with Thatcher, reinvigorated the Atlantic bloc and threw their weight behind the new neoliberal leadership of the IMF and the World Bank. In 1981 the G7 used the debt crisis to put an end to any discussions of the subsidies to the Third World. Under the pressure of international debt agreements to keep their economies going, many of the formerly Non-Aligned countries across Asia, Africa, and Latin America buckled, which led to “debt relief” packages that privatized economies and stripped away social supports. The new intellectual property regime emerged as technologies in the West in biotech, communications, and computing further disenfranchised the countries of the Global South from the new postindustrial economy, while benefiting those that offered integration with the Western corporate regime through cheap labor and the lack of worker rights.¹⁰¹ The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 also quickly proved to be a global disaster on many fronts: military, economic, and diplomatic, damaging the Soviet relationships with the Non-Aligned countries much more than the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia had. The alliance between the socialist bloc and the Third World unraveled, weakening the Third World countries in the UN while increasing the power of the wealthiest and most reactionary, like Saudi Arabia.

The cinematic landscape also changed dramatically from the early 1980s on, reflecting the intersection of geopolitical changes and shifts in media production

and distribution technologies. The increasing impact of video due to relatively cheap home systems and the informal economies of its distribution globally and locally (made inevitable under the increasingly stringent US-dominated intellectual property regime) inflected film production, distribution, and exhibition by making it more expensive and thus leading to different models for appealing to the mass market. The 1980s saw a boom in coproductions in the East and West, North and South, more than ever dependent on capital, which increasingly only foreign—mostly European—institutions could offer, given the financial pressures facing most Third World governments.

Although the Palestine situation remained a unifying political issue ideologically, its militancy declined in the face of what looked like inevitable defeat, with Palestinian cinema largely turning inward toward questions of national cultural identity. South Asian cinema continued its bifurcation, with Indian Parallel Cinema welcomed at international festivals throughout the 1980s; Bollywood expanding market share globally, especially in the wake of South Asian diasporic communities worldwide; and cinemas of Bangladesh and Pakistan becoming fully marginalized. The Havana Festival of New Latin American Cinema, which began in that same fateful year, 1979, became the main site for the exhibition of leftist cinema from Latin America, finally realizing its Cuba-centered continental approach, largely independent of developments in the rest of the Third World, while most mainstream commercial cinemas relied increasingly on television, video markets, and satellite development for survival strategies.

For African filmmakers, the Niamey Congress in 1982 rearticulated the commitment to FEPACI, while significantly altering its 1975 Congress of Algiers position by making room for private enterprise and foreign funding.¹⁰² The emergence of Nigeria's highly successful video film industry emblemized commercial possibilities in the new media landscape, while the victory of Souleymane Cissé's *Brightness (Yeelen)* (1987) at Cannes, the first sub-Saharan film to win a major award at a prestigious European festival, marked the success of African cinema as global art cinema. The depoliticization of "return to the source" films on the European and US festival circuits, framed as celebrating a mythological precolonial past, was a clear component in their international success (even if, as in the case of Cissé's and many other films, this was done explicitly to avoid domestic censorship).¹⁰³ The 1987 victory of Abbas Kiarostami's *Where Is Friend's Home? (Khane-ye doost kodjast?)* (1987) at Locarno heralded the arrival of the New Iranian Cinema on the European festival circuit.¹⁰⁴ Together with the Chinese language New Waves (Hong Kong New Wave, which originally emerged in 1979, Taiwan New Cinema in 1982, and China's Fifth Generation in 1983), these trends led to the significant reorientation of the European film festivals toward global art cinema, integrating the cinemas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America through these prestigious circuits, incentivizing an aesthetic style framed as incompatible with socialist didacticism and militancy.¹⁰⁵

At the same time, international film festivals in Asia, which started with Hong Kong in 1977, gained a significant foothold, with Busan and Dubai eventually emerging as major power players.¹⁰⁶ East Asian popular genre cinemas, which gained increasing international popularity in the 1970s and benefited from the new scale of circulation marked by the advent of video and the circulation of diasporas, entered their global phase. All of these factors were involved in the emergence of a new global cinematic landscape, adding a correlate to what English-language film scholarship would soon dub “World Cinema.” In both its commercial/popular and auteur/art cinema manifestations, this new cinematic configuration made its peace with late capitalism, which emerged triumphant with the end of the Cold War. The socialist international cinema of the 1960s and 1970s was virtually erased from cultural memory. At best, its films were appropriated into national(ist) and auteurist scholarly narratives.

A closer look at the films and filmmakers that passed through Tashkent helps us account for the distinctiveness of this cinematic formation. As the next chapter demonstrates, the debates informing the shared cinematic networks represented by Tashkent both resonate with and differ from the film discourses, which characterize the history of the Global Sixties from the Euro-American perspective in crucial ways. As such, they not only illustrate the reasons for their exclusion but also challenge many accepted scholarly assumptions about the relationship of cinema and politics of that time.

Tashkent Festival Critical Discourses

This chapter will focus on the discourses—emerging from seminar presentations, press conferences, and festival press coverage—that formed a crucial part of the Tashkent festival from 1968 to 1980, demonstrating the participants’ understanding of cinema’s social and cultural function. These discussions challenge many Western assumptions about film and politics—assumptions, that still color our contemporary mainstream scholarly approaches to cinema during the Cold War period. Most of their main topics and governing tropes—concerns over the monopolies governing global film distribution and its effect on the developing national film industries; the understanding of cultural, social, and political functions of cinema and its most explicitly militant embodiment in the metaphor of “cinema as a weapon”; the denunciation of violence and sexuality onscreen as expressions of dehumanizing effects of decadent Western bourgeois ideology—were widely shared across the different groups represented at the festival. More contentious, however, were questions of realism, aesthetics, and definitions of a national culture or distinctions between popular and commercial cinemas or artistic experimentation and social responsibility. As such, the discourses emerging from the festival form a heterotopic space vis-à-vis not only “the West” but also across the various local, national, regional, and geopolitical entities and identities manifested in these discussions and accounts—simultaneously shaping and reinforcing specific alliances, affinities, and solidarities, while also pointing to other unspoken differences and divergences.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Each edition of the festival, from 1968 onward, included roundtable discussions—officially called “creative discussions on the role of film art in the fight for peace, social progress, and the freedom of the peoples”—that took place over one or two days and brought together somewhere between twelve and twenty presenters,



FIGURE 4.1. Roundtable creative discussion at Tashkent. Photo from author's private collection.

most of whom were foreign guests (fig. 4.1). Thematically mirroring the slogan of the festival, these roundtables were open to the public, and the texts of the presentations were subsequently included in a printed edition (in Russian). In addition to these official roundtable discussions, there were also multiple solidarity meetings occasioned by specific political events, as well as daily press conferences, which often spilled out into more open public exchanges between the members of different national delegations. And, of course, the festival produced a considerable amount of coverage in a wide range of local (Uzbek), Soviet (Russian-language), and foreign publications.

The format of these discussions and solidarity meetings fit in comfortably with such rituals in the Soviet era, complete with the announcement of Leonid Brezhnev's greetings to the participants and guests of the festival and the guests sending their salutations to the General Secretary of the Communist Party. The presentations forming these events were unidirectional; the "discussion" did not include any input from the audience or spontaneous remarks from the participants, although they could put their name on the list to deliver an address, even if they had not been formally invited to do so.¹ The explicitly political nature of many of these presentations and press conferences, however, could have real political consequences for speakers. Thus Tahar Cheriaa, the Tunisian organizer of the Carthage film festival, was jailed briefly by Bourguiba's government when it was reported that he'd spoken out against the president at the festival. The Tunisian ambassador to the Soviet Union demanded the record of his remarks from the organizers, who, in turn, claimed they were unable to find it given the high number of various speeches given at the festival (which allowed Cheriaa to refute the accusation).²

If these presentations were largely intended as ritual demonstrations of shared ideological positions, they also provided festival participants with a crucial overview of the "state of the field" for many national industries and progressive movements, presenting basic information about different national film industries and cultures. Such updates served a crucial educational function within the global information regime, which was otherwise entirely controlled by the five wire services. Of these, one was Soviet TASS, and the other four—AP, AFP, UPI,

and Reuters—were NATO-based, with the advent of satellite broadcasting further exacerbating this global news-media imbalance.³ In such a mediatic regime, these presentations and reports from the various festival delegations were often the only direct source of information that Asian, African, and Latin American participants could access about political and cultural developments in different nations, especially as related to cinema. As such, they collectively produced knowledge that could be operationalized transnationally by filmmakers and cultural institutions for whom the ideal of socialist internationalism was still alive.

The presentations were not censored by the Soviet hosts, nor did the participants apparently adjust their remarks to cleave to the Soviet line, as is evident from the wide range of topics and claims. In fact, their presentations are remarkably consistent with other recorded statements—manifestos, resolutions, interviews—at Third-Worldist gatherings taking place outside the Soviet sphere. For example, the Montreal 1974 international meeting of political filmmakers, which included several figures, such as Littín and Cheriaa, who were hosted at Tashkent, was resolutely non-Soviet in its geopolitical formation and rhetoric.⁴ Its final resolution denounced “the intervention of imperialism and its allies in Latin America, Africa and Asia . . . the Zionist aggression against the arab [*sic*] people of the Middle East . . . [and] the repression hitting the cultural workers of the arts and culture in Chile and Palestine”—phrasing that mirrored almost exactly that of the Tashkent festival communique the same year.⁵ Thus, while the film selection at the Tashkent festival differed from its radical Third-Worldist counterparts, the discourses that it generated did not. This was at least in part due to the crucial role played by the shared understanding of the role of film festivals as first and foremost fulfilling a social, cultural, and political function. In this sense, the formulaic slogan of the festival—“cinema in the fight for peace, social progress, and freedom of the peoples”—actually reflected the beliefs of the festival’s participants. Tashkent foregrounded a shared awareness on the part of its participants and audience of cinema as political motivator, agent of international solidarity, cultural diplomacy, national or regional cultural identity, and educator in the broadest political and epistemological sense. Yet with its inclusion of genre cinema, which fit best under an umbrella of entertainment, the festival simultaneously brought out many internal frictions concerning the specific parameters of these various functions of cinema and film festivals in a way that was largely erased from the art cinema circuit.

CINEMA AT THE FESTIVALS: ART, EDUCATION, OR ENTERTAINMENT?

Many of the internal contradictions allude to the colonial origins of these debates. In the context of African film (festival) history, Lindiwe Dovey, building on Aboubakar Sanogo’s argument, identifies the friction between “education” and “entertainment” at colonial film screenings:

Reading between the lines of the documentation that we have of these early film festivals in Africa, it is possible to conjure a clash of interpretations—(*dis*)*sensus communis*—around the meanings and value inherent in the festivals and the films they screened. For many Africans, as Sanogo suggests . . . , the screenings afforded an opportunity for leisure through the act of gathering with other people amid storytelling and song. For many of the organizers, however, the intention was moral and scientific instruction, and the incorporation of Africans into a European logic, economy, and way of behaving.⁶

Especially given the colonial history of Central Asia within the Soviet context, something similar could be said about Tashkent as well, whose role was understood by its organizers as at least in part consisting in educating its audiences with the goal of incorporating them into the socialist progressivist community. Thus, concerns about the representation of sex and violence and their harmful effects on the audiences were a recurring theme in the discussions, ultimately addressing the didactic understanding of socialist cinema and its impact. Given the multiethnic and multiracial context of the festival, there's an uncomfortable echo here of the colonialist agenda of "educating" non-European races, resonating with Dovey's and Sanogo's discussion of colonial film exhibition legacies, which privileged easily digestible films, devoid of too much formal experimentation, while also excluding any "harmful" elements such as sex and violence of "unsuitable" commercial cinema.⁷

At the same time, the festival also privileged exactly the kind of community-sharing aspect of leisure that, as Sanogo suggests, was so important for film screenings in the colonial contexts. Moreover, for its audiences, participants, and cultural workers involved in the festival, it offered a rare and exciting engagement with the world—a form of virtual travel that would otherwise be unavailable to most in the audience, as well as an equally rare chance to interact with people from all over the world, offering another form of affective proximity, further highlighted by the fact that many of them were "stars" whom audiences recognized from the big screen. In short, it created an experience of imaginary and affective global community for audiences and participants alike, an almost-utopian form of world-building that was multiethnic, multiracial, and culturally heterogeneous. The tensions between these two structuring principles of the festival experience—its governmentality and its *jouissance*—are crucial to our understanding of its politics and aesthetics.

In terms of the former, while Tashkent certainly imposed no clearly defined "norms" to its selection, the logic of taste-formation as an essential task of all cultural events and forms of cinematic curatorship was inscribed in the festival's self-conception. In this it was consistent with the revolutionary rhetoric of "the New Man" endogenous to the discourse of socialist revolutions in particular, and the more "radical" and independent theorists of the New (political) cinemas were even more invested in this notion. While many of them believed commercial film harmed audiences by corrupting their taste and channeling their desires into

complicity with their oppressors, for Soviet bureaucrats, in the best tradition of socialist realism, this same logic applied instead to overly formally experimental cinema, which failed didactically to be legible to the “masses” and was easily susceptible to ideological misinterpretation. Both theorists and bureaucrats assumed a patronizing attitude toward the audiences and “the masses,” reproducing the colonialist mind-set even within a decidedly anticolonialist position. Yet, as Dovey explores in her discussion of African film exhibition, these various political legacies, bringing together colonial anxieties, educational function of cinema, and its potential for revolutionary practice nonetheless made explicit “the centrality of human activity to cultural production, and the centrality of audiences to the meanings of this cultural production,” thus simultaneously affirming their agency.⁸

A similar dynamic surfaces in the Tashkent seminars, where behind the often expressed concerns about how to form spectators’ consciousness through progressive cinema, there lurked the suspicion that people are fundamentally sentimental and irrational. Discussions of the economic mechanisms of cultural colonialism were inseparable from strategies for effective education of the spectator. Even in socialist countries where film distribution and exhibition were already fully state-controlled, concerns about audiences’ consistent preferences for foreign, commercial, and other ideologically problematic cinemas never ceased. From Eisenstein on, leftist filmmakers and critics were caught in a paradox: on the one hand, valorizing the creation of active and engaged film viewers and, on the other hand, fighting to overcome viewers’ equally active resistance that demanded pleasure defined on their own terms.

These attitudes can be glimpsed in the reviews of the festival, where European observers noted the fact that the local Uzbek audience openly and loudly expressed their opinions of the festival’s fare, which led one Swiss reviewer to negatively compare the audience at Tashkent (“uneducated and undisciplined”) to those in Moscow.⁹ Similarly, Western critics were openly negative about the quality of the films overall. Gordon Hitchens, an important international film journalist and the founder in 1962 of the magazine *Film Comment*, was a committed leftist who attended all the early editions of the festival. He regularly expressed his dismay at the conservatism, both formal and political, of most of the films he saw. “While the word revolution is heard everywhere at the festival, the films are often passive, of simplified or escapist character,” he wrote in his 1974 festival review.¹⁰ This opinion certainly mirrored that of many participants themselves, who had strong and extremely divided views on the matter. Yet it becomes hard to separate such views from his complaints about the lack of air-conditioning or swimming pools at the hotels or his assumptions about the inherent inferiority of what he refers to as the “anthropological” qualities of these films, which needed to be transcended through revolutionary forms derived from European and American political aesthetics.¹¹

In their lament over insufficiently developed aesthetic norms, such judgments resonate with the views of most Western critics, who tacitly assumed that “world

cinema” was synonymous with the lowering of the quality of festival film selections. This is not to say that African, Asian, and Latin American participants of Tashkent were indifferent or blind to aesthetic questions, but their particular colonial and postcolonial experiences of the global film culture provided them with a better sense of economic and political hierarchies underwriting these positions. Far from being more “naïve” or less cosmopolitan (as many Western film critics would assume), their approaches were formed by a different conception of film culture, one that understood cinema as a cultural and social form and activity. This is what Med Hondo referred to when, at the 1972 Tashkent creative discussion, he explained his own political and aesthetic position against the autonomy of the artwork by stating that “making cinema for cinema’s sake is an unforgivable luxury for Africans.”¹² Perhaps Ousmane Sembene best expressed this notion when he argued that “in light of global history and the assaults of slavery and colonialism on black Africans, it makes more sense to use the term ‘culture’ than ‘art’ to speak about human expression, since culture grounds expression in human production, whereas art is too readily associated with an abstracted aesthetics.”¹³ And, echoing the Latin American manifestos on Third and Imperfect cinema, Paulin Vieyra, in his 1974 Tashkent presentation, put it even more categorically: “In African culture and civilization there is no such tendency as ‘art for the sake of art.’ Our art is always functional, whether it’s cinema, music or sculpture. It depends on specific needs, specific situation[s], specific ceremonies, and our traditions. I can say today that our cinema is thus a cinema of struggle, cinema of combat. . . . We are politically independent and must also be culturally independent, even if we are not yet economically independent.”¹⁴

Indeed, a festival like Tashkent rejected the supposedly universalist assumptions of aesthetic autonomy upheld by many other festivals, allowing for culturally and politically situated values that were precisely meant to enable filmmaking and were aligned neither with Hollywood nor the art cinema canons of such festivals as Venice or Cannes. This alternative spectrum, however, was diverse and far from indiscriminate. In many cases, the festival’s invitees were its harshest critics. For example, Senegalese Vieyra, Indian Mrinal Sen, and Cuban José Massip all articulated their criticisms of the film selections by articulating the need for a political filmmaking that was genuinely independent in spirit from official statist position and propaganda. Their critiques, however, were reserved for completely different films, speaking to the diversity of precise positions within this seemingly coherent camp. Thus, Massip, in his review of the 1968 Tashkent festival in *Cine Cubano*, says that the festival was dominated by “the tendency towards anti-truth and anti-realism” and films of “overwhelming technical primitivism, rudimentary commercialization, folkloric populism, which was nothing less than a[n] underdeveloped and weak assimilation of the over-developed commercial stereotype”—in which he saw “the mirror of what was our cinema before the triumph of the revolution.”¹⁵ Predictably, then, his criticisms were reserved for the selection of

the films from “reactionary” regimes such as Morocco and Jordan (not realizing, for example, that Jordanian film was part of the Palestinian resistance).

Massip’s praise, however, was directed not only at Vietnamese war films but also films made by the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea. In contrast, Guy Hennebelle, the radical French critic and great supporter of Third World and Cuban cinema, directed the force of his ire at the same Korean film praised by Massip as the worst example of socialist realism. While acknowledging this, Massip nonetheless justifies his position by the fact that the audience was clearly moved by the film and applauded at the end (as was, in fact, a standard audience response for almost all Tashkent screenings, especially ones attended by the national delegations representing the film).¹⁶ Massip similarly singles out a film by “his friend Diagne Costa,” to which he dedicates a paragraph full of exuberant praise. Vieyra, however, in his discussion of the same film, harshly criticized its naivete and lack of aesthetic rigor, linking Costa’s filmmaking directly with the propaganda of the Guinean state.¹⁷ One could suspect that this criticism may also have had something to do with the delicate political alignments between Senegal and Guinea at the time, as well as Vieyra’s even more complicated position within Senegalese state politics.¹⁸ In the meantime, Massip also expressed his disappointment with Satyajit Ray’s absence at the festival, dominated by commercial cinemas of India, which he compared to the Mexican Golden Age cinema (to whose legacy revolutionary Cuba saw itself in opposition). Mrinal Sen in 1974, instead, specifically singled out Ray as a filmmaker whose recognition rested on the success of his films in the West, a tendency Sen hoped that filmmakers represented at Tashkent could avoid—a remark that provoked outrage within the Indian delegation, which saw it as a betrayal of national unity.¹⁹

These instances demonstrate that the participants’ agreement on seeing cinema as a point of intersection of political, social, and cultural life, rather than its own autonomous realm, in no way led to unanimity of theoretical positions or the evaluation of specific films. And yet, analysis of the filmmakers’ and critics’ discourses at the creative discussions at Tashkent do reveal some particularly forceful shared tropes. These are, in particular, the dominance of foreign film monopolies, especially in film distribution, the notion of cinema as a weapon, and the need for filmmakers’ direct involvement in institutional and political life. Within these shared concerns, we can identify a materialist approach that gives systematic shape to a socialist international cinema theory, one rooted in issues of geopolitical economy, spectatorial and production cultures, and social function of cinema in opposition to strictly formal concerns. More implicit issues that emerge from within these discursive tropes, however, are the shifting parameters of such notions as national culture, definitions of realism, and, finally, the conflict between entertainment and political functions of cinema, particularly concerns over the impact of screen representations of sex and violence. In what follows, this chapter reconstructs these discourses and their implications. Just as I did

with the festival programming, I place them simultaneously within the Soviet institutional context and the multiple national and regional debates and polemics of the era.

GEOPOLITICS OF FILM MONOPOLIES

All participants at Tashkent shared, to a greater or lesser degree, an ideology that emphasized anti-imperialism and anticolonialism, including in their relationship to cinema. Unsurprisingly, virtually all participants in these discussions over the decade worried about the dominance of film monopolies—in particular, foreign ones—in most Asian, African, and Latin American countries. Heavily resourced and established, they blocked distribution and exhibition of national cinemas and progressive films in general, and *de facto* shaped audience tastes. African filmmakers in particular—Sembene, Vieyra, Hondo, Sébastien Kamba, Souheil Ben Barka, and many others—voiced at every edition of Tashkent the same complaint: an African who wanted to see African films would have to go abroad, for all this person would see at home were either European and American films or commercial productions from India and Egypt. Nor was this an exclusively African concern. For countries with more developed commercial film industries, the endogenous studio system combined with the privileged distribution of the commercially dominant international cinemas, had the same effect: choking off independent productions and limiting the circulation of other international films, even those from neighboring countries. It was also a concern that the more radical filmmakers shared with the cultural elites (such as representatives of cinémathèques, film societies, and art museums, ranging from Turkey to Brazil, who were also part of the Tashkent delegations) interested in preserving and promoting art cinema as precisely an alternative to the commercial film monopolies.

The problem of film distribution was framed in three overlapping but slightly distinct ways: first, through the junction of monopoly and imperialism, aimed not only at profit-making but also at sidelining of cinema that could articulate an authentic national culture; second, as a question of political economy, focusing on the mode of film production, where big studio monopolies, whether domestic or foreign, sought to extinguish smaller independent productions, with the effect that national culture became identified only with the economically dominant structures fabricating a mass culture in its image; and third, as a problem of ideological taste formation in audiences, where reactionary bourgeois entertainment, whether domestic or national, aimed at creating a taste for further entertainment, prevented audiences from engaging with politically progressive cinema and, by extension, from the social reproduction of a critical (or revolutionary) consciousness.

Indeed, this problematic is prevalent in the discourse of the broadly leftist leaning African, Asian, and Latin American filmmakers and critics throughout the

1960s and 1970s.²⁰ Nowhere, perhaps, is the issue more emphatically stated than in the opening line of the Tunisian film critic Tahar Cheriaa's book *Écrans d'abondance . . . ou cinémas de libération en Afrique?*: "The problem of distribution is incontrovertibly the key problem—the one that largely determines all the rest—materially affecting the cinema of the African and Arab countries."²¹ The struggle for the liberation of an authentically independent national cinema was inherent to the total project of decolonization: full political and cultural self-realization on both national and international scale. Since at least the 1920s, cinema had been seen as a uniquely powerful tool that could reach beyond the limits of literacy (both in regions where literacy rates were extremely low and internationally, among audiences that did not understand other languages). In so doing, it could incorporate other vital elements of repressed cultural expression (orality, music, visual culture, local poetic heritage and traditions). Even the less political radical among African, Asian, and Latin American participants were keenly aware of the economic geopolitically distributed disparities within the global world cinema networks and stressed the importance of cinema's role in developing a national culture.

The US economic monopoly of international film distribution impacted even Soviet cinema, albeit in a different way. Starting from the early 1960s, US companies abroad took an increasingly aggressive stance to limit cinematic exchanges (especially commercial ones) with the Soviet Union. For example, many of the British, Italian, and French films' international exhibition rights belonged to US distributors who did not allow for films to be sold to the USSR, in spite of the economic benefit that would accrue to producing countries.²² Furthermore, the film community was acutely aware of the pervasiveness of USAI cinematic activities all over Asia and Latin America, to which the Tashkent festival presented itself as an explicit alternative.²³

In this respect, however, the Soviet Union's position was a clear result of bilateral Cold War logic, in that Soviet film import-export policies did favor these regions (for example, by allowing barter trade) but in ways largely aimed at increasing Soviet film distribution or coproductions, neglecting the goals of developing truly multilateral cinematic cooperation across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Yet the absence of a formal competition, with a variety of awards given by different organizations at Tashkent, created a space for screening films that was freer from the market, which would otherwise be dependent on the more hierarchical award structures. Moreover, the informal ties established among the filmmakers at the festival who were looking for alternatives to the commercial networks did allow for greater exchanges among them, independently from Soviet hosts' agendas.²⁴

The idea of using the festival as a springboard for an international organization for mutual support for the production, distribution, and exhibition of progressive cinema across the continents was brought up at literally every roundtable discussion at Tashkent. Thus, in 1972, as part of his presentation at that year's creative

discussion, the Egyptian writer and journalist 'Abd al-Rahman al-Khamisi (in exile from Egypt and studying in Moscow at the time) suggested setting up a committee to help develop film exhibition, including the construction of movie theaters and other infrastructure, in the countries of Asia and Africa—enthusiastically seconded by the Guinean delegate.²⁵ Farid Ahmed, the head of the National Film Corporation of Pakistan in 1974, made a proposal for an Afro-Asian film center to promote realist filmmaking, with exchanges of films using a barter system.²⁶ In 1976, using the same forum, Ibrahim Jalal, the famous actor-director and head of the Film Union of Iraq, suggested creating a development bank for film financing, bringing together progressive cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.²⁷ Basu Bhattacharya made the same proposal in 1978, supported by the Mexican José Estrada and the Tunisian representative of FEPACI, who lamented the failed attempts to set just such a committee in 1974 in Montreal (a meeting to which filmmakers from the Soviet bloc, excepting Cuba, were not invited), suggesting Tashkent as an alternative.²⁸ But despite these repeated proposals, which Soviet organizers politely promised to consider, nothing happened.

Nor was this the first time that the Soviet film bureaucracy was challenged to live up to its internationalist ideals: as Rossen Djagalov documents, as early as 1962, Joris Ivens, the famous internationalist filmmaker and recipient of the 1954 Stalin Peace prize, called on the Soviet Minister of Culture to support the creation of a center for the training of young Latin American political filmmakers—requesting film stock and cameras, as well as financing for a permanent center in Latin America to encourage aspiring political filmmakers to make documentaries based on their local reality, thus launching a structure built on already existing trans-Latin American networks that could rely on Soviet funding. Despite his persistent and repeated requests, Ivens never received an answer. Djagalov attributes the lack of interest in this project to the Soviet policy of not supporting guerilla movements (to which this film training would be without a doubt directly contributing).²⁹

The lack of engagement of the Soviet film bureaucracies with the proposals by the festival's participants to support concrete steps toward the creation of alternative distribution networks makes visible the limits of Soviet cultural policy vis-à-vis South-South movements beyond the rhetoric of solidarity. Goskino and Sovexportfilm alike were increasingly oriented toward commercial interests—if, at least on the part of Goskino, this was the only way to support the increasingly hard-to-maintain cinematic infrastructure. The Central Asian and Transcaucasian studios, as well as individual filmmakers who were genuinely interested in more direct exchanges, had limited autonomy given that all international projects had to go through Moscow's approval and funding. These filmmakers might well have felt a particular sense of affinity for the difficulties experienced by postcolonial film industries, but even though this may have enabled closer personal bonds, it was hardly conducive to addressing the large-scale systemic problems that all Tashkent presenters were so eager to identify and combat.



FIGURE 4.2. Cinema as a weapon: original poster of the Algerian Cinematheque. Scan of the original poster from author's private collection.

CINEMA AS A WEAPON

The problem of international film distribution for progressive films was also framed through these discussions in regional and international(ist) terms as blocking venues for shared political actions and grassroots activism, in particular with nations engaged in anticolonial and anti-imperialist liberation wars. Discussions of cinema's direct participation in these struggles formed another extensive trope at these seminar presentations, signaled by the use of the metaphor of film as weapon. This metaphor was visualized on posters for both the Palestinian Film Unit and the Algerian cinematheque, which featured an image of a camera as a gun (fig. 4.2), as well as across Latin America—discursively appearing in virtually every presentation at Tashkent

The tone was set by the Soviet filmmaker Azhdar Ibragimov, who in his festival opening speech recounted an anecdote he heard from his Vietnamese colleagues about a peasant who asked if a film camera could shoot the enemy.³⁰ Virtually every presentation at the Tashkent creative discussions from that year on, also operated with the metaphor of cinema as a weapon in the fight for peace. Some participants used it as a metaphor of the war against imperialism and capitalism, or bourgeois ideology more broadly. In the 1968 creative discussion, for example, the Japanese critic Yamada Kazuo responded to Ibragimov's anecdote with a warning about cinema being also used as a weapon by our enemies, "the reactionary, war-mongering film capitalists." The Minister of Culture of Guinea further elaborated

on cinema as a “double-edge sword which could create or kill,” and the Algerian representative extolled cinema’s role more specifically as a form of creative and moral self-realization for soldiers traumatized on the battlefield.³¹ Mrinal Sen and S. Sukhdev in 1972 both offered their reflections on the impossibility of a progressive filmmaker to stay out of the fight and therefore the need to make cinema as effective a weapon as possible.³²

Several participants expressed a more literal understanding of the act of filmmaking as directly participating in the revolutionary wars for independence, underscoring a material consideration of the relationship between warfare and cinema; after all, the filmmakers of this generation often began as cameramen on the front, whether in the Soviet case it meant the Second World War or the more shifting guerilla tactics characteristic of Vietnamese, Algerian, Palestinian, Bangladeshi, or Angolan wars of liberation. Palestinian presentations offered particularly vivid articulations of these experiences in a way that is entirely consistent with the 1974 manifestos of the Palestinian Cinema Group and Popular Front of the Liberation of Palestine, as both groups were represented at Tashkent.³³

Soviet organizers’ voices often set the militant tone for these discussions. The weapon metaphor and its realities in Soviet film history hark back to Eisenstein’s formulation of a “cine-fist” following the 1917 revolution and consequent civil war, which served as film training for many early Soviet filmmakers. By the 1960s, the reference was usually to the Soviet experience of World War II—which was repeatedly emphasized at Tashkent by Soviet participants. Vladimir Baskakov, one of the main ideologues of cinema in the 1960s and 1970s Soviet state apparatus, whose speeches frequently opened creative discussions at Tashkent was particularly insistent on this point. His career and his ideological positions are particularly effective in illustrating the official Soviet state culture of which the festival was inevitably a part and its intersection with the cinematic cultures the festival hosted. Between 1963 and 1972, he was deputy head of Goskino, directly in charge of festivals (both international festivals in the USSR and Soviet films at international festivals—which meant that he was part of the official delegations of virtually all the important film festivals during this period). After the restructuring of Goskino in 1973, he was appointed head of the Research Institute of Theory and History of Cinematography (as part of VGIK), which was allegedly reopened just to provide him with a suitably prestigious position.³⁴ In both of these capacities, he was a permanent fixture at the Tashkent seminars, often setting the agenda for the discussions.

Baskakov was notorious for his dogmatic views and ideological militancy and for his direct involvement in censorship; he was always keen to decipher potentially “ideologically dangerous hidden elements” in films.³⁵ He was the author of several books on cinema, including such telling titles as *Contradictory Screen: The Spiritual Crisis of Bourgeois Society and Cinema*, *Combating Screen: Contemporary*

Ideological Struggle and the Art of Cinema, and *The Dispute Continues*.³⁶ He declared socialist realism the only viable weapon against both Western mass art (“Hollywood and its epigones”) and the “decadent” elitist cinema, which “pretends to be philosophically and politically relevant.” In this latter category, Baskakov included virtually all European postwar auteurs, making a prosecutorial case against their “ultra-leftist” films.³⁷ From the late 1960s through the perestroika period, his position was directly restated (sometimes verbatim) by many Soviet film critics writing about Western cinema. An exception could be made, however, for some anticolonialist and anti-imperialist films: thus Georgii Bogemskii, the Soviet film critic “in charge” of Italian cinema, singled out Gillo Pontecorvo’s *The Battle of Algiers* (*Ma’rakat al-Jaza’ir*, 1966), Valerio Zurlini’s *Black Jesus* (*Seduto alla sua destra*, 1968), and Valentino Orsini’s Fanon-inspired *The Wretched of the Earth* (*I Dannati della Terra*, 1969) as exceptions to the “decadent ultra-leftists” (such as Jean Luc Godard).³⁸

Baskakov began his career as a correspondent during the Second World War. Like virtually all his Soviet colleagues at the Tashkent festival, he was part of “the frontline generation.”³⁹ This experience was foundational for his understanding of the role of cinema in the propagation of ideology: in his writings he repeatedly returns to the idea that Soviet socialist-realist films of the 1930s ideologically prepared people for fighting Nazis and that wartime cinema was indispensable for shaping the patriotic spirit of the people.⁴⁰ Within the Soviet context, such a position represented a backlash to the questioning and reconsiderations of the wartime experience and appropriate modes of its commemoration that emerged in the period of the Thaw and the cinema of the 1960s.⁴¹ But while Baskakov’s celebrations of heroism had little resonance among the Soviet artistic intelligentsia of the period, at Tashkent it was framed as a testament to the power of (Soviet) cinema. Rather than emphasizing the importance of socialist realism, it confirmed Soviet socialism’s effectiveness as a form of organization, military as well as symbolic, against foreign and domestic enemies, demonstrated through its victory in the war against the Nazis.⁴²

The continuous and multifaceted use of the war metaphors at Tashkent created an analytical continuum among the economic, military, and cinematic spheres, which helped identify “Western” economic dominance in global film distribution and circulation as a front in a greater war. This notion found profound resonance among festival participants and their material context of both postcolonial state formations and liberation struggles (including, in the Latin American context, the experience of dictatorship and state oppression). For many of them, even Baskakov’s decidedly conservative rhetoric of heroism evoked different associations than it did for their contemporary Soviet filmmakers. Yet the idea of a shared enemy—imperialism in its foreign and domestic manifestations—allowed for sufficient structures of identifications across the national and regional contexts to overcome objections among even those Third-Worldist political filmmakers who were otherwise pointedly hostile to such jingoism.



FIGURE 4.3. *Left to right:* Mrinal Sen (India), Chingiz Aitmatov (USSR), and Ramu Kariat (India) at the 1974 Tashkent festival. Photo from author's private collection.

(SOCIALIST) REALISM AND THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL CULTURE

Explicit mentions of socialist realism were rare even among the Soviet presenters at Tashkent. Many of them were themselves representatives of the Thaw period, who defined themselves in opposition to Stalinism and aesthetic ideologies associated with it. Nonetheless, the broader issue of realism—often qualified as “humanist”—was often promoted by Soviet presenters during roundtable discussions. Its particularly vocal defender was another veteran mediator of Soviet-Afro-Asian exchanges, Chingiz Aitmatov (fig. 4.3), the celebrated Kyrgyz writer (and author of many screenplays adapted for cinema) whose works were translated into 150 languages.⁴³ In his presentations at the creative discussions in 1972 and 1974, he explicitly links realism to the concept of a national culture. Less concerned with defining it than defending it against the threat of “mass culture,” which, according to him, placed all “truly national” cultural forms under erasure, he repeatedly attacked the “pseudo-romanticism” of the popular cinemas “of the East” (presumably referring to Egypt and India). Such cinemas, he argued, were only superficially national or popular—no different from the “pseudo art of neocapitalism” characteristic of the “mass culture of the West,” which offered no connection to the experience and culture of the people.⁴⁴

In offering realism as a guarantor of the link between the people and art at these Tashkent discussions, Aitmatov tended to couple the term *realism* with the

adjective *psychological* and repeatedly offered Japanese antiwar cinema as its best model. This choice may seem surprising as Japanese cinema was a somewhat unusual point of reference for cinematic realism of the era (unlike Italian neo-realism or its non-Western iterations). Nor did it speak to any obvious political affiliations—as of all the countries at the festival, Japan was certainly the furthest from the socialist bloc in its socioeconomic policies and geopolitical alignments. Aitmatov's aesthetic criteria emerge as largely based on personal preferences: for him, as for many other Central Asian artists, Japanese cinema served as the source of great inspiration (so much so that he offended the Indian delegation in 1968 when in a speech at the festival he failed to mention India as a major cinematic industry in Asia at all, focusing his attention entirely on Japan; he had to apologize afterward).⁴⁵

This preference, however, was fully acceptable on the terms of the Soviet cultural apparatus and socialist internationalism, within which Aitmatov realized his aspirations. He was elevated to the highest echelons of the Soviet government, cochair of head of the Soviet Committee of Solidarity with the countries of Asia and Africa. Yet in his own fiction the overwhelming affect is that of melancholy—over the passing of the cultural traditions and ways of life—outweighing in its affect the celebration of the victory of Soviet modernization. His writings were known to some of the participants of the Tashkent meetings, and in turn, Aitmatov was conversant with Asian, African, and Latin American literature, being involved in many of the translation projects of the decade. A remarkably talented Central Asian artist committed to the local culture and its folklore, mythologies, and epic forms, he saw his engagement with these traditional forms as fully compatible with the broader notion of realism—as was the case for so many other 1960s and 1970s writers from the Global South, as demonstrated by the enormous global success of the Boom Literature and magical realism.

Yet Aitmatov did not appreciate Med Hondo's statement, made during the 1972 seminar discussion at Tashkent, in reference to cinema's European origins and Hondo's own position as a filmmaker in France, that he had to "learn cinema from the enemy and express himself in the language of the enemy."⁴⁶ Aitmatov, who had the last word in the creative discussion that year, rebuked such a sentiment, insisting instead on the need to "adopt and continue developing the artistic experience of psychological realism" characteristic of "the more developed European cultures," in the interests of "our own cultural self-expression"—therefore positioning himself in direct opposition to Hondo's aesthetic principles.⁴⁷ It was unusual for the Soviet hosts to enter into direct debates with the positions expressed by the guests at these roundtable discussions. Perhaps the comment about having to express oneself in the language of the enemy struck home with Aitmatov, who around that time was starting to write in Russian rather than his native Kyrgyz.⁴⁸

To fully understand Aitmatov's critique, we will take a short but relevant detour here on the Soviet reception of the figure who was particularly influential for radical filmmakers such as Hondo: Frantz Fanon. Even though Fanon's writings

had little cultural or political impact in the Soviet Union and were consistently undermined by the Soviet Marxist establishment, the few critical commentaries that did come out in the 1960s and 1970s can shed light on Aitmatov's rejection of Hondo's—undoubtedly Fanonian—position on adopting “the language of the enemy.” While Fanon was partially translated into Russian as early as 1962, his critical reception was as controversial as it was underwhelming. Yet references to him and his work, as well as some translated excerpts, were framed as *culturally* and *artistically* relevant; thus, his famous essay “On National Culture” was included in its entirety in an anthology of African literature.⁴⁹

Unlike the liberal reception of Fanon in the West, however, it was not his defense of violence (which was so important for the Third-Worldist filmmakers and theorists) that was the point of contention for the Soviet Marxist establishment; as previous discussions in this chapter make clear, such a position was rather consistent with the Soviet ethos. Violence in the context of Fanon's work was understood by Soviet commentators specifically as the “armed resistance of the people,” and its transformative value lay in the politicization of the people in combat; it was particularly important because it provided the legitimization of its power post-Independence. In other words, the collective political consciousness that resulted from participation in armed struggle included the sense of responsibility for the nation, thus placing the people who participated in anticolonial violence in the position of legitimate national leadership after the liberation.⁵⁰

What was truly unacceptable for Fanon's Soviet critics, instead, was his suggestion that African, or more generally postcolonial, nations may not follow the path of progress exactly as charted by their (European) socialist counterparts. Fanon's foregrounding of racial identification above class formation, and, even more crucially, his rejection of the Eurocentric logic of development, which placed postcolonial nations in need of catching up to the West, were simply unimaginable for the Soviet Marxist establishment that insisted on the need for “developing” postcolonial countries’ “assimilation of the historical experience of Europe as a necessary condition of progress.”⁵¹ Fanon's dismissal of the European working class as an appropriate historical model for emulation amounted to disqualifying him as a Marxist theorist worthy of translation in the Soviet Union.

Following the same logic, Aitmatov's need to defend European (read: Russian) cultural tradition as foundational for the development of his own (Kyrgyz—and internationalist) culture was a response to Hondo's suggestion that this may in fact amount to “speaking the language of the enemy.” But even more, Hondo's insight—consistent with Fanon's reading of national culture as, above all, dialectically tied to whatever form best constitutes its liberatory needs—that African cinema was not going to follow a prescribed set of aesthetic and ideological forms (stemming from its European antecedents as the more “developed” progressive traditions) appears to have troubled Aitmatov. As James Mark and Quinn Slobodian observe in the context of the socialist bloc's engagement with the postcolonial world, “alternative political imaginaries, whether around anti-imperialism, rights

or cultural revolution, always carried the potential of eroding the legitimacy of regimes from the inside.”⁵² It is this anxiety—of alternative political imaginaries that may entirely exceed the two offered by the Cold War—that lurks behind Soviet critical engagement with Marxist postcolonial critiques, even those embedded in the familiar narratives of “cinema as a weapon” such as Hondo’s: that solidarity may not be fully subsumed under the iconography of the Russian revolution, and liberation may not take the path prescribed by the Soviet state. This anxiety was no doubt much more palpable for a figure such as Aitmatov—a man who was at once fully embedded in the Soviet cultural apparatus yet was equally dedicated to the preservation and cultivation of his local traditions and Afro-Asian internationalist solidarity. His defense of realism is best understood in this context rather than as endorsing the rhetoric of socialist realism, however performatively.

In the 1978 debates, the veteran Soviet director Sergei Gerasimov edged even further away from socialist realism by invoking “the lessons of early Soviet film theory” as a way to “go beyond the tired old notions of realism or romanticism.”⁵³ This move is particularly striking in Gerasimov’s case, given his own strong historical association with socialist realism; by this time he was certainly one of the oldest and politically “reliable” representatives of the Soviet film establishment. His career spanned an early engagement with eccentric avant-garde of the 1920s as an actor in the Leningrad FEKS, war documentaries, and some of the classics of socialist realism (such as *The Young Guard* [*Molodaia Gvardiia*, 1948] and *And Quiet Flows the Don* [*Tikhii Don*, 1958]). A skilled diplomat who always managed to remain on the official side of developments in Soviet film policy and ideology, Gerasimov here seems to contradict the overall consensus on the importance of *realism*, along with *humanism*, at Tashkent discussions throughout the decade. However differently it may have been understood—whether through the introduction of documentary techniques, linkages of emblematic images, attention to ordinary cultural life, or rejection of the usual entertainment narrative trajectories—*realism* was a privileged term in Tashkent throughout the decade, used as a proxy for progressive political and social engagement in cinema.⁵⁴ Yet evidently its frequent usage hid a status decline, even in Soviet discourses, so that by 1978 this broad umbrella term was increasingly sidelined (even as the use of demonized stylistic and formal alternatives such as *formalism* still served to justify censorship well into the early 1980s).

POPULAR CINEMA VS. POLITICAL AVANT-GARDES

The capaciousness of the notion of realism as it emerges from the Tashkent discussions was certainly a somewhat effective way to avoid the inevitable clash between mainstream cinematic forms and avant-gardism, which characterized the film culture of the long 1960s. The reception of the Latin American program of the festival’s 1974 edition provides a good illustration of the peculiarities of this dynamic

at Tashkent. Brazil's selection (the first one at the festival) that year included Leon Hirszman's *São Bernardo* (1971), an adaptation of an eponymous 1930s novel of social critique by Graciliano Ramos, whose other novel, *Barren Lives* (*Vidas secas*, 1938), became one of Nelson Pereira dos Santos's most celebrated (including in the socialist bloc) early films of Cinema Novo. Directed by one of the other members of the movement—its most outspoken Marxist intellectual, reader, and admirer of Eisenstein and member of the Communist Party, whose 1965 documentary short *Absolute Majority* (*Maioria absoluta*) is cited in *The Hour of the Furnaces*—the film was originally censored in its home country. This stark minimalist analysis of economic relations filmed in sparse one-shot flashback sequences with a voice-over narration was subsequently screened at Cannes and won an award at the Berlin festival's Forum of New Cinema.⁵⁵ At Tashkent, it was praised by all European critics from both sides of the Iron Curtain, many of whom unequivocally named it the best film at the festival.⁵⁶

Yet, despite Hirszman's undeniable Marxist and anticolonialist credentials, as well as his film's solid literary origins, *São Bernardo* was barely mentioned in festival reviews by the Soviet critics (who perhaps lacked sufficient cultural mediators in those early days of Latin American participation to make better sense of it). The film similarly failed to impress their Arab and Asian counterparts, who completely ignored it in their reviews. And local audiences, most likely disappointed by the film's failure to conform to their experience of popular Latin American cinemas, passed their judgment by leaving the massive twenty-five-hundred-seat movie theater in a "veritable exodus," as reported in one festival review.⁵⁷

The audience's preferred Latin American selection was *If the Singer Is Silenced* (*Si se calla el cantor*, Enrique Dawi, 1973), an Argentinian melodrama about working conditions in the mining industry. The film starred a famous neofolkloric singer (and an active Communist Party member), Horacio Guarany, who had been long familiar to Soviet audiences, starting with the Moscow Youth Festival in 1957, in which his music was featured.⁵⁸ Capitalizing on its Tashkent reception, Guarany's film ended up screened commercially in the Soviet Union, its songs introduced to listeners and distributed through the popular music audio-magazine *Krugozor*.⁵⁹ The film was lauded for its emotional authenticity and accessibility, *realist* qualities presumed to be lacking in *São Bernardo*, despite the two films' similar politics.

Despite the Soviet penchant for waging wars against so-called excessive formalism in art, such divisions within film culture tastes were far from unique to state socialism. In many film discourses in the Middle East and India of the period, the term *experimentation* was often loaded with negative, pro-Western connotations, understood even by many important filmmakers as antithetical to the political and social goals of filmmaking, as well as threatening to their national foundations. Prem Vaidya, one of the cameramen at the Films Division, reported that during John Grierson's visit in the early 1970s, Grierson strongly and publicly criticized FD for their experimental films, which according to him had very limited reach

and therefore little utility in terms of didactic value, amounting to a waste of governmental money. K. A. Abbas similarly appealed to the filmmakers to not apply to the government for support of experimental cinema he saw as overly indulgent.⁶⁰ In a different, although not unrelated, vein, Ray (!) criticized Sen's film *Bhuvan Shome* (1969) with a similar rhetoric, equating its (mild) formal experimentalism with pandering to the taste of the "minority audience" that wants a film that "looks a bit like its French counterpart but is essentially old-fashioned and Indian beneath its trendy habit."⁶¹ Sen's and other artists' critiques vis-à-vis Tashkent's programming must also be understood within the context of such polemics, indicative of an increasingly combative cultural environment—made more so by the state's involvement.

In sub-Saharan Africa this process of segmentation and the emergence of an alternative film aesthetic did not take place to the same degree as in more established, and consequently more stratified, cinematic spheres. Yet FEPACI held the most radical position in this respect, criticizing openly many of the most popular films of the period—from Cheikh Tidiane Aw's *The Bronze Bracelet* (*Le bracelet de bronze*, 1974) to Djibril Diop Mambety's *The Journey of the Hyena* (*Touki Bouki*, 1973) and Cameroonian Daniel Kamwa's *Pedicab* (*Pousse-pousse*, 1975)—as naive and insufficiently politically committed.⁶² All three were successes on the international film circuits on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Yet, as Cheriaa notes in *Écrans d'abondance*, even these films ultimately faced the same problems of production and distribution as did the more explicitly political ones. In that respect, their situation was different from places that had established commercially successful productions or clearly articulated formulas for state-supported filmmaking, leading to greater divisions within both filmmaking and film-viewing cultures.

More generally, the African debates on film form tended focus on the need to develop and preserve its uniquely African identity. Hondo, for example, was very keen to emphasize that the experimental qualities of his films come from the organic orality and hybridity of African traditions and therefore, by extension, are related more to tradition than to experimentation.⁶³ Maghreb's cultural heritage was similarly at the center of Ben Barka's films, no matter how modernist its techniques.⁶⁴ The importance of the oral tradition of African storytelling as foundational for an African film aesthetic was particularly stressed, even in Soviet film discourses of the 1970s. Aleksandr Karaganov, another important ideologue of the Soviet cinema establishment in charge of international exchanges, in his 1976 account of the debates in Tashkent and Moscow referred to Vieyra's insistence on African cinema's being rooted in oral tradition rather than literary sources. This contradicted the dogma of Soviet film scholarship, which since the 1930s insisted on the primacy of the script in cinematic production. Showing an uncharacteristic degree of cultural sensitivity and self-criticism, Karaganov acknowledges that his initial disagreement with Vieyra was an expression of the problematic tendency of film scholars, like himself, to fall back on the experience of the "older film industries" when making theoretical claims. He affirms the need to resist this

habit because “such a narrow approach may lead to a certain ‘Eurocentrism’ which disrupts the study of the younger cinemas of Africa, which are developing under different historical conditions and different foundations and traditions.”⁶⁵

Karaganov’s surprising reflection demonstrates that Soviet criticism could be considerably less dogmatic when approaching non-Western cinemas (reflected in the fact that Fanon, for example, was accepted as an “African writer” but not as a Marxist political theorist). But it also reveals that rigid oppositions between the popular and the avant-garde, or tradition and experimentation, which framed so many European cinematic polemics of the long 1960s, were not necessarily either the most relevant or the most productive ways to approach the world cinema one encountered at a forum like Tashkent. Overall, the debates at Tashkent are consistent with the assertion of the authors of *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era* that “more often than not, [Soviet critics and audiences] privileged a discussion of ideas/ideals over the film style.”⁶⁶ In the case of international dialogues, this meant that film discourses tended to focus on political and economic problems. In this, they were similar to many Marxist-inflected Asian, African, and Latin American critics who even in the 1960s and 1970s continued to emphasize (for understandable reasons!) the material conditions for production, reception, and circulation of cinema. This set them apart from critics and scholars from Europe, the UK, and the US of that period, whose embrace of structuralist and psychoanalytical models of Marxist analysis rejected as politically reactionary the realism and humanism so vaunted by the Soviets. More important, with the exception of a handful of critics (such as Guy Hennebelle in France), these new theoretical approaches also relegated the work of earlier scholars who focused on the political and economic infrastructures of cinema to the status of “vulgar Marxism”—even while being fully aware that their counterparts in the Global South still foregrounded materialist approaches over textual analysis.⁶⁷

As a result, Soviet film critics’ denunciations of privileging formal elements as politically motivated did not seem so far-fetched to the Tashkent guests: Liudmila Budiak in her account of the cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America claims that the overvalorization of formal elements by French critics undermined their political significance. She gives two examples of this from the French “bourgeois press”: Mohammed Lakhdar-Hamina’s *Chronicle of the Years of Ember (Waqai’ Sanawat al-Jamr, 1975)*, which won the Golden Palm at Cannes and was successfully screened at both Tashkent and Moscow; and Mrinal Sen’s *Chorus (1974)*, winner of the Silver prize at the Moscow International Film Festival. In the case of the former, the French press foregrounded the Hollywood aesthetic and high production values over its anticolonial and revolutionary pathos; in the latter, it celebrated Sen’s film’s avant-garde techniques over its overt social critique. According to Budiak, in both cases, foregrounding cinematic technique made it easier to absorb these films into “bourgeois mass culture,” cleansed of their “national roots” and references to socialism, thus delinking stylistic choices and formal experiments from the question that is, indeed, crucial for these filmmakers: the future of their

respective national cinemas.⁶⁸ Despite Budiak's dogmatism (deliberately ignoring the argument that formal characteristics of a film do, in fact, shape its ideological import), it nonetheless articulates a keen understanding of the operative privileging of high formalism in the international film discourses of the period, weaponized to dismiss cinemas from Asia, Africa, and Latin America—a tendency that was consistent with most Tashkent participants' experiences.

THE FILMMAKER'S SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ROLE

As these examples demonstrate, festival discussions focused largely on the analysis of material and social reproduction as constitutive of cinematic experience in all its forms, paying particular attention to the way the medium constructs social and political reality both in symbolic and in concrete forms. Thus, Iraqi-born filmmaker Kais al-Zubaidi, who at Tashkent was representing Syria in his 1974 intervention, began with the grand claim that cinema is "one of the forms of nation-building." As part of this process, however, he emphasized the need for cinema to act as a critical—and not merely celebratory—reflection of the social process (thus implicitly arguing against the heroic tendency in socialist realism and the revolutionary epic that was endemic in Soviet and Arab "progressive" cinemas alike). As part of this praxis, however, he called on filmmakers and critics to be directly involved in shaping the institutional and economic bases of a national cinematic apparatus.⁶⁹

Such a state- and nation-building framework strongly resonated with both postcolonial and socialist realities and the experiences of many guests at the Tashkent festival. But in reality, for many progressive filmmakers, their commitment to expressing their subjective vision through cinema would at a certain point conflict with the stress on the collectivity that such a framework entails. This problem emerges in al-Zubaidi's own production of *The Yazerli* (discussed in chapter 3), which was rejected by the Syrian state for which it was produced, as well as by the Leipzig film festival. The reason given by both was that the film's formal experimentation resulted, according to its critics, in an insufficiently transparent political position, to al-Zubaidi's great dismay.⁷⁰ Acknowledging and negotiating such conflicting artistic and social demands presented a challenge for many politically committed filmmakers. Reconceptualizing the very figure of an auteur in social and materialist terms that demonstrated political agency and command over the means of productions (instead of its traditional conception as the bearer of a privileged subjectivity) was a way to reconcile some of those contradictions. Such a notion of the heightened political and specifically *institutional* role of a filmmaker in all aspects of cinematic culture was highly relevant in the socialist context.

Soviet filmmakers—starting with Lev Kuleshov and Eisenstein in the 1920s and 1930s, and continuing with Gerasimov, Mikhail Romm, and Mark Donskoi

in the postwar period—played key roles in the development of film education through VGIK, as many international filmmakers who studied there experienced firsthand.⁷¹ Although most Soviet filmmakers were certainly constrained in their exercise of institutional power by directives “from above,” many Soviet presenters of the Tashkent seminars were also leaders of the Filmmakers’ Union (whether on the national or the republics’ level), which meant that they had some influence in regard to many of the more internationally oriented institutional changes of the 1960s. Even such a scholar as Valerii Fomin, who is otherwise extremely critical of the Soviet film industry and its state governance system, asserts that the very existence of the Filmmakers Union did allow for the creation and accumulation of initiatives coming from within the filmmakers’ own communities. Conceptualized in one of the most liberal periods of Soviet history (the late 1950s), the union did, at least to some extent, function as a dialogue partner to the state- and party-mandated form of governance.⁷² Although it was by no means fully “autonomous,” and was in many ways obedient to larger state institutions and party directives, the union involved filmmakers (at least its leading figures) in the shaping of cinematic processes. Many of them fought tirelessly for the improvement of the working, social, and living conditions of its members, as well as getting involved in censorship battles on all levels. This was sufficient to warrant discussions of the possibility of shutting down all the creative unions during the reforms of the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁷³

As early as the union’s first meeting in 1957, even before its official recognition, the expansion of international ties was at the center of discussion. The goal of such expansion, from the perspective of the organization, was not so much to advance Soviet film distribution (as was often the case for Sovexportfilm) but rather to enable the involvement of filmmakers and other members of the union in establishing direct relationships with “progressive institutions” abroad—film schools, archives, and museums, as well as filmmakers and critics.⁷⁴ The union was thus finely tuned to establish relationships with “developing countries.” Before the official state apparatus would be delegated to conduct business, informal artistic and cultural ties had to be put in place. Thus, the “international committee” of the union was put in charge of establishing contacts with international film organizations and associations (through UNESCO and others) to advance Soviet participation at international film events and informally promote institutional and cultural ties. This included paper media, notably the union’s own monthly “informational bulletin of foreign cinema,” which included information about new foreign films, directors, and so forth. These were often based on reports of the delegations from the union from international festivals and other trips abroad, as well as translations of foreign film publications. This level of knowledge and international exchange was unique among Soviet cultural institutions, where nothing compared to the union’s globally informed monthly bulletin.⁷⁵ The establishment of new film festivals (both national and international) was also under the union’s mission.

Thus, the Tashkent festival was, in many ways, itself a result of Filmmakers' Union initiatives as much as it was an extension of a Soviet geopolitical agenda, which spoke to the importance of the filmmakers' civic engagements.

A good example of this is Georgii Chukhrai, a participant in Tashkent seminars and the celebrated director of such Thaw classics as *Forty-First* (*Sorok pervyi*, 1956) and *Ballad of a Soldier* (*Ballada o soldate*, 1959). He was a decorated war veteran whose entrance to VGIK was delayed, first, because he was drafted and then because he was convalescing from the serious wounds he suffered during the war. A protégé of Romm and Ivan Pyr'ev, Chukhrai was an archetypal member of the Soviet official film establishment, in charge of one of the sections of the union and the founder of the Experimental Creative Studio (ETK; from the 1968 Experimental Creative Union).⁷⁶ While filmmakers like Chukhrai were limited in their ability to effect change, their level of institutional involvement marked a strong departure from the narrow professional and artistic roles assigned to artists within a "traditional" private studio system. In constant institutional battles and under threat of censorship, they often had to continuously articulate their and their peers' ideas in relation to institutional and ideological demands, solutions to ongoing problems of scarcity, and the poor quality of technological infrastructure due to underfunding, leading to a culture of "tinkering" shared by cinematographers and other technical members of the crew, all qualities that, outside of the socialist system, are more often associated with the DIY culture of independent, activist, or experimental filmmakers. Such experiences provided additional points of affinity with the Tashkent guests, who were very familiar with such challenges and were eager to realize the opportunities such a different understanding of an auteur entailed.

Chukhrai's intervention at the 1972 Tashkent roundtable, however, did not address any of these aspects of his long artistic and institutional career. Instead, it deserves closer examination here not only for its unusual liveliness and emotional impact but also for its explicit linking of the war experience as central to cinema. As we have seen, this topic was central to many discussions at Tashkent, with critiques of violence and sexuality on (bourgeois) screens. As such, my examination will enable a pivot from the emphasis on Cold War geopolitics as organizing the practices and discourses at Tashkent, on which this book has centered until now, to a more ambivalent and perhaps surprising topic of gender and sexuality within both the Tashkent festival and world socialist cinema at large, on which the rest of this chapter and the following one will focus.

SEXUALITY ON THE SCREEN

As repeated rhetoric against the representation of sex and sexuality on the screen used in many roundtable presentations demonstrates, this was perhaps the most obvious implicit criteria for potential exclusion of films at the Tashkent festival (as well as all other socialist festivals)—albeit one that was largely unchallenged by the participants. An Egyptian reviewer of the 1974 festival reported that at a press

conference, the head of Goskino Filipp Ermash asserted that films shown at the festival could not include any depiction of “deviant love.”⁷⁷ This claim is somewhat dubious in detail, if not in essence: homosexuality in the Soviet Union at the time was taboo to the point that it was never referred to publicly, so it is highly unlikely that Ermash’s comments would even touch on such an unmentionable subject.⁷⁸

But if explicitly stating such rules was not done, the report certainly reflected both the perception and the reality of film exhibition within this shared cinematic sphere. Thus Egypt’s own censorship norms (de facto in place even before the 1976 law) among other codes of “moral behavior” prohibited depictions of “naked human bodies or the inordinate emphasis on individual erotic parts and . . . sexually arousing scenes.”⁷⁹ Egypt’s code was typical of production norms in both South Asia and Middle East cinemas. The Soviet Union, while lacking an official code, adhered largely to the same standards, and foreign films were frequently censored on these grounds. At Tashkent, this restriction affected mostly Latin American films, and reports from the official Soviet selection committee often contain recommendations to either exclude or shorten some of the films that contained too many “erotic scenes” (a clause affecting even films by established political filmmakers such as Miguel Littín’s *Widow of Montiel* [*La viuda de Montiel*, 1980], based on a short story by Gabriel García Márquez). Japanese films, in contrast, were often singled out in these reports for overly graphic depictions of violence, making them “inappropriate for wide audiences.”⁸⁰

Keen and passionate attention of Soviet critics to these issues is evident in their surprising familiarity with the phenomenon of the rise of “pink cinema” in Japan, which they frequently mentioned as a symptom of decline of the Japanese film industry. For example, Soviet film critic Semion Chertok, in reviewing the state of world cinema as seen at Tashkent in 1978, concludes his otherwise enthusiastic account of the films by progressive Japanese filmmakers by referencing the prevalence of graphic depictions of sexuality in Japanese cinema at large: “Pornofilms [from Japan] were never brought to Tashkent. But excessive realism and broad interpretation of the freedom of mores and reconsideration of moral criteria are palpable even in the works dealing with serious social problems.”⁸¹ Similarly, Soviet film critics were quick to point to the Shaw brothers films from Hong Kong as exerting an unhealthy influence on Asian films. Martial arts were widely practiced in the Soviet Union at the time, spanning devoted subcultures only partially under the control of state institutions. Though in our period kung-fu films were largely unknown in the Soviet Union (they would flood the video market only in the 1980s) and certainly were never included in Tashkent selection, Bruce Lee’s posters (brought from abroad, copied, or reproduced) were prized possessions among fans. Soviet film authorities had good reason to suspect that martial arts films from “enemy territory” would be wildly popular and were unwilling to take such risks.⁸²

Such attitudes are thoroughly reflected in seminar discussions, where worries about sex and violence on the screen were voiced surprisingly often by a large number of participants. Of course, this “moral panic” was far from unique to either

the socialist or Third World cinemas. In the 1970s, the International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI) held a conference on “eroticism and violence in cinema” in Milan, where Japanese cinema was one of the focal points of discussion.⁸³ Indeed, Japanese film critic Yamada Kazuo (who presented lengthy reports at every roundtable at Tashkent between 1968 and 1980) notably condemned “pink films” and horror as primarily responsible for the virtual destruction of Japanese cinema (although he failed to mention that 1970s films by Shindo Kaneto, who was nearly as revered by the Soviets as Kurosawa, were deemed too sexually explicit for Tashkent).⁸⁴ Indian, Bangladeshi, and Pakistani participants likewise emphatically supported the view that sexuality and violence were antithetical to the didactic aims of progressive cinema. A quick glance through the Indian mainstream film journal *Filmfare* of the late 1960s and early 1970s finds judgments almost identical to the Soviets’ (while, in a time-honored tradition, featuring many images to properly illustrate just how shocking the “Western” depicting of sexuality onscreen could be).⁸⁵

Chukhrai’s 1972 intervention at Tashkent offers perhaps the most colorful discussion of this issue, enlivened by his reminiscence of watching “erotic films” during a visit to West Berlin, where his impression was that all movie theaters (“except just one”) showed nothing but erotica. He admits to being curious, “having never seen films like that before,” and deciding to watch one. After he found the film “really bad,” he thought maybe he should sample another one, but this one turned out to be even worse! Having subjected himself to this difficult test, Chukhrai recounted his impressions to his German colleagues—who just mocked him for his prudishness and fear of naked bodies. Chukhrai assures his audience that “as a married man who has never had any problem with either intimacy or nudity,” his problem with “sexual films” was not related to prudishness. Instead, he theorizes his objection to erotic cinema as rooted in his unwillingness to accept making a public spectacle and commercial product out of the most intimate moments of people’s lives. “Sexual films destroy human beings, lowering them to the animalistic level—both those who have to act in them and those who watch them.” In a somewhat surprising twist, he concludes by bringing together the issue of privacy and the question of the war. In both sex films and war, Chukhrai argues, dehumanization is an essential representational tactic, reducing people to objects instead of real existing people. Thus, the culture of sex films and the culture of military aggression are part of the same system of reification and oppression.⁸⁶

Chukhrai’s critique resonates uncannily with the feminist antipornography discourse of the same period in the West, while his attention to actors’ experiences now comes across as shockingly consistent with some more contemporary critiques of the exploitation of labor, even in mainstream filmmaking. Yet in the Soviet context of the 1970s, they betray an almost comical unwillingness to accept erotic pleasures as constitutive of cinematic experience despite all the evidence provided by Tashkent audiences (including the hosts), whose enthusiasm for anything even mildly erotic on the screen was expressed quite exuberantly.⁸⁷

While it is certainly true that such concerns shaped film discourses from the beginning of cinema, in the late 1960s discussions of “eroticism and violence” reached fever pitch in the Soviet Union. The *zasilie* (forceful presence) of sex and violence onscreen was, indeed, the mantra of the official Soviet cultural stance toward “Western”—especially American—cinemas. The 1960s head of Goskino, Alexei Romanov, was known to take a strong stance on this issue, going so far as to make comments approving the US Hays Code, repeatedly stressing the need to combat all such tendencies in Soviet cinema:

Western Cinema has become extremely dirty. Sex and eroticism aren't even a point of contention, this stage is past. Nowadays pornography has taken over the screen, completely and fully. The code of decency, which was in effect in the US in the 1930s, is thrown into the trash. Governments pass laws legalizing pornography, as in Denmark.

Under these conditions, it is particularly important for our cinema to keep up the fight against the filth, arriving from . . . that world. And this fight should be merciless and uncompromising.⁸⁸

The intensification of the rhetoric of “filth” in discussions of nudity and sexuality on the screen in the 1960s was, indeed, symptomatic of the global reaction to the loosening of film censorship laws all over Europe and the US, a loosening that went beyond the simple Left/Right ideological divide. In the Soviet Union, it happened in the context of the liberalization of the Thaw, with its valorization of authenticity and the subjective—and, therefore, intimate—experiences as an alternative to Stalinist culture and its desexualization of love and marriage.⁸⁹ However timid the intimacy of the Thaw-era cinema may appear now, it represented a big change and was truly shocking for many viewers.⁹⁰ But it also reflected an increasing divide heralded by the arrival of youth culture—and young audiences—associated with sexual liberation and with “the West” (although “the West” in this case could be as close as the less censored films of Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia). For the Soviet film critical establishment, this concern was particularly focused on the dangers of the New “Freudian Left,” exemplified by Marcuse and Reich, “ultra-radical leftist” political movements, and European auteur cinemas and New Waves, both East and West (Jiří Menzel and Věra Chytilová; Pier Paolo Pasolini and Louis Malle)—all presented as mere perversions indicative of decadent bourgeois culture. The obvious appeal of these explorations of sexuality on the screen to youth in particular constituted a major threat to socialist ideology.⁹¹ Thus the representative of the Belarus studio in 1966 called directly on Goskino to “send a strong message” to the young people at their own studio, *de facto* asking for increased censorship on the national level: “We have young directors, and their youth is just pouring out of them, they . . . try to stuff their films as much as possible with veiled pornography. It takes a lot of work for us to talk them out of it, to convince them to reject this. But if our studio, God forbid, hears that it's not necessary—this will be just terrible for our studio.”⁹²

Chukhrai, however, was not known for such pious attitudes; in fact, despite his high position within the Soviet film establishment, he earned quite a reputation for his independent streak. In 1963, as the president of the jury of the Moscow film festival, he insisted on awarding the top prize to Federico Fellini's 8½ (*Otto e mezzo*, 1963) against explicit orders to award a Soviet film, and he refused to buckle to considerable pressure from the party, which resulted in Fellini getting the prize, and although the film wasn't commercially released in the Soviet Union until the 1980s, it became as iconic for Soviet cinephiles as it did for their international counterparts—in no small part owing to its lively depiction of sexuality.⁹³ Chukhrai was also the direct target of attacks by the Chinese and Vietnamese antirevisionist campaigns of the 1960s, who accused him of undermining the importance of class struggle in his films through his embrace of lyricism and humanism—a specific reference to the centrality of love and romance in them.⁹⁴

Chukhrai's linking of sexualized bodies on the screen with the slaughtered bodies of war victims reveals some of the larger ideological stakes in this opposition. Whether in its commodified commercialized form or in its antisystemic, anti-institutional anarchic and libertarian construction, sexuality on the screen falls outside social and political forms that are traditionally constitutive of socialist collectivity. The sexual autonomy of a cinematic subject (whether liberal or radical) appears as antithetical to organized collective action. While perfect for a revolt against the system, this makes it, in turn, quite different from the understanding of love as it is articulated in "progressive" ideologies and cinematic forms of global socialism of the 1960s and 1970s, where it is instead constitutive of and directly contributing to broader ideological goals and portrayed as a productive force, enabling social reproduction.⁹⁵

Andrei Shcherbenok underscores the specifically socialist construction of love as an experience, which can only have signification in relation to broader historical and social context. In his discussion of the onscreen kiss in the Thaw-period film *Fidelity* (*Vernost'*, Petr Todorovskii, 1965) as compared to *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942), he argues that in the Soviet case, both love and its implicit physical consummation can only take place within an intersubjective space that is never rendered entirely private, even—and especially—when not depicted onscreen:

... whereas in *Casablanca* the sexual scene between Rick and Ilsa temporarily isolates them from the context of World War II, in *Fidelity* the war is inextricably linked with the encounter between the man and the girl, and it is this connection that contributes decisively to transforming their "sleeping with" into love. . . .

Love in Soviet cinema does not require a conventional romantic plotline but rather a cinematic articulation of "sleeping with" that entangles it with the larger intersubjective, cultural and historical world.⁹⁶

Shcherbenok concludes that the prohibition on the depiction of sex scenes in Soviet cinema (at least in the 1960s) is not simply bourgeois cultural repression but rather a symbolic relationship between the individual and the collective: "imagining a

sexual act of the man and the girl in *Fidelity* would cut off the larger intersubjective and cultural context that constitutes the cinematic sexualization of their desire and would thereby reduce it to a mere corporeality.” Identified by Shcherbenok specifically as “war, heroism and self-sacrifice,” such required context certainly offers a rich set of signifiers of national(ist) and socialist objectives.⁹⁷

Nor is such a critique of sexual representation as a figuration of liberal subjectivity entirely unique to the Soviet case. This representational dynamic strongly resonates with the way that Madhava Prasad, in his *Ideology of the Hindi Film*, famously articulates the informal taboo on kissing in Indian popular cinema as a prohibition of the private (i.e., liberal capitalist) sphere, where “the representation of the private . . . engenders the ‘same-faced’ voyeurism of the cinema and presupposes the reality of the subject’s solitude in the act of voyeuristic perception, and the dissolution of the substantive communal relation into the atomistic individualism of capitalist social relations.”⁹⁸ Common to both Shcherbenok’s and Prasad’s analysis is an implicit rejection of representation of sexuality constructed through (modern) liberal subjectivity, albeit serving different ideological purposes.

In Prasad’s analysis of Indian cinema, this mechanism is a mere disavowal: a “symptomatic cultural protocol whose origins lie in the need to prevent a dissolution of pre-capitalist patriarchal enclaves.” It is a prohibition of the acknowledgment of the capitalist nature of the Indian nation-state, where “socialism was only involved as ideology, and Congress socialism was no more than a protective shield for the development of indigenous capitalism, the emerging capitalist culture [that] had to be disavowed and this disavowal was the only (negative) proof of the existence of socialism.”⁹⁹ In the case of the Soviet cinema of the Thaw, Shcherbenok’s analysis takes a similar cultural protocol, not as a form of disavowal but as a visual representation of affect, integrating it into the broader fabric of collective social and historical forces rather than a separate private sphere.

Within the Soviet context, the exclusion of sexuality (and especially its nonheteronormative manifestations) from the political and public sphere has been frequently understood as the result of the state’s violation of the private (as policing and surveillance culture). Further exacerbating the opposition between the personal and the public (understood to be complicit with the official state-controlled culture), the private sphere became increasingly valorized in late socialism (especially in the dissident circles).¹⁰⁰ This attitude certainly characterized cultural and personal attitudes throughout the late Soviet and post-Soviet periods, preventing queer activism from entering into the public domain even after the fall of communism.¹⁰¹ This experience further resonated with similar dynamics in postcolonial nation-state contexts (and the many authoritarian regimes of the Global South during that period).¹⁰² Yet, while the repressive state apparatus certainly had its impact and shaped the rhetorical structures, especially of its victims, it does not offer an explanation that can fully account for the complex dynamics of a different redistribution and constant renegotiations of private and public spheres either in the

Global South or in the late socialist societies, which ultimately find their representation in world socialist cinema at Tashkent, as well as in the discourses around it.¹⁰³

It is useful to compare the official socialist representational regime with the (neo)liberal one: in Lauren Berlant's brilliant exploration, the opposition is precisely between the vision where "social forces and problems of living that seem not about the private 'you' are, nonetheless, central to the shape of your story" and one where the centrality of aspirations of domestic privacy (with its narratives of heteronormative romance and sex) is the fantasy that brings an illusion of control and the possibility of "passion, care and good intention" as a way of disavowing the persistent experience of disempowerment of public life and economic precarity.¹⁰⁴ The former gives us a reversal of the latter while nonetheless fully preserving the logic of heteronormativity.

In both the Indian and Soviet cases, the mechanisms of cultural censorship of onscreen sexual representation clearly speak to a different symbolic relationship from the dominant neoliberal one, one that cannot not be legible through the Hollywood (or Western capitalist) model of sexuality precisely because it is explicitly set up in opposition to it. Bhaskar Sarkar elaborates on this dilemma: "In cinema, sensualized depictions of women were accepted so long as their professed intent was the negotiation of collective dilemmas and so long as a moral-spiritual dimension prevailed. But charges of Western influence and un-Indian excess arose whenever a female character's sexuality, as primarily an expression of personal desire, threatened patriarchal prohibitions crucial to modern state formations. Since the 'true' core of an Indian self was supposedly impervious to external influences, Westernized expressions of individuated sexuality were considered deviant and perverse."¹⁰⁵

The nationalist logic of these discourses, setting up an opposition between the West's individuated sexuality and the moral-spiritual (and political, in the case of socialist rhetoric) alternative, sheds further light on Tashkent's film discourses as another way cultural affinities were created, giving us a broader sense of what was at stake in opposing the purported onslaught of sexuality on the screen. Yet the very sense of crisis, signaled by these fervent condemnations, communicates the same sense, discussed by Berlant in the neoliberal context, that "the normative relays between personal and collective ethics [have] become frayed and exposed."¹⁰⁶

These high stakes—and the different solutions for rethinking the relationship between the private and public—become even more evident when we place this debate in the context of the historical alliance between women's movements and the activism between socialist blocs and the Third World during the same period. The next chapter will draw out this broader cultural history to further contextualize the way gender played out at the festival—in its discourses, practices, and representations, as well as in absences and omissions—and point beyond the festival's contours to consider alternative modes of gendered production and representation within world socialist cinema.

The Woman Question at Tashkent and World Socialist (Women's) Cinema

Providing a telling illustration of treatment of gender and sexuality within the cultural space of the Tashkent festival was the much-publicized opening film of its 1978 edition, *Veil* (*Parandzha*, 1978), by Malik Kaiumov. This five-minute documentary, with no voice-over, dedicated to women's emancipation in Soviet Uzbekistan juxtaposes the idyllic ordinary life of fully liberated (and strikingly beautiful) women in contemporary Tashkent with the footage of the *hujum*, the Soviet "assault" on the traditional way of life in Central Asia of the 1920s and 1930s. The traditional practices the *hujum* attempted to eradicate included polygamy, arranged marriages, and *kalym* (the bride dowry), but in Uzbekistan, in particular, it became synonymous with its violent and traumatic (but ultimately unsuccessful) unveiling campaign. The societal backlash to the women activists who joined the unveiling campaign cost them harassment, physical assault, and at times their lives.¹ Through an extended focus on the documentary records of that period, the film brings to the fore the troubled history of women's emancipation in Soviet Central Asia.

Kaiumov was Uzbekistan's most celebrated documentarian, with a long and illustrious career that included working alongside Roman Karmen and Azhdar Ibragimov in Vietnam and shooting films (which ranged from official newsreels to feature documentaries) in India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Burma, Iran, Iraq, Algeria, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Morocco, and Sudan. He was the president of the Union of Filmmakers of Uzbekistan and the head of the republic's Documentary Film Studio; as such, he was a key member of the Soviet Central Asian elite and served as a major force of cultural diplomacy, representing the region to the rest of the world, as well as specifically mediating between the Soviet Union and the Global South. A committed communist, as well as a practicing Muslim (he even managed to go

on a hajj to Mecca in the 1960s), Kaiumov often focused in his films on Islamic cultural heritage and its preservation, both in the USSR and abroad.²

Veil, which Kaiumov claimed to be his favorite out of his sixty-year-long career, earned him the top prize at the Leipzig festival that year.³ At Tashkent, the film earned much praise from reviewers and fellow participants from India, Bangladesh, Niger, and Algeria as the most affecting and relevant cinematic experience that year. All of them claimed the relevance of the film and, by extension, of women's emancipation as integral to their own national independence struggles.⁴ Not only did the film posit Soviet Uzbekistan as a model modern (socialist) society, but by gesturing toward the moment of the (post)revolutionary liberation struggles as an originary site of women's emancipation, which was particularly legible within the various postcolonial contexts, *Veil* and many other similar films at the festival allowed for a further sense of ideological and political unity vis-à-vis the woman question.

Indeed, the condemnation of onscreen sexuality at Tashkent, discussed in the previous chapter, should not lead us to assume that the topic of women's emancipation was similarly dismissed. To the contrary, women's experiences were central to a large number of films screened at the festival and were repeatedly foregrounded in the festival reviews. In the context of Asian and African cinema in particular, the degree of women's emancipation from the traditional patriarchal order became a litmus test of progress and a pivot point for envisioning the alliance of "progressive" Islam and socialism. Central Asian cinema in this context occupied a position as an intermediary between Soviet and postcolonial models of the treatment of gender and sexuality, and the Tashkent festival—in both its cinematic projections and cultural practices—embodied a space of mediation between these divergent but intersecting models. Set against both traditional patriarchy and contemporary Western "bourgeois" feminism, it offered a distinctly socialist understanding of women's emancipation, attuned to specific cultural and social conditions that by the 1970s had become visibly uneven across the Soviet republics.

This chapter demonstrates the degree to which gender discourses, practices, and representational modes at Tashkent were consistent with international women's diplomacy of the 1970s—providing an additional context, which clarifies the logic of alliances between the socialist bloc and Third World women's movements. Yet Tashkent's distinctive mode of dealing with gender ultimately underscores the increasing divergences of the social realities and shifting ideologies of late socialism and the internationalist models embodied by the festival. The fissures and internal contradictions were nowhere more explicit than in the works of socialist women filmmakers. Thus, the chapter concludes with a consideration of women's cinema that was largely excluded from Tashkent's selections—as exemplified by the work of Assia Djebar, Larisa Shepitko, and Lana Gogoberidze—as a limit case of world socialist cinema. With the reading of these directors' films, the book makes a dialectical transition from its focus on the specific dynamics

of cinematic networks, movements, and individual participants that crystallized around the Tashkent festival to broader questions of generic formations within world socialist cinema.

PARANDZHA AND THE WOMAN'S QUESTION IN SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

Kaiumov's film offers a particularly telling entry point into the issues of women's liberation as seen from the perspective of a shared Soviet and Afro-Asian cultural space. The film uses original footage from the 1920s and 1930s, much of it allegedly shot by Kaiumov himself, who started working as an assistant cameraman in Uzbekistan in 1929 and, throughout the 1930s, was the Central Asian correspondent for the Soviet newsreel agency Soiuzkinokhronika.⁵ In addition to conventional images of public marches in support of the *hujum* and women taking off and even burning their veils (cinematic representations familiar to viewers of Dziga Vertov's *Three Songs about Lenin* [*Tri pesni o Lenine*, 1934]), the film includes shockingly gruesome footage (including close-ups of mutilated bodies) documenting the violence suffered by women who participated in unveiling campaigns, to whose memory the film is dedicated. The historical footage is evidently a mix of original documentation and later reconstructions presented without any commentary or identifications: for local audiences, some of the faces on the screen would have been familiar, such as the iconic images of Tojikhon Shadieva, an early Communist Party activist in the *hujum* and an editor of the Uzbek women's magazine *New Woman*. For viewers unfamiliar with this history, the historical footage hardly adds up to a coherent narrative, presenting instead a highly emotionally charged and often shocking sequence of images connoting different aspects of emancipation of Muslim women.

The juxtaposition between "then" and "now" on which the film is constructed is anything but subtle, underscored by changes in the music and the vibrant colors of the contemporary footage (which includes women not only unveiled but breast-feeding in front of the camera—as well as working a variety of jobs, studying, and teaching) in contrast to the black-and-white historical imagery. Halfway through the film, however, the clear division between the lyrical music accompanying the images of contemporary women and the dramatic electronic soundtrack of the struggles of the past gets disrupted and blurred. It happens at the moment when a photograph featuring Nadezhda Krupskaiia (Lenin's wife, one of the leaders of the Women's Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Zhenotdel, and an ideologue of Soviet antireligious education) surrounded by two young unveiled Uzbek women, which we initially see as part of the footage of the 1930s, reappears in the segment depicting contemporary reality, with the past directly entering the present, as it were. In the new segment, set in contemporary times, the photograph is being shown to the younger generation of

women by the original participants of these historical events—part political education, part memory-sharing. Although she is never identified in the film, the older woman showing the photograph of herself with Krupskaiia is evidently Asiia Faizova—who as a young woman was delegated to the 1936 Komsomol Congress in Moscow, subsequently becoming a Russian-Uzbek translator at the Pedagogical Institute in Fergana, eventually leading its department of Marxism-Leninism, having defended her thesis on the topic of the role of the cultural programs of the Communist Party in the women's emancipation movement in Uzbekistan.⁶

On the surface, this repeated visual emphasis on Krupskaiia underscores the role of the Soviet leadership in the process of liberating the women of Uzbekistan—both “then” and “now”—a common trope of Soviet discourses of the time. Yet the actual history of Krupskaiia and Zhenotdel's involvement in the unveiling campaign is considerably more complicated. As Anne McShane recently argued, Zhenotdel's position on the *hujum* differed considerably from the rest of the Soviet party leadership, and Krupskaiia famously publicly argued against mass unveiling in 1928, warning (unsuccessfully) precisely against the kind of violent backlash that would turn women activists into martyrs. She was advocating instead for gradual change and support of women-only clubs and cooperatives that would provide a protective environment for women, as part of Zhenotdel's program.⁷ By 1936, when the photograph of Krupskaiia with Faizova was taken, Zhenotdel no longer existed, having been dissolved by party leadership. And within a year, many of the local women activists who were actively campaigning for unveiling (including Shadieva, whose face we see in the historical footage part of *Veil*) would be sent to prison camps as part of Stalinist purges, to be rehabilitated only in the late 1950s.⁸ By pivoting on the image of Krupskaiia, the film therefore both reveals and conceals the complex relationship between women's experiences of liberation movements in Uzbekistan and the official Soviet iterations of this history. Kaiumov's choice to provide no commentary whatsoever in his film, with only musical accompaniment providing cues to the audience—making it function in part as an homage to the earlier era of cinema referenced in the film, and in part as a poetic reflection on the mediated past and present of Soviet cinema's mediation of women's images—produces the kind of historical ambiguity that could function strategically to enable *Veils* accessibility in multiple cultural contexts.

One thing remains unambiguous: as Kaiumov's film and its reception demonstrate, the emphasis on women's status was constructed, rhetorically and cinematically, as one of the key indicators of the progress of socialist modernity. In the Soviet context, this issue was nowhere as relevant as in Central Asia, particularly in regard to Islam. As the headquarters of the Central Asian muftiate (SADUM), Tashkent was the official center of Soviet Islam, and the festival's history coincides with the period of “strictly controlled cooperation” between Soviet and Islamic authorities in Uzbekistan (following Khrushchev's short-lived attempts at their eradication).⁹ Thus, even beyond general Marxist ideas on gender, demonstration

of improvement in the status of women in Central Asia was crucial for international diplomacy, implicitly positing the possibility of harmonious coexistence of socialism and progressive Islamic culture in Asia.

But regardless of the ethnic or religious origins of their (almost exclusively male) directors, Central Asian films screened at the festival constructed the problem of women's emancipation as that of their integration into the public sphere, promoting it as concomitant with socialist progress. Indeed, even by the late 1970s, in the Soviet East women's participation in the public sphere continued to present particular challenges that alluded to larger problems of socialist modernization of its Central Asian republics. And the historical traumas generated by these processes were especially identified with Uzbekistan, where harsh unveiling campaigns took place in the 1920s and 1930s, as depicted in Kaiumov's film.

As Gregory Massell famously argued, *the hujum* for the Soviets functioned as a substitute for the revolutionary politics of the (largely nonexistent) working class in Central Asia.¹⁰ In the absence of a proletariat to spur a revolution, the emancipation of women was treated as a conduit to the fundamental reorganization of social and political life, creating a passage toward achieving "a new socialist consciousness in everyday life."¹¹ The legacy of this approach is legible in the way gender issues were treated—discursively and cinematically—at the Tashkent festival, with its continuous emphasis of aligning "woman's fate" with the fate of socialist modernization, not only in broad ideological terms but also specifically through their entry in the labor force.¹² But just as within the post-Bandung decolonial parlance "the fate of the nation" was understood to be advanced by the people themselves, women were represented as active agents of their emancipation—whether in terms of their public participation (as artists or revolutionary combatants) or in their rejection or renegotiation of traditional family roles (except for motherhood, which, for obvious reasons, remained nonnegotiable). In religious contexts, this could mean a radical rejection of religion or a (re)negotiation between tradition and progress. But despite this emphasis on individual agency, women's liberation was therefore framed not as a subjective experience but in terms of the changes in social, communal, religious, or family affiliations. And this understanding of gender politics, while particularly paradigmatic for the Soviet case, resonated across the cinematic cultures represented at Tashkent, just as it did elsewhere in the socialist world. Together with mass literacy and education, the equal social status of women and men demarcated a break between the prerevolutionary period and the progress brought about by socialism. Progressive political development was presented as an inseparable condition of women's emancipation, and vice versa, with the main focus placed on economic and political equality, thus conceptually keeping it largely separate from issues of sexuality.

Of course, even within the socialist bloc the actual policies toward gender and sexuality varied a great deal, both historically and nationally. In the Soviet case, they went from the exceptionally progressive Soviet 1920s—when not only men

and women were granted equal rights but marriage and divorce were bureaucratically simplified, children born outside of marriage were granted full recognition, abortion was legalized, and homosexuality was decriminalized—to the reversal of most of these policies in the 1930s and 1940s. After Stalin's death and following the transformations of the labor force caused by the war, the Soviet state rearticulated its position on a number of issues related to gender, sexuality, and reproduction. For example, abortion became legal again, but male homosexuality was mercilessly persecuted. Eastern European countries followed different patterns: in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, for example, homosexuality was decriminalized in the 1960s, while East Germany in some ways was more in line with Western Europe, legalizing abortion only in the early 1970s but also adopting much more liberal views on nudity and homosexuality in media, as long as they were rendered as personal experiences and not linked to social movements.¹³ This particular understanding of the differentiation between the personal and the political as subordination of gender issues to broader political struggles has also been at the center of much contemporary feminist criticism of both militant Third World movements and state socialism.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DIPLOMACY BETWEEN SECOND AND THIRD WORLDS

The ideological consensus on how to understand women's liberation among the male-dominated discussions at Tashkent mirrored the women-centered international diplomacy of that period. Indeed, within official Soviet state ideology, gender equality in legal and economic terms was considered central to both the festival's policies and its identity, nationally and internationally. The figure of Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman cosmonaut, served as a key signifier in Soviet cultural diplomacy all over the world as an embodiment of the triumph of socialist modernity, perfectly combining its cultural and technological advancements.¹⁴ And despite vast differences in the conditions for women and problems facing them in the Third World, throughout the postwar period women's movements in the socialist bloc were strong allies of women representatives from Asia, Africa, and Latin America on the intrastate level, such as the UN. For them, women's issues were inseparable from larger political and economic problems. Within the UN, the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), founded by state socialist members, concentrated on disarmament and decolonization as issues crucial to women's freedom from violence and discrimination, with strong support of women representatives from the "developing nations."¹⁵ Positioning such broader political issues as central to the struggle for women's emancipation allowed for alliances and solidarity among these blocs, while at the same time creating major rifts among them and many Western feminists, especially those from the US.

This division became especially pronounced during the 1975 UN International Women's Year. Under the UN aegis, there was a two-week-long World Conference

on Women in Mexico City, which brought into the spotlight widely publicized conflicts abbreviated, catchily, to “Betty Friedan vs. the Third World.” The fundamental disagreement rested on the fact that the core group of US representatives at the conference (mostly consisting of white middle- or upper-class women) strongly fought to exclude “non-women related” political issues—especially Israel’s occupation of Palestine and Apartheid—from the center of their discussions. As Jocelyn Olcott explains in her analysis of the complexities behind both the perception and realities of what took place during the conference, “Through the mid-1970s, the non-aligned countries would link these two issues [Israel and Apartheid], branding Zionism as a form of racism and shifting the movement’s center of gravity from India and Indonesia to an alliance between Arab and sub-Saharan African countries that traded allegiances, giving the bloc ‘votes to dominate most aspects of UN activities, and to paralyze the rest, if they so choose.’”¹⁶

In this, the nonaligned bloc was consistently joined by the socialist women representatives. Following this path, the Third and Second World alliance at Mexico with regard to Palestine was more significant than the presumed gender-based solidarity. The US delegation and its allies were attacked for their attempts to focus only on their conception of women’s issues at the expense of discussions of geopolitics. Their single-mindedness on this issue made them an outlier at this international event, manifested most clearly in their refusal to sign the “Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace” (1975), to which they objected for its equation of “Zionism” with “racism” and “imperialism.”¹⁷ The Second- and Third-World women’s alliance, instead, insisted on inscribing women’s experiences within broader sociopolitical contexts, demanding, as Kristen Ghodsee underscores, actions on “issues of development, colonialism, racism, apartheid, imperialism, and the creation of a New International Economic Order (NIEO), which would radically redistribute the world’s wealth.”¹⁸

Seemingly remote from the debates and participants of the Tashkent festival, the conflicts between the alliance of Third World and socialist bloc women activists and their US and US-aligned counterparts bring to the fore the different configurations of gender politics on the two sides of the Cold War. The alliances and solidarities, which were highly visible on the diplomatic sphere, similarly found their manifestation in cinema, which comes out as well in roundtable discussions at Tashkent. A similar strategic politics prevailed there that manifested in Mexico City, with issues about Israel and apartheid advancing the broader Soviet positions in the global Cold War. Beyond such strategic deployment, it was indicative of a fundamentally different understanding of what constituted feminism—a term that was identified with Western women’s activism, or the “bourgeois” feminisms of the earlier period—in distinction to the legacy of radical women activists like Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg or of contemporary African, Asian, and Latin American women militants.

While Betty Friedan came to stand for the US side of this conflict at the conference, on the other side of the divide was Domitila Barrios de Chungara, a Bolivian

tin miner's wife who came to prominence through her on- and offscreen participation in *The Courage of the People* (*El coraje del pueblo*, Jorge Sanjinés, 1971), where she famously reenacted her own role as a housewife labor organizer during the 1967 army massacre of the miners. An activist for economic justice, Domitila was skeptical of any alliances with Western feminists and disdainful of their discourse on sexual rights (including those of sexual minorities), which she saw as antithetical to the economic and political rights for which she was struggling.¹⁹ She rejected the idea that questions of gender were articulated through sexuality—in as much as it was understood as belonging to the subjective and private sphere—but, instead, linked directly to social, economic, and political discourses of modernization and progress.

Domitila's role as an organizer of the Housewives' XX Century Committee, a women's organization that actively supported miners' unions, as well as acting on issues directly affecting women, in effect rejected the separation between the domestic and public working sphere.²⁰ Thus, many films dealing with the liberation and anti-imperialist struggles (as well as building socialism) placed emphasis on women's active contribution to these processes, whether through combat, industrial or agrarian labor, or domestic and affective work. In this context, women's domestic and affective labor was consistently represented as a form of resistance integrated into the fight for liberation and progress as manifested in the public sphere, not in opposition to or separate from it.²¹

By the 1960s, the actual legal and economic situation of women in the socialist bloc differed considerably from elsewhere in the world: abortion was legal everywhere in the Soviet bloc except East Germany by the late 1950s (although restrictions were introduced in many Eastern European countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s); women constituted a large part of the labor force across the class spectrum; paid maternity leaves were lengthy and guaranteed; childcare services were free; and the divorce rate (most frequently initiated by women) was the highest of anywhere outside the US.²² These gains did a lot to compel Third World women activists to see their socialist bloc counterparts as natural allies. At the same time, they were suspicious of white "bourgeois feminists" whose commitment to sexual politics was frequently seen as a sign of their class privilege, exacerbated by the fact that Western women's movements were increasingly organized through groups centered on specific identity formations.²³ Questions of desire or what we would now term queer sexuality—unlike those of rights of labor, including domestic or reproductive—did not intersect with the socialist productivist ethos, which was still predominant among most women activists from the socialist bloc and the Third World alike, while continuing to violate the more traditional cultural taboos, which were likewise still prevalent. In other words, it's not that the Western feminist slogan "the personal is political" did not resonate with socialist and Third-Worldist women activists; but for many of them "the personal" included such issues as abortion, childcare, or choice of vocation—but not sexual practices.

The discourses and representational models we see at Tashkent, then, are fully consistent with such a majoritarian position within official women's movements of both the socialist bloc and the Third World countries. Among such representational models, it is the melodramatic mode of many of the films screened at Tashkent that deserves particular attention for the way it mediated these complex gender issues across both socialist and postcolonial contexts.

MELODRAMA IN WORLD SOCIALIST CINEMAS

Disparaged as they were by the critics and filmmakers at the Tashkent round-table discussions, films that engaged the melodramatic mode at the festival were often the only ones that allowed for the most explicit exploration of gender politics. In these films, the dynamics of (heterosexual) desire—the romantic (sub)plot—still tend to form the narrative drive. But what makes them distinct is the way this desire tends to be folded into the story of larger progressive goals (whether of socialist modernization, anti-imperialist struggle, or revolutionary consciousness-raising), while allowing for its more explicitly sexual manifestations to remain within the private sphere (and therefore outside of the cinematic representational regime, as dictated by the logic discussed in the previous chapter). Thus, if Hollywood women-centered films, melodrama in particular, have focused on private and domestic spheres, the opposite tends to be true when we consider films in world socialist cinema, where such narrative devices as the choice of romantic partner were endowed with high stakes beyond the private realm, explicitly aligning the woman with ideological positions the films seek to advance. Within such narratives, women often serve as moral arbiters within the traditional community, thus bringing it to the side of social progress.²⁴ As an extension of this logic, women's suffering within the patriarchy often serves to catalyze not only her own but also the male hero's political awakening and transformation. In other, more explicitly woman-centered narratives, women protagonists become active agents of change, fighting the vestiges of the "old" regime of patriarchy, which is defined by the way it blocks progressive social and economic development.

A variation on this motif is the figure of the mother of a martyr—in line with a socialist-realist tradition of Gorky's famous novel, which was highly influential all over the world—whose personal loss (usually of a son) causes her political transformation. Grief and mourning, as well as melancholy, within traditional melodrama signal the withdrawal to the private subjective realm (whether of a romantic hero's—or heroine's—psyche or to the domestic space of the couple). In socialist melodrama, these affects are still significantly inscribed within the historical and communal order, but the specific role played by the public sphere or the state in the women's self-realization in this mode of representation can be unstable and highly variable, often amounting to a vague utopian horizon rather than an actual

inhabited space. Yet it is always rendered through social, communal, or political terms, not as the satisfaction of subjective desires, pleasures, or personal fulfillment.

These dynamics extend to many socially minded woman-centered (melo)dramas presented at Tashkent over the years. It applies to the handful of Algerian films shown in the Soviet Union that included female characters (as so many of them didn't): from the more traditional and melodramatic, as in Mohammed Lakhdar-Hamina's *The Wind of the Aurès* (*Rih al-Awras*, 1966), to more explicitly socially engaged films, such as Mohamed Slim Riad's *Wind from the South* (*Rih el Djanoub*, 1975), Merzak Allouache's *Omar Gatlato* (1976), or Sid Ali Mazif's *Layla and the Others* (*Layla wa-Akhawatuha*, 1978). Many of the films at Tashkent used melodrama to critique the socioeconomics of the traditional social order. Soviet critics were quick to justify melodrama as an effective framework for urging progressive social and cultural transformations: finding this at work in such a wide range of films as *Sergeant Bakary Woolen* (*Le sergent Bakary Woolen*, Mohamed Lamine Akin, Guinea, 1966), Oumarou Ganda's *The Polygamist's Morale* (*Le Wazzou polygame*, Nigeria, 1970), Ababacar Samb-Makharam's *Kodou* (Senegal, 1971), Omar Khelifi's *Screaming* (*Sourakh*, Tunis, 1973), Khan Ataur Rahman's *Be Human Again* (*Abar Tora Manush Ho*, Bangladesh, 1973), Sébastien Kamba's *Price of a Union* (*La rançon d'une alliance*, The Republic of Congo, 1974), Yilmaz Duru's *Honor Debt* (*Namus Borcu*, Turkey, 1974), and Hassan Tariq's *One More Sin* (*Eik Gunnah Aur Sahi*, Pakistan, 1975). Soviet critical analysis of these films tends to foreground their contestation of traditional gender politics—but in a way that is aligned with creating the hybrid modern state distinct from the liberal model, even in cases where such a state could hardly be called “socialist.”²⁵

GENDER POLITICS FROM THE SOVIET THAW TO LATE SOCIALISM

To position Tashkent's mediation of these issues within a transnational context of the 1970s, it is crucial to acknowledge the significant shift of the treatment of gender and sexuality, which took place in the late 1950s and early 1960s, resulting, among other things, in a bifurcation in the cinematic modes of representation between the Russophone center and the republics.

Although the Soviet Union arguably never experienced the “sexual revolution” as that phrase is understood in the Western context, the Soviet Sixties were nonetheless marked by continuous renegotiations of gender norms and sexual representations on the screen and off. The question of the legitimacy of libidinal desires and experiences independent of the greater ideological goals of building socialism was a subject of hot dispute in Soviet media, from questioning the moral character of the female protagonist of *The Cranes Are Flying* (*Letiat zhuravli*, Mikhail Kalatozov, 1957) to raging critical debates triggered by the high school romance *And What If It's Love?* (*A esli eto liubov'?*, Iulii Raizman, 1961).²⁶ As with

many other aspects of cultural life, the Thaw brought about considerable diversity of positions, possibilities, and imaginaries. But in this respect, the political shift, which took place in the Soviet bloc in 1968, had paradoxical consequences. Following the Prague Spring, the official culture promoted not a return to the militancy of earlier socialist policies but a “normalization” ethos that affirmed more traditional and normative treatments of gender: “the last two decades of state socialism were marked by an ambiguous mix of rising levels of female employment with only perfunctory repetitions of the importance of women’s equality, while traditional approaches of framing women as child-bearers came to the fore.”²⁷

Russophone Soviet cinema of the stagnation era mirrors this tendency, notably, through melodrama, which staged the continual renegotiation of issues of gender and, by focusing on private dramas, marked the growing ambivalence and estrangement from the Soviet social and political order. Unlike its earlier Soviet manifestations (and even the production of the other Soviet republics’ studios of the same period), melodrama in this context allowed for the detachment of the representation of love and sexuality from social and political relations in which they were officially embedded. While the latter still characterized the socialist women’s movements, in the course of the 1970s, Russophone Soviet cinema and television allowed for new discourses on gender to be articulated and performed.²⁸ The women’s struggle against patriarchy was depicted almost exclusively in the historical context of the revolution and war. Outside of that context women’s professional and economic emancipation tended to be either toned down or outright questioned. As the authors of *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era* describe, in Soviet melodrama, “by the 1970s . . . women’s individual self-realization becomes completely separate from the Soviet public sphere, which was usually presented as male-dominated, but simultaneously impotent and corrupt.”²⁹ Such affirmation of the private autonomous sphere of intimacy certainly produced a certain range of new cinematic and epistemological vocabularies for greater complexity and ambiguity of interpersonal and sexual experiences (within a strictly heteronormative framework), which had not been available in the past. Yet as a result, by the 1970s, Russophone Soviet cinema largely excluded any imaginary of a public sphere capable of seriously engaging with gender questions, increasingly legitimizing more conservative modes of conceptualizations of gender, femininity, and family relations.³⁰

This, however, was not the case with the cinemas of Central Asia and Azerbaijan. In these republics, the reality of cultural and labor assimilation of women into the public sphere was met with greater resistance, significantly lagging behind the northwestern parts of the country; and the post-Thaw cultural shift in their cinematic representations there did not follow the same trajectory.³¹ As such, they offered a model that was, indeed, considerably closer to its Asian and African counterparts, while still affirming a socialist paradigm of advancing women’s emancipation that was fully consistent with the official Soviet position. Much of

their cinematic production, as evidenced by the Tashkent selection, still focused on the role of women's liberation and integration into the public sphere and labor force as a marker of socialism's progress, with historical films centered on the Soviet modernization of the regions serving as a paradigmatic model.³²

GENDERED DISCOURSES AND PRACTICES AT THE FESTIVAL

Further manifesting the complexities and contradictions of gendered discourses and practices at Tashkent was a certain disconnect within a threefold relationship of women's actual participation in the historical liberation struggles, their representations on the screen, and the roles they were materially accorded in the cinemas shown at Tashkent. In other words, in many national cinemas represented at Tashkent, the historical women's roles within the liberation movements did not always find their manifestation on the screen, while the visibility of women's actual participation at the festival in some ways contradicted both. The festival site can therefore be seen as negotiating these tensions through its discourses and practices, with mixed results.

Most significantly, these contradictions were reflected in the fact that out of the hundreds of films shown at Tashkent, those made by women could be counted on one hand. Even greater gender imbalance was seen in public debates and discussions: the only woman who gave the main address at Tashkent during this whole period was Rano Abdullaeva, deputy minister of Uzbek republic and head of the Communist Party, and her address is indistinguishable from any other official festival greetings. Despite the fact that there were many distinguished women film critics in the USSR during that period—Maya Turovskaya, Neia Zorkaia, Kira Paramonova, Irina Smirnova, and Ianina Markulan, to name just a few—not a single one of them participated in the debates, and very few even got to cover the festival until the 1980s. This was in part representative of the division in the Soviet Union between critics who could write about international cinema—a much more ideologically controlled and, in some ways, elite group, privileged with trips abroad and interactions with foreigners—and the majority of critics and scholars, whose area was Soviet film. This hierarchy was, in turn, gendered, with men dominant in the elite group. Even given the official downgrading of the cinemas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America against “Western” ones or even the cinemas of the socialist bloc, male dominance still held. Moreover, the Soviet organization of cultural institutions with an international interface commonly reflected unspoken cultural stereotypes, so, for instance, while women could be tentatively included in the field of Latin American criticism (such as the art historian Inga Karetnikova, and the film scholar Tatiana Vetrova, who started writing in the early 1980s), it was assumed that Africans and Asians would not accept women in prominent cultural roles, thus justifying their exclusion. In Central

Asia, women were overall considerably slower in gaining access to the top echelons of cultural and cinematic institutions, even as they celebrated women being liberated into the public sphere.

There were, of course, many women participating in the festival—cultural workers, representatives of film institutions such as archives and museums, especially from the other socialist bloc countries, and some European journalists who were also guests of the festival. Female voices literally dominated the festival in live voice-overs that enabled film screenings to be translated into several languages, and these numerous women translators served a crucial role in mediating between the cinematic works and local audiences. This was often particularly challenging given the unusually demanding work conditions, with the lack of available dialogues, librettos, or sometimes even basic summaries of films they had to translate, multiplicity of languages, and long work hours—resulting in translators often having to improvise and rely on their wit and personal knowledge of cinema to make sense of the films to the audiences.³³ But while they were certainly audible, they also tended to stay “behind the scenes,” their labor and contribution to the festival left largely unacknowledged.

As a result, the most numerous and visible women at the Tashkent festivals from Asia, Africa, or Latin America were actresses, dancers, or singers, and their participation constituted a crucial cultural and ideological aspect of the festival. And in the Soviet press coverage, stars who represented Tashkent festival selections were awarded an unusual level of symbolic agency, agency that was constructed as simultaneously creative and political.

STARDOM AT TASHKENT

As discussed earlier, the participation of both socialist and Third-Worldist women in internationalist cultural diplomacy in other venues, from the UN to the publicity of space exploration, by the 1970s was in fact both commonplace and highly effective. When placed in the context of the Tashkent film festival, the Bolivian activist Domitila's role in international women's diplomacy emerges not as exceptional but as paradigmatic: *The Courage of the People* is a testimony to her own life of both domestic and public labor and activism. This dialectical understanding of labor extends to her role and direct participation in making that film, which in turn gave her further visibility on the activist circles, enabling international venues for her activism. As such, she could serve in many ways as a perfect model for a socialist understanding of stardom, and we will see reflections of this conception in the way many actresses were presented at Tashkent. Yet, like with many other aspects of the festival, this notion itself was simultaneously tempered by much more traditional notions of femininity.

We must go beyond the official record of roundtables to festival publicity and documentation, with images and newsreels of the festival, to make the gendering

and racialization of the period evident. One sees lots of older men in suits (these are mostly the Soviet and Asian directors and functionaries), younger hirsute men in suits, but with increasingly more bell-bottomed trousers, often holding cigars (Latin American and North African directors) and Black men in colorful tunics (the sub-Saharan African filmmakers). Typically, these men are surrounded by attractive young women dressed in colorful national costumes or fashionable attire (all actresses, regardless of origins). Many of these actresses were also singers or dancers. They became regular participants of the festival, forming long-lasting friendships with the Soviet filmmakers.³⁴

One of these star performers was Mexican folkloric dancer and musician Sonia Amelio. Amelio's career and star persona offer another example of the intersection of creative expression and public diplomacy: she was a major cultural ambassador of Mexico to the socialist bloc; an internationally celebrated dancer, pianist, and actress; the daughter of Salvador Amelio Garcia, the director of the state film distribution company Películas Nacionales; and wife of Luis de la Hidalga, the head of Cultural Affairs in the Secretary of External Relations of Mexico.³⁵ In the 1960s, Vladimir Obrubov, head of the Soviet film export agency in Mexico and Amelio Garcia's close friend (he was, among other things, one of the founders of the pro-Communist Party Partido Popular in the 1940s), helped arrange his daughter's tour of the Soviet Union, where her performances had great success and put her in close contact with some of the elites in Soviet artistic culture.³⁶ In 1967, after her cinematic debut in Emilio Fernández's *A Faithful Soldier of Pancho Villa* (*Un dorado de Pancho Villa*, 1967), she participated in the Moscow International Film Festival, and throughout the 1970s, she was a regular participant at all the major events related to Mexican cinema in the Soviet Union. As such, Amelio, together with popular Mexican actresses Susana Dosamantes and Alicia Encinas, was among the most visible guests of the 1974 edition of the festival, appearing in numerous photos as part of the festival coverage and fondly remembered by Soviet participants (figs. 5.1, 5.2).³⁷ While Mexican cinema in the 1970s, unlike its Indian or Egyptian counterparts, became increasingly "risqué" by the rigid Soviet norms with respect to depictions of sexuality and nudity, actresses-performers like Amelio represented the attractive side of both state-supported high and folkloric cultures, as well as popular audiovisual genres, and they contributed to the creation of a lively celebratory and informal atmosphere of the Tashkent gatherings discussed in chapter 1.

An emphasis on stardom may seem surprising for a festival that presented itself as an alternative to "Western bourgeois" commercial film festivals, with their red carpets and paparazzi. Tashkent's emphasis on socialist, decolonial, and anti-imperialist values seems ill-matched to star culture: wasn't the star system the very essence of Hollywood commodification of commercial studio filmmaking that politically progressive cinemas were strongly opposed to? While stardom was always a key feature of Soviet (and other state socialist) film cultures, with



FIGURE 5.1. Soviet director Kamil Iarmatov (Uzbekistan) with Mexican actresses Alicia Encinas (*left*) and Susana Dosamantes at the 1974 Tashkent festival. Photo from the author's private collection.

film magazines (both the popular magazine *Soviet Screen* and the critical journal *The Art of Cinema*) featuring regular articles and special issues on famous actors, its construction was not merely a reflection of the Hollywood model.³⁸ In fact, as Kristin Roth-Ey points out, criticisms of the “star industry,” the cornerstone of bourgeois cinema, were frequently voiced in Soviet film magazine articles about foreign stars; often, depending on the political sympathies of the star, the Soviet point of view focused on the ideological and artistic difficulties these actors encountered in a corrupt bourgeois film industry directed only at profit-making.³⁹ To distinguish acting within the socialist film industry, Chinese film discourses of the same period consistently referred to actors as “film workers.”⁴⁰ The Soviet press never went so far as to equate artistic labor to that of the proletariat; nonetheless, it foregrounded the process of actor training and preparation for the roles, long working hours and hardships, which had to be overcome during shootings. The press remarked on the actors’ creative evolution, their sense of responsibility and awareness of the high social mission of cinema, and their direct participation in the more conceptual aspects of filmmaking.⁴¹

In some ways, this was a legacy from the early days of Soviet film education from the 1920s onward: like many other film schools, VGIK was originally an actors studio, which, in distinction from similar European and American institutions, was

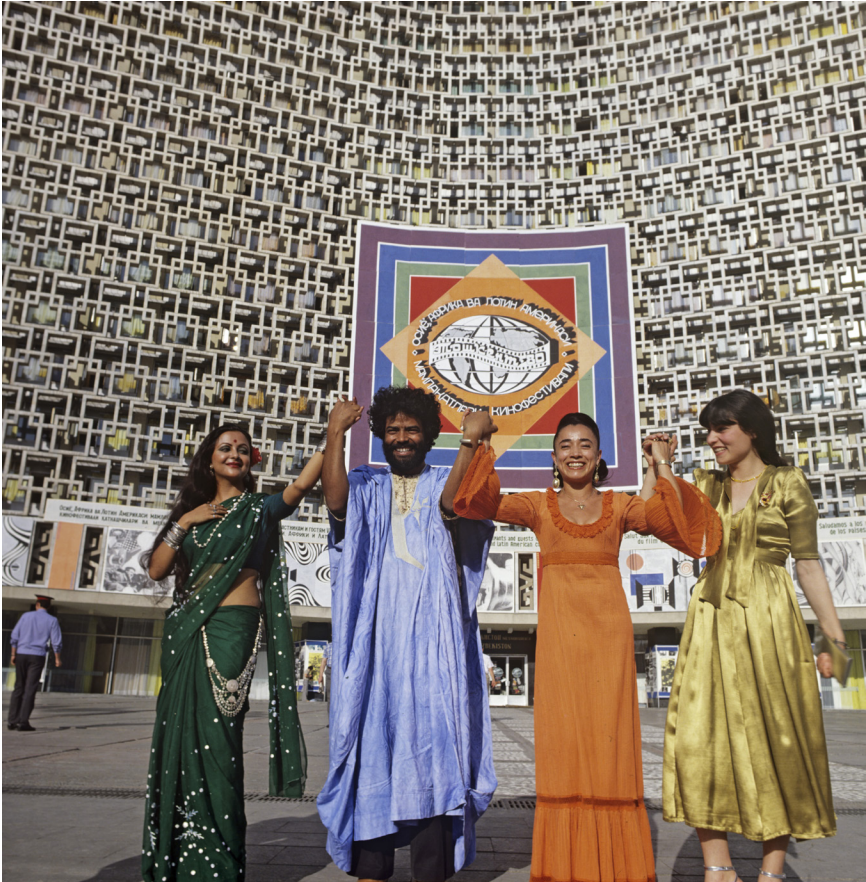


FIGURE 5.2. *Left to right:* Minakshi Anand (Nepal), Med Hondo (Mauritania), Sonia Amelio (Mexico), and Daredjan Chakhidze (Georgia) at the the 1980 Tashkent festival. Photo used by permission of Sputnik.

pervaded by the early Soviet film theory that accorded a large role to the actor, which in turn shaped Soviet film education at large.⁴² At VGIK, actors, just as other cineastes, became part of an in-depth multiyear specialized curriculum. Thus, discourses on acting from the very origins of the Soviet film apparatus were constructed in reference to education, working conditions, and individual professional and social growth more than the Hollywood-style gossip about the stars' private lives (although glimpses into their family histories or particular domestic talents were occasionally provided). Unlike Indian cinema of the 1930s and 1940s, where, as Neepa Majumdar argues, the private realm was segregated from the construction of the star persona owing to its negation as an “unacknowledged cultural force in public life,” the Soviet star system overemphasized the historical position

of cinema as integral to the constitution of its public culture—as an industry, a workplace, an educational endeavor, both in political and aesthetic aspects—not so much segregating the private realm from it as rendering it less relevant.⁴³ Instead, Soviet star discourse foregrounded the agency of actors and actresses, acknowledging their work as collaborative and productive labor. This further reinforced the understanding of cinema as embedded within a network of political, economic, and cultural forces and highlighted actors' interventions in them.

An awareness of the role of actors and actresses in international cultural diplomacy was fully consistent with such a view. And after the 1950s, Soviet policy makers began to realize that Soviet actors and actresses could serve as effective international cultural ambassadors. Afro-Asian film festivals were no exception: Masha Kirasirova describes a report by the Soviet ambassador in Indonesia in 1964 that suggested that the poor reception the delegation received at the Afro-Asian film festival in Jakarta that year was due at least to the fact that there was only one actress present, in contrast to earlier artistic delegations that were better endowed, including one with the beautiful actress Zinaida Kirienko, who, the report states, led to direct access to personal attention from Sukarno.⁴⁴ Soviet film actress Liudmila Chursina was featured on a 1965 cover of the Indian film journal *Filmfare*; she was one of only two foreign actresses bestowed with such an honor in the 1960s.⁴⁵ The high visibility of the actresses at the Tashkent festival reflects the awareness of such international publicity and points to the inevitable contradiction. If its goal was to create a more attractive and livelier social event while redressing the obvious gender imbalance, in doing so it instrumentalized an ornamental understanding of women performers. In contrast to star discourses outside the socialist sphere, the festival gave its fullest acknowledgment of their social impact and foregrounded their political agency; even so, in the absence of important female directors and critics, it nonetheless created obvious gendered divisions within the cultural spheres as represented at the festival.

A big part of the festival press coverage in the Soviet Union was its introduction of “new stars” from Asia, Africa, and Latin America to Soviet audiences. In part, this was a regular film publicity mechanism since many films shown at Tashkent were bought for wide release in the country. And because many actors and actresses participating at the festival were not (yet) familiar to local (Tashkent or Soviet) audiences, this was a conscious and unidirectional way of creating their star image for potential Soviet audiences, that is, publicity for their films. Moreover, both Soviet audiences and critics lacked background knowledge of the actresses' overall body of work. This situation was not uncommon in the Soviet Union, where coverage of foreign stars' careers in *Soviet Screen* very often referred to films that were inaccessible to the Soviet audience. In place of the films themselves, the audience read articles that summarized their plots and included stills, thus offering “viewers a kind of secondhand consumption experience, drawing them into an international cinematic imaginary otherwise unavailable.”⁴⁶ In the

case of African, Asian, and Latin American stars, however, film critics themselves were often at a loss for information beyond what festival participants would share with them. Thus, the context of any critical discussion was based almost entirely on observations of the films shown at the festival and the interviews actors took—even when some of the actresses (such as Pakistani Shamim Ara or Turkish Türgan Şoray) were superstars with extensive cinematic careers at home.

Without much access to their films, the Tashkent star personas for Soviet audiences were actively created on-site, framed within their immediate set of coordinates: their roles as cultural ambassadors, their own political commitments and experiences, their relationship to their respective social and cultural milieu. In interviews, the actresses were asked about progressive cinema in their home country, how they approached their choice of films, directors, topics, and types of characters they played. These interviews and articles emphasized how the stars were active agents in their industry, whose skills were shaped by personal and professional formation that reflected larger historical trends. These social forces explained the spectatorial identification of which they were the object, drafting them into the didactic and revolutionary purposes of progressive cinema, in which they played an important public role. The Soviet press introduced these Asian, African, and Latin American stars in terms consistent with the Soviet line on stardom, emphasizing the ethos of continuous cultural growth and development through work.

Thus, in festival coverage, the article about the two stars of Ousmane Sembène's *The Money Order* (*Mandabi*, 1968), Ynousse N'Diaye and Isseu Niang, both of whom participated in the festival (with Niang becoming a frequent participant), not only discussed their dresses, so exotic and unfamiliar to Soviet eyes, but dwelt on the fact that they could make their own clothes, which was demonstrated for the reporter at Tashkent when the two went out and bought Uzbek fabrics at the market in order to sew themselves new outfits within a few hours (fig. 5.3). The emphasis on this lack of an extended apparatus of film production (which, in the capitalist context, would include stylists and dressmakers) may appear condescending and orientalist; however, self-reliance and connections to manual labor were consistently celebrated in Soviet discourses. In fact, such DIY practices were common even in the financially constrained Soviet film production culture. The same article emphasized the fact that Niang spoke fluent French, English, and Italian, in addition to Wolof, and pointed out that N'Diaye earned her living from stenography while hoping to take the entrance exam for VGIK (while concluding with the predictable claim that both actresses enjoyed Central Asian films they saw at the festival the most).⁴⁷

Chieko Baisho, the star of several of Yoji Yamada's films featured at the festival, was introduced in an interview as the daughter of a tram driver and a singer best known for her song "Shitamachi no Taiyō" ("Sun over Shitamachi"), set in a working-class neighborhood of Tokyo. This proletariat context colored her roles in



FIGURE 5.3. Senegalese actresses Ynousse N'Diaye (left) and Isseu Niang in Tashkent. Photo from authors private collection.

“progressive” films, where the noticeable authenticity of her performance reflected her real experiences and her interest in the everyday lives of “simple working women.”⁴⁸

The press reports about the two most famous Bangladeshi actresses, sisters Shuchanda (Kohinoor Akhtar) and Babita (Farida Akhtar Poppy), who were also frequent guests at the festival in the 1970s, wove their life stories into the traumatic history of the War of Liberation. Shuchanda was the widow of Zahir Raihan, the communist director of *Stop the Genocide* (one of several of his films shown in the USSR), who had disappeared following the war. Thus, the frequent interviews with both Shuchanda and Babita always noted the background history of the people's resistance movement and the role that cinema in Bangladesh played in it, further emphasizing Raihan's participation in this history, even if the films Shuchanda and Babita presented at Tashkent were generally apolitical. Babita's experience of working with Satyajit Ray further legitimized her “realist” (and, therefore, progressive) credentials, and Shuchanda's emphasis on tragedy as her preferred cinematic mode as “best responding to the conditions of life for the people of Bangladesh” likewise endowed the folkloric romantic films in which she starred as the aura of political allegories or expressions of the spirit of the people in the face of historical trauma.⁴⁹ The reception of Magda in the Soviet bloc was defined by her role as Jamila Bouhired, the famous FLN guerilla fighter in Chahine's film, even

though her popularity with Soviet audiences, as well as elsewhere, derived from mainstream Egyptian melodramas. Her interviews emphasized her independence (she became an actress against her family's wishes) and her creative ambitions as a director (her directorial debut was widely screened in the Soviet Union after its premiere in Tashkent), as well as producer.⁵⁰

Similarly, the Turkish superstar Türkan Şoray, who, along with Fatma Girik, in the course of the 1970s became an increasingly visible presence at Tashkent, especially after the success of *The Girl with the Red Scarf* (*Selvi Boylum, Al Yazmalım*, Atif Yılmaz, 1977), an adaptation of Chingiz Aitmatov's short story, and a Turkish-Soviet coproduction *My Love, My Sorrow* (*Liubov' moia, pechal' moia/Bir aşk masalı: Ferhat ile Şirin*, Azhdar Ibragimov, 1978). Her acting career covered a wide range of roles, but what the Soviet press liked best was her ability to play the gentle and repressed "everyday woman" who, in the course of the dramatic arc, stands up against masculinist compliance with oppressive social, political, and economic structures. Her unusual control over her filming conditions (which became known in Turkey as Türkan Şoray Laws), which covered nonnudity clauses, fixed working hours, and choice of locations, was emphasized. Her box-office appeal from the start of her career enabled her to choose roles with socially and politically transgressive filmmakers. Her own directorial debut, *The Return* (*Dönüş*, 1972), won an award at the 1973 Moscow film festival, and Soviet film critics were keen to highlight all these aspects of her professional persona, which combined glamor and progressive political consciousness of women's rights onscreen and off.⁵¹

The star of *Kumari* (Prem Bahadur Basnet, 1977), screened at Tashkent in 1976, Chaitya Devi Singh began her acting career in Nepali's very first feature film, *Mother* (*Aama*, Hira Singh Khatri, 1964), an experience that convinced her that to promote the art and culture of Nepal, she needed a more formal film education and led her to study at VGIK. After completing her full course of studies there—as the first Nepalese student at VGIK, let alone the first Nepalese woman to study cinema—upon her return she became not only "Kollywood's First Lady" but the only woman to join the Royal Nepal Film Corporation as a filming assistant, working on documentaries for the Ministry of Forestry. Her commitment to film education and educational films and her directorial ambitions were emphasized in Soviet press coverage of the festival.⁵²

Finally, among the many Indian actresses, Shabana Azmi emerged as the one who most reflected the "spirit of the festival." After the international success of her debut in Shyam Benegal's *The Seedling* (*Ankur*, 1974), which was screened at the Moscow film festival, Azmi became the face of the Indian Parallel cinema; that recognition was further confirmed with her performance in Benegal's *Night's End* (*Nishant*, 1975), which was screened at Tashkent to great critical success. In many ways, her persona brought together all the aspects of Indian culture and cinema that were celebrated in the Soviet Union. She was the daughter of Kaifi Azmi, whose life was filled with socialist and Third World accomplishments: he

was a renowned Urdu poet and lifelong communist whose works were translated into Russian, a member of the Progressive Writers' Movement, the All-India president of IPTA, winner of the Soviet Land Nehru Award and the Afro-Asian Writers Lotus Award, and a member of the Soviet-Indian Friendship Association.⁵³ He also worked extensively as a lyricist for films, creating some of the most famous lyrics and poetic dialogues for such classics as Guru Dutt's *Paper Flowers* (*Kagaaz Ke Phool*, 1959), Chetan Anand's *Reality* (*Haqeeqat*, 1964), and several of K. A. Abbas's films—as well as for several independent projects, including Benegal's *The Churning* (*Manthan*, 1976) and M. S. Sathyu's *The Legendary Outlaw* (*Kanneshwara Rama*, 1977). Shabana's mother, Shaukat, had a distinguished resume of her own as an IPTA actress (later to appear on the screen as well).⁵⁴ Shabana's own quick ascent to crossover stardom, both commercial and independent, was seen as carrying on her parents' intellectual and political commitments, making her a perfect spokesperson within the context of socialist cinema.

In an interview in 1976, alongside Indian directors Basu Bhattacharya and S. Sukhdev, Shabana Azmi addressed aesthetic and ideological developments within the Indian film industry, while also speaking knowledgeably and appreciatively of the Soviet cinema of the Thaw. The article concludes with the discussion of "the fate of an Indian woman" as, according to Azmi, the most important theme in cinema, to which she appended a passionate plea for change in the social and economic conditions in the lives of women in India and around the world.⁵⁵ In the 1978 festival, she was a vocal fan of Kaiumov's *Veil* (particularly relevant given her own Urdu Muslim socialist background), while also praising the other women-centered films at the festival.⁵⁶ Her political outspokenness earned her the accolade of "India's Jane Fonda and Vanessa Redgrave rolled into one charismatic icon" in the US account of her retrospective at the 2002 New York Film Festival.⁵⁷ Indeed, by 2002, she could look back on a career both as a star working with such directors as Satyajit Ray and Mrinal Sen and as a political activist lobbying for women's rights and AIDS-education, all the while retaining her membership in the Communist Party of India.

Despite its inevitable ideological heavy-handedness, Tashkent's press coverage offers a rare perspective on the possibility of treating female stardom as an affirmation of women's agency and on the social value of their labor. As the emphasis on the cultural and political activism of these actresses demonstrates, film criticism within this international socialist context assumed a pedagogical function in shaping the spectatorial consciousness, the forming of which was a common topic in Tashkent roundtables. What is perhaps more surprising is that in these discourses we glimpse recognition of a certain charismatic politics and its potential for mass mobilization (a complicated phenomenon in a country where the notion of the "cult of personality" had acquired such heavy historical resonances) in a way that is otherwise unusual for leftist aesthetic discourses—clearly serving as a major site for the creation and negotiations of cultural affinities. Although some male stars



FIGURE 5.4. Beatriz González (Chile), the only woman filmmaker in the group of guests at the 1976 edition of the Tashkent festival. Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.

(such as Raj Kapoor and Toshiro Mifune) also enjoyed the limelight, the predominance of women in such exercises of charismatic politics as star performers—whether actresses, singers, or dancers—was fundamental to the shared culture Tashkent represented. While such gendering of performance spaces and forms of sensual embodiment (physical or aural) is part of the traditional association with the domain of the feminine, the Tashkent sphere foregrounded the agency of these performing women as public cultural and political figures. As such, it allowed for a different understanding of the functions of performance cultures and acknowledgment of the importance of women artists: as the memoirs of Sylvia Leyda Chen and the career of Tamara Khatoum, which open this book, demonstrate, they served as crucial conduits between the public and political spheres, on the one hand, and affective and subjective experiences (of audiences and participants alike), on the other—an important link in the construction of transnational affinities and solidarities.

WOMEN'S CINEMA IN WORLD SOCIALIST CINEMA

Despite this discourse on the artistic and political agency and multiplicity of roles performed by Asian, African, and Latin American women participants in the Soviet press, the number of films directed by women and especially women directors who actively participated at the festival was disappointingly low (fig. 5.4). This discrepancy is particularly striking given the fact that by the 1970s, women were

considerably more prominent in the socialist film industries (as compared to, for example, US cinema), certainly on par with France, Italy, and Germany. Women also played an important, if often not fully acknowledged, part in Third-Worldist and anti-imperialist filmmaking. Many were part of film collectives (such as the Palestinian Film Unit's Khadijah Habashneh and Sulafa Jadallah or the Ukumau group's Beatriz Palacios and Danielle Caillet, and the Cuzco School's María Barea). Others established themselves as auteurs, such as Marta Rodríguez, one of Columbia's most important radical documentary filmmakers and a regular at Leipzig, Heiny Srour in Lebanon, and Selma Baccar in Tunisia, as well as the Cuban Sara Gómez and the Chilean exiles Marilú Mallet, Valeria Sarmiento, and Angelina Vázquez, who were all making films in the 1970s and none of whom was present at Tashkent.⁵⁸ Their absence from the festival was doubtless the result of a number of factors: women's marginal status within their respective film institutions and movements; restrictions of international mobility (a factor more commonly affecting women than men, based on family or other personal circumstances); projections of cultural assumptions by the Soviet organizers—or by their male guests—about women's preferred roles at such events, and consequently women artists' own reservations about such male-dominated exhibition circuits. The lack of a shared international forum (beyond its more regional articulations, where they were still always a tiny minority), therefore, precluded the possibility of a sustained dialogue among these filmmakers, let alone the kind of mobilization of alliances, affinities, and solidarities that were enacted by their male counterparts at Tashkent and elsewhere.⁵⁹

Indeed, in cinematic circles, sexism often overlapped with Cold War politics, and cultural hierarchies between the North and the South remained visibly in place at international events focused on women. For instance, the 1975 Symposium on Women in Cinema, organized by UNESCO, largely excluded African, Asian, and Latin American women. Of twenty-eight participants, only three came from outside Europe and North America: the radical Egyptian filmmaker Ateyyat El Abnoubi, the legendary early Indian film star Durga Khote (who was seventy at the time), and María Luisa Bemberg, who would go on to become one of Latin America's most important filmmakers but who also came from Argentina's highest cultural elite and was directly aligned with European and North American feminist movements. Only two—Márta Mészáros from Hungary and Larisa Shepitko from the USSR—were invited to represent the Soviet bloc.⁶⁰

The absence of women filmmakers at Tashkent further confirms the peculiarly marginal status of women's cinema on both sides of the Cold War. Yet this marginal positionality is in part what allowed for its uniquely controversial (but not oppositional) role vis-à-vis socialist world cinema—redefining it from within in a way that truly challenged many of its hegemonic positions, and not only in relation to gender politics. The rest of this chapter will therefore depart from the specificities of Tashkent's selection to consider some of the key films in the world socialist *women's* cinema canon—Assia Djebar's *The Nouba of the Women of Mount*

Chenoua (*La Nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua*, Algeria, 1977), Larisa Shepitko's *Wings* (*Kryl'ia*, 1965), and Lana Gogoberidze's *Some Interviews on Personal Matters* (*Neskol'ko interv'iu po lichnym voprosam*, 1978), none of which were part of the festival.

These films have been discussed in English-language scholarship as notable examples of women's cinema, but they are typically, in fact almost exclusively, approached either from within a national, regional, or auteur context or explicitly in relation to other European or American (women) filmmakers. I argue that, considered together, these films reveal remarkable correspondences, not only in their criticism of patriarchy but in providing glimpses of nonhomosocial relations and communities as constitutive of socialist and liberation struggles. Through their blending of (auto)biographic elements, attention to transgenerational memory, and the diversity and distinctiveness of women's experiences (joys and struggles alike), exploring the historical traumas of the past and the hopes and demands for the future, these films rearticulate the relationships between individual autonomy and the needs of the community. They underscore certain inseparability of the positive and negative function of the state as at the same time a guarantor of rights and as a mechanism of repression. Moreover, they insist on the understanding of liberation as a complex transformative but ongoing unfinished process. As such they reengage the key dialectics of world socialist cinema identified and discussed at length in the next three chapters—between tradition and modernization and between war and peace—in a way that is strikingly personal while fully committed to the socialist ideals of *communitas*.⁶¹

Shepitko's *Wings* and Djebbar's *The Nouba of the Women of Mount Chenoua* center specifically on women's contributions to war and liberation struggles. The two directors stand in different but equally intimate personal relationships to these historical experiences: Shepitko's film is rooted in what she referred to as "a kind of intuitive genetic memory" of her mother's experience of World War II.⁶² Djebbar, an important writer as well as filmmaker, was a journalist during the Algerian Liberation War. Neither of these women's film narratives focuses on the combat; both center, instead, on the aftermath of war and its legacies in women's lives and are memorable for showing the ambivalences and temporal and spatial conflations of war and peace in both (anti/post)colonial and Cold War socialist biopolitics.

While public commemorations of revolutions were fundamental to socialist cultures, their traces in contemporary social reality constituted a much more difficult subject—one that many filmmakers were eager to explore but that the state was less eager to support. The temporary disruption of cultural norms necessitated or caused by war—such as women's participation in public life, changes in the family structure, or increase in the number of disabled people—are only some of the social transformations that significantly affect the private lives of people but tend to be ignored by the state, whose priorities usually lie in the combination of continuing political security and rebuilding industrial and agrarian infrastructures.

The burden of these adjustments falls disproportionately on women, whose traditional patriarchal roles as caregivers tend to be swiftly restored. They are burdened with responsibility for healing the wounds, tending the children, and, especially in the socialist context, covering the absence left by the men killed in the war. In different ways, Shepitko's *Wings* and Djebbar's *The Nouba of the Women of Mount Chenoua* both center on the loss of the sense of belonging that was once provided by the urgency of the struggle, its high costs, and the inadequacy of the official forms of public memory to restore or even acknowledge it.

THE NOUBA OF THE WOMEN OF MOUNT CHENOUA

Djebbar's film famously provides a counternarrative to the hegemonic masculinist mythologies of Algerian revolutionary nationalism forged in war.⁶³ The protagonist of Djebbar's formally highly experimental film (Lila, a stand-in for the director) returns to her native village of ChercHELL fifteen years after Algeria won the war, looking for witnesses who will help her resolve the problem of her brother's disappearance during the war. She is accompanied by her young daughter and by her paralyzed mute husband. The film brings together the stories of the Berber peasant women of Mont Chenoua: stories of their participation in the war, stories of bravery, betrayal, and loss that are markedly different from the monumentalist male-centered narratives of the Algerian "freedom fighter cinema." These stories foreground the unacknowledged cost of the war to women engaged in it and the legacy of pain and bitterness with which they continue to live. Yet the film also offers a certain utopian projection of an alternative community within a clearly demarcated women's space that emerges from these intertwined intergenerational histories. The film's emphasis on women's testimonies and storytelling is remarkably close to that of Gogoberidze's *Some Interviews on Personal Matters* (which I will discuss at length later). The parallels include the role of the narrator, whose figure is identified with the director herself, and the integration of the director's autobiographical elements into the narrative, which is launched from gathering together women's multigenerational stories (including those of Djebbar's own family); the way these stories expose the repressed traumatic national histories experienced by women; and, finally, the resilience and vibrancy of their community beyond the traumatic past.

And while the community depicted on the screen is constituted through personal experiences focusing on the private domestic realm, in opposition to the official state national culture, the narrator's role as a filmmaker (or, in the case of Gogoberidze's film, a journalist) brings it—both metaphorically, as part of the diegesis, and literally, through the exhibition of the actual film—into the shared public sphere, thus providing a radically alternative public commemoration of the traumas of the war. Any straightforward didactic effect is mitigated, however, by Lila, who, while telling one story through the film's narrative to the audience,

chooses to tell a different version to her daughter, remarking, “Why tell her about the tragedies of the past? The occupation, the war and the hatred. It’s better for her to dream of birds.” The gesture of protecting a child from “the tragedies of the past” marks a real departure from the way children are usually interpellated in socialist war cinema, where their knowledge of struggle is their first step toward involvement in it (as we will see in detail in chapter 8). In this way, too *The Nouba of the Women of Mount Chenoua* represents a limit case of a socialist war film, as well as a Third-Worldist film more generally—made at the very moment of its decline. The year of the film’s release, 1978, was also the year of Boumédiène’s death, who had ruled Algeria since 1965, and a year before Chadli Bendjedid’s election, which marked Algeria’s movement away from Ben Bella–style socialism, and further concessions toward an Islamism that was advancing its own agenda vis-à-vis women’s rights, private and public alike.⁶⁴

The film is structured through Lila’s sense of dislocation and loss, and the possible rekindling of community offered in it is decidedly not grounded in the kind of internationalist solidarity we see in most official articulations of the genre. Yet the film never moves in the direction of the (neo)liberal trope of the subjective overcoming of traumatic memories, of “moving on” and individual self-realization that became typical devices of global art cinema’s engagement with the topic of historical trauma and women in the post–Cold War period. Instead, the film seeks to restore women’s place within it; instead of rejecting the struggle, it insists on the process of continuous resistance by attending to the dissonances and fissures within the social body and the public memory of the marginalized, refusing the assumption that liberation was achieved, treating it instead as an unfinished project.

WINGS

Shepitko’s *Wings*, made almost fifteen years earlier than Djebbar’s film but positioned at a similar historical distance from the war whose legacy it investigates—in this case, some two decades after the end of World War II—is stylistically somewhat more conventional. Yet it also includes jarring and disorienting montage sequences of the protagonist’s fragmented and disjointed memories and dreams that disrupt the narrative and produce a complex and rather ambiguous diegetic optical space. While *The Nouba*’s narrative identification with Lila is, if anything, overdetermined, Nadezhda, the protagonist of *Wings*, occupies a much more ambivalent position vis-à-vis both the director and the spectator. Unlike Shepitko, who was twenty-seven during the making of the film, its heroine is a middle-aged woman, a much-decorated fighter pilot of World War II. Forced to abandon her military career, she nonetheless occupies a highly placed social and professional position as a provincial official (a deputy in the City Soviet) and principal of a vocational school. Her heroism during the war is commemorated at the local museum. Her military demeanor (unnaturally straight back, buttoned-up blouse, commanding voice, uncompromising and unwavering certainty of every pronouncement)

clashes strikingly with her environment. She bears every marker of belonging to the Stalinist generation, the cultural formation to which Shepitko's own generation of the Thaw saw itself in opposition.⁶⁵ In an interview, the director said that she was, indeed, unable to "become one" with her heroine, explicitly connecting Nadezhda's character with Shepitko's parents' generation.⁶⁶ The film focuses on Nadezhda's particular inability to reenter the very private, intimate realm that the Thaw generation cherished, as is evidenced by her failure as a mother (she is rejected by her adopted daughter), her ambivalence toward her long-suffering adoring suitor, and her conflicts with the more freedom-loving students at her school. She rejects traditional associations of women with domesticity ("Why does a person have to peel potatoes on Sunday?" she exclaims in a much-quoted outburst), and her one heartbreaking attempt to make herself sexually available to a stranger by unbuttoning her coat and provocatively slipping it off her shoulders is never even acknowledged, let alone reciprocated.

But despite this emphasis on the difficulties of identification—Nadezhda's with her own private life and people's emotions; the director's with her heroine's generational place; the audience's with the protagonist—*Wings* shows us Nadezhda's most treasured, most intimate memories and dreams in a series of flashbacks that make the audience aware not only of the protagonist's humanity and fragility but, more important, of the sense of absolute freedom she experienced in the war—which was, nevertheless, inseparable from its traumatic impact. During these montage sequences, providing point-of-view shots (from the cockpit of the plane, as we eventually come to realize), the narrative and spectatorial positions become aligned. Such subjective representations become the only space allowed by the diegesis of the film that enables the creation of a unified symbolic community of the filmmaker, the character, and the audience, as well as a lens through which we come to interpret the character in a radically different and sympathetic way. Thus, while providing a powerful critique of the war as the source of trauma as well as of the dehumanization of the Stalinist era associated with it, the film affirms, dialectically, its foundational role as the moment of liberation and moral fortitude. Despite all of Nadezhda's seemingly irreparable flaws, her commitment to doing the right thing, to the greater good, and to the well-being of everyone is the driving force of her life, ultimately making her the center of pathos and the moral fortitude within the film.

Wings gains its complexity by making clear that the greater stakes of the struggle are not to be easily disavowed, in spite of the irreparable losses of life and the existential costs of militarization, impacting both this woman's individual psyche and the socius itself. In its reckoning with the war's legacy, this film is characteristic of the Soviet Thaw. And despite her absence from Tashkent, Shepitko's involvement with Central Asia, too, goes back to the early 1960s, with her VGIK diploma film *Heat* (*Znoi*, 1963), which was based on Chingiz Aitmatov's short story and filmed in Kazakhstan, the first feature film produced by the Kirgiz Film Studio, with Tolmush Okeev working as a sound engineer. The film was entered

into the Symposium of New Cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America at the 1964 Karlovy Vary festival and won the Grand Prix at the 1965 Frankfurt festival of cinemas of Asia and Africa.⁶⁷ By the 1970s, Shepitko's films were recognized as works of an important *auteur* and were screened at major European film festivals: her last film, *The Ascent* (*Voskhozhdenie*, 1977), was the second film directed by a woman to win a Golden Bear at the Berlin film festival and only the third film directed by a woman to win a top award at any major European film festival. It was screened as part of the market selection of the Tashkent festival in 1978, but otherwise Shepitko's work and participation followed a more recognizable European film festival trajectory. But after Shepitko's tragic death in 1979, the Indian filmmaker Basu Bhattacharya, a regular guest at the Tashkent meetings, commented on how seeing this film was an important inspiration for him to support women filmmakers in his own country. In 1980, he brought to Tashkent *Touch* (*Sparsh*, 1980), which he produced, directed by Sai Paranjpye, one of the first women filmmakers in India, starring Shabana Azmi. But even this gesture did not lead to Paranjpye speaking about her film at Tashkent; instead, Bhattacharya introduced it, and its Soviet coverage emphasized his role as a producer, as well as Azmi's performance. The structure of gendered exclusion held.

SOCIALIST WOMEN AND THE DOUBLE BURDEN

Just as socialist women's war films contested predominant heroic and melodramatic narratives, women's films that centered on contemporary life offered equally powerful correctives to familiar socialist rhetoric by exposing the ongoing problem of domestic labor and the infamous "double burden" that was, indeed, experienced and discussed by working women everywhere.⁶⁸ In fact, as the Cuban director Sara Gómez made clear (referring to the ideological program of the Federation of Cuban Women), the burden was triple, including not only domestic labor and job-place performance but also expectations of voluntary overtime in social, political, and cultural work.⁶⁹

Within the socialist bloc an open discussion of this problem created tension with the officially held position that the entry of women into the public sphere and the labor force resolved the patriarchal/capitalist problem, instead of becoming a source of other problems. The issue was occasionally explored within some very high-profile films across the Global South and socialist bloc, from *The Big City* (*Mahanagar*, 1963), the only film by Satyajit Ray that had wide distribution in the Soviet Union in the late 1960s, to Pastor Vega's *Portrait of Teresa* (*Retrato de Teresa*, 1979), the Cuban entry into that year's Moscow film festival. But it was most poignantly addressed by women filmmakers themselves, whether Cuban, such as, most famously, by Sara Gómez in *One Way or Another* (*De cierta manera*, 1974), or Soviet, such as the Georgian Lana Gogoberidze in *Some Interviews on Personal Matters*.

SOME INTERVIEWS ON PERSONAL MATTERS

While Gómez's film has rightfully taken its place as one of the classics of not only Cuban but international women's cinema, Gogoberidze's work (much like that of her contemporaries Shepitko or Kira Muratova), while widely screened to this day, has rarely been discussed outside the Soviet film context. *Some Interviews* presents a highly autobiographical and moving reflection on the experience of a journalist who is passionate about her job and struggling with the routines of domestic life, including her husband's increasing demands on her, which are prelude to his infidelity. A close look at this remarkable film demonstrates how this set of issues was negotiated in ways that clearly exceed the male-dominated discourses at Tashkent, pointing to the film's place in the larger socialist film sphere.

The film's title, which comes across as a fragment of official speech, gives an impression that it fits in with the similar late Soviet melodramas such as Gleb Panfilov's *I Want the Floor* (*Proshu slova*, 1976), which depicts a woman's career and dedication to social concerns as the cause of her family's tragic demise. In its Soviet publicity, Gogoberidze's film was summarized as follows: "Sofiko considers herself happy: she has an interesting job, she loves her husband and children. She is always around people, she knows their problems and concerns, and she finds the meaning of life in her job. But being often away from home she doesn't even notice that the well-being of her family is threatened."⁷⁰

This annotation gives a subtle impression that this film (like *I Want the Floor*) holds its female protagonist responsible for her neglect of her family, an interpretation that would blame Sofiko for her husband's infidelity—a claim voiced in the film by the husband himself. This, however, is decidedly not the conclusion any careful viewer of the film will draw. Instead, despite its decidedly unobtrusive and seemingly nondidactic authorial style, which involves intercutting Sofiko's daily routine of the job (she is in charge of addressing the concerns raised by the readers who write to the newspaper), the interviews she conducts with other women, multiple flashbacks to her childhood, and her domestic life, the film brilliantly demonstrates the way that private and public lives constitute each other, as well as the way individual stories reflect the long *durée* of history. We realize that Sofiko's attention to the experiences of others, a sense of critical connection and solidarity with other women, and her need to advocate for justice regardless of the power hierarchies that form the core of her professional and public life, are direct extensions of her family life and history. They are informed by the tacit knowledge she has learned from the other women around her—her aunts and her mother, who, as we gradually realize in the course of the film, was sent to the Gulag when Sofiko was a child, returning to the family many years later.

In a critical moment in the film, a school principal comes to thank Sofiko for her public defense of his efforts to save the school's playground from becoming a construction site for a politician's private house. He admits that he didn't believe

that she would be able to help: "I thought, what can a woman do against such a scoundrel? But now I understand. This is a new generation. You have not experienced fear." As the film cuts to Sofiko's pensive face, we are presented with a series of quick flashbacks, whose extended versions we have already seen earlier in the film: an image of Sofiko as a child, alone in the house, after her mother's arrest; an image of the kids looking through the windows of an orphanage, as Sofiko's aunts are taking her away with them; her mother's return from "the North" (i.e., the camps) with a frightened young Sofiko up against a wall, an expression of anticipation and horror on her face, wringing her arms. The temporally overlapping jump cuts highlight the eeriness of these memories in juxtaposition with the school principal's patronizing assumption. In fact, the experience of fear—the fear of authorities, of the state, of the potential costs of an openly political life and fighting for one's beliefs—has clearly shaped Sofiko's social position and professional dedication. These fears do not stem from being cocooned from historical trauma, nor from the egoism of privilege, nor from innocence or a simple inability to see the falsity of such official engagements with public life, as her husband maintains when ridiculing her journalism. His mockery of Sofiko's interview questions ("Are you happy? What do you dream about?") opens up the recognition and critique of what scholars have come to term the emotionally charged commonplaces of the media in late socialism, which would have been familiar to the film's contemporary Soviet viewers.⁷¹ In the words of Christine Evans, "in an environment in which forms of visual or linguistic evidence were seen as discredited or worn out fifty years since 1917, emotions, and the personal ethical qualities and attitudes toward Soviet life they revealed, seemed to offer the most convincing evidence of the superiority of the Soviet 'way of life.'"⁷²

Sofiko's husband's arguments would have resonated powerfully with many Soviet—and socialist—audiences, making her complicity with such officially recognized platitudes ideologically suspect. Yet Gogoberidze rejects this criticism, making clear that Sofiko's dedication to "digging in other people's problems" (as her husband dismissively refers to both her interviews with women and her social activism) is not rooted in her blindness toward the regime but instead is intrinsically linked to the historical trauma embodied in her mother's and her own experience of state repression and the lessons she draws from it. Her refusal to retreat into the private sphere, complacency, and consumption—to accept a promotion offered to her, which would entail a better paid bureaucratic position that would also allow her to spend more time with her family and be a "better wife and mother" and to buy a car, which seems to be her husband Archil's only dream—appears, instead, to be a choice resulting from a sustained reflection on her experiences and those of other women. Those "interviews on personal matters" repeatedly intercut the main narrative, sometimes as part of the diegesis, sometimes as memories or associations triggered by events in Sofiko's own life, as well as conversations with her aunts and memories of her mother. They also serve as links to the variety of

women's experiences and the lessons they draw from those experiences, as well as to the traumas of war and Stalinism. The two aunts, both bearing unmistakable markers of "old intelligentsia" (clearly referencing a pre-Stalinist era) in their dress and manners, are touching as fascinating characters in their own right. They are portrayed neither as older and outdated modes of subservient femininity nor as nostalgic reminders of better days; instead, they are fully independent, autonomous intellectuals, typically taking opposing positions on most issues although sometimes agreeing with Sofiko.

As Sofiko is always shown helping her aunts around the house, the costs of domestic labor for women in a socialist society are presented vividly, cuing the film to women's work—from scenes of women cooking (with Sofiko cheerfully announcing that what she thought would be dinner for two days will now have to be served to guests arriving unannounced) to the quintessential women's experience in the Soviet Union—standing in several long lines at once to buy groceries, carrying home heavy bags, and trying to get on a crowded bus.⁷³ While Sofiko confronts them all with admirable cheer, the detailed documentation of these experiences (and the total absence of men in these scenes) speaks for itself. When one of the interviewees gives an obvious answer to the question of what a woman does in her free time ("What time to myself? I don't have any time left"), what emerges as an alternative is a dream of the rural life, where the alienation of a nuclear family is mitigated by a more communal life. The older women whom we see Sofiko talk to likewise debunk the assumption that a woman's happiness lies in her family: one talks passionately and intensely of her love for books, and the other comes with a request to move to a retirement home despite having children who could take care of her; that way, she says, at least she could have other people to talk to.

Sofiko's job responding to people's letters to the newspaper, which in turn spurs her activism, embodies the public sphere in a socialist context that makes it a matter of dynamic and reciprocal relationships between private individuals and state institutions. The act of letter writing to newspapers and magazines and the act of responding to them signals the state institutional responsiveness to private citizen's concerns, even as the latter, logically, are made public concerns.⁷⁴ The film does not hide the ambivalences and resistances that emerge as part of this process, as when one woman refuses to open the door to Sofiko or the striking moment when another woman, who has just delivered a passionate and almost unhinged monologue accusing the man who abandoned her, resolutely refuses to give his name, suddenly aware of the implications of the state stepping in. Neither in the stories conveyed by the women in their interviews nor in Sofiko's own narrative does the film allow some abstract exchangeability of the private with the public or naivete about the complex relationship between the state and the individual's destinies.

Sofiko's own onscreen presence—her warmth and incredible vitality alternating with pensiveness, at times amused, at times serious or troubled, suggestive of her inner world—is conveyed by the incomparable Sofiko Chiaureli, the daughter

of the director of the Stalinist classics *The Vow* (*Kliatva*, Mikheil Chiaureli, 1946) and *The Fall of Berlin* (*Padenie Berlina*, Mikheil Chiaureli, 1949). The actress was famously the muse of Sergei Paradjanov and an important figure within the history of Georgian national theater (associated with both the Rustaveli Theater in the 1960s and the Marjanishvili Theater later). Her own screen and stage and personal history contributes additional layers and complexity to the character (perhaps not accidentally sharing her first name). We see Sofiko lovingly and happily playing with the children, being affectionate with her husband, being a generous hostess when he brings guests over, and looking after her aunts—sometimes patiently, sometimes joking—in a way that displays genuine intimacy and ample capacity for human connection. Unlike many 1970s Soviet films, *Some Interviews* debunks the late Soviet normative assumptions that engagement in public and professional pursuits (for a woman) is merely a sign of inability to experience intimacy or failure of personal life, that public and private realms are separate and incommensurable with each other, that the lessons of history teach us the futility of social struggle, and that artistic recourse to the particular experience of women are inferior to the more “serious” concerns of art.

Lana Gogoberidze’s own remarkable family history’s reflection in the film is itself a testimony to the way women’s creative and political lives intersected with Soviet history. Her mother, Nutsa, was the first woman director in Georgia, who started in filmmaking when she was twenty-five, after having obtained a philosophy degree in the University of Jena. She married Georgian Communist Party activist Levan Gogoberidze and began working on documentary *kulturfilms* with Mikhail Kalatozov, directing her first feature, *Ill-tempered* (*Užmuri*) in 1934. The film was immediately banned, despite Eisenstein’s, Shklovsky’s, and Dovzhenko’s defense, owing to the screenplay’s affiliation with the Association of Proletarian Writers (RAPP), which came under attack.⁷⁵ Subsequently, after Levan’s arrest and execution, Nutsa was sent to camps for ten years as the wife of an “enemy of the people,” and her name was erased entirely from film history. Her daughter, Lana Gogoberidze, grew up completely unaware of her mother’s films (even after her return from the Gulag), but she was persistent in trying to pursue her own cinematic career. As a daughter of political prisoners, she was not able to start at VGIK until after Stalin’s death, but she occupied her time until then by establishing herself as a literary scholar and translator of poetry, completing a doctoral dissertation on Walt Whitman. At VGIK, she studied under Gerasimov, in the same group as Kira Muratova, just a few years removed from Larisa Shepitko and alongside what would turn out to be a constellation of Georgia’s most important filmmakers—Tengiz Abuladze, Otar Iosseliani, and Eldar Shengelaia. In her formative years as a filmmaker, she participated in the internationalization of the film sphere; the development of poetic, auteur, and women’s cinema; and the revival of Georgian national artistic culture.⁷⁶ *Some Interviews on Personal Matters* is in many ways a reflection of that era and the evidence of its longevity, especially outside of the

confines of Moscow and Leningrad. The film was screened widely in the Soviet Union (winning the main prize in the 1979 national film festival in Ashkhabad), as well as, eventually, abroad—but it was not shown at Tashkent, one can speculate, because it was one of the first films to openly reference the experience of women in Stalinist labor camps and the fate of their children.⁷⁷

As this chapter shows, women's cinema occupies a marginal, albeit crucial, space within world socialist cinema in its articulation of the shared vision of some of its key problematics, such as the dialectics of tradition and modernization and war and peace. The next three chapters will explore how these issues were constructed from a more mainstream position. Even though, as we will see, representation of women will often play a crucial role within them, these male-directed films formed the core of world socialist cinema. Thus, as I have done in this chapter, I will expand from the exclusive focus on Tashkent to discuss a broader range of films in which the affinity to Tashkent is characteristic. If only some of them were screened at the festival, all of them, nonetheless, formed the larger body of cinematic production it intended to represent.

World Cinema of Socialist Industrial Modernity

Kirill Razlogov, an important Soviet Russian film scholar and critic, used to recount a story of how he worked as a film interpreter at the Tashkent film festival when he was fresh out of the university. Once he was tasked with doing a live voice-over translation of an Iraqi documentary, working from French subtitles (a common practice at the festival). But when the film arrived, it turned out that one of the reels had no subtitles, so Razlogov had to improvise. Using his experience, he not only effortlessly inserted his own version of a standard celebratory narrative of the country's continuous path toward progress but was even able to, in real time, predict the order of sequences. In a pastoral sequence featuring a body of water, Razlogov concluded his improvised description of its natural beauty with the pronouncement of the importance of water as a source of energy. And sure enough, the next image appearing on the screen was a hydroelectric station!¹

This anecdote highlights many important aspects of the festival: films frequently arrived at the last minute, unseen by the organizing committee, which often left it to the live translators to interpret them to the public, at times regardless of their knowledge of the language or availability of a script. The prevalence of certain kinds of films at the festival made them predictable, but in this case Razlogov's prescience was due not only to his knowledge of Asian or African films; many of the same tropes as hydroelectric stations were a well-worn motif in Soviet cinema, all too familiar to its audiences. As Mariia Koskina argues—paraphrasing Katerina Clark's famous formula of the master plot of socialist-realist narratives “boy meets girl and gets a tractor”—by the 1960s an apt description of Soviet cinema could be “boy meets girl and they build a dam.”²

Beyond the general disdain of the genre of institutional documentary such as the one Razlogov was asked to translate on that occasion (an attitude certainly shared by film critics worldwide), the humor of his anecdote articulates the fatigue

that images of hydroelectric stations and other industrial wonders induced among Soviet intelligentsia and general audiences alike. The Soviet mediasphere was saturated with tropes of industrial modernization in newsreels and documentaries (regularly shown on television and before feature films in theaters) and frequently in the fiction cinema as well. Dams were especially common, as much because of their importance for the vision of modern industrial development as for their “photogenetic” visuality, effectively bringing together spectacular technology, the power of the elements, and heroic feats of human labor. Films highlighting industrial modernity of the socialist decolonial world thus served as manifestations of affinities, given the importance awarded to accelerated industrial modernization in all the areas of the world represented at the festival, as well as evidence of the supposed success of the socialist economic model of development and an implicit nod to the impact of Soviet aid to Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

THE GEOGRAPHIES AND TEMPORALITIES OF SOCIALIST MODERNITY

In his discussion of oil films by British Petroleum (BP), Brian Jacobson argues for a complex but powerful relationship bringing together oil, film-, and world-making:

Working in an energetic feedback loop, film and oil, the last century’s most powerful media, co-constituted the world we have today.

From the floors of the Persian Gulf to Abu Dhabi, Zanzibar, Papua, Sicily, the Canadian Rockies, and even Antarctica, BP’s global prospecting efforts mapped out a new corporate world shaped by forward-thinking progress. Film . . . did more than just reveal this new world; it helped create it.³

Films featuring socialist industrial production (including but not limited to oil), like the ones featured at Tashkent, complement Jacobson’s world-building vision by showing how it functioned on the other side of the Cold War divide. This other, now somewhat forgotten, world of socialist extraction equally constituted the one we live in today. At the time, however, it was seen as an alternative to both industrial modernity’s colonial past and capitalist present, as a path to economic and political self-sufficiency for postcolonial nations that would guarantee an equal distribution of both revenues and benefits. By the late 1960s, however, the enthusiasm of earlier decades about centrally planned large-scale industrial projects in the Global South was diminishing: in tandem with ecological damage, concerns about the ineffective economics of these large entities and their human and cultural costs were emerging and finding some reflection on the screen. But even as central planning fell gradually into disrepute, the rise of OPEC and the leverage it gave its members provided another powerful geopolitical force that funded industrialization projects in favored countries. At Tashkent, over the decade of the 1970s films reflecting these

developments came from places as different as Iran and Zambia, Peru and Niger, Iraq and Armenia, India and Panama, Morocco and Siberia.

This chapter unpacks the logics governing the shared tropes of industrial modernity as seen through cinematic production across the socialist bloc and the postcolonial world and their functions within their respective national and international contexts. As in the previous chapter, I will take the Tashkent festival here as merely a starting point for a broader discussion of world socialist cinema, whose generic and stylistic explorations of industrial modernity ranged from ethnographic and tourist films to avant-gardist documentary celebrations of technology, to melodramas and musicals, all of which confront fundamental questions of negotiating life under the regime of rapid and often violent modernization. This chapter will take a closer look at the Syrian documentary *Film Essay on the Euphrates Dam* (Muhammad 'an Sadd al-Furat, Omar Amiralay, 1970) and the two versions of Youssef Chahine's ill-fated Soviet-Egyptian coproduction *People on the Nile* (*Al-Nil wa-al-Hayah*, 1968; and *Al-Nas wa-al-Nil*, 1972). Even though their directors in many ways belonged to the same cinematic circuit, neither of these projects got to be screened at Tashkent. Both, however, serve as perfect demonstrations of a socialist cinematic perspective on industrial development—as well as both the potentialities and limits of internationalism underlying such projects.

The centrality of accelerated industrial modernity in the service of the people was an important affinity between the developmentalist ethos of socialist states and much of the decolonial world.⁴ It remained a sustained priority for state heads and elites throughout the Cold War period, deeply affecting the everyday lives of people. The productivist ethos inevitably found its manifestation on the screen and, more generally, formed the economic component of “the Spirit of the Bandung.” In the Soviet Union, the state plan for the electrification of the country (GOERLO) and, more generally, the industrialization of its western-central part in the postwar years was perceived as the model for development not only for the rest of the Soviet bloc and the friendly states of the Global South but also for the country's own peripheries, including Central Asia (although within this consensus there was room for debate during the Thaw and late Soviet period).⁵ Thus, by the 1960s, Soviet policies toward the developing world and its aid programs were inseparable from the developments in the Soviet's own “East.”⁶ Far from being imposed by either side of the Cold War, the ethos of accelerated industrial modernity was equally foundational for the leaders of the Bandung movement and all the independent states of the Global South because they understood their political autonomy and economic status as conditional on displacing agriculture as their chief economic support in favor of domestic industry. Rapid development on this scale required massive energy, ideally domestically produced—a policy clothed in the heroic rhetoric of science and technology, which could, in Nehru's words, be “added to the power of man to such an extent that for the first time it was possible to conceive that man could triumph over and shape his physical environment.”⁷

Modernization and development went hand in hand with the discourse of decolonialization in the Global South, and an understanding of development as a political category was often the driving force behind distinct and frequently shifting Cold War geopolitical alignments.⁸ This developmental logic was nonetheless predicated on the inherent contradiction between the distinctly socialist goals of industrial modernization, to which many decolonial leaders subscribed, and the slogan of “catching up” to capitalist development, which even the Soviet Union fully embraced. Samir Amin eloquently summarizes this conceptual conundrum, identifying two particularly problematic features of the shared decolonial and socialist industrializations: the underlying logic of technocratic rationality and exponential growth, which was indistinguishable from its capitalist counterpart, and the extreme violence of its impact, which made its human and environmental costs ultimately similar to those engendered by capitalist exploitation.⁹ These overlaps posed two representational problems—first, how to make socialist development look different from the capitalist one? And second, how to visualize the successes of these developmental projects in the face of their increasingly visible costs? In analyzing the regime of visibility of socialist and decolonial representations of industrial modernity, this chapter will wrestle with these questions in different national and cinematic contexts.¹⁰

SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

While socialist industrialization also engenders technocratic rationality, it differs from capitalism in its value system. In economic terms, socialist industrialization undermined profit (and the capitalist system of financialization) as its foundation, often relying instead on barter exchange.¹¹ This privileging of the barter system was a particularly important factor for economic cooperation of the socialist bloc with the countries of the Global South, the latter hoping to escape the toll of debt that was becoming increasingly unavoidable when trying to become part of the global “free market” system. The anxiety over debts (and industrial self-sufficiency as its alternative) is palpable already in many films from the midcentury, most famously in Mehboob Khan’s *Mother India* (*Bharat Mata*, 1957)—which ends with a triumphant image of a dam—as well as Ousmane Sembene’s *Money Order* (*Mandabi*, 1968), which was such a success at the first Tashkent festival. As we will see, the emphasis on debt, and development as the solution to it, was hardly a coincidence—and with its failure, the Global South would get to know the debt regime and its radically uneven distribution of benefits all too well after the victory of neoliberalism in the 1980s, as brilliantly explored by that other famous graduate of VGIK, Abderrahmane Sissako, in *Bamako* (2006).

Symbolically, the value of these socialist industrial projects was predicated on collective ownership and equal distribution of both the commons themselves and the revenue stemming from their extraction and industrial production. The

commons as, on the one hand, collectively owned and shared and, on the other, as a resource for the purposes of extraction and manipulation (without which industrial modernization is impossible) is the duality that, as famously discussed by Michael Hardt, constitutes a major tension and division between anticapitalist and environmentalist movements today.¹² Further complicating this picture throughout the twentieth century was the conflict between traditional, especially minoritarian and Indigenous, cultures and centrally planned large-scale industrial projects, which not only physically displaced (or destroyed) these cultures but also posited a very different way of living in the world, creating a conflict that wasn't easy to resolve through promises of a more just future to come.

Thus, despite important differences, the utilitarian presupposition in both capitalist and socialist industrial modernization schemes made individual human and nonhuman life alike subservient to more abstract future goals. In socialist and postcolonial discourses on industrialization, the rhetoric of state nationalism often took the place of capitalist accumulation—its interests superseding those of capital. Aggressive and accelerated industrial modernization was driven not by the increase of profits but by the need to redress the severe geopolitical inequities and dependencies produced by the history of imperialist expansion. To planners and policy makers, the logic of survival, rather than increasing consumption, dictated the planning and carrying out of large-scale infrastructural industrial projects, the goal of which was to boost production to achieve economic autonomy. Avoiding the dependency trap of relying on Western capital, many newly independent states opted for central planning, putting the state in control of the economy to kick-start industry and put in place agrarian reforms.

Contrary to many contemporary assumptions guided by the retrospective neoliberal logic, this was neither unprecedented nor particularly unusual: in the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s, faced with the aftermath of the First World War and economic depression, most European states, as well as the US and Canada, similarly adopted various forms of state planning and large developmental projects. As Martha Lampland notes in her exploration of Hungary's gradual transition to a socialist economy, "during this period planned economies were found in capitalist and socialist societies, in fascist and liberal regimes, and in colonial states as well as in sovereign states."¹³ She demonstrates that in the 1920s and 1930s, embracing technocratic rationality and advancing the role of scientific experts in the areas of economic development was inseparable from various forms of state planning in much of the world. While the Soviet Union certainly provided the most radical version of this, the logic of state governance of large-scale modernization of industry and agriculture was more typical than exceptional. When the geopolitical and economic developments of the 1940s heralded new modes of liberal economic globalization, creating US-led hegemony of the "free market," the devastating impact of World War II on Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union further increased their historical "underdevelopment," bringing their industrial and agricultural output on par with the postcolonial world.¹⁴ Aggressive industrialization, then, was not

merely an inevitable technological extension of the broader ideology of modernization that begun in the previous century. For much of the world outside North America and parts of Western Europe, it was experienced as a historical and moral necessity for survival. As an example, Lampland quotes from a speech of a Hungarian industry leader in 1947, who put this condition in the following terms: "If the state recognizes the rights of its citizens to life, then it must help them so that they can live. Whether one likes it or not, agrees or not with our design—theoretically, politically, economically, morally or philosophically—the conditions force us to have a target and planned economy. The road ordained by economic and social necessity is the one we must travel."¹⁵

Some version of a speech like this was given by policy makers in much of the postcolonial world in the 1950s and 1960s. This was the logic that brought together large-scale industrial projects, nationalist ideologies, Soviet and Eastern European aid programs to the "developing world," and state-sponsored filmmaking practices. By the early 1970s, the cinematic articulations of this socioeconomic turn became so predictable that Razlogov could easily reproduce in voicing-over an Iraqi documentary he'd never seen before.

INDUSTRIAL DOCUMENTARY: EAST AND WEST, NORTH AND SOUTH

That predictability was certainly not unique to the socialist world—as highly generic patterns are prevalent in nonfiction films, generally, and institutional media, in particular. And just as socialist technocratic rationality converges with that of capitalism, these films share many rhetorical figures and imagery with their capitalist counterparts. These extend to the tropes of the conflict of humans and nature (with man emerging triumphant), the future horizon of universal well-being, and the image of nature as a boundless resource to be used by human beings.¹⁶ Corporate media throughout the twentieth century propagandized for multinational industry and commerce. State media, as well, celebrated its industrial projects as expressions of national progress in the name of well-being of its citizens. While the capitalist industrial media created its vision of a "free-market" world (of multinational corporations with their variously positioned stakeholders and geographies of surveying and prospecting), its state socialist counterpart visualized the world of internationalist solidarities and centrally planned development.

As Hediger and Vonderau argue in their influential volume, such industrial media are "best understood as interfaces between discourses and forms of social and industrial organization. More often than not, industrial films are supposed to directly translate discourse into social practice (including political action)."¹⁷ In the case of global socialist cinematic production, this translation was assumed even when actual development was flimsy or fictitious. Timothy Nunan describes the dynamic in Afghanistan: "During the Cold War, even the best-informed experts could imagine an Afghan economy and state out of only a few conversations, or a

walk around the right couple of blocks of Kabul. Frequently, ‘development’ meant less building a state or economy than injecting meaning into fragments of both. Seen in isolation, however, and preferably with the interlocution of native informants, experts could read into a factory, a canal, a gas pipeline, a spreadsheet, or sawmill a functioning but in reality barely existent Afghan state.”¹⁸

Along the lines of the “experts” Nunan describes, these films frequently conjured images of state industrial development where there was none, doing so in competition with the West’s own world-building (which was also not averse to fantasizing the development of its client-states). The logic of instrumentalization that, as Hediger and Vonderau, as well as Haidee Wasson and Charles Acland, argue is crucial to “useful cinema,” tasked the cinematic apparatus in the socialist bloc and Third World with producing compelling models of development as alternatives to the imaginaries of both colonial media and contemporary capitalism. Thus socialist films needed to clearly reframe it as belonging to and serving the interests of the working class, not capital, and as profoundly national yet also internationalist. At the same time, socialism’s internationalist world-making had to be distinct from either multinational corporate or liberal international (such as UN or UNESCO’s) articulations.

The industrial documentary by the 1960s was a well-established genre in the West, and it evolved, indeed, in seamless continuity with colonial—especially British—media’s emphasis on development as part of the colonial project. State institutions (such as the Canadian National Film Board) and corporate film units (such as Shell or BP) produced a steady stream of documentaries. Their international reach should not be underestimated: Shell Oil Company alone, for example, had film units in Australia, Venezuela, Egypt, Nigeria, India, and all over Southeast Asia. Many of their films were shown in theaters and mobile units to audiences everywhere; thus “in 1951, there were almost 160,000 screenings around the world with an audience of more than 8.5 million. In 1960, the international audience had grown to forty-five million, and films were shown in some thirty countries.”¹⁹ Certain “prestige films” were produced specifically for high-profile international screenings at both general and specialized film festivals.²⁰ Similarly, Iraq’s British-controlled oil company in the 1950s produced at least two-dozen sponsored films and cine-magazine episodes. “These films and cine-magazine [episodes] worked to legitimate political acts of foreign exploitation and control of Iraqi oil, land and labour from 1951 to 1958 within a regional context of mounting anti-imperialist discourse and nationalist movement building.”²¹

Against this (neo) colonialist legacy, documentary makers in postrevolutionary Iraq and Syria produced their own celebrations of national industrial and agrarian development throughout the 1970s.²² The nationalization of major industries was a crucial act of postcolonial independence, merging the rentier state structure (dependency on oil rents) with state-socialism. These films performed a self-reflexive response to earlier colonial media while often operating along the

lines of the same genre conventions. In many contested countries on the boundaries of the Cold War binary, such as Egypt or India, documentary films dealing with industrial development were produced by endogenous sources—national state-sponsored organizations (such as India's Films Division or Egypt's Aid Organization for Documentary Film Production, replaced in 1963 with the General Egyptian Film Organization)—sometimes with the involvement of the exogenous ones from both sides of the Iron Curtain (with USIA looming especially large). When nationalization of industries forced the withdrawal of corporate or foreign film units, their still legacies loomed large: in Egypt, many documentarians who would later work for the National Documentary Film Centre received their education in Shell Film Unit's training program.²³ The Colonial Film Unit in West Africa, which specialized in development films, ran the West African Film School to "Africanize" film production, although its impact on local filmmakers after independence was more ambiguous.²⁴

We can therefore assume that both filmmakers and audiences in newly independent countries were familiar with the industrial development documentary genre, and attitudes toward these films varied. While certain decolonial film festivals, like Carthage or FESPACO, rejected state-sponsored industrial documentaries, this wasn't the case for pan-African cultural festivals. FESMAN in Dakar in 1966 (Senghor's celebration of Negritude), PANAF in Algiers in 1969 (intended as a radical alternative to FESMAN), and especially the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC '77) in Lagos (which "signaled Nigeria's triumphant emergence as a significant player in global capitalism)" showed a variety of documentaries, with industrial development in the mix.²⁵ While agriculture was still the largest economic sector for most countries in the Global South, the images of modernity were usually attached to large-scale infrastructural sites.²⁶ Thus, despite the fact that some attention had to be paid to the "agrarian problem" (such as, for example, the Algerian films on the agrarian reform of 1973), large-scale industrial projects were undoubtedly at the center of cinematic production, showcasing development, and those were the films that tended to be exported to international film festivals and other global venues.²⁷

THE SPECTACLE OF SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL MODERNIZATION

Unlike many capitalist infrastructures, which are commonly characterized by their invisibility, with the notable exception of nuclear power, socialist iconographic celebration of industrialization was oriented toward revealing rather than concealing.²⁸ This was similarly the case for nationalist modes of representation throughout the Global South, where industrial imagery stood as evidence of the new states' modernity. Development was the mechanism of symbolic entry into the simultaneous global temporality as a way to refute the (Western) slur

of “backwardness” as a temporal lag, putting these new nations in sync with the contemporary world—while also showing their political effectiveness. The rhetoric of backwardness was continuously reinforced by the West; in 1953, a US State Department officially announced: “We must frankly recognize that the hands of the clock of history are set at different hours in different parts of the world.”²⁹ And Marxist-Leninist doctrine, while understanding this temporal lag in terms of capitalist exploitation, nonetheless embraced the same linear temporal logic, as did Bandung socialists. In consequence, the search for a “great leap forward” or “take off” necessitated an aggressively accelerated clock. “There is only one-way traffic in Time,” Nehru famously observed.³⁰ As we will see, showcasing industrial infrastructure—especially through appropriately spectacular cinematic technologies made all the more spectacular in the context of international film festivals—was an effective way to demonstrate successful catching up to the global “now” time.

This hypervisibility through festival circuits also served to highlight the dynamic between national(ist) and international(ist) aspects of this process, the latter being also important because of the external funding that often resourced such industrial projects. In Soviet contexts, it also signified the successes of its own system of international developmental aid against the US one. The more spectacular the infrastructural projects and the public sector economy connected to it, the more convincing was the evidence that the Soviet developmental model worked—even where in reality most countries were engaged in complex balancing of the needs and interests of local elites and competing sources of international support, whether across the Cold War divide, or across the Sino-Soviet split.³¹ The cinematic showcases of these large-scale projects were major currency in Cold War cultural diplomacy on both sides.

One mode of showcasing industrial modernity in documentary was by subsuming these images within the genres of ethnographic or tourist documentaries, which mirrored the reality that modern industrial sites often became tourist destinations alongside more traditional sites. For instance, tours organized around the Tashkent festival included such Uzbek historical monuments as Bukhara or Samarkand, as well as a panoply of factories and collective farms. The representational equivalent of this convention was extremely common. Thus, numerous African and Asian documentaries at Tashkent, produced to “introduce” their country to the rest of the world, followed a similar itinerary: a sequence of spectacular natural landscapes followed by a sequence of historical monuments and local artisanal production and, finally, a sequence of industrial and infrastructural “monuments,” such as bridges, oil refineries, or dams. By means of this metonymy, industrial infrastructures are absorbed into the “natural” flow that associates them with natural landscapes and sites of cultural heritage. Razlogov’s improvised commentary, which opens this chapter, is a perfect demonstration of the young critic’s keen awareness of this convention.

While such visual protocols, largely drawn on romantic and colonial genres, are aimed at creating an impression of temporal continuity between the natural and cultural past and the industrial present, a different aesthetic modality of industrial documentary draws on the iconographies of the 1920s cinematic avant-gardes. Here the stress falls on rupture and the experience of temporal acceleration of industrial development through visual tropes and narrative techniques that are best known from the Soviet and German documentary traditions. Chinese revolutionary documentaries also picked up this accelerated tempo and similarly looked to “defy the determinism of conventional developmental time.”³² The hallmarks of this style—such as montage and trick photography as means to manipulate time and space, or striking extreme low-angle shots—were also adopted, for example, by certain of India’s Films Division documentaries to organize many of the films that represent industrialization projects even into the 1960s and 1970s.

A distinctly socialist approach to this mode of representation was the emphasis on the process and human labor, bearing the mark of Marxist critiques of reification and image commodification of capitalism. Instead of erasing all traces of labor and the history of production to create a monumental effect, these films focus on the process. Yet the process is understood here not as a sequence of discrete production steps leading to the completion of the task (in the way that Salomé Skvirsky has recently defined “the process film”) but as a way to connect and epistemologically unify the divisions of labor, raw material, and its final product, which would otherwise appear as separate.³³ This includes the production of an industrial infrastructure, the sourcing of natural materials, and the production of the very machines and technology that enable socialist construction. With their own form of labor and production, these protocols are shown to form part of this overarching process. Cinema and other forms of cultural work are also included in this understanding of process: rather than serving as a marker of bourgeois artistic subjectivity, cinematic self-referentiality is used to underline the ways filmmakers and film technology participate in this larger process of modernization and socialist construction. In this way, the production of the film is both part of the industrialization and the building of socialism and internationalism. While Dziga Vertov’s work is both originary and exemplary of this cinematic approach, its vestiges are evident even in the most pedestrian socialist industrial documentaries.³⁴

Putting these two modes of representing industrialization side by side, it is easy to see a certain tension between the “tourist ethnographic” and “constructivist” paradigms. Where cultural diplomacy was at stake, the emphasis on labor and industrial processes risked ruining the monumentalist effect aimed at, which would be best served by spectacular images of completed projects. This was often framed as a question of aesthetics and legibility, since a worksite is by definition messy and its existence means the project is uncompleted, thus introducing contingency into the rational planning process and the speedy accomplishment of its goals. As early as the 1930s, Vertov was attacked for “disorganized” depictions (and aural

constructions) of the industrialization process of shock-workers' Five-Year Plan in Donbass.³⁵ In China in 1957, according to Carlo Lizzani, an Italian filmmaker making a documentary there, the authorities objected strongly to his filming anything that was still under construction, demanding that he shot only final products, making these sites look more like monuments and not as "work[s] in progress."³⁶

But across such divisions in approaches, socialist industrial documentaries more than their capitalist counterparts placed emphasis on labor, habitually placing the workers at their visual and narrative center—women workers in particular. This was especially the case when documenting geographically "peripheral" industrial projects, with their harsh natural conditions. Emphasizing these workers' femininity and their resilience in the face of these challenges, these documentaries simultaneously challenged and reaffirmed gender norms, acknowledged the extreme demands such labor placed on workers, and neutralized the impact of such demands by showing that even young physically fragile women were capable of them.³⁷

A CULTURE OF EXPERTS

But what kind of labor counted? In the earlier avant-garde, manual workers (i.e., "the proletariat") were the stars of the industrial process. In the postwar decolonial era, this emphasis was gradually replaced with the members of the technocratic professions: engineers, planners, geologists, and other "scientific experts," who formed an urban elite in cities as disparate as Dar es Salaam and Baghdad. In the course of the 1950s and 1960s in the Soviet Union, the celebration of workers was increasingly relegated to popular genres (comedies and melodramas). Even in those films, the characters were usually either highly skilled workers or continuing their education: Nikolai Rybnikov became the heartthrob of the popular movies of the late 1950s and early 1960s by playing an exemplary and fearless worker performing feats of bravery and productivity in dangerous work conditions at various "projects of the century" (*Spring on Zarechnaya Street / Vesna na Zarechnoi ulitse*, Marlen Khutsiev, 1956; *Heights/Vysota*, Alexander Zarkhi, 1957; *Gals/Devchata*, Yuri Chuliukin, 1961). But in the more ambitious and "serious" cinema of the Thaw (which, incidentally, was most likely to circulate internationally through the film festival circuit)—from *The Poem of the Sea (Poema o more, Iuliia Solntseva, 1959)* to *Nine Days of One Year (Deviat' dnei odnogo goda, Mikhail Romm, 1962)*, *Letter Never Sent (Neotpravlennoe pis'mo, Mikhail Kalatozov, 1960)* to *Brief Encounters (Korotkie vstrechi, Kira Muratova, 1967)*—the main heroes were scientists, engineers, and geologists.

Geologists, in particular, became the romantic heroes of the Soviet 1960s—at once brave adventurers, battling against the elements in faraway places and builders of communism, whose scientific knowledge grounded the industry of the future. In fact, the romanticization of geologists became such a cliché that the plot of the Soviet musical comedy *The Restless (Neposedy, Viktor Ivanov and Abram Naroditskii, 1967)* revolved around it.³⁸ Its protagonist, a spunky but

politically immature young woman from a small town, joins a cohort of Soviet (and international) enthusiasts on their way to Siberia to work at a hydroelectric station. Unlike most of the Soviet “romantics” heading to Siberia, she has a more traditionally romantic goal—she is going purely in hopes of meeting a geologist to marry. The geologists are, as she knows from the movies, the biggest catch and will also sweep her away to the capital. The film even features a fantasy sequence where a crowd of men are climbing a mountain to get to Zoya, the protagonist, with one particularly handsome bearded young fellow saying to her, “I am a geologist, you know me from the movies!” In addition to the overall hammy tone of the film, the fact that Zoya ends up with a clumsy but adorable crane operator rather than a geologist adds to the impression, frequently noted by critics and audiences alike, that the film belonged to an earlier era of the 1930s Soviet comedies.

Even in the face of the overarching rhetoric that proclaimed that the masses in a classless society were all working toward the same goal (of building socialism), the 1960s was the era of specialists. For the Soviet republics in particular, it was all about the upward mobility that could be leveraged through acquiring technical skills or a specialized education. Expertise could even help Soviet citizens work or study abroad, a rare privilege.³⁹ In fact, most international exchanges and interactions (including the military ones) were framed as scientific research and technical assistance, imposing a technocratic framework on the broader relationship between the socialist bloc and the developing world, which was mirrored in cinema, albeit in complicated and often ambivalent ways. Developmentalism and accelerated large-scale industrialization formed the technological side of this process, while its institutional aspect was manifested in the growth of professionalized policy makers in state bureaucracies (culminating in state planning). Cinema and other media were also overseen by a cultural bureaucracy, which often included filmmakers. The image of the filmmaker in the mold of a technocrat, which figures in Peter Hopkinson’s *The Role of Film in Development*, published by UNESCO in 1971, shows how pervasive the administrative mind-set was on both sides of the Iron Wall: the filmmaker was conceived as a “social engineer who has chosen film as his tool, and totally mastered its methods.”⁴⁰

The emphasis on the creation of the technocratic elite and the class of scientific experts, however, was not perceived by many participants of these projects within socialist contexts as an expression of classism or exclusionary hierarchies. Instead, just as in the 1930s, as Stephen Kotkin demonstrates in his majestic account in *Magnetic Mountain*, those involved in the 1960s and 1970s large-scale industrial projects, such as the High Dam in Aswan, understood themselves as contributing to a “revolutionary truth.”⁴¹ As recent work demonstrates, a more bottom-up methodological approach to the experiences of industrial modernization reveals that for its participants, the affective communities and forms of collectivities created by these projects were often more transformative than their industrial outcomes.⁴² As Kalinovsky summarizes one of his Tajik subject’s accounts, “The dam—and by extension, the Soviet Union as a whole—helped him transform

himself, and he in turn helped build the dam and transform his community, contributing to the larger goal of building a new world in the process. I would hear variations of this narrative many times over the coming months.”⁴³

At its best, cinema was able to represent and reflect on the complex responses and transformative effects these massive projects engendered. While many of the industrial documentaries relied exclusively on stereotypical images of “the people,” many of which were deeply rooted in colonial imaginaries and other statist iconographies, others looked to evoke the new collectivities and imaginaries that emerged from the people themselves—and not by state dictate. To tease out these divergent strands and internal contradictions, this chapter will turn to a discussion of one documentary and two versions of a fiction film (an Egyptian-Soviet coproduction), in which the focus on dams and hydroelectric stations demonstrates the complexities inscribed in the socialist path to modernization from different perspectives.

FILM ESSAY ON THE EUPHRATES DAM

What would a distinctly Marxist dam building film look like? The answer to this question emerges when we compare *A Village Smiles* to a film like the Syrian Omar Amiralay’s *Film Essay on the Euphrates Dam*, about the Baath government prestige project, the Tabqa Dam in the Euphrates Valley. Called “the centrepiece of Eastern bloc economic assistance,” the Tabqa Dam was built between 1968 and 1977, receiving around \$150 million in funding from the USSR, which also sent 850 specialists to assist 10,000 Syrian builders.⁴⁴ This construction project was part of the second Five Year Plan of the Baath government, which depended increasingly on the socialist bloc despite the Assad’s rejection of scientific socialism.⁴⁵ The Soviets were eager to extend cinematic relationships with Syria as well, with tireless lobbying not only for organizing Soviet film screenings but also for the filming of a Soviet-Syrian film about the construction of the dam. The Soviet suggestion never received the green light from the Assad government, which turned instead to Omar Amiralay to immortalize the Tabqa Dam construction.⁴⁶ The cameraman on the film was Kais al-Zubaidi, whose extensive ties with the Soviet bloc and participation at the Tashkent festival we explored in previous chapters.

Soon to become Syria’s most renowned international filmmakers, eventually becoming an opponent of Assad’s policies and leaving the country for France in 1978 after his films were banned, Amiralay was funded to make *Film Essay on the Euphrates Dam* by the Syrian National Film Organization. Unlike his two subsequent films in what became known as the Euphrates Trilogy (*Everyday Life in a Syrian Village / Al-Hayat al-Yaomiyyah fi Qaryah Suriyyah* [1974], a Marxist critique of the failed socialist revolution, and *A Flood in Baath Country / Tufan fi Bilad al-Ba’th* [2003], a detailed indictment of not only the Baath Party’s regime but also of the environmental and social impact of the dam he’d celebrated), *Film Essay* is an ode to industrial modernization, which explains Amiralay’s later lament over this “error of [his] youth” in the opening of *A Flood in Baath Country*.

Despite its director's disavowal, however, *Film Essay* does give us an important example of Marxist vision of development. This is not accomplished by celebrating Soviet assistance and expertise (which is erased in the film's imagery) but through an emphasis on the work on the dam and the new and old collectives it mobilizes. Amiralay, a great admirer of Vertov, alludes to the latter not only in his employment of montage (a staple of leftist documentary avant-garde of the 1960s everywhere in the world) but, more importantly, in highlighting the link between technology and human labor. From its distinctly constructivist photography, with extremely low- and high-angle shots of the dam's construction sites and the people working on it, and rhythmic montage match-on-action moving-crane sequences, it is clearly operating in the Kino-eye vein of uniting the machine (whether it's a crane or a camera) and the worker (metallurgist or cameraman), intercutting these images with a long shot of groups (of, presumably, workers) kneeling down together in prayer at the construction site. The camera here sways slightly along with the crane, leaving us with the impression of their integration—among themselves and within the landscape and its machinery, including the camera eye. A series of visual rhymes is constructed using the similar texture of the mud-covered hands of the man building a fence, the parched earth (familiar from just about all dam documentaries), the thorniness of the cattle's fur, the bristle of the bushes, the wrinkles on the face and hands of the woman making bread, the walls of the hut where a younger woman is cooking, the folds of the clothes of the two women (one with a toddler, the other breastfeeding a baby), culminating with the cracked feet of the older man and, finally, coming full circle through a close-up of cracks in the parched earth. The total effect is to make clear the rhetorical point concerning the harsh arid conditions of the countryside, which a more effective system of irrigation would liberate.

Amiralay does not present the people in these sequences as symbols of "the old" preindustrial society but as subjects, aware of the filmmaker's presence (many of them look inquisitively into the camera), their expressions and gestures both purposeful and affectionate; here the children are smiling. Moreover, they are clearly presented as a community, linked by harsh natural conditions as well as by labor itself (whether domestic or agrarian). Both labor and technologies are, furthermore, linked to art: thus, when the spectacular machinery is visually reintroduced into the narrative, these images are mediated through close-ups of the clay figures of the ancient Mesopotamian civilization of the Euphrates, followed by close-ups of children hard at work, concentrated on creating their own art—which, in the final images of the film, is shown to be the drawing of the construction site and the people working at it.

The juxtaposition between the children's drawings of the dam and the relics of ancient civilizations (as artistic creations equally bound to the conditions of living and working on the Euphrates) creates a temporal link that reinforces the perception of the dam construction not only as manufactured by the state but as mediated through and embedded in popular experiences and imaginaries. The

children's drawings expand the domain of how the dam is perceived and the way it can serve as a trigger for artistic creation, which allows for a story that could be quite different from official accounts. Of course, children's productions are easy to see as a deliberate and direct result of ideological indoctrination—of a modern industrial postcolonial state ideology that treats its subjects as children to be shaped into model citizens (and soldiers) or, more specifically, of a socialist state with its emphasis on the formation of a “new man” through its civilizing educational mission. Nonetheless, their screen presence points to an artistic methodology mediating between the subjective (as children's art is often understood to be the freshest and most original expression of an individual vision) and the collective, between informal artistic practices and highly codified and state-sponsored ones.

Indeed, as recent work demonstrates, dam-building projects generated an enormous amount of media, both official and informal.⁴⁷ From amateur films made by the workers themselves to journalistic and cinematic projects, media-making in this context can be seen as an important extension of popular participation, creating a different and more varied vocabulary for the narrative of modernization. Many filmmakers saw their task as giving voice to ordinary everyday experiences. But acknowledging the complex range of affects and beliefs of the people who participated in these projects could, indeed, reveal a less triumphalist perception of these projects, ultimately leading to an outright critique. As Amiralay's artistic trajectory demonstrates, extensive interviews about the experiences of the people impacted by industrialization would inevitably speak to centrally planned modernization's costs, turning cinema into an instrument of the critique of the state. But focusing on the experience of the people, their motivations and their work, was itself a crucial aspect of socialist ideology, thus always generating the potential that the filmmakers working in the service of socialism could find themselves on the outs with the state's idea of its immediate priorities—a situation that befell more than one Tashkent participant and many other Third-Worldist filmmakers.

Cinematically, this set of complex contradictions in the experiences and ideologies of socialist industrial modernization is perfectly captured in the history of what should have been the most famous dam film ever made, Youssef Chahine's ill-fated Soviet-Egyptian coproduction *People on the Nile* and its two—1968 and 1972—versions. The film was originally intended to be exhibited at the opening of the first Tashkent film festival, in 1968, following its intended Moscow premiere, and the first in a series of Soviet-Egyptian coproductions, overseen by Chahine. Tashkent was meant to provide the ideal space not only to show the film but also to discuss and negotiate these future plans.⁴⁸ But this is not what happened, and the remainder of this chapter will focus on the vexed production, exhibition, and reception history of this project, as well as a comparison of the two versions (both in different ways failed), which resulted from it.

BUILDING THE HIGH DAM

Nasser's most daring, demanding, and dangerous enterprise, the centerpiece of the Egyptian revolution and, he assured the nation, the way to achieve agricultural self-sufficiency and industrial stability, rested in his plan for the Aswan High Dam. Its erection is an exemplary Cold War case study as initially both superpowers pledged money for the building of the dam, but the US and UK withdrew their offers when Egypt signed an arms deal with the Soviet bloc. To raise funds, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal and turned to the USSR, which provided a low interest financial loan, heavy machinery, and technological assistance for the dam. Egyptians accepted the Soviet design of the project, and construction began in 1960.⁴⁹ The completion of the first phase of the project—in May 1964—was an international news story, with a ceremony presided over by Nasser and Khrushchev and attended by many representatives of the Non-Aligned nations, with Algeria's Ben Bella as a special guest. In distancing itself from the US and the UK, the project confirmed Nasser's anticolonialist stance and leadership of the pan-Arab movement, while also putting Egypt in line over Iraq, which the Soviets had previously favored as a major aid recipient. For the Soviet Union under Khrushchev, the High Dam was "a showpiece of their superior technological, engineering, and logistical resources and a demonstration of Moscow's willingness to take on even the most ambitious development schemes."⁵⁰ The grandiose vision of the Aswan Dam so influenced the leaders of Algeria and Syria that they signed on with the Soviets for similar cooperative projects.⁵¹

As Elizabeth Bishop demonstrates, in actuality the story of the Soviet-Egyptian cooperation on the Aswan Dam was one of mutual frustrations and miscalculations, creating conflicts among the administrators that led to Egypt's gradual removal of all Soviet expertise from the project.⁵² Alia Mossallam's account of the workers' recollections of that experience tells a slightly different story: one of comradeship and shared aspirations, however tragic or disappointing the outcomes.⁵³ Both accounts show the degree to which Aswan was envisioned as a social and political experiment by all involved: Bishop emphasizes the way Soviet cooperation entailed not merely a transfer of technological/scientific know-how but of production culture as well, while Mossallam illustrates powerfully how Egyptian construction workers understood their work on the dam as realizing a genuinely liberating vision of a socialist future (fig. 6.1). This vision was less centered on material well-being than on belonging and the hope for a future of social and professional mobility combined with a sense of justice and equality. The experience of building the dam was meant to be the future in microcosm: "on the High Dam, the 'new man' was free of imperialism, having challenged the world and built the Dam despite meager resources; he was the worker who overcame his inhibitions and fear of the Nile as a peasant, and educated himself, overcoming ignorance."⁵⁴

At the same time, this vision was instrumentalized to override the enormous costs, justifying losses and sacrifices and normalizing violence and military



FIGURE 6.1. Builders of the Aswan Dam: Egyptian electric welder Muhammed Abdel Menen (*left*) and Soviet specialist and two-time Hero of Socialist Labor Alexei Ulesov. Photo used by permission of Sputnik.

discipline as necessary conditions of the struggle. Such revolutionary enthusiasm also exacerbated a constant sense of fissure between the present and the future: the promise of ownership (of their country, of the production process, of their own lives) and belonging (to the nation, to the world beyond the nation) was achievable only after the constant delay of the present—a sense that was very familiar to Soviet builders of socialism and dams. Cinematically, this dialectic is perfectly captured in Youssef Chahine's Soviet-Egyptian coproduction *People on the Nile*. Its history demonstrates the ambivalent and complex dynamics behind internationalist industrial modernization projects (of which the High Dam was the most emblematic), extending into the similarly contradictory relationship between filmmaking and the state in the Cold War.

THE FIRST SOVIET-EGYPTIAN . . .

The first Soviet-Arab feature film coproduction intended to show the friendship of the Soviet and Egyptian peoples, cemented by this tremendous joint project—a friendship that was also meant to infuse the filming process itself and to be evidenced by it.⁵⁵ Indeed, *People on the Nile*'s production and reception history does mirror its subject in the most uncanny way—grandiose, full of inspiration and political commitment on the part of its makers, demanding iron discipline and

high tolerance of physical conditions on the part of all the participants, technologically advanced but not easily adaptable to local conditions, extremely expensive, with equal Egyptian and Soviet state funding, shot entirely on location, with larger-than-life personalities, and bearing the mark of endless bureaucratic and political conflicts leading, ultimately, to failure.

Moreover, just as the first phase of the High Dam construction was dominated by Soviet production culture, whose failures resulted in its replacement with Egyptian experts in the second phase of the project, the two versions of the film represent different visions of the Soviet-Egyptian cooperation and the relationship between colonial legacies and internationalism.⁵⁶ Just as the dam's construction witnessed Egypt's newly found postcolonial confidence, evident in the second version of the film, there came a price: the abandonment of the very socialist aspirations that were so crucial to the builders of the dam themselves.

Chahine, who had by the early 1960s established himself not only as an internationally renowned auteur with films screened major international festivals, East and West, but also as a filmmaker who could manage equally well political anticolonialist subjects (*Jamila*, 1958), grand spectacles (*Saladin / Al-Nasir Salah al-Din*, 1963), and social realism (*Cairo Station / Bab al-Hadid*, 1958), appeared to be the perfect choice for such an endeavor. *Struggle in the Valley / Sira' fi al-Wadi* (1954), in particular, was widely shown and very popular in the Soviet Union, and *Jamila* was an enormous success at the first Moscow international film festival.⁵⁷ In fact, in 1964, Chahine started shooting his own film on the topic of the dam on location, but after a confrontation with Egypt's deputy Minister of Culture over his script (entitled *Tomorrow Life Begins*), he abandoned the project to shoot a musical comedy in Lebanon, starring Fairuz. Only then, on Nasser's personal orders, was he called back to Egypt—this time to direct the coproduction.⁵⁸ Chahine's vision was of a film that would reflect on the "long and hard struggle to build the dam, and the symbolic meaning it [held] for the people of Egypt and for all third world countries."⁵⁹ This sense of global significance, rendered through very personal affective experiences of the characters, ended up somewhat overwhelming the pathos of nationalist developmentalism in the original version of the film, much to the displeasure of Egyptian officials.

Meanwhile, the Soviet side likewise originally had a different conception of the coproduction, which was initially intended as a documentary made using existing archival footage. But in 1967, when the Soviet film delegation in Cairo reviewed the extensive footage shot at the dam by the Egyptian documentarians, it made a harsh judgment: the footage lacked "any artistic attempt to understand the people, their new worldview and the changes taking place in UAR—as reflected in the lives of the many people brought together, united as a collective in the building of the Aswan dam."⁶⁰ Worse, Soviet involvement was totally missing from the footage.⁶¹ To address these problems, it was decided at this midpoint to change the coproduction to fiction, with Chahine directing. In retrospect, it is remarkable

how much Chahine's original version was able to respond to these Soviet criticisms while still retaining his personal cinematic vision.

The contract with Mosfilm was quickly signed, with a release date tentatively planned for the fall of 1968.⁶² The script was to be written by the celebrated author Abdel Rahman al-Sharqawi and Chahine himself. The film was shot in 70 mm cinemascope on location in Aswan, Cairo, Moscow, and Leningrad by the veteran Soviet husband-and-wife team Alexander Shelenkov and Yu-Lan Chen. Devoted communists, the couple was famous for their sweeping camerawork in historical epics (*Glinka*, Lev Arnshtam, 1946; *Admiral Ushakov*, Mikhail Romm, 1953; *The Communist*, Iulii Raizman, 1958; *Five Days, Five Nights / Piat' dnei, piat' nochei / Fünf Tage, Fünf Nächte*, Lev Arnshtam and Heinz Thiel, 1960; and *War and Peace*, Sergei Bondarchuk, 1965–67), which clearly indicated the Soviet ambitions for the film, if not exactly matching Chahine's authorial style. Given the high technological demands of the 70 mm film, it was to be developed in Moscow and edited there by Chahine himself.

The Soviet team remembers the grueling conditions of the shooting in Egypt and Chahine's iron discipline and exacting orders.⁶³ Early in the process, Chahine kept insisting on deviating from the script to best express his own personal vision, which greatly alarmed the Soviets, who were not accustomed to such liberties and were concerned about the ideological consequences. But these disagreements were eventually resolved, and the film was completed on time by July 1968, with all its production team and the Soviet film authorities satisfied with the final result.⁶⁴ Chahine's main concern at that point appeared to be securing sufficiently prestigious exhibition venues in Egypt to counter the upcoming slate of Hollywood releases.⁶⁵ Soviet film officials pronounced the coproduction an overall success and an effective propaganda vehicle of Soviet-Arab friendship, and they began developing a plan of three future coproductions with Egypt, with scripts ready for approval by the end of the year.⁶⁶

PEOPLE ON THE NILE, 1968

People on the Nile (its original title in Arabic was *Al-Nas wa-al-Nil*; in Russian *Liudi na Nile*, which in English was referred to alternately as *People on the Nile*, *People of the Nile*, or *People and the Nile*) starts with a series of familiar constructivist-inspired tropes: sweeping images of the desert with silhouettes of camel-riders, an electricity tower, and a montage of close-ups of parts of the hydroelectric station and the dam equipment, including the iconic image of the bright orange turbine (fig. 6.2), which features in so many memoirs of the builders of the Aswan Dam, followed by the rapids of the Nile.⁶⁷

The narrative begins on the day of the opening of the dam, at the conclusion of the first phase of its construction, and interweaves in flashback the stories of several Egyptian and Russian characters from a wide range of backgrounds—from common builders to engineers, managers, and intellectuals. These include several

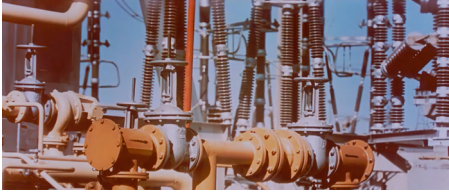


FIGURE 6.2. The orange turbine, vividly remembered by many builders of the Aswan Dam (opening sequence of the 1968 version of *People on the Nile*). DVD screen grab.

love stories, as well as a very affectionate friendship between a handsome young Russian worker, Nikolai, and his Egyptian-Nubian counterpart, Barak, whose relationship in many ways frames the film. The flashback structure begins with Barak drowning in the Nile after making a daring and foolish bet to be the last person to swim there before the dam shuts it down, and, Nikolai jumps in to save him, and as the two wrestle in the water, the narrative bifurcates into a series of flashbacks, underscoring parallels between the Soviet and Egyptian characters. From that point on, the binary structure continues to weave through pairs of Russian and Egyptian colleagues, with linked themes tying together the stories that unfold in their two respective national contexts. On both sides, families worry about their sons' work assignments, while the sons, although deeply rooted in their families' traditions, try to find a space for themselves. The women on both sides are looking for independence and self-realization, while bearing up under the impact of the men's work on the family circle. The men, at work, display a military bravery in the face of the danger and possible death posed by the project. These parallels mutually amplify both similarities and differences between the Soviet and Egyptian characters and their contexts.

There are two love stories—one of the Russian engineers, Alik (Aleksei), and his wife, Zoya, also an accomplished engineer, who comes with him to Aswan but is denied the possibility to work there. Frustrated by enforced domesticity, she leaves but then comes back to Alik. Despite this happy ending, the film openly acknowledges the masculinist homosocial environment of the dam, and Zoya's frustration is depicted with considerable understanding. The other love story is of Yehia, a writer who had been in prison for what is implied was the anticolonial stance of the journal he was publishing and who now works as a common builder at the dam. He falls in love with Nadia, the young daughter of the dam's Egyptian chief, and proposes to her. The father approves, but the daughter, despite being attracted to Yehia, rejects his proposal because she doesn't want to settle down and give up on her own aspirations. The two endings of these love stories—one happy, the other melancholic—conclude the film, with a beautiful and whimsical long take of the rejected Yehia watching a street boy balancing on the rails of Cairo's embankment of the Nile to the sounds of a Russian song celebrating the friendship between the Soviet and Egyptian people.

These love stories, however prominent, do not dominate the film, which is more concentrated on the working life of the characters. The flashback that immediately follows the introduction of the other pair of friends—Alik, Zoya's husband, and his

Egyptian counterpart, Saad—shows the two engineers disregarding direct orders from the Soviet chief, Platonov, and executing a daring explosion to avoid a flood that is threatening to destroy the dam. Platonov had rejected the plan because Alik and Saad had not come to seek his approval, but they do it anyway. This episode not only capitalizes on the much-commented-on builders' experiences of "the monstrous sounds of machinery, the explosions of dynamite, [and] the crumbling of tunnels" but also introduces an important autogestion narrative strand within the film, with the builders (both engineers and common workers) demanding control over the construction process and higher management's ambivalent refusal.⁶⁸ Connected to this is another strand of the story, dealing with the other Soviet-Egyptian couple, Barak and Nikolai: when Barak finds out that Nikolai is leaving the project because his contract has come to an end, although he doesn't want to, Barak collects signatures from his fellow workers and petitions to keep Nikolai. He tries to explain to management that Nikolai is a better worker and treats his Egyptian fellow workers better than the man replacing him. But the Egyptian boss dismisses Barak's appeal without reading the petition, which Barak tears up and throws in the Nile. Platonov, seeing this, is sympathetic in a patronizing way, but Nikolai ultimately is sent back nonetheless. This captures with surprising accuracy the dynamic of the production culture of Aswan described by both Bishop and Mossallam—namely, the struggle between the workers' repeated attempts at direct participation and management's resistance to autogestion.

Similarly, there is a long sequence toward the end of the film depicting an absurdly comical bureaucratic ordeal of ordering some much-needed additional equipment for the dam—a sequence on par with such classic socialist bureaucratic comedies as Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's *Death of a Bureaucrat* (*La muerte de un burócrata*, 1966). Another recurrent routine concerns the incompetence of the Russian translator and an attempt by an inept journalist to interview people who are busy working. The focus on Barak's family and other Nubian villagers displaced by the dam is also quite extensive, their representation ranging from comedic to tragic, as when an old man describes the new dwellings provided by the government to the displaced Nubians. Their old houses, he explains, were all different "like fingers on one's hand," while the new houses are all the same, like barracks. Yet in the same breath, he dismisses his own complaints and praises Nasser in a moment that captures exactly the historical dynamics of this process as it emerges from recollections.⁶⁹

One of the unexpected extended flashbacks in the film recounts the Battle of Stalingrad, where Alik fought as a nineteen-year-old, and his experience of "fear, love, and death" as he falls in love with a nurse who is killed on the battlefield the next day. This war reference taps into the formative experience of World War II for the Soviet builders, embodying the oft-repeated claim that Dam building on this scale is comparable to fighting a war—both in terms of its dangers and its symbolic pathos. In 1968, when the film was finished, it also evoked Soviet military support for Egypt in the 1967 war, and the air of resignation with which the film ends is

perhaps best understood in the context of this defeat. "I wish I could have met you before," says Nadia to Yehia, referring to his political past, which he has now renounced. "Those were difficult years," he responds. "The best years of your life!" she retorts, conveying at once the sense of loss, disappointment, and her unwillingness to accept defeat. Reading this romantic exchange in the context of Egypt's defeat in the 1967 war helps guide us through the enigma of why, in 1968, when the film was completed, it was rejected, reshot, and finally released in quite a different version in Egypt in 1972—to scathing reviews.

PEOPLE ON THE NILE: TAKE 2

The details of the story behind the rejection of the 1968 version of the film have only begun to emerge, after decades of silence and the film's lack of availability.⁷⁰ The only detailed published account of what happened is included in the memoirs of Victor Sytin, a Goskino representative involved in the making of the film, yet his recollections seem rather confusing.⁷¹ Chahine himself, while often referring in interviews to the disastrous experience, never fully explained what happened. What becomes clear from the Soviet archives is that political events in August 1968, particularly the invasion of Czechoslovakia, influenced the official reception of the film. Although in the spring of 1968 it was fully approved and formally accepted by the Soviet side and the Egyptian embassy in Moscow, once Chahine and the Soviets returned to Cairo, the film was prescreened in Cairo to a group of industry insiders and select journalists (a screening that did not include either Chahine or the Egyptian Minister of Culture, who had been the guarantor of the project). Their review was scathing. Chahine was accused of pandering to the Soviets and representing Egypt as a backward country, a "civilization of camels" (fig. 6.3).⁷²

Within a few weeks, the head of the Soviet state cinema committee, Romanov, received an official telegram from the head of the Egyptian film center that shut down the release of the film based on "differences between the film and the script previously accepted."⁷³ Significant modifications were demanded, and under pressure from the Soviet embassy in Cairo, Soviet film officials quickly sided with the Egyptians.⁷⁴ The Moscow and Tashkent premieres were canceled. Magda (the star and producer of Chahine's *Jamila*) represented Egypt at the Tashkent opening, but *People on the Nile* was fated not to enjoy that success. Instead, at the next session of the festival, the Egyptian selection included a much older film made about the Aswan Dam, *The Naked Truth* (*Al-Haqiqah al-'Ariya*, Atef Salem, 1963), a romance starring Magda and Ihab Nafie, the intelligence-officer-turned-actor (their relationship, onscreen and off, was rumored to have begun at a party at the Russian embassy in Cairo).⁷⁵

Under pressure from both countries, Chahine ultimately agreed not merely to reedit but to reshoot the film to conform to the official Egyptian critique. This was quite an exceptional step for Chahine. In the 1970s, he would make films funded by Algeria to avoid this pressure, under the same impulse that made fellow



FIGURE 6.3. “The land of camels” (opening sequence of the 1968 version of *People on the Nile*). DVD screen grab.

filmmakers Tewfiq Saleh and Salah Abu Seif turn to Syria and Iraq for work. As he has explained, he was influenced by the fact that “the Soviet market involved more than seventy thousand movie theaters. The Soviet bloc also represented an opportunity to connect with hundreds of millions of people within the socialist bloc as well as a solid grass root[s] following among progressive people around the world.”⁷⁶ But the new version came out in 1972, after Nasser’s death, at the precise moment that Sadat’s government chose to break its ties with the Soviet Union. As a result, the film, intended as a compromise to be played in the Soviet market, ended up pleasing no one: the Egyptian press criticized it, on the one hand, for underrepresenting the power of the workers and, on the other, as insufficiently patriotic. “Fuzzy and dramatically unfocused” was the general judgment.⁷⁷ In the Soviet Union, the 1972 version was screened outside of competition at the Moscow International Film Festival that year but was never released commercially, generating virtually no media attention except for a one-paragraph-long write-up in the journal *Iskusstvo kino*, whose very trailing title, lacking a definite subject—“The First Soviet-Egyptian . . .”—seems to underscore the unsigned author’s uncertainty about the film.⁷⁸

Chahine managed to sneak the original 1968 version of the film into the hands of Henri Langlois, the director of the Cinémathèque française, where it was subsequently restored and screened with the French title *Un jour, le Nil*, while Chahine himself referred to it by the Arabic title *Al-Nil wa-al-Hayah*, literally *The Nile and the Life*. The multiplicity of titles, along with the film’s deliberately obscured history, generated confusion among critics and audiences alike.⁷⁹

THE TWO VERSIONS: WHAT CHANGED?

An exact reconstruction of the history of the two versions remains somewhat speculative, although Soviet archives provide some clues. While it may be easy to attribute the film’s rejection by the authorities to its many criticisms, it is worth noting that such digressions from the strictly celebratory mode of representation were in fact common elements of the socialist ethos of many Egyptian films of the public sector era, as well as of Soviet films of the 1960s and 1970s (Cuban or Eastern European films saw similar treatment during that period). The victory of the “common man” over the bureaucrat, and of people’s vigilance against enemies of the revolution and its original commitments, were common tropes. Also, the

emancipatory representation of women in Egyptian melodramas of the Nasser era was something of a "litmus test" of modernization in both socialist and postcolonial cinemas of the period. Acknowledgment of the destruction of the Nubian village and politics of resettlement of its inhabitants and its ancient monuments were also common motifs in the Egyptian representations of the High Dam, subsumed to the narrative of the sacrifice for the sake of progress and national cohesion, which Chahine's film ultimately embraces, if with a markedly melancholic tone.

Instead, it was the overweeningly leading role awarded to the Soviet characters, which by comparison made the Egyptians seem backward—a metaphor that was literalized and inverted by the Egyptian censors, who demanded that the Soviet characters should walk behind the Egyptian officials—that constituted the biggest problem.⁸⁰ Indeed, Chahine's 1972 version of the film complies with the Egyptian complaint, allotting more screen time to the Egyptian characters and showing their contributions to the project as primary. Overall, Egypt is represented in the new version as considerably more "modern," erasing all the markers of "backwardness" and focusing on the urban Egyptian elites and their commitment to the project.⁸¹ The autogestion theme in the film was also deemphasized. It is worth looking in detail at some of the changes made by Chahine for what they say about the code of postcolonial industrial development in its explicitly socialist internationalist iteration and its nationalist post-Nasserite imaginary.

The 1972 version introduces new characters, all of them Egyptian professionals: the daughter of the dam's director (played by a different actress, the star Soad Hosny) in the second version is an accomplished artist; her lover is a doctor, albeit a son of peasants, whose social rise is due to the successes of Nasser's social mobility program. A major new character in this version, he comes to the dam to work on the effects of bilharzia on the local population (schistosomiasis was a major concern for the inhabitants of the region, and "conquering" it was seen as a great triumph of Egyptian medical science, although the victory proved to be illusory).⁸² Much of the action of the first part of the film takes place in a Cairo depicted as a modern metropolis, featuring Mercedes-Benzes, offices equipped with state-of-the-art technology, and forward-looking Egyptian industrial leaders. Unlike in the earlier version, the viewer is introduced to the dam from above, in an extensive sequence of aerial shots as the characters arrive in Aswan by plane. This foregrounds the modern technology of air travel and Aswan as a grandiose spectacle of nature and technology, both ideas subsumed under the regime of visual mastery of an all-seeing eye of the camera instead of the fragmented montage of the close-ups of the desert, electrical towers, and turbines in the original opening sequence.

As implied by the inclusion of air travel, the film's class positionality is also turned significantly from the 1968 ensemble piece, with characters of different class and national backgrounds, to the new version, which has as its center Nadia, the daughter of the boss of the dam project. Her love story has changed, as

well: resenting her boyfriend, a patriotic and devoted doctor, for having left Cairo to work at the dam, Nadia is considering Yehia's attentions, who in this version is a minor character entirely stripped of his former political backstory. Nadia's reconciliation with the doctor in the end mirrors Zoya's return to Alik—both decisions dictated by the dual logic of patriotism and patriarchy.

In the new version, the Russian characters are flattened out, functioning primarily as props to give the contours of their backstories and showcase the tourist views of Leningrad and Moscow (including ballet at the Bolshoi Theatre—that “intrinsic part of the official pantheon of Soviet achievements”).⁸³ All linguistic nuances are erased, with all the characters fully dubbed into standard Arabic and no voice-over narration. All sequences showing cultural misunderstanding or miscommunication are purged, including a lovely scene in the original version when Alik unexpectedly pays a visit to Saad, who quickly tries to make himself and his house look more presentable to the foreign guest by putting on more formal (Western) clothing over his home *galabiya* and hiding his whole extended family in the closet—maneuvers to which Alik, absorbed in his personal drama, is completely oblivious. In the new version, Saad is married and lives in a modern apartment with his wife and two children, and his interactions with Alik lose all the intimate homosociality of the original version. The relationship between Barak and Nikolai is reversed: it is now Barak who jumps into the Nile after Nikolai—a scene that is now a semicomical insert instead of a jumping-off point for a divergent series of flashbacks. The simplification of the narrative structure does make the film more accessible but at the cost of reducing the original set of thematic resonances between the Egyptian and Russian characters. Their relationships lose both their complexity and their affective power.

Similarly, the new version removes all traces of workers' self-governance and autogestion. Instead, the project apparently springs from the head of the dam's chief (which is literalized through the title sequence, where the title is superimposed on the design as he is explaining it to his daughter), is operationalized by a team of professionals, and is executed by faceless Egyptian work crews. No friction between these levels is rendered visible, and of all the Soviet characters, it is now Platonov, the Soviet production head, who is most visible in the film, although clearly “following behind” his Egyptian counterpart. Ironically, we know from Elizabeth Bishop's account that the Soviet top management of the dam was hoping to “reverse” the bottom-up dynamics of the 1950s–1960s Soviet production culture, in which highly skilled workers could regularly challenge their superiors, for a top-down culture restoring managerial authority and enforcing a class and culture hierarchy on the Egyptian laborers.⁸⁴ But the upper Soviet management hadn't reckoned on the rank-and-file Soviet specialists, who brought with them norms similar to what they were accustomed to in the postwar Soviet context: where continuous acquisition of new skills and initiative were not only encouraged but expected and where general cultural education (through music, literature, and other extramural activities—common in the Soviet Union from the

“houses of culture” where workers were expected to socialize) were also part of this socialist production culture, valuing the workers’ broader interests and leading to the formation of more informal relationships.⁸⁵ In turn, the Russians also went into their experience as a learning opportunity, which was appreciated by their Egyptian peers.

Overall, Mossallam’s interviews with the dam builders confirm the tenor of the work-life captured by Chahine’s 1968 version of *People on the Nile*—pointing to the formation of an affective community, which grew out of a mutual understanding of their work culture despite the complicated but powerful experiences and remnants of colonial dynamics. Unsurprisingly, this historical fact is purged entirely from the reworked 1972 version of the film, which was heavily supervised by the equivalent top management of the Soviet and Egyptian film industries. It is significant that while most sequences dealing with the dislocation of the Nubians remain in the new version, just like the Russian subplots, they are significantly shortened—sacrificing all texture and detail.⁸⁶ In small details and large, the new version effectively erased all traces of the everyday discourses and cultures around the dam, just as the management of the dam gradually replaced Soviet production culture with “entrepreneurs with experience in construction sites in the Arabian Gulf” as part and parcel of Egypt’s turn away from socialism.⁸⁷

SAVING THE NUBIAN MONUMENTS

Both versions of Chahine’s film feature visual allusions to the other, well-publicized massive infrastructural project that accompanied the Aswan Dam’s construction: the relocation and preservation of the archaeological sites in Nubia under the threat of inundation by the newly built reservoir. The plans for saving the archaeological sites (not fully excavated at that point) began at the same time as the plans for the building of the dam, following Egypt’s appeal to the international community for assistance. Consequently, like the dam itself and Chahine’s film(s), the project of “saving the Nubian monuments” became the site of Cold War rivalries. In this case, the internationalism on display was framed by liberal multilateral terms: a coalition of state and nonstate actors, central to which was the partnership between Egypt and UNESCO, laying the grounds for the formalization of the World Heritage system at the World Heritage Convention of 1972.

The two projects, the industrial and the cultural, have traditionally been represented as corresponding to the two Cold War formations, with one commenter seeing the Aswan High Dam as “a veritable iron curtain neatly dividing the Nile Valley between Eastern and Western blocs,” with, on one side, “Russian engineers working downstream at the dam and its associated power stations” and, on the other side, “Western archaeologists and engineers working upstream in Nubia under the auspices of UNESCO to survey and salvage hundreds of monuments and sites.”⁸⁸ At the same time, this imagined binary, which attributes industrial modernity’s destructive impact to the socialist side and the preservation of our World Heritage

to the Western liberal side, presents a counterpoint to the understanding of the project as fully subsumed under the logic of Egyptian nationalism (the perspective reflected in Chahine's 1972 film and in some scholarship on Egypt). Yet these large classificatory gestures are ultimately misleading. The Aswan Dam was not simply the product of the Soviet experts' vision and practices as conjured by Cold War phobias, nor was the Nubian monument project a harmonious unity of liberal initiatives. Far from being devoid of Cold War politics, UNESCO in the 1960s brought together divergent—and often competing—notions of “world culture.” As Bojana Videkanić demonstrates, the coalition behind the project tilted, originally, toward the Non-Aligned Movement: “of the forty-five UNESCO members that participated, twelve were Western countries and thirty-three were either members of NAM or other non-Western countries.” India, Yugoslavia, and Cuba all donated considerable funding and expertise to the campaign.⁸⁹ While the Western press highlighted European, British, and American experts, the USSR, East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland all sent teams of archaeologists to work on the site as well. The Polish expedition, in particular, made some of the greatest discoveries, uncovering an eighth-century cathedral with more than one hundred frescoes.⁹⁰ And as Louis Porter details, during the early phase of the campaign, the Soviet UNESCO Commission also dispatched several archaeologists to Egypt—although anti-Soviet backlash in the Western press led the Soviet side to refuse to commit resources to the project: “The campaign, in the final analysis,” the Soviet permanent delegate wrote in 1961, “had an anti-Soviet tendency since the preservation of monuments has been juxtaposed to the construction of the Aswan Dam, which, as is known, will be erected with the participation of Soviet specialists.” The campaign therefore amounted to “an attempt to use the organization to counter the growing influence of the Soviet Union in the weakly-developed countries.”⁹¹

Indeed, the final project of saving the Nubian monuments, as compellingly demonstrated by Lucia Allais, was governed by the logic of what she terms “calculability”—“the potential . . . to be incorporated into a project of [capitalist] economic development.”⁹² The decision to salvage the monuments by cutting them into some 7,047 blocks, which were then removed to a storage area, and then reconstituted piece by piece on a hill less than a mile away, was convenient for the US to fund without allocating much additional resources. The high labor costs of this solution could be absorbed by the US by converting its surpluses of Egyptian pounds acquired through earlier US aid programs (which the US could not spend otherwise, given the tense political relations with Nasser), into payments to Egyptian laborers. This made the US the most generous supporter of the project, restoring its considerable political clout. Cutting also allowed for an even easier system of converting architectural sites into museum artifacts: for their contribution to the campaign, the US, Spain, Holland, and Italy all received four “minor” Nubian temples as “gifts of appreciation.”⁹³ Thus for UNESCO the upshot was that the Nubian monuments were presented in the media as items of “universal cultural

heritage” positioned beyond the Cold War binary, which obscured any economic or geopolitical rationale.⁹⁴ This conception of reclaiming the past, as we will see in the next chapter, was far from unique: a similar logic of establishing a shared cultural heritage (in this case, articulated as a unified “Black Civilization”), Apter argues, was instrumental for the FESTAC festivals in Nigeria in the 1970s: “The rationalization of tradition . . . , linking the past to the future in programmatic statements which assimilated cultural difference to a singular Black Civilization, is perhaps best understood as a mode of bureaucratic rationality which established the authority of the petro-state through the logic of FESTAC’s administration.”⁹⁵

Conventionally left behind within the logic of bureaucratic rationality is the impact of these projects on ordinary people—the human costs of labor, cultural and physical dislocation, and the environmental impact.⁹⁶ In the end, after Nasser’s death, the builders of the dam were paid significantly less than promised and stripped of their benefits once they retired; their hopes of professional and social mobility went unrealized in the post-Nasserite era.⁹⁷ Nor was the money dispensed for the relocations of the Nubian people anywhere close to what was spent on the monuments—further illustrating the institutional logic that configured cultural heritage and industrial development alike as disembodied processes, existing, as it were, outside the lived experiences of the groups effected. Socialist production cultures were generally more oriented toward workers’ issues and broader stakes, as Kalinovsky observes in his history of the Nurek Dam in Tajikistan:

In their interactions, local residents, managers, and party activists tried to find a way to make reality approximate stated ideals of Soviet equality and welfare. On the one hand, just as the typical problems of disease, boredom, and labor turnover convinced managers of the wisdom of investing in better facilities and housing for workers in Nurek, so did complaints from villagers lead those same officials to invest in infrastructure and facilities for the surrounding countryside. On the other hand, the way that these individuals approached both sets of problems reveals the powerful hold of utopian ideals of equality, internationalism, and urban and rural life.⁹⁸

These ideals, however, relied heavily on the demand for sacrifice imposed on or internalized by the workers, whose military logic in reality undermined the very humanist foundations of socialist ideals. In Egypt, this military mind-set excused the high number of accidents during the building of the High Dam as much lower, in comparison, to “typical war casualties.”⁹⁹ It is documented that even during the 1964 inauguration of the dam, which forms the center of Chahine’s film, many people were swept away by the flooding water, causing many casualties in the midst of the celebration, as is visible in some of the documentary footage.¹⁰⁰ This footage was not used in Chahine’s film, but our knowledge of this filmed disaster gives additional symbolic power to the narrative structure of the 1968 version inasmuch as it is unleashed by flashbacks from the sequence showing Nikolai and Barak struggling in the water.

Overall, the enthusiasm for industrial modernization, which set the tone for postcolonial cinematic representations of the 1950s, gradually gave way to a growing sense of loss or melancholy. Even in Tashkent, despite the nominal celebration of industrial modernity, the films presented at the festival began to tentatively offer an environmental consciousness of costs, which emerges especially in the cinemas of the Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics. Central Asian New Wave of the 1960s (with Tolomush Okeev's *Sky of Our Childhood* [*Nebo nashego detstva*, 1966] as the most famous example) offers many examples of a deep ambivalence toward the modernization process as many of these films are marked by melancholy and a sense of loss. The environmental and human costs of industrialization are addressed directly in two of Armenia's festival selections: *The Canyon of Abandoned Fairytales* (*Ushchel'e pokinutykh skazok*, Edmond Keosayan, 1974) and *White Shores* (*Belye berega*, a.k.a. *Voda nasha nasushchnaya*, Arman Manarian, 1975). If in the first film the ecological critique of industrialization is melodramatically inflected as the conflict between tradition and modernity in family relations (with woman, once again, presented as an agent of change), *White Shores* addresses the problem head-on by focusing on the ecocide of Lake Sevan.¹⁰¹ The hero of *White Shores* is a man who hopes to redeem his past participation in ecologically disastrous industrialization by leading attempts to save the lake.

In fact, Armenian intellectuals were some of the first people to take a public stance calling on the state to provide environmental protection: in 1975, one of the leading figures in the Union of Architects of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, A. Grigorian, called for the creation of a nationwide committee for nature protection that would coordinate all environmental management activities. Consistent with their heightened self-understanding as agents of social conscience, writers in the Soviet Union played a particularly important role in pushing the state toward a more active role in environmental protection—with the Union of Soviet Writers taking an environmentalist stance in 1977.¹⁰² The involvement of cultural and artistic figures in the late 1970s showed the convergence of the question of cultural patrimony and environmentalism in Soviet discourse.

The history of the Aswan Dam and the Nubian monuments campaign illustrates the bind between industrial modernity and cultural heritage, both being subject to Cold War international negotiations and constitutions of different communities while also being foundational for national(ist) ideologies of postcolonial states. Dialectically constructed as “modernity” and “tradition,” both depended on the new class of technocratic experts, but in the process, both produced new forms of belonging and commons, which do not fully coincide either with the logics of nationalism or with Cold War binaries. Initiated by our discussion of the UNESCO Nubian project, the next chapter will investigate the ways this same dialectic plays out in the cinematic constructions of national heritage in socialist contexts.

Cultural Heritage in World Socialist Cinema

A POLITICS OF THE PAST

In the opening creative discussion at Tashkent in 1968, Boris (Bension) Kimiagarov, one of the key figures of Soviet Tajik cinema, began his comments with a verse from Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi that spoke to the importance of friendship and peace. Qasmi was well known to most South Asian participants of the festival. A celebrated Urdu poet, he was also recognized as an important influence on Indian film lyricists, thus contributing to the great literary tradition of Indian film song-and-dance music—making it a particularly appropriate reference at a festival dominated by Indian popular cinema.¹ Qasmi was also a member of the Progressive Writers Association of Pakistan and a believer in the compatibility of Islam and communism, both of which he saw in local Punjab culture and traditions that he so famously captured in his poetry.² Kimiagarov's reference to Qasmi was thus a strategic choice, intended to show several aspects of shared cultural knowledge. Indeed, Urdu socialist poetry had been translated and circulated widely in the Soviet Union as part of its advancement of the progressive Afro-Asian literary program.³ Moreover, Urdu—understood as a designated pan-Indian “Muslim” language—was taught both in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in recognition of a shared Indo-Persian civilizational past, as well as Soviet Central Asia's self-designated role as a model of progressive cultural Islam.⁴

In fact, Kimiagarov in his speech made a mistake—referring to Qasmi as “an Indian poet.”⁵ Given the history of Partition, Pakistan's official pro-US stance, and its tensions with India, this misidentification was particularly loaded and problematic but also very telling, unintentionally revealing the inherent fissures within such nomenclatures. Of the three Urdu progressive poets who were widely translated and read in the Soviet Union, Qasmi and Faiz Ahmad Faiz were Pakistani, while Kaifi Azmi was Indian. All three of them originally came out of (albeit

different sections) the All India Progressive Writers Association (AIPWA), which predated India's independence and partition.⁶ The AIPWA endowed Urdu literary culture with its anti-imperialist spirit and its support of socialism, which served as an opposition to the anticommunist, anti-Soviet establishment in Pakistan well into the 1960s and 1970s.⁷ Progressive Urdu poets on both sides of partition "sought to affirm the one-ness of the old Urdu literary community that spanned the borders and its shared Indo-Islamic heritage."⁸ Both sides had ties with film culture; thus, Azmi's writing for the screen also brought Urdu literary heritage into the Bombay film industry.

Kimiagarov's mix-up, more than a mere cultural blunder, thus unwittingly betrays the truth of historical contingency of national labels, which comes out forcefully against the background of other configurations of shared cultural heritage. As such, it unintentionally draws attention to the possible divergences between political alliances and religious, cultural, and linguistic affinities as manifested at the Tashkent festival (and elsewhere). The former were fully tied to the nation-state structures, while the latter could not be contained by such (recently established) national boundaries.

Such intertwined and contradictory identities would be familiar to Kimiagarov, who was born into a family of Bukharan Jews in Samarkand (modern Uzbekistan), becoming one of the founders of the Tajik film industry in the 1940s. An ardent socialist internationalist who participated in the Afro-Asian circuit already in the 1950s, he won the top prize at the Afro-Asian Film Festival in Cairo in 1960 for *The Fate of a Poet* (*Sud'ba poeta*, 1959), a biopic of Rudaki, a foundational figure in the history of classical Persian literature and Tajik national culture. The Soviet Central Asian republics' own status as nations (with their specific cultural and linguistic contours and geographical borders) were only a few decades older than India and Pakistan's statehoods and had been devised through a similarly traumatic process of political ruptures, negotiations, and impositions.⁹ Soviet cultural and political spokespersons in the 1950s were quick to use the history of Partition as a contrast to the Soviet multinational approach to both statehood and identity. Thus, in his reflections on the trauma of South Asian leftist poets' experience of Partition, in 1950 the prominent Tajik poet and diplomat Mirzo Tursunzoda explicitly opposed it to the harmonious state of affairs between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as Soviet republics.¹⁰

But despite such pronouncements, the profound violence inherent in such complicated histories of nationhood, more often causing the experience of non-belonging rather than unity, would likely resonate with Kimiagarov's own experience (as well as many others'): he was able to enter the prestigious Moscow film institute (VGIK) as part of the quota program for advancing ethnic minorities in the 1930s, weathering the Soviet "anticosmopolitanism" (i.e., anti-Semitic) campaign of the 1940s and 1950s within the nascent Tajik film industry, and becoming one of the foundational figures in the cinematic (re)construction of Tajik national

heritage—a status, however, that was often subtly questioned because of his Jewish origins.

Kimiagarov's cinematic adaptation of Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (*The Book of Kings*), the most important literary epic of Persian civilization, brings out the complexities of the notion of a national cultural heritage within a socialist and postcolonial context. Together with a similar project, an Uzbek cinematic biopic of the polymath of the Islamic Golden Age and Ferdowsi's contemporary Abu Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Biruni (also screened at Tashkent), these films form the core of this chapter. I see them as part of a larger body of cinematic works whose explicit goal was to explore and (re)constitute the cultural—in particular, literary—heritage of the socialist and postcolonial world, what I refer to collectively as *world socialist cinema of cultural heritage*.

HERITAGE CINEMA

Eric Hobsbawm famously proposed the notion of “invented tradition,” whose function is to “establish continuity with a suitable historical past.”¹¹ The reconstruction of such a “suitable historical past” and its cultural objects is precisely what is at the core of all heritage cinema. The task of creating a sense of a connection with the fractured past and culture that had been radically transformed, appropriated, and at times eradicated by colonialism was a particularly urgent part of the program of decolonization. At the same time, while finding precedent for nationalism's contemporaneity through (re)creations of a cultural past remains fundamental in these cinematic narratives, this process is complicated by the persistence of both future and past imaginaries and historical realities that exceed the national(ist) vision. This tension emerges particularly clearly within the socialist context of heritage cinema and its international sites of circulation.

Taking precedence over affirmations of nationalist imaginaries, as is most common for heritage cinema, its socialist iteration was marked instead by an emphasis on class and anticolonial struggle as constitutive of history (at times including the supposed primitive communism of premodern social organization). Its geographic contours somewhat overlapped—but also often conflicted with—the program of universal cultural heritage and civilization embodied by UNESCO. The 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, which officially shifted the notion of cultural heritage from the national to the world framework, coincided with the second edition of the Tashkent festival, and UNESCO films began to be included in the festival selection.¹² The Soviet articulation of world cultural heritage, which predates UNESCO's existence, goes back to Anatolii Lunacharskii's publishing and educational campaigns of the 1920s, which, combined with earlier twentieth-century Jadid/late Ottoman conceptions of universal culture, shaped the Central Asian sphere.¹³ By the 1950s, given the Soviet Union's own geography and geopolitical ambitions, its construction further expanded from

Western (European, white) culture to Asian (and, to a lesser extent, also African) forms.¹⁴ The specific genres and modes of socialist cinema of cultural heritage ranged from historical epics to biopics of famous historical figures and adaptations of literary classics to ethnographic and other documentaries highlighting the presence and vitality of various forms of traditional cultural production. Each cinematic form was governed by its own set of generic formal and ideological rules, but when seen together, heritage films constitute another prominent strand in the socialist and postcolonial filmmaking showcased at Tashkent, as well as other venues.¹⁵

It shouldn't be surprising that the idea of heritage should have such broad resonances and polyvalent receptions, given the importance of the notion of heritage in the mass mobilizations of the twentieth century, allowing for the creation and management of collective identities of nation-states and international organizations alike. Nor, of course, am I describing a phenomenon exclusive to the socialist or postcolonial world: in the US, as Kathleen McCarthy demonstrates, cultural development similarly framed foreign-aid programs. It was important that "development was tailored to local capacities and conditions and of controlling some of the fallout from modernization."¹⁶ UNESCO was particularly well suited to promote projects centered on cultural heritage in the developing world as part of cultural diplomacy, not least as a way to deal with internal conflicts caused by modernization in the West. My analysis of world socialist heritage cinema foregrounds its dialectical relationship with the cinema of socialist industrial modernity, endowing the latter with a "usable past," ultimately serving the same goal of advancing the ideology of socialist development. At the same time, as we will see throughout, it will prove inseparable from the socialist ethos of armed struggle (which forms the last chapter of this book).

Cinema offered its own version of cultural heritage, in part to substitute for the loss of the oral networks that communicated intangible traditional knowledge and practices that were ruptured by industrialization and modernization. These were the very processes of which cinema, paradoxically, was both a product and a powerful agent. As such, it promised not only traditional culture's preservation through film recordings but also its relegitimation for increasingly larger—and potentially international—publics. The legitimation process fed back into cinema itself, making it a prime mode of cultural production, even as at the time cinema was not itself considered part of "cultural heritage" or worthy of the same attention and status as other artistic forms, whether tangible or intangible. In the world socialist context, direct association with classical literature—the ultimate heritage media—gave film additional symbolic value and prestige, which underlay even such "inferior" forms as popular genre films or institutional documentaries. Since the institutional power of an international festival itself was a form of official validation, as well as of cultural diplomacy, it is not surprising that heritage films formed a privileged genre at Tashkent.

From the perspective of our contemporary film culture, the prominence of epics and period dramas—and other such instantiations of heritage cinema—at an international festival, let alone a socialist one, may appear surprising. In film scholarship, such films have been conventionally associated with culturally conservative nationalist agendas, frequently tied to colonialist and imperialist ideologies, especially in their epic iterations (think of David Lean's cinematic oeuvre as a paradigm here). Relegated to middlebrow or genre cinemas and, in the case of period dramas, presumed to be popular primarily with women and queer audiences (unless they are directed by famous international auteurs), “heritage films” are unlikely to make it to “serious” film festivals (the exception to this is, perhaps, the interest in Return to Source films from sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s, which were part of the film festivals’ turn toward “global art cinema”).¹⁷ As we will see, world socialist heritage cinema follows quite a different trajectory, both in terms of its ideologies and in its reception and circulation histories. Kimiagarov's Rustam Trilogy (*The Legend of Rustam / Skazanie o Rustame*, 1971; *Rustam and Sukhrab*, 1973; and *The Legend of Siavash / Skazanie o Siiavushe*, 1976) and Shukhrat Abbasov's *Abu Raikhan Beruni* (1973), the cinematic texts on which this chapter focuses, all follow the line of the socialist internationalist interpretation of cultural heritage; moreover, they do so in a way that, as we will see, resonates far beyond their Soviet production context, most concretely as part of the international revival of Ferdowsi and al-Biruni in the 1960s and 1970s across Asia. This revival was supported in part by the UNESCO cultural program, which specifically sought to integrate the cultural and scientific history of Asia into the broader framework of world heritage. For the pan-Islamic cultural community both Ferdowsi and al-Biruni could be deployed to show the contributions of Muslim intellectuals to science and literature, becoming indispensable shared cultural references. At the same time, their legacy was claimed within the ongoing process of postcolonial nation building. And finally, within the explicitly political Afro-Asian framework, both Ferdowsi and al-Biruni in their cinematic manifestations figured as progressive historical antecedents to a secular yet religiously inclusive, ethnically and linguistically diverse, and rationalist and humanist vision, ultimately embodying an ethos of peace—a vision, as we will see, that at times transcended the officially sanctioned definition of internationalism, pointing to other, alternative imaginary formations.

HERITAGE CINEMA AT TASHKENT

Most of the heritage films screened at the Tashkent festival were highly celebratory of the notion of cultural heritage. Only a few offered a direct Marxist and postcolonial critique. Perhaps most notable among these was Souheil Ben Barka's Moroccan entry, *A Thousand and One Hands* (*Alf Yad wa Yad*, 1973), which exposed the exploitation of women and children's labor and the commodification of national culture in Marrakesh's carpet industry. Philippe Mory's Gabonese film

The Tam-tams Are Silent (*Les tam-tams se sont tus*, 1972) also offered up a sharp denunciation of the Westernization and commodification of African traditions (although the film was also complicated by its rather ambivalent gender politics). Soviet critics praised both films for demonstrating neocolonialism's devastating impact on national cultures, implicitly juxtaposing the failures of postcolonial states with the successes of socialist state policies.

(Auto)ethnographic cinematic celebrations of various forms of local cultural traditions were otherwise prominent in most postcolonial contexts: Sudan, Lebanon, Zambia, Nepal, and Iran presented films showcasing their respective traditional dance cultures. Architectural landmarks were central in Iran's documentary selection, as well as in Moroccan and Tunisian entries. Egypt, Laos, Lebanon, and Mali all screened documentaries focused on local decorative arts and crafts. Various African documentaries highlighted local musical traditions.

As most of these films were state-produced, they advanced the vision of the postcolonial nation-state as a guarantor of cultural heritage. But there was perhaps no organization that did this as effectively as India's Films Division (FD), whose ethnographic documentaries were screened frequently at Tashkent throughout the 1970s. Integral to the FD's vision of modern development was the study, preservation, and celebration of various aspects of traditional Indian culture in its different regional forms, confirming simultaneously the diversity and unity of the Indian nation-state.¹⁸ These films set out to show a national audience how the "continuous and unbroken [Indian] civilization" symbolically brought together various ethnic and religious groups (papering over the unspoken rupture of Partition).¹⁹ Yet they also proved to be a successful export, showcasing India's cultural heritage and its importance to the world.

While less visible at Tashkent, on the other side of Partition, Pakistan, during the rule of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in particular, also foregrounded such objects of heritage as classical Hindustani music, (Persian) manuscript painting, and the various local folkloric Indigenous cultural expressions, which found their place in cinema. Further demonstrating the shared internationalist reach of these ideas, Pakistan's cultural sector reforms were spearheaded by none other than Faiz Ahmad Faiz, the famous communist internationalist poet and leading figure in the Afro-Asian Writers' Association, who became active in Pakistan's cultural policies in the late 1960s.²⁰ Scandalizing Pakistan's conservatives, these projects, however apolitical they may appear, were explicitly associated with the Left, especially once Bhutto's populist government came to power. With the establishment of the state film organization, and with even greater ideological urgency placed on cultural institutions after the loss of Bangladesh, Pakistan's efforts of showcasing its "unbroken" cultural heritage paralleled India's.²¹ At the same time, as Faiz's involvement in these cultural projects indicates, for the Left the stakes in (re)articulating a broader vision of cultural heritage went beyond nationalism: they served as part of an implicit internal cultural polemic that framed Pakistani culture through collectivities other

than either the nation-state or Islamic universalism. Indeed, Pakistan's envoys to Tashkent in the 1970s frequently articulated cultural affinities alongside political solidarities (such as their repeated affirmation of support for Palestine during the creative discussions) to substantiate their membership in the cinematic community the festival represented. Such repositioning of cultural heritage was in fact part of their ongoing attempts to seize control of national(ist) projections away from the Pakistan state's monopolistic claims on its political and cultural identity.²² Tradition, in other words, was clearly framed as a political issue, one linked directly to issues of postcolonial development and international solidarity.

UNESCO-produced documentary films that began to be screened at the festival in the 1970s demonstrated a similar dual focus on traditional culture and development beyond national borders. But within nonfiction, the modality of films that perhaps most effectively traced modern and international dimensions within traditional culture were documentaries on cultural festivals of the era; these films were often part of the Tashkent festival selections. Most prominent among them were the pan-African cultural festivals, which became the subject of documentaries and newsreels from all over the world. As ideologically varied as Dakar's 1966 First World Festival of Negro Arts, the 1969 First Pan-African Cultural Festival (PANAF) in Algiers, and the Second World Festival of Black Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in Lagos in 1977, these international events generated a considerable amount of media attention. Simultaneously celebrating specific national participations, showcasing nonnational regional traditions, and making implicit arguments for pan-African cultural unity, these films inevitably also foregrounded the massive modern infrastructure (from spectacular architectural landmarks, built specifically for the occasion, to audiovisual technologies and media capabilities, to air travel arrangements and crowd control) enabling such events.²³ Ethnographic documentaries likewise thematically and formally foreground change even while emphasizing supposed cultural continuity. In the context of international institutions such as UNESCO, moreover, the emphasis on cultural heritage and its crucial contributions to universal world culture paved a way for the "underdeveloped world" to resist the prescribed temporality of its "backwardness"—not merely to follow but to lead in the global world order.

If orality, music, and dance were often constructed as universal shared markers of Blackness, the Soviet Union was primarily associated with literary culture. Since at least the 1930s, literary adaptations, biopics, and historical epics formed a crucial part of the Soviet film repertoire, in line with socialist realism's literary origins and insistence on the primacy of the film script. The official privileging of these genres was particularly visible on the level of international coproductions with Asia and Latin America from the 1950s through the early 1980s.²⁴ It should not be surprising that this extended to international exhibition practices and import-export objectives, making such films particularly prominent at Tashkent.²⁵ And while Africa in some ways constituted an exception to this, many Asian, Middle Eastern, and

Latin American literary cultures were, indeed, deeply intertwined with cinematic ones on both the formal and institutional levels.²⁶ In the course of the twentieth century, famous writers often produced both screenplays for films and film criticism, and many of them played key roles in emerging film educational institutions. From shared epic and mythological motifs (particularly visible through Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literary antiquity) to traditional and contemporary poetry (which often entered films through song lyrics) to modernist twentieth-century literatures (from Tagore to Mahfouz to Latin America's magical realist Boom), literary articulations of world heritage played a key role in the formation of modern national and international (cosmopolitan, internationalist, or universal) cultures, not least through their cinematic mediations.²⁷ Such connections to literature further legitimized the status of cinema in tandem with participating in the modernizing project of creating mass literacy.

Soviet republics consistently represented the largest number of adaptations of literary classics and biopics of cultural figures, which constituted a big part of the selections from Central Asia and Transcaucasian republics at each edition of the festival. Nor was the Soviet selection an exception: from Iran's *Dash Akol* (Masud Kimiai, 1971), based on Sadeqh Hedayat's writings, to Tagore's Indian film adaptations, such as *Wife's Letter* (*Strir Patra*, Purnendu Patri, 1972), to Turkey's cinematic version of Chengiz Aitmatov's short story "The Girl with Red Scarf" (*Selvi Boylum, Al Yazmalım*, Atıf Yılmaz, 1977), to Brazilian Leon Hirszman's minimalist and experimental *São Bernardo* (1972), based on Graciliano Ramos's novel, and Mexican Roberto Gavaldon's psychedelic *The Mushroom Man* (*El hombre de los hongos*, 1976), based on a novella by Sergio Galindo (both films dealing with the psychic and physical violence of colonial-era plantation cultures), to Ousmane Sembene's film versions of his writings—literary adaptations from all over the world were well represented at Tashkent.²⁸

The subgenre of historical epics and romances frequently formed an important part of such cinematic articulations of the intersection between cultural heritage and anticolonial struggle, well represented by Pakistan's Bengali-language historical biopic *Nawab Sirajuddaula* (K. A. Rahman, 1967), which was screened at the first edition of the Tashkent festival. For countries sharing physical borders and artistic heritage with the eastern and southern republics of the Soviet Union, their mutual literary heritage was an obvious choice; thus, Iran brought to the 1974 edition of the festival *Leyli and Majnun* (*Leyli va Majnun*, Siamak Yasemi, 1970), based on a classic tale well distributed in the Persian, Indian, Turkic, and Azeri spheres, which made it very familiar to many festival participants (but didn't prevent it from being pronounced a resounding disappointment).²⁹ But the failure of *Leyli and Majnun* did not slow the festival's exhibition of other historical epics and romances. Such films could successfully combine the spectacular pleasures of a period piece, the prestige of its literary origins, and anti-imperialist political orientation in a way that resonated across the national divides and different audiences. Highly reliant on an extensive technological cinematic apparatus in their construction of

spectacle (notoriously, epics required complicated and expensive locations and props) in order to successfully convey the impression of a “return to origins,” they almost inevitably serve as a showcase for modernity and technological progress.

In their broadest denomination, many of these “heritage” films could be collectively referred to as cinematic *epics*, albeit not in the precise literary definition of the term. In some cases, *epic* refers to the film’s historical literary origins. In others, it merely designates a grandiose and (melo)dramatic cinematic aesthetic associated with, on the one hand, high budget, large-scale studio productions (“prestige pictures”) and, on the other, adventure and/or romance (“tit and sand” movies in the old Hollywood parlance). Thus, broadly understood, epic cinema proved to be a particularly effective way of integrating cultural heritage within the postcolonial and even revolutionary orientation, constituting a key element of the decidedly modernizing ethos, which governed the global socialist imaginary of a festival like Tashkent.

The Soviet scholar of Oriental literature specializing in epic poetry, Iosif Braginskii, reflecting on the 1973 conference of Afro-Asian literature, referred to it (in a variant of the socialist-realist slogan) as “socialist in its content . . . , diverse in its national forms, and internationalist in its spirit and character, representing an organic fusion of spiritual values created by all the peoples of the world.”³⁰ Appropriately, Braginskii’s maxim helps us see how, as a form, the historical literary epic was particularly suitable for socialist international aspirations and how—notwithstanding the ongoing slippage of its epic, dramatic, and melodramatic aspects as mutually constitutive of its cinematic adaptation—this form proved to be particularly successful at a venue like the Tashkent festival.

EPICS AND SOCIALIST WORLD HERITAGE CINEMA

Within film scholarship and criticism, cinematic epics tend to be associated with Hollywood or dominant European cinemas in the West. As such, they are assumed to be major vehicles of ideologies of empire in both style and content, an anathema to progressive (realist) or radical cinemas: “Epic spectacle has been considered an emblem of political bad faith and cultural vulgarity, a vertiginous assault on the senses that produces a kind of adrenalized stasis in the narrative that compels either laughter or consent.”³¹ Recently, scholars have focused on contemporary iterations of the epic genre as part of world cinema, a development that is symptomatic of the globalization of film markets. Dina Iordanova offers a rare discussion of the alternative genealogy of this contemporary dynamic by referring to epic films from the Global South and former Soviet Union, but, as she notes, this corpus is “not likely to be listed in the annals of the epic genre” owing to the Western dominance of the genre in film histories.³²

Beyond genre studies, however, film historians working outside Western contexts have long been aware of the prevalence and importance of the epic for the development of cinematic cultures worldwide. As Iftikhar Dadi argues, in South Asian cinema, literary and theatrical forms tied to epics—“oral legends such as

dastans, poetic forms such as the lyric ghazal and the longer masnavi, and imaginative ‘historical’ themes in Parsi theatre”—continued well into the 1960s to be included in the imaginative interpretations of Mughal, Rajput, and Maratha historical narratives.³³ Bhaskar Sarkar offers further reflection on how acknowledging the centrality of these genres should compel us to rethink the relationship of cinema and modernity more broadly. According to him, in much of the world, epics “continue to purvey a kind of cognitive framework that structures the understanding of historical experience; that is to say, experience becomes a contextual iteration of the epic”—a temporal construction that illustrates “the possibility that the social formation of which this cinema is a constitutive part will never fit readily into Western teleological models of history or modernization.”³⁴ The strong presence of the epic genre at Tashkent both complicates and ultimately supports Sarkar’s conclusion. These films formed an active part of cultural and political negotiations between “modernity” and “tradition,” or “progressive” and “reactionary” politics, in a transnational “non-Western” context; even if many of them engaged with Marxist conceptions of history, they inevitably exceeded its linearity. By drawing on diverse historical trajectories that traverse the modern geopolitical boundaries of nation-states, these epics indeed resist easy identification between cinema and the nation, laying bare “the multiple textures and fissured temporalities of postcolonial modernities, which trouble historicist assumptions about the gradual subsumption of all local difference by a teleological and unitary history.”³⁵ Just as nationalist discourse sought precedent in these stories, their identities were also complicated by them. Despite being produced under the regime of secular modernization, technorationalist development and hegemonizing nation-building, shared imaginaries of the epic past at times allowed the possibility for alternative potential future collectivities based on such shared affinities and identifications.

These films functioned to mediate among the different notions of past and future. The heroic form of the epic offered an aesthetic in which the past and ongoing legacies of colonialism could be symbolically overcome while helping create an imaginary of world culture that challenged its Eurocentric assumptions. In the Soviet Union, among other socialist countries, they provided audiences with narratives of historical continuity of national cultures while also inevitably conjuring different imaginary communities that endured far beyond the confines of a nation.

CENTRAL ASIAN EPICS AND NATIONAL HERITAGE

The predominance of Central Asian epics at the Tashkent festival correlates to the strong presence of screen adaptations (along with historical-revolutionary “Easterns”) in the Central Asian cinemas of the 1970s more broadly.³⁶ While their high visibility at the Tashkent festival reflected this general trend and served their own local and national purposes, these developments were also crucial for Soviet cultural diplomacy.

While “the Soviet East” constituted a crucial site for conducting cultural diplomacy with “developing countries,” by the late 1960s, presenting Central Asian republics as models for the development of the “noncapitalist” countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America became increasingly less plausible. As they were fully integrated into the Soviet socialist economic model, the pattern of the centrally planned economies of the Central Asia republics were thus virtually impossible for other countries to reproduce (this was demonstrated, for instance, in the Soviet experience in the building of Aswan Dam in Egypt, as we saw in chapter 6). Moreover, by the late 1960s the industrial policies of the republics were starting to show systematic inefficiencies, to the point that they could hardly be presented as desirable models to follow.³⁷

What remained compelling, however, were the Soviet cultural modernization programs. Showing itself as a modernizing state, fully committed to the preservation of its cultural heritage, was therefore crucial to the Soviet Union’s ability to pose as a model for Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In terms of practices, in addition to supporting progressive cultural movements and offering education and training, this included translations, publications, festivals, exhibitions, and other public cultural work dedicated to the history and culture of “the East” (as well as Africa and Latin America). It also involved developing close relationships with institutions that were seen as primary agents for cultural preservation, such as UNESCO, and seeking to play a leadership role in promoting progressive cultural agendas within them; one such agenda was defined specifically as advancing the role of non-Western cultural production within the conception of world history.³⁸ For the Central Asian republics, which identified themselves as “part of a cultural sphere that emerged from a shared Persian and even pre-Islamic heritage,” there were deep affinities to be exploited, particularly in relation to South Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran.³⁹ As Kimiagarov’s reference to Qasmi demonstrates, film events could also be effectively integrated within this larger project.

Drawing exclusively on historical accounts that privilege the diplomatic and ideological priorities of the Soviet state, however, risks misrepresenting these developments as originating exclusively from “the top” and serving primarily state national interests. This has been the traditional approach in scholarship on Central Asian historical epics and biopics—seen, at worst, as a total imposition of Soviet cultural policies and a negation of the emerging school of poetic realism and, at best, as an escape and a way to disavow the present.⁴⁰ Only occasionally are these films acknowledged as important to the growing national self-consciousness of the republics and contributing to the development of their own cultural identities, independent of the Russo-Soviet “center,” “stimulating the evaluation of the nation’s spiritual roots.”⁴¹ Yet they are ultimately dismissed as being “in essence, Soviet.”⁴²

True, the epic genre fits well in the Soviet cinematic landscape of late socialism, where, as Alexander Prokhorov and Elena Prokhorova demonstrate, such state-mandated “prestige productions” played an important ideological role, and

a financial one as well, given the box-office success of entertainment-driven genre filmmaking.⁴³ While Sergei Bondarchuk's *War and Peace* (*Voina i mir*, 1965–67) was meant to conquer European and American screens as much as it was to boost nationalist sentiment, its Central Asian counterparts were being marketed to an explicitly Asian audience for international circulation, while also actively participating in cultural nation-building within the republics in the framework of the Soviet Union's multination state.⁴⁴ As early as 1958, a Sovexportfilm official based in Iran lobbied for the production of films explicitly geared toward both Soviet and international "Eastern" audiences, citing the *Shahnameh* as one of the "many subjects at our disposal."⁴⁵ Nor were such productions in any way contrary to the traditional socialist-realist formula (attributed to Stalin) that Soviet art should be "socialist in content, national in form." With their heavy reliance on theatricality and the written word, they could be in some ways reminiscent of older cinematic forms, both Soviet and pan-Asian, while in others their techniques may come across as considerably more experimental. In other words, "national in form" could—and did—mean a lot of different things, while still remaining not only acceptable but desirable to Soviet film authorities.

But the desirability of these projects should not mislead us into thinking that the cinema epics either originated or were administered exclusively from the center. In fact, despite the oft-repeated rhetoric in support of national cultures, Moscow authorities often resisted republics' attempts to produce cinema, which explicitly engaged with their heritage. From the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, the planning committee of the central Soviet film organization demanded more films on contemporary topics, with only a handful of "prestige" projects focusing on historical or literary adaptations, entrusted to the most established directors with impeccable communist cred, usually the heads of their respective republics' filmmakers unions. This makes the overall shift toward historical epics in central Asian cinema all the more exceptional to Goskino's general policy of discouraging this genre, which was costly to produce and potentially rife with ideological problems.⁴⁶ Thus, *Makhtumkuli* was the only "historical" film out of 123 films approved as part of Goskino's "thematic plan" for 1967.⁴⁷ By 1972, the new decree on the development of Soviet cinema placed even greater emphasis on films addressing "contemporary themes" against what the document referred to as "the 1960s infatuation with historical narratives."⁴⁸

Yet, against Goskino's demands, studios in Central Asia and Transcaucuses repeatedly requested changes in their thematic plans that would allow film treatments for "the study and engagement with the national cultural heritage."⁴⁹ Such arguments pressed a sensitive strategic and politic point, given the continuous emphasis on the role of these republics in international exchanges, which depended on the projection of an image of cultural autonomy and a commitment to the preservation of cultural heritage. So, despite the thematic plan for the USSR at large, Central Asian and Transcaucasian studios kept producing more

literary adaptations and historical epics and biopics. The potential political multivalence of such heritage projects (to say nothing of their costs) did not escape the attention of Soviet bureaucrats, who often criticized studios for these indulgences.⁵⁰

Most of the heritage films screened at Tashkent, were, without a doubt, “prestige” productions, created with high production values, helmed by ideologically reliable older directors, with an international market in mind. In fact, the films in Kimiagarov’s *Shahnameh* trilogy were by far the most expensive productions in the history of the Tajik Film Studio, made at a time when it was undergoing serious financial cuts. Abbasov’s al-Biruni biopic came out of the considerably more financially stable Uzbek studio and was heralded as the “most important historical biopic of its time,” a model for other republican studios to follow, even before filming had been finished.⁵¹ Both were made by established directors who had played key roles in the development of their respective studios and occupied important positions at their republics’ filmmakers’ unions. The importance of these projects internationally was twofold. First, as these films dealt with canonical figures and texts, claiming the works as part of the Soviet Central Asian literary legacy inserted the Soviet Union into the recognizable framework of world cultural heritage. Second, they demonstrated that the affinities traversing world culture could comfortably fit within the framework of Soviet internationalism.

Moreover, in terms of its local and national significance, because historically it was precisely Uzbek and Tajik national identities whose histories were particularly contested, the issue of a shared cultural heritage was much-debated in Soviet culture and scholarship.⁵² In the 1920s, when the group labels *Uzbek* and *Tajik* were applied, these categories did not correspond to any self-identifying markers of the people living in those areas. Above any ethnic or linguistic considerations or broader geographic areas, the people identified with their specific locales and religion.⁵³ Soviet policy makers thus had to find new categories of belonging for dividing these areas into national republics, which was crucial for Soviet state formation and ideology. As recent scholarship demonstrates, they engaged with some existing categories from those initially created by Islamic modernizers, the Jadids (whose identitarian nationalism in some ways foreshadowed the ideological foundations of republics), institutionalizing this emergent understanding of distinct ethnicities and nationalities in forging a (multination) state.⁵⁴ Their mobilization required a massive apparatus and took decades to fully realize; thus, cultural institutions—from scholarly and educational programs to museums, operas, theaters, and, crucially, cinema—all played a key role in this ongoing project.⁵⁵ From the 1930s, and into the post-Stalinist era, official cultural and scholarly practices crystallized and naturalized the categorization of the Central Asian republics’ distinctive national ethnic characters and histories; a crucial part of this work was staking claim to famous figures of the shared past.⁵⁶ Cinema, with its particular capacity for the recreation of cultural heritage, actively participated in this process.

The degree to which the performance of “national character” through Kimiagarov and Abbasov’s films is consistent with this process is, indeed, remarkable. Thus, Haugen describes how the difference between Kazak/Kyrgyz and Uzbek cultures was articulated along nomad/settled lines, with its varied interpretations: the Uzbek occupied the settled side, staking claims to modernization and science as a result of this development trajectory, while the other (“nomad” Kazak/Kyrgyz) side presented it as inherently “conservative and religious.”⁵⁷ Tajiks, in the meantime, were largely recognized on the basis of the linguistic lineage as “carriers of an ancient Iranian culture.”⁵⁸ As we will see, these early Soviet conceptions and polemics are reflected perfectly in the Rustam Trilogy and the al-Biruni biopic: the former adapting the classic literary text of Persian civilization as a “Tajik national epos,” the latter locating the polymath scientist and scholar of the Islamic Golden Age, presented as a challenger of Islamic dogma, in modern-day Uzbekistan.

CENTRAL ASIAN HERITAGE AND INTERNATIONALISM

By the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, these national histories were further embedded in the various regional and international(ist) articulations of world culture from Afro-Asian solidarity to UNESCO. One of the key protagonists here is Bobodzhan Gafurov, whose work and institutional activities reflect both nationalist and internationalist trends. Gafurov was one of the earliest Soviet historians of Tajikistan and first secretary of the Communist Party of the Tajik Republic in the 1940s and 1950s. He stepped down from his party post in 1956 to assume the directorship of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow, the primary institution for Soviet scholarship on Asia and Africa.⁵⁹

Throughout his career, Gafurov proposed a view of the history of Tajikistan that was profoundly nationalistic, opposing the consensus that the Tajiks were culturally Persian by “asserting that the Tajiks were at least as ancient a culture as the Persians and had been the great disseminators of Persian culture.” Gafurov thus challenged the status of Iran as “the sole heir to [Persian] antiquity,” arguing that cultural and historical primacy should be accorded to the regions that would subsequently become Soviet territories.⁶⁰ He advanced the notion of the autochthony of the ancient Tajiks, to the point that the publication of his last book, *The Tajiks: Early, Ancient, and Medieval History*, “sparked outrage in Uzbekistan, where the Academy of Sciences of Tashkent officially complained to the Central Committee of the CPSU that individuals regarded as Uzbek, such as al-Khorezmi, al-Farabi, and al-Biruni, should not appear in a book about the Tajiks.”⁶¹ This dispute helps us see Kimiagarov’s 1970s appropriation of Ferdowsi’s epic as a claim to put Tajik national heritage in continuity with Persian culture and Abbasov’s Uzbek biopic of al-Biruni as its Uzbek nationalist counterweight.

But these nationalist polemics are cast in a different light when placed within the international context of Afro-Asian movement. In fact, Gafurov, in his position as the director of Oriental Studies, was also intent on investing Soviet Orientology

with much more politically explicit overtones, encouraging work on the national liberation struggles of “the people of the East,” and actively supporting the agenda of Afro-Asian solidarity organization.⁶² In the late 1950s, he led the initiative to reorganize Orientalist studies in the Soviet Union “as a complex research institution with an international focus aimed to support research institutions in decolonizing countries with knowledge and expertise.”⁶³ His goal was to redirect the Institute of Oriental Studies’ agenda toward more contemporary scholarship, and while he also did a lot to restore the more traditional research on the cultural and religious heritage of the region, he did so through shifting away from its earlier Russophone philological models toward work done by the emerging intellectual cadre within the Central Asian republics and framing it in decidedly contemporary geopolitical terms. The global geopolitical relevance of this approach is best exemplified through Gafurov’s relationship to UNESCO.⁶⁴

As the president of the Soviet East-West Committee (part of the Soviet Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO), Gafurov cultivated relationships with international organizations, whose representatives participated in many public congresses organized by the Soviet Afro-Asianists; for instance, UNESCO was the major sponsor of the 1958 Conference for African and Asian Writers in Tashkent, the prototype for the festivals of the Afro-Asian cinematic circuit of the late 1950s and early 1960s and, eventually, Tashkent.⁶⁵ His collaborations with UNESCO often focused on the differences between Soviet internationalism, with its anti-colonial militance, and Western liberal conceptions of world culture—the latter advocated by former colonial powers as a neutral depository of universal values finding their highest expression in the great works of (safely long gone) antiquity. Gafurov actively polemicized with UNESCO against this position; thus, “in a letter to Rudolf Salat, Director of the Department for Cultural Cooperation [of UNESCO], he argued, it ‘would hardly be right or expedient to concern ourselves solely with the past, leaving all the cultural values that are created in the present and in different countries out of consideration.’”⁶⁶ Underscoring this commitment, he took up the position of main editor of the journal *Asia and Africa Today*.

Given the dominance of historical and philological studies in Soviet scholarship, including Gafurov’s own, his position allowed for mediation between the explicitly political agenda of the Afro-Asian association and its cultural-historical orientation, albeit invested with a clear political anticolonialist stance. As Hanna Jansen notes, even Gafurov’s first book, which came out in 1944, “emphasizes cultural entanglement and unity, highlighting moments of cultural and intellectual synthesis brought on by encounters between wandering Sufis, Muslim court poets, and tradesmen.”⁶⁷ His subsequent *History of the Tajik People* (1949), the first official Soviet history of the Tajik Republic, she claims, “reads like an illustration of Nehru’s suggestion that the liberation of Afro-Asian cultural and intellectual heritage would serve to reorient Western narratives of civilization and history. As Gafurov asserted, the aim of *The History of the Tajik People* was to adjust serious shortcomings in Western knowledge of the East: showing that Central Asian

peoples all had made an 'original influence on the general treasury of human culture,' and the research of their historical trajectories should be supplemented with "the general moments in their histories, illuminating what united them."⁶⁸

Jansen argues that the emphasis on a shared literary heritage that binds together a transnational, anticolonialist consciousness was an expression of the lived experience of figures like Gafurov and Satym Ulug-Zade (a Tajik scholar-philologist, specialist on Rudaki, and the screenwriter for Kimiagarov's *Fate of a Poet*, as well as Iarmatov's Uzbek cinematic biopic of Avicenna). For Gafurov, this unity was closely linked to maintaining an Islamic identity, which formed a key part of their cultural upbringing. "In Gafurov's historical writings of the 1930s and 1940s, Islamic civilization was reimagined as a source of belonging and popular unity," providing additional affinities with many other Asian cultural figures who formed part of the Afro-Asian movement.⁶⁹ For non-Muslims like Kimiagarov, the association between a shared literary heritage and religion was more ambiguous, but such ambiguity could find its own embodiment in the ancient pre-Islamic Persian civilization, as we will see in our discussion of the Rustam Trilogy. Simultaneous affirmation of the cultural aspects of the Islamic civilization, while somewhat undermining its specifically religious legacy (in accordance with the official Soviet position), is also evident in the choice of al-Biruni as another emblematic figure of the Soviet heritage of cultural Islam.

While Afro-Asian solidarity provided a key heuristic for Central Asian intellectuals, this alternative socialist version of internationalism and development came to have a powerful impact on UNESCO, which was becoming increasingly shaped by both Soviet and, by the 1970s, Third-Worldist presence in the institution. In turn, Soviet scientists and cultural bureaucrats like Gafurov fully invested their cultural capital in the organization and its programs. It is also during the 1960s that cinema began to play an active role in projecting UNESCO's vision of global culture, with the organization sponsoring many film festivals, especially those focusing on Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as well as operationalizing its own film productions, some of which ended up at Tashkent, and promoting others. The Soviet biopic of al-Biruni, whose millennial celebration was taking place in 1972–73 around the world, with UNESCO sponsoring many of these events, was one such project.

AL-BIRUNI: MILLENNIAL CELEBRATION

Al-Biruni was a polymath—a scholar of physics, mathematics, astronomy, and natural sciences, along with history and linguistics—and sometimes considered the father of comparative anthropology and religion. Born in what is now north-western Uzbekistan, he spent his life under the patronage of various rulers in the region and wrote more than a hundred books on an encyclopedic range of topics. Along with Avicenna, he is considered one of the most important scholars of



FIGURE 7.1. Al-Biruni on the cover of the *UNESCO Courier*, June 1974. Photo reproduced by permission of UNESCO.

the Islamic Golden Age. Incorporated into the European Middle Ages' scholastic pantheon (under the name of Alberonius), unlike Avicenna he fell into obscurity, becoming a subject of serious scholarly work in the West only in the twentieth century. How he became the subject of Abbasov's film, and how such a film project would be green-lighted by the Soviet cinema bureaucracy, speaks to what his work came to symbolize in the search for a world cultural history that was not dominated and shaped by Europe—how he became a person of academic interest to Third World nations, the socialist bloc, and UNESCO, which fostered the study of al-Biruni in several locales at that time.

The June 1974 issue of the *UNESCO Courier* was dedicated entirely to al-Biruni (fig. 7.1), with an introductory article, "Al-Biruni—A Universal Genius Who Lived in Central Asia a Thousand Years Ago," written by none other than our familiar Tajik scholar Bobodzhan Gafurov. Gafurov's article was followed by several others exploring al-Biruni's contributions to world civilization—pieces written by French, Iranian, and Afghani scholars—and concluding with the "photo-report 'Al Biruni on the Screen,'" on the making of Abbasov's film. Its production stills in the journal were used not only to advertise the film but as visual accompaniment to the scholarly articles in the issue (fig. 7.2). Thus, an image from the film depicting al-Biruni and Avicenna appears in reference to the essay on the famous polemic between the two scholars. Other images in the film—of al-Biruni "talking to an Indian sage during the travels he undertook before writing his monumental 'India'" and



FIGURE 7.2. Coverage of Abbasov's film in the *UNESCO Courier*, June 1974. Photo reproduced by permission of UNESCO.

“discussing a reading from the quadrant he constructed for determining latitude by measuring the sun’s elevation”—are also used in reference to the other articles on these topics in the same issue, thus underscoring the film’s educational and even scholarly function within UNESCO’s conception of the international millennial celebration. The *UNESCO Courier* explicitly highlighted the significance of the film in that the screenplay was written by a scholar, translator, and author of al-Biruni’s Soviet biography.⁷⁰

Abbasov must have been pleased to get this kind of publicity for the film, as the *Courier* was published in fifteen languages and distributed all over the world. Nor was his the only al-Biruni biopic that year: Mohammad Reza Aslani—a famous Iranian poet, writer, painter, and filmmaker—released his own documentary, *Abu Rayhan* (1973).⁷¹ The following year, Iran, making a heavy play to capture al-Biruni, as it were, for the Persian side, came out with another film under the auspices of the Ministry of Art and Culture, *The Congress of Abu Rayhan* (Barbad Taheri, 1974).⁷² In retrospect, the international UNESCO-sponsored al-Biruni revival was an extremely important marker of the deprovincialization of the Eurocentric intellectual history of Islamic civilization and Arabic science, as well as, more generally, various “ancient” non-Western traditions. Within the context of UNESCO, al-Biruni’s studies of religion and cultures (such as his book on India) were particularly relevant in the project of finding a precedent for tolerance of other cultures and belief systems on which one could base a global system of

coexistence.⁷³ A polyglot, al-Biruni apparently had knowledge of Khwarezmian, Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit, as well as Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac. His multiculturalism thus informed his encounters with civilizations other than the Persian-Islamic culture into which he was born (whether Turkic, Greek, or Indian), making them central to his work and of interest to Soviet scholars working in Central Asia, many of whom were attempting to straddle their own historiographic divide between national cultures and transnational ones. This cultural aspect of al-Biruni's work was also particularly important for placing him at the forefront of the UNESCO project.

The Soviet al-Biruni film created the image of the Islamic scholar that was appropriate for a progressive socialist notion of cultural heritage: he was represented as simultaneously an Uzbek national hero (and Uzbek SSR named a prize for science and technology after him), a humanist-internationalist, an enlightened Islamic scholar, and a pan-Asian(ist), his legacy serving as evidence of the validity of a non-Western version of a universal history that did justice to the Islamic Renaissance, in particular, as a crucial intellectual development. This particular combination could speak simultaneously to multiple imaginary communities represented at the Tashkent festival, where it would screen in 1974 to great acclaim. The film's director was one of the best-known filmmakers of the postwar Uzbekistan film studio, who established himself with such popular films as the comedy *The Whole Mahalla Is Talking about It* (*Ob etom govorit vsia makhallia*, 1960), whose humor revolves around the conflicts between "the old" and "the new" Tashkent, and *You Are Not an Orphan* (*Ty ne sirota*, 1963), based on the true, and locally celebrated, story of an Uzbek family who adopts fourteen war orphans of different nationalities—a celebration of Soviet internationalism. In other words, working with a script by Pavel Bulgakov (a leader at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan), Abbasov was a perfect candidate to undertake the high-profile project of making a Soviet Biruni picture for both local and international circulation.

ABU RAIKHAN BERUNI: THE FILM

At the center of Abbasov's film is al-Biruni's relationship to power, both secular and clerical. The narrative chronologically reconstructs the scholar's life through a series of fictional and nonfictional episodes: the former touching on his private life, such as his childhood, the latter on the little that is known from the record. Rather than dramatically narrating the moments of scientific discoveries or framing eureka situations, as in conventional biopics of geniuses, al-Biruni's life story is centered on his attempts to survive and do work as a court scientist (astrologist) amid wars and famines, courtly intrigues, changing political demands, and ongoing crises. The scientific experiments and intellectual polemics are relegated to the background, cropping up mainly in dialogue and never dramatized. Instead,

the script reflects the central conflicts of his era in terms of the orthodox Marxist interpretation that poses a dialectic between progressive rational humanism and feudalism, on the one side, and religion, on the other. The film captures al-Biruni's conflicts in the various courts he serves, depicting him in struggles with ruthless feudal rulers and dogmatic clerics.

But where one might expect a Soviet film to denounce religion and its class structure, this film presents both the emerging nationalism and religion dialectically—as historically productive and necessary, while at the same time unable to entail liberatory politics. For this reason, al-Biruni's own faith and complete identification with Islam is never questioned or problematized, and the script remains loyal to the historical fact that his scholarship is articulated in terms of Islamic tradition. The rejection of his work by clerics does not shake his faith but points to the dogmatic blindness of his peers, who are unable to see that the dynamic “free-thinking” experimentalism of al-Biruni's relationship to the world, which extends to his interest in other religions and cultural organization, does not make him a heretic. Likewise, the emir of Tabaristan, Ghaboos (in whose court al-Biruni wrote his *Chronology of Ancient Nations*), is given the attributes of a good ruler, driven by “the love of his land” (i.e., emerging nationalism), as opposed to the purely expansionist imperialist drive of Mahmud of Ghazni, but he is also exposed as ultimately unable to honor either the sanctity of human life or the interests of the people. Mahmud's portrayal in the film, as was noted by contemporary Soviet critics, is similar to that of the Grand Duke of Moscow in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev* (1966), who is first presented as a national liberator and supporter of the arts but whose political oppression of artists is revealed as we recognize that he was responsible for the execution of the Jest.⁷⁴

Against this historical background, al-Biruni's predicament comes out of his standing as an intellectual and artist serving the ruler in order to survive and work. He is meant to both outlast and potentially subvert the system of power in which the humanism of the intellectual is thwarted in its potentially progressive social effects. Unlike the more conventional earlier Soviet biopic genre that shows the heroes of the past actively aligning with the interests of “the people,” even joining the struggle against oppression, in Abbasov's film al-Biruni's attempts to physically fight injustice are shown as pathetically ineffective, resulting in total failure. The ultimate—and only—expression of ethical and political struggle available to him is through writing, through his quest to pursue and reveal the truth, not to his contemporaries but to future generations—that is, us, the audiences of the film. Books in this film assume particular grandeur, even materially, as their preservation and reproduction—that is, the tangible cultural literary heritage—is what made knowledge of the figure at the center of the film possible: the importance of the text is articulated throughout the film, most starkly perhaps by Mahmud, the ruthless ruler of Ghazni, who says that monuments perish with time, but books are copied, memorized, and continue to live in generations

to come. Thus, Mahmud seeks his own immortality through al-Biruni's writings, which is why he supports Biruni, in spite of his lack of obedience and his intellectual transgressions. Most of the developments of the plot revolve around books. For example, the slave Rayhana (Reikhana in the Russian), al-Biruni's disciple and lover, accepts captivity in order to save his manuscripts; al-Biruni himself enters into difficult alliances motivated purely by the need to save his books; and the threat of their destruction becomes a major form of al-Biruni's enemies' manipulation of him. The world of the film shows that books—as tangible, historical, and literary heritage—are the ultimate currency and the only true measurement of value.

The library here is a sanctuary, a refuge, the only place of affective and intellectual belonging and the only guarantor of progress. The scholar/artist in real time, engaged with practical politics, is impotent and limited, forced to compromise his own ethics in the face of ruthless power in order to serve the future with his writing. His main, and perhaps only, act of political courage is “serving the truth” through his work, thus serving posterity. Such an image—and understanding of politics and cultural heritage—was, indeed, extremely prevalent in the late socialist years: we see a version of this in Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev*, Tengiz Abuladze's *The Plea* (*Mol'ba*, 1967), and Giorgi Shengelaia's *Pirosmani* (1969), to name just a few of the most famous and artistically accomplished examples. It is easy to read this characterization of an artist as an allegory of the position of the artist/intellectual in Soviet times, as well as reflecting a much longer tradition of the understanding of the relationship between the artist and power precisely in the historical and cultural context in which the two are intrinsically connected. As such, this vision places extraordinary political and social value on the notion of cultural heritage. The nationalist or liberal universalist definition of this heritage doesn't sufficiently define it, even if its forms are, indeed, contained within these ideological platforms. This understanding of cultural heritage, which envisions it through its political liberatory potential, reflected both the Marxist socialist vision of history and the particular experiences of the twentieth century exponents of nationalism and socialism alike, making for a close affinity with the ethos and varied experiences of Asian, African, and Latin American filmmakers, who together formed part of the Tashkent festival community.

The film was warmly received at Tashkent when it was screened there in 1974, with particularly enthusiastic reviews from the Afghani, Pakistani, Indian, and Tunisian press—including the director of the Carthage festival, Moncef Charfeddine, who pronounced it one of the best films at the festival—which led to its sale to many Asian countries.⁷⁵ Even European critics, while acknowledging the dry “academic” tone of the film, mostly praised its educational impact and representation of the historical period.⁷⁶ Soviet critics, however, questioned the film's underwhelming cinematic execution, even as they applauded the excellence of the film's historical and scholarly conception. The general Soviet summing up was that “the

film's artistic outcome does not yet match the complexity of the historical problems posed by the authors."⁷⁷

Similarly complex historical and literary problems—but rendered cinematically with considerably more flare and verve—come to the fore in Boris Kimiagarov's *Rustam Trilogy*, an adaptation of the stories from Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, screened at the Tashkent festival's 1972 and 1978 editions. Its production and reception not only illustrate a similar approach to the question of cultural heritage but also bring out many of the same ideological and political contradictions. At the same time, these films fit perfectly with the vision of world cinema that emerges from our encounter with shared postcolonial and socialist spaces.

SHAHNAMEH

Composed in Modern Persian, *Shahnameh*'s fifty thousand verses, compiled and written by Ferdowsi between 977 and 1010, constitute a compendium of Indigenous, pre-Islamic legends and historical episodes dealing with the four mythical dynasties of Iran. Scholars typically divide the book into three "ages." The first, the mythical, begins with the world's creation and the reign of the first Iranian king (and man on Earth) and contains stories such as that of the struggle between the blacksmith Kaveh and the demonic Zahhak, whose reign of terror as ruler ends with his defeat by the blacksmith. The "heroic age" contains the epic's best-known tales, which arise out of the military rivalry between the Iranians west of the Oxus River, in Central Asia, and the Turanians to the east. The stories of Rostam—or Rustam, in the Soviet transliteration (the version I will stick to for the duration of the chapter when discussing the film, while, as with the other characters, using the transliteration from Farsi when discussing the source material)—which are at the center of Kimiagarov's *Trilogy*, are embedded in this conflict. They tell of Rostam's many trials, his fights with evil demons, and his aid to numerous kings both to battle adversaries and to settle disputes. In one of the epic's most tragic episodes, Rostam also happens, in a case of mistaken identity, to kill his son, Sohrab (Sukhrab in the film). Another well-known story is that of the ill-fated peace-loving Siavash (Siiavush), Rostam's surrogate son and an heir of the Iranian king, who, after declining his stepmother's sexual advances, gets accused by her of rape and proves his innocence in a trial by fire but eventually commits suicide when captured by the Turanians. The death of Rostam—some three hundred years later—marks the transition to the third, "historical age" within the poem, which begins with Alexander's invasion and ends approximately in the seventh century. The stories from the "heroic age" of *Shahnameh*—best known, most beloved, and mostly centered on the figure of Rostam—are the ones that Kimiagarov adopted for his films.

The epic poem allows for the widest geographic imaginary of the world it depicts: although its emphasis is on the Iranians as a people, the Iran in the *Shahnameh* does not correspond to modern-day Iran, or even to the Iran of Ferdowsi's time, but to the ancient Iranian homeland—Aryanam Vaejah, which was largely

in Central Asia: modern Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. "In the poem's mythical and early legendary sections, Iran is in what is now northern Khorasan, and reaches as far north as present-day Bokhara and Samarkand . . . and it reaches as far east as the Helmand province in Afghanistan."⁷⁸ *Shahnameh*'s enormous geographical reach speaks not only to the expanse of the Persian Empire, Persianate cultural sphere, and Ferdowsi's own breadth of literary references and sources but also to the history of the poem's reception, with numerous translations circulating over the centuries all over the Asian world and making an enormous impact on numerous literary cultures.⁷⁹ It is not surprising, then, that Central Asian scholars in the Soviet era claimed the epic as part of the Tajik national literary heritage. Although partially translated as early as the nineteenth century into Russian and Ukrainian, its full scholarly translation had to wait until Soviet Orientalists' enormous efforts of the 1950s and 1960s. Kimiagarov's cinematic adaptation of *Shahnameh*, while both highly personal and born out of his long-standing passion for Persian/Tajik literature, was certainly part of the larger project of bringing Ferdowsi's work into the Soviet imaginary of both Tajik national and world literary heritage.

The "contemporaneity" of *Shahnameh*—both as an enduringly popular living text and as a commentary on questions of war and peace—was repeatedly trumpeted in the press coverage of Kimiagarov's films. Anri Vartanov, a Soviet film and television scholar whose Georgian origins enabled an additional sense of cultural intimacy with the source material, provided the most enthusiastic, extensive, and insightful discussions of the Rustam Trilogy in the pages of the journal *Iskusstvo kino*. In his concluding review of the three films together, he emphasizes the fact that as part of the thriving oral tradition in Central Asia, recitation of bits of the *Shahnameh* continues to be enacted "in the most remote and hard to reach parts of the country," forming part of the "wisdom of the people"—through the sayings, proverbs, and teachings that have entered into the everyday culture of the widest social layers of society. This popular function of the text, Vartanov argues, is revitalized through the "naturally democratic" medium of cinema, helping it reach the widest possible audience.⁸⁰

In this account, Vartanov seeks to rehabilitate the classical literary work as forming part of the living oral culture of the people across Central Asia—a position that was first articulated in the Soviet cultural discourse vis-à-vis *Shahnameh* as early as the 1930s. As Samuel Hodgkin details, in 1934 as part of the celebration of Ferdowsi's Jubilee in the Soviet Union, the Kazakh Commissariat of Education entertained the idea proposed by the prominent Tajik writer Sadr al-Din 'Ayni of having *Shahnameh* rendered by an oral bard (*aqyn*), Türmaghambet Iztileuov. Rather than presenting a conventional translation, it offered the bard's version of these stories, drawn from "a long tradition of oral epics that recounted episodes from the various myth cycles based on which Ferdowsi composed his text."⁸¹ At the time, when "the creation of a category of literary translation formed part of an effort to distinguish oral from literary verbal arts," Iztileuov's version was rejected, and he was arrested and shot during the Stalinist purges. It wasn't until the 1960s, as part

of the post-Stalinist reforms within Soviet Orientology that his rendition of the Rustam cycle was finally published.⁸² Vartanov's comments affirming the vernacular cultural life of *Shahnameh* are thus part of these ongoing reformulations of the significance of the Persianate legacies within Central Asia in an effort to rehabilitate elite literary forms through their vernacular and, therefore, more democratic (re)appropriations. At the same time, it was also part of Vartanov's long-standing critical project of arguing for the legitimacy of popular media—cinema, as well as serialized television format—as narrative and visual modalities of contemporary mediations and reconfigurations of both vernacular folk traditions and literary epic genres. He explicitly states that in the case of Kimiagarov's adaptation of *Shahnameh*, the cinematic apparatus itself is not just an interpreter of the literary text but acts as a new storyteller, "taking up the torch from time immemorial." Thus, Vartanov again emphasizes the oral transmission and folkloric aspects of the epic.⁸³

But this was not the only aspect of *Shahnameh*'s contemporaneity brought out by the critics as justification for its cinematic adaptation. The exhibition of Kimiagarov's films both in the Soviet Union and abroad was also presented as "playing an important role in the strengthening of international ties and mutual understanding among the peoples."⁸⁴ The significance of *Shahnameh*'s antiwar pathos was also the established Soviet Orientalists' line of the time, which credited the popular epic with being "the first in literary history poetic-philosophical exploration of the problem of the just war in the name of protection of the motherland and peace," thus demonstrating the geopolitical and decolonial relevance of traditional literary scholarship.⁸⁵

Such strategic uses of Ferdowsi are far from exceptional, as Hamid Dabashi emphasizes in his history of the epic poem: "no other text in the history of Persian literary masterpieces has been so consistently used and abused in the services of state-sponsored linguistic and literary nationalism as has the *Shahnameh*."⁸⁶ Michael Fischer further posits that it is at least in part the centrality of its king-hero and father-son relationships that has made *Shahnameh* continuously relevant to the issues of state power: "The recited, living *Shahnameh* has functioned throughout the centuries to both celebrate Iranian nationalism and criticize the politics of the state. . . to moderate (to tell again in public; to temper) father-son relations within the family and patrimonial relations of king and subject, state and society."⁸⁷ And Franklin Lewis points out that "the production of Kimiagarov's trilogy coincided with a revival of the epic in Iran and in expanding international scholarship, with a real push given by Iran's Ministry of Culture and Arts, following the shah's path of highlighting the roots of Persian culture, which resulted in a monumental edition of Ferdowsi's bibliography."⁸⁸

As part of this process, Tus in Iran, where Ferdowsi's mausoleum was located, became the site for a Ferdowsi-themed festival that screened all three of Kimiagarov's *Shahnameh* adaptations to date as part of a larger cinema exposition that included *Shahnameh and the People* (*Shahnameh Va Mardom*, 1975), by Nasib

Nasibi, and *Ferdowsi and the People* (*Ferdowsi Va Mardom*, 1976), by Hossein Torabi.⁸⁹ As one can judge from these titles, in line with the late Pahlavi Iran's state efforts to promote the national heritage, the emphasis of the festival was on "the people"—presumably a reference to the vernacular life of the epic as belonging to the masses but without a doubt meaning specifically the Iranians. The Soviet films occupied an ambiguous position in such a constellation.⁹⁰

Nor was it the first time that *Shahnameh*—and Tus as its commemorative location—became a center of Iran's nation-state identity building, just as it wasn't the first time it was used in the Soviet Union: as we have seen, the 1934 Ferdowsi Jubilee offered a perfect occasion for state-directed reinterpretations of the text.⁹¹ In Iran's case, as Dabashi argues: "Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* became a key poetic text in their [Pahlavi] ideological project of state building, with monarchy as the definitive institution and defining moment of that nationalist modernity. Reza Shah had decidedly modeled his persona and monarchy on pre-Islamic Persianate legacies. By 1934 he was constructing a mausoleum over the grave site of Ferdowsi in Tus. He made a recognition of Ferdowsi's epic a bedrock for his 'modernization' ambitions."⁹²

This point is particularly important in that it illustrates the double move on the path to national modernization, where the legacy of national culture, in this case Ferdowsi's epic, functioned politically as an entry into the constitution of world heritage but, in doing so, problematized its nationalist definition. In fact, the first adaptation of the epic was filmed by the Imperial Film Company in Bombay by Abdolhossein Sepanta in 1934, intended to be screened in Tus as part of the celebrations surrounding the mausoleum. The choice of India as the producer was fully consistent with the higher level of development of its film industry but also with *Shahnameh*'s crucial cultural historical impact in South Asia, in particular as a frequent source for Parsi theater performances, the foundational artistic form for Indian cinema.⁹³ But on his viewing of the film, Reza Shah personally did not approve its release, which led to a reshooting of parts of the film, with Nosratollah Mohtasham in the role of Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi in the altered scenes. Subsequently, Mohtasham was appointed as an attaché to the Iranian embassy in Bombay, underscoring the political weight of this choice.⁹⁴

This early episode demonstrates how politicized the history of *Shahnameh*'s filmic adaptations was from their very inception, and the epic's appropriation within Soviet culture followed a similar, yet even more complicated, ideological operation vis-à-vis the epic's national definition. The demands and challenges of Soviet cinematic versions of *Shahnameh*, beyond implicit polemics over the operative national labels, were centered on its assimilation simultaneously into the broader categories of multinational nation-state, internationalist arena (global socialist), and world heritage media. The epic proved to be of a richness that lent itself perfectly to such multiple uses—as well as to multiple controversies, as will be evident from Kimiagarov's personal history.

THE RUSTAM TRILOGY AND ITS ANTECEDENTS

Kimiagarov's first cinematic attempt to adapt the *Shahnameh* for the screen was *Kaveh the Blacksmith* (*Kuznets Kova*, 1961), based on a story taken from the mythical age of the epic's internal chronology. It had already been staged as an opera in Tajikistan in the 1940s, with Iranian émigré poet Abdulqasem Lahuti's libretto and Sergei Balasanian's celebrated score.⁹⁵ Its choice as a subject for film adaptation was easy: a fantastical tale, which fits in easily with the well-established Soviet genre of fairy tales, its plot—the revolution against tyranny—easily legible as protosocialist, with the working-class hero being at the head of the people as they defeat the evil ruler. Indeed, such a reading was consistent with its reception among the Left in Iran, too—as Dabashi notes, “opposing the Pahlavi monarchy, leftist literati, poets, and scholars (appropriated) *Shahnameh* for their own political purposes, emphasizing depictions of the plight of the proletariat, most significantly manifested in the story of Kaveh and Zahhak.”⁹⁶ Kimiagarov's film was modest in scale and went largely unnoticed in the Soviet Union and abroad. The director's international reputation was earned, instead, virtually the same year with a film centered on another classic author of Persian (and Tajik) literature, Rudaki, whose *Fate of a Poet* was awarded the top prize at the Afro-Asian Film Festival in Cairo. With this and other successes under his belt, he finally secured approval to take on a large-scale project of adopting the *Shahnameh*'s most famous stories through a series of films, starting with *The Legend of Rustam*.

The story of Rustam and Sukhrab had a long theatrical history in Soviet Tajikistan and Azerbaijan, where by the 1970s it had been staged several times. Even more important, the figure of Rustam in these productions was interpreted as constituent with the socialist-realist emphasis on war heroism, which Kimiagarov successfully integrated into his plans for the film, emphasizing in particular its relevance in the context of Soviet antiwar and anti-imperialist struggles. He repeatedly declared that the adaptation of the epic was important not only as a way of familiarizing wider audiences, both Soviet and international, with this classic of Tajik literary culture, but also underlining its “confirmation of the ideas of humanism, and its passionate call for the strengthening of peace and friendship among the peoples.”⁹⁷ All of the promotional material presents the Rustam Trilogy as a protosocialist antiwar epic arguing for humanism, heroism, and international solidarity—which elevated it to the politically privileged thematic category of a “war-patriotic” film (usually reserved for the films about the revolution and the Great Patriotic War), while also fitting the bill as an international prestige film, albeit directed more toward the eastern and southern film markets.

The Trilogy would end up costing the most of any film project in Tajik film studio history, in spite of such cost-cutting procedures as reducing the staff and other in-house expenses in compliance with a recent decree decrying the studio's financial mismanagement.⁹⁸ The production of the Trilogy, as with Bondarchuk's

War and Peace, depended on its epic scale, which required production values to elevate it as a showcase for both local and international audiences. Similar to earlier fairy-tale and folkloric productions such as Alexander Ptushko's films (which were, indeed, very popular Soviet cinematic exports), and like all epic spectacles, Kimiagarov's adaptation was intended not only as a celebration of premodern heritage but of state-of-the-art cinematic technology as well—thus potentially combining and reconciling the diplomatic objectives of the Soviet state with commercial interests. All of this was to be accomplished by celebrating Tajik heritage, extending it to the film industry; the latter was equally important to Kimiagarov, an important institutional player who had effectively helped to build the film studio.⁹⁹

All this, however, is not to suggest that *Shahnameh* was a purely pragmatic choice for Kimiagarov. His passion for literature was long-standing; he started his professional life teaching Tajik language and literature, and he turned repeatedly to various forms of literary adaptations and biopics throughout his cinematic career. Literary and cultural erudition as a foundation for cinematic work had been promoted by Sergei Eisenstein, Kimiagarov's first teacher at VGIK. Eisenstein was well known for incorporating numerous allusions and examples from world literature, theater, and art in both his writings and his teaching. For many students this intertextual approach was incomprehensible, but in Kimiagarov's case, it both resonated with and influenced his interests, further enhancing his aesthetic vision with his newly found interest in Islamic visual culture. In his memoirs, Kimiagarov tells us that Eisenstein introduced him to the art of Persian miniature, showing him books illustrated with the works of the great miniaturist Behzād, which left a profound impact on Kimiagarov's own artistic vision. The VGIK art history professor Nikolai Tarabukin turned Kimiagarov's attention to the intricacies of Central Asian applied arts, in particular ceramics and textiles. Tarabukin approached them as art rather than as everyday utilitarian objects, which was a revelation for Kimiagarov. We can see how this engagement with both "high" and "popular" forms of cultural heritage find their way into the cinematic world of his *Shahnameh*, which so strongly foregrounds its frontal pictorial organization, as well as ornate costumes and sets.¹⁰⁰ In fact, his insistence that these visual elements are equally meaningful for his adaptation is consistent with the way the text of the *Shahnameh* exists, essentially, as a multimedia object: "The *Shahnameh* is a single, sustained act of creative ingenuity—from the manner in which it is composed to the ways it is recited, written, and illustrated."¹⁰¹ Kimiagarov's formation enabled him to fully grasp this fact, which is evident in his cinematic adaptation, marked by all manner of visual excesses and extreme attention to ornamental detail (fig. 7.3).

In this, it was certainly not exceptional: despite the fact that the Rustam Trilogy is far removed from the aesthetic radicalism of Sergei Paradzhanov's *The Color of Pomegranates* (*Sayat Nova*, 1969), these films belong to the same broader historical



FIGURE 7.3. Ornamental details in *The Tale of Rustam*. DVD screen grab.

development within Soviet cinema, aimed at the exploration of the national heritage of the republics by immersing themselves in the literary, pictorial, and material cultures of their respective traditions (in the case of *Sayat Nova*, within a Transcaucasian rather than Central Asian context). Ironically, both Paradzhanov's and Kimiagarov's projects were embraced by their respective Armenian and Tajik film studios in an attempt to rehabilitate them after Goskino's stunningly negative critiques of both studios' ideological and organizational failures.¹⁰² Armenian officials chose a young director who had just won a number of awards at European international festivals with his Ukrainian-Carpathian-revival *The Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (*Teni zabytykh predkov*, 1965), which had improved the standing of the Ukrainian (Dovzhenko) film studio with Goskino.¹⁰³ Tajik studio bet, instead, on the veteran filmmaker and one of the leading figures within the studio and the Filmmakers Union.

THE RUSTAM TRILOGY: THE "ASIAN" AESTHETIC

Unlike the (post)modernist performative queer aesthetics of *The Color of Pomegranates*, Kimiagarov's versions of *Shahnameh* are done in a more conventional epic genre style, with a predominance of battle scenes and spectacular landscapes intertwined with a more static theatrical dramaturgy. Unlike Paradzhanov's, Kimiagarov's gender representations are highly conventional, and while narratively such conventionality is certainly consistent with Ferdowsi's source material, women characters are some of the least successful elements of the Rustam Trilogy. From performances to costumes, the male protagonists hold the audience's attention and elicit the strongest responses (something that is evident even in online discussions of these films by their fans, old and new).

Despite the Trilogy's relatively conventional form, however, the poetic language (the script of all three parts retained the verse structure of the original), its visual emphasis on the ornate and haptic materiality of sets and costumes, and the heightened expressivity of the camerawork—with its uneven tempo, frequently jarring close-ups, and zooms—combine to create a strong sensorial impact. The highly theatrical, declarative acting style further underlines the epic construction projected by the film, which refuses to provide in-depth psychological subjectivity for its characters (the way that Hollywood epic films, in particular, tend to do through

the combination of realist effects of method acting and added personal backstories or other elements of externalization of individual psychology). This has the effect of foregrounding the strangeness of the past, which further contributes to its overall pathos, which is successfully sustained throughout the Trilogy: exposing the bloodthirsty folly of those in power and the moral conundrums and emotional costs of their decisions for all those caught in the endless battles.

Both stylistically and thematically, Kimiagarov's *Shahnameh* aesthetic is rooted in his teacher's late work. Eisenstein was himself very interested in adapting the epic for the screen. In 1933 he discussed the production of *Shahnameh* with Vostokkino (a studio developed specifically to promote "Eastern" films, both fiction and non-fiction), evidently with the involvement of Teheran, with both the studio and the Iranians greenlighting the proposal. Yet, like many of Eisenstein's other initiatives, it was rejected by Boris Shumiatskii, the infamous head of the Soviet film industry, who tirelessly fought against avant-gardist "formalist excesses" and advocated for Hollywood-style entertainment cinema (the potential entertainment value of *Shahnameh* clearly escaping the Soviet bureaucrat). Eisenstein carried some narrative and stylistic ideas based specifically on the Rostam and Sohrab stories into scripts of his two similarly ill-fated projects: in 1937, *Bezhin Meadow* (*Bezhin Lug*) and in 1939 *The Great Ferghana Canal* (*Bol'shoi ferganskii kanal*).¹⁰⁴

During Kimiagarov's time at VGIK, Eisenstein was working on his own epic creation, *Ivan the Terrible* (1944), and he shared his own creative process with his students. He showed his drawings and all other preparatory materials for the film(s), as well as using his recently completed *Alexander Nevsky* (1936) as a case study. Eisenstein's monumentalist aesthetic, particularly evident in *Ivan the Terrible*, clearly influenced Kimiagarov's approach. Curiously, already in the 1950s, André Bazin famously linked the visual qualities of *Ivan* with the "Asian aesthetic," which he attributes to the fact that it was shot in Kazakhstan. Rosalind Galt draws attention to Bazin's persistent gendering and orientalizing/racializing in his discussion of Eisenstein's "unnatural, overly composed film" as "Asian extravagance . . . understood in terms of stylization, excess, elaborately composed images, and the unreal."¹⁰⁵ Taken at face-value, Bazin's observation is consistent with Eisenstein's—and, more broadly, early Soviet—Orientalist associations between formalist (or avant-garde) and Eurasian (or "Asiatic") aesthetics. Whereas for Eisenstein such Orientalist tropes were a source of inspiration, for Bazin, the great theorist of cinematic realism, both the avant-garde and ornamentalism were ideologically—and ethically—unacceptable because they were inherently linked with bad politics.

Such associations, Galt further argues, became manifested even more strongly within postcolonial leftist discourses, which began in the 1960s to unequivocally link elaborately stylized films with conservative politics. Yet visualization of the markers of cultural heritage—such as textiles, dress, pictorial traditions, theatrical and literary forms—which may come across as excessive ornamentalism, can in fact function, as Galt argues (using Jorge Sanjines's writings), as cultural markers

and as resistance to regimes of value that are Eurocentric in origin. In a rare instance of leftist political discourse, which embraces the aesthetics of surfaces, Sanjines pronounces that “the political film, like the Andean textile, is well made, decorative, and attractive, and the worldview it expresses merges political thought with aesthetic pleasure.”¹⁰⁶

At least one of the pleasures Kimiagarov’s films offer is precisely a tactile and haptic one: in one particularly memorable scene from the ending of the last installment of the cine-epic *The Tale of Siiavush*, when Rustam comes to avenge Siiavush’s death by punishing his step-mother, whose passion for him led not only to his downfall but to the new cycle of war, she is hidden in a secret room behind what the characters in the film refer to as “hundreds and hundreds of carpets.” The camera, with a slow pan, first lingers for an unusually long time on the silk surfaces of the wall hangings, before Rustam removes them, layer by layer, continuously revealing yet another shiny beautiful surface. While we may be tempted to read this sequence metaphorically, symbolism is not the structuring principle of the film’s organization of meaning. Instead, textures, surfaces, and things that densely populate Kimiagarov’s Trilogy need to be addressed on their own terms: as sources of spectatorial and haptic pleasure and as markers of the cinematic translation of a distant poetic regime—as well as of Persianate culture in its Soviet appropriation.

Vartanov, in his reviews of the Rustam Trilogy, rightfully emphasizes the importance of objects to the poetic world of what he calls folkloric and fairy-tale genres (among which he includes epics such as *Shahnameh* and the Mahabharata—as well as folk fairy tales). Objects in them are often endowed with magical powers and play an active role in the narrative. For centuries, Vartanov argues, this rich material (*predmetnyi*) world of fantasy and fairy tales was left to the imagination of listeners and readers—and only with the advent of cinema could film artists bring this materiality to life.¹⁰⁷ He therefore links Kimiagarov’s foregrounding of costumes, sets, and all other decorative elements in the film with the intensity of its action scenes and the overall spectacular elements of the Rustam Trilogy. These elements embody the folkloric and fairy-tale tradition within both the literary epic and the cinema—while also staying faithful to the historical artistic heritage his films are called upon to bring to life.¹⁰⁸

Ornate surfaces and objects are not associated with a particular character and are not at all gender-marked (as our assumption would be to link it with the feminine realm); in fact, the warriors’ and shahs’ costumes, especially their head-dresses, are significantly more ornate and opulent than the dresses of the female characters. Thus the opening sequence of the first film, *The Tale of Rustam*, begins with a close-up of a highly ornate metal structure, whose shape is revealed, in a downward tilt, to mirror (or extend) the crown of the Shah of Kay-Kavus, the bloodthirsty and arrogant ruler of Iran, whose expressive but immobile face is positioned against the background of multiple bas-relief panels with deities’ equally expressive and terrifying faces. After a very long and uninterrupted shot, revealing, one by one, the various figures of the bustling court, Kimiagarov cuts back to



FIGURE 7.4. Battle scene in the finale of *The Tale of Siiavush*. DVD screen grab.

the shah and a series of extreme close-ups—his mouth, his ring-adorned hands, his eyes—before cutting back to a medium-shot of the shah's court, oversaturated in its frontal composition with details clearly influenced by the Persian manuscript painting style (referencing also *Shahnameh's* miniatures).

Just this opening sequence gives the sense, on the one hand, of the eclecticism of cinematic styles employed in the film and, on the other, of the visual predominance of ornamental detail. At the same time, as the dialectical counterpart of the emphasis on objects and sets, the frequent outdoor battle scenes in the three films certainly rival in their scale the most ambitious Hollywood epics of the pre-CGI era. The increasingly complex choreography of such sequences finds perhaps its most striking manifestation in the ending of *The Tale of Siiavush*, where, over the announcement of the new cycle of wars, we witness several simultaneous lines of warriors moving across the screen on multiple levels (fig. 7.4). This complex visual organization mirrors the complex narrative structure of *Shahnameh*, with its inter-referential parable logic of multiple alternating father-and-son and interclan relationships that Kimiagarov's serialized screen adaptation seeks to capture.¹⁰⁹ This is how Michael Fischer describes *Shahnameh's* organization: "The same conflicts are examined again and again with different characters and sometimes with the direct transitivity of generation: son in one story becomes father in the next, and what he did as son affects how he behaves as father. This extended parable or parabolic logic constitutes a structure of intersignification. That is, each story comments on prior and later ones. The beauty of this narrative structure is that one can tell the stories independently, or one can work them into more elaborate intersignifying chains."¹¹⁰

Honoring the interreferential structure of the epic and the parabolic logic, which resists fixed interpretation of each episode because its meaning is complicated (and sometimes contradicted) by the others, creates a different, more ambivalent, poetic regime. Vartanov, in his review of *Rustam and Sohrab*, notes (and laments) the director's "cautious" attitude toward the use of poetic imagery, giving the few examples where the formal elements of composition and camera-work communicate unequivocally the film's pathos.¹¹¹ In other words, the formal elements in these films, despite their narrative straightforwardness, tend toward the excessive and the paratactical, which dilutes and disrupts both the classical and the romantic norms on which so much of the cinema is based. They create an ambiguity—which, however, is resolved not, as in the case of Bazanian realism,

through the individual viewer's ethical judgment but through the extratextual cultural and ideological context of the work's continuing reception and circulation. It is precisely *Shahnameh*'s complexity and ambiguity that enables its appropriations for the multiple political and cultural purposes of Soviet 1970s internationalism.

SHAHNAMEH'S AMBIGUITIES

In the context of the cinematic network linking the socialist bloc with the Global South, the ethnic and national heterogeneity of both the *Shahnameh* and its adaptation by Kimiagarov proved to be a perfect site for the manifestation of cultural affinities—both historically grounded and more recently created. Its religiously and ethnically ambiguous pre-Islamic setting allowed for the largest possible identifications and collective imaginaries, an aspect that was equally relevant for the epic's reception over the centuries.¹¹² For the multiethnic, multinational, multi-faith (and, in the Soviet case, antireligious) pan-Asian community represented at a forum like the Tashkent festival, for mobilizing a sense of a shared future, the inclusivity of such imaginaries was as important as the their familiarity.

Shahnameh's simultaneous embrace of heroic combat and antiwar pathos, much commented on in scholarship, provided further space for multiple ideological positioning, appropriate for a wide international reception. Kimiagarov's film versions advance this ambiguity by resisting assigning clear characterizations or identifying features to the two warring kingdoms within the epic, to emphasize that "there are no right or wrong sides in wars that are waged not in the interests of the people but against them."¹¹³ Unusual for either epic or melodramatic consciousness, in Kimiagarov's films, even more than in the original text, the Iranians' (versus the Turanians') moral superiority is far from evident. The rulers of both are constantly tempted by their own desire for power and revenge or by demonic machinations (by the *divs*) or by petty vanity; on both sides are characters who are motivated by justice, peace, and the ethical treatment of others, often forced to make difficult—and even wrong—decisions, in some ways foreshadowing some of the discussions in recent English-language scholarship of what Dabashi refers to in his book as *Shahnameh*'s "anti-epic position."¹¹⁴

Thus, Amir Mahallati, a legal scholar and former ambassador of Iran in the UN, argues that the *Shahnameh*'s understanding of war is unusual for both, our conventional understanding of the ideology of the epic genre and for the specifically Islamic conceptions of what constitutes a just war. While war in the *Shahnameh* appears both inevitable and endlessly repeated, it is, at the same time, morally acceptable only as a last resort. Mahallati enumerates two legitimate and just causes for war given in the text: defending land and dignity (defensive war) and penal or corrective justice (punishing a person or a state for a crime or aggression). This logic is quite different from the standard understanding of military law under Sharia; instead, it is much more consistent with contemporary articulations of war

ethics and humanitarian concerns as expressed by international institutions such as the UN.¹¹⁵ Recognizing this, Mahallati concludes:

For Muslims as well as non-Muslims living in the modern world, the *Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi is a testament against the “inevitable universal cultural clash.” Its anti-war positions, the elaborate ethics of war it presents, and the emphasis it places on universal wisdom, liberality and justice and the indivisibility of humanity at large, all speak to this philosophy. Ferdowsi’s political ethics and specifically his view of the ethics of war, well grounded in both reason and revelation, also reflect a solid and rich tradition that encourages peace activism in all levels of societies, while providing plentiful ingredients for modern anti-war philosophies and ethical theories for peace.¹¹⁶

Kimiagarov’s film adaptation readily lends itself to such a “universalist” interpretation. The Rustam Trilogy’s simultaneous embrace of heroism and its call to war as a last resort functioned perfectly in the context of, on the one hand, the Soviet and, more broadly, socialist Cold War position as simultaneously advocating for world peace and defending the necessity of armed struggle (a point on which I will elaborate at great length in chapter 8). On the other hand, the need to articulate—and debate—the definition of what constitutes a just war positioned it in dialogue with the emerging humanitarian discourses, which began to dominate within the international organizations (UN, UNESCO) right at the time when these films were made, therefore making such an interpretation potentially resonate within a less clearly Soviet or socialist-aligned—including liberal—form of internationalism (as articulated today by both Mahallati and Dabashi).

Even within the Soviet context, among the intelligentsia in the post–World War Two era, any sense of military triumphalism would come across as ideologically suspect and, more specifically, associated with Stalinism. The very generational structure that underscores *Shahnameh*’s narrative—with its repetitions and reversals of father-son (and grandfather-father-son) conflicts—would, in the 1960s and 1970s Soviet Union, be inevitably culturally mapped onto Stalinist legacies. But as in Shepitko’s *Wings*, discussed in chapter 5 (albeit through the mother-daughter dyad), this generational divide was clearly marked yet full of ambivalences. In every part of the Rustam Trilogy, victory comes through loss—of innocent lives and of the surviving heroes’ moral integrity—an endless chain of sacrifices that are never fully recuperated and can only be justified through promises of “no more wars.” The loss of the sons—Sukhrab, Siavush—and their fathers’ moral responsibility for it, reverses the “natural” patriotic logic, whereby the younger generation carries on in the footsteps of the fathers. It is significant that unlike the narrative of the *Shahnameh*, Kimiagarov’s adaptation largely ignores the third generation, the grandsons, who in the epic frequently reverse the father-son dynamics again—refusing to emphasize the easily available trope of children as the hope for a better future.

Yet the narrative powers on, resonating, as we will see in the next chapter, with the socialist conception of war rooted in the inevitability of political struggle,

ultimately combined with antiwar rhetoric—but even more with the socialist understanding of war as a permanent horizon: on the one hand, the embrace of struggle and military heroism as the only possible defense against an endless threat of aggression (colonial, imperialist, or other) and, on the other, the impossibility of granting it any triumphalist aspect, foregrounding the costs of any victory. All victories are seen as fragile; the hope of real future peace is always delayed—a tragic consciousness, indeed. Yet, just as in the al-Biruni biopic, it is the figure of the poet—which is strongly foregrounded in Kimiagarov's adaptation—that invites us to contemplate the role of artistic creation in cultural reproduction: this ultimately creative act (the [re]telling of the epic) can offer an emancipatory reading against the substance of atrocities and endless wars, once again attributing a heightened social and political function to the artist and rendering political the question of cultural heritage.

The resonances of such a political and cultural sensibility—as situated as it is universalist—can, indeed, be legible beyond the Soviet sphere. Thus, despite his repeated insistence on the need to divorce the epic's text from its history of politically motivated appropriations, Dabashi, in his discussion of the *Shahnameh*, frames its sensibility within a distinctly twentieth-century cinematic—and recognizably Cold War—context:

The central narrative trauma of the *Shahnameh* is its moral memory of a tragic end to any imperial act of triumphalism—just before the text itself is appropriated as the insignia of imperial triumphalism of a new dynasty. This act of remembrance, at once triumphant and defeatist, exuberant and tragic, eventually becomes the most cogent constitution of the very subtext of the *Shahnameh* as an epic. That destiny is made precisely at the moment when it is interrupted. That central sense of tragedy becomes definitive to the archetypal *modus operandi* of the *Shahnameh* as a self-conscious epic, precisely the same way that Kurosawa's cinema thrives on the traumatic birth of a nation at the moment of its near annihilation in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.¹¹⁷

It is therefore not surprising that Dabashi's reflection on what he considers the mode of revolutionary epic embodied in the *Shahnameh* connects it to his own generation's artistic and political sensibility: "Reading poets like Mahmoud Darwish, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Nazem Hekmat, Pablo Neruda, or Vladimir Mayakovsky, we read them with a sense of revolutionary epic. We read them with a sense of enabling fragility of time and space, both ours and not ours."¹¹⁸ Despite the historical ambivalence, or the even more frequent outright rejection of the Soviet Union by Iranian leftists at the time, the choice of these poets, all canonical within the Afro-Asian writers movement, together with references to Kurosawa and Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the earlier quote, positions Dabashi's literary world within precisely the same community to which Kimiagarov's films at Tashkent were addressed. And this "sense of enabling fragility of time and space, both ours and not ours," is, indeed, a powerful hermeneutic for its engagement with

culture and politics, where the triumphalism of the state ideology—communist or nationalist—is negated by the tragic sense of its cost, the endless delay of true emancipation, the need for the continuous struggle. Yet it is also balanced, to an extent, by the knowledge that a community, however geographically dispersed, is being forged in this struggle. And it is also not surprising that Kimiagarov's own artistic trajectory was itself a demonstration of the tragic contradictions of the kind his films engage.

Despite all their aesthetic excesses, unlike Paradzhanov's masterpiece, Kimiagarov's extravagant *Shahnameh* adaptations raised no objections from Soviet censors for their formal or ideological qualities, earning him multiple awards on the republican and national level, as well as warm and lasting popularity with mass audiences. Yet the Trilogy's history proved as disastrous for both its director and its studio as that of *The Color of Pomegranates* (which was not released, but "shelved," for decades), albeit for different reasons.

After the release of the first two parts and during the filming of the third installment, which turned out to be the last, Tajik studio and Kimiagarov's crew came under investigation for financial mismanagement of funds. The films' budget was, indeed, enormous by Soviet standards (falling somewhere between one and three million rubles per film)—with cavalries brought in to film its battle scenes, parts of sets custom-made by artisans in Georgia using copper, costumes made with real furs and bespoke textiles, and the whole studio undergoing technical reorganization to accommodate the complex infrastructural needs entailed by filming complex mass scenes on location. All of this had, in fact, been laid out in the films' plan, which was approved by both the studio and Goskino. Yet the negative publicity had dramatic ramifications for everyone involved—resulting in a reshuffling of the studio's administration and even temporary arrests, including that of Kimiagarov himself. He was released after one day, after Davlat Khudonazarov, a young and talented filmmaker and Kimiagarov's cameraman, assistant director, and de-facto collaborator, appealed directly to the famous Tajik poet, scholar, and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Mirzo Tursunzoda, who got involved on his behalf. The investigation yielded no criminal activity; thus, no charges were brought. But Kimiagarov never fully recovered from the shock and humiliation. His health, physical and emotional, suffered dramatically, and he died a few years later, in 1979, at the age of fifty-nine.¹¹⁹

At the same time that financial mismanagement accusations were whirling around, controversies arose within Tajikistan about the fact that the film was cast with few ethnic Tajiks in leading roles. Rustam is played by Bimbolat Vataev (fig. 7.5), an Ossetian actor, but the overall cast reflects the full diversity of the region, with Georgian, Uzbek, Kazakh, and Tajik actors playing leading roles; yet the questioning of the national and ethnic identities of the characters, actors, and even the director continues to this day in the press and social media.¹²⁰ Even so, the film's ethnic diversity was repeatedly celebrated in the press at the time as

FIGURE 7.5. Ossetian actor Bimbolat Vataev as Rustam in *The Tale of Rustam*. DVD screen grab.



emblematic of Soviet internationalism—adding, no doubt, to its mode of multiple address at screening venues such as Tashkent’s.

SPECIFIC UNIVERSALS OF SOCIALIST WORLD HERITAGE CINEMA

The construction of cultural heritage as simultaneously national and yet distinctly internationalist in a way that was particularly relevant to the postcolonial world was, without a doubt, a highly successful way to legitimize the vision of the Tashkent festival’s geopolitics as the integration of the Soviet sphere with the Global South. In this process, the logic of nationalism was both reaffirmed and challenged, resonating at a distance with the cultural and political experience of the decolonial world.

In this, as in many other aspects, Tashkent continued the heuristic, suggested by the Bandung, where, as Duncan Yoon notes, “the invocation, however idealistic, of the linkages between Africa and Asia in a precolonial past provided an historical legitimacy to Bandung as an event.”¹²¹ For the Bandung countries and the “Soviet East” alike, visions of a shared cultural past allowed for a “psychological opening that enabled a separation from ‘the more immediate past’ of European colonialism by establishing a mediated relationship to a distant past” of Afro-Asian coexistence.¹²² At Bandung, just as at Tashkent later, shared literary references provided a primary way for such mediations: such as when the Philipino delegate, Romulo, in his speech at the closing session, which discussed precisely the nuances and porousness between national self-determination and humanist cosmopolitanism, cited Rabindranath Tagore’s poem “Where the Mind Is without Fear,” and Kimiagarov cited Qasmi to the same effect. As Yoon argues, even at Bandung, which was characterized by state-level diplomacy and centered on the notion of the autonomy of postcolonial nation-states, “Romulo recognized that the nation-state was already too narrow a category for a global definition of humanism, especially with the ‘new departures’ of a postcolonial multipolarity.”¹²³ Pan-Asian literary and artistic heritage could, indeed, provide a much more flexible proxy for such multipolarity.

Sometimes such iterations of a shared past could be based on actual historical continuities (as was the case with Central Asian and Persian epics). Other times,

the alternative precolonial communities could be imagined as metaphorically, if not literally, connected. The most impressive manifestation was perhaps the 1977 FESTAC imaginary of Black people, which included the aboriginal groups of the South Pacific as a symbolic extension of "Blackness"; the original plan had included the "four Black republics of the Soviet Union."¹²⁴ This operation of constructing versions of such specific universalities was widespread, taking place in virtually all the cultural festivals of the period. These constructions seem to gesture in their potentiality beyond their more fully realized alternatives (whether nation-state sovereignty or socialist internationalism), which from our contemporary perspective are marked by historical failure or political exhaustion. As Samera Esmeir argues in her discussion of the Bandung gathering as "reviving the ancient paths of crossing," such alternative archaic imaginaries manifest "the possibility of another collectivity or being-in-common, bringing back forms of life that were once possible, in the Indian Ocean and on the ship."¹²⁵ They evoke other forms of specific universality, open to new configurations of subjectivities, even as the pressure of postcolonial politics was actively foreclosing on them. Rather than pointing to a global totality, they gesture toward preexisting or compossible geopolitical communities that exceed the modern nation-state at the same time as they give it its legitimacy and power, simultaneously giving possibility to many local, national, and regional configurations of "universals."

The two heritage films I have discussed here are particularly good illustrations of the ambivalence of realizing such complex cosmopolitan solidarities, caught as they are in somewhat contradictory affects. These affects emerge with particular force through their engagement with this distinctly Marxist topos of history as a record of continuous conflict and struggle. The final chapter of this book turns to this perhaps most characteristic and visible formation within the cinemas of global socialism: war.

World Socialist Cinema of Armed Struggle

THE PEOPLE'S WAR

At the first 1968 seminar discussion at Tashkent, Azhdar Ibragimov, the Azeri-Turkmeni actor-director who between 1959 and 1962 helped establish the National Film School of Vietnam in Hanoi, recounted an anecdote he heard from Khương Mễ, the legendary Vietnamese guerilla cameraman. Khương's crew was using dinghies as mobile film studios in the war against the French to develop footage that was shot during combat, as well as to transport film equipment (and ice, needed to preserve the film) from Saigon across the Mekong Delta. One day, Khương had to ask a local fisherman for the use of his boat. The fisherman had never seen film equipment and asked if this machinery was used for shooting the enemy. Khương and his teammates response was a categorical and enthusiastic yes! As a result, the fisherman not only gave them permission to use his boat but offered to stand guard over it as well.¹

This story as retold by Ibragimov in 1968 is part of the canonical iconography and state-sanctioned heroic accounts of Vietnamese revolutionary film history.² But it also aligned Ibragimov personally (and by extension, the Soviet cinematic cadre he came from) with the aura of militant combat filmmaking. This contrasts with the more lyrical humanist war cinema of the Thaw period with which he was otherwise associated and that had earned him and his fellow Soviet filmmakers the condemnation of the Chinese-aligned cultural policy of 1960s Vietnam.³ This variation on the trope of the film camera as Kalashnikov, so prevalent at the Tashkent festival, reveals more than a merely routine expression of that cliché in its allusions to the complex and internally contradictory social forces that converged at Tashkent. Considering this shared international context as it emerges in the war topoi in socialist cinemas across the Soviet bloc and the Global South, indeed, reveals more than its strategic geopolitical employment. Cinematic representation

of armed struggle was a crucial arena for the complex performances of affinities, alliances, and solidarities, as well as the cleavages and contradictions that traversed the postcolonial and socialist projects.

Far beyond the contours of the Tashkent festival, socialist cinema of armed struggle extended to many sites and institutional contexts of production, circulation, and exhibition, both national and international. It included, on one end of the spectrum, the film productions of the military itself and, on the other end, the clandestine filmmaking that has come to be associated with radical Third Cinema.⁴ I put in this category all films dealing with the war, insurgent violence, military aggression (including state violence), and armed resistance in a variety of historical and contemporary contexts. In their multiplicity of forms, these films affirm the broadest possible understanding of armed struggle, encompassing “a varying pattern of conflict in which ‘the people’ may become mobilised into a revolutionary political party operating alongside of, or in some cases in competition with, an army.”⁵ This chapter focuses on the iterations of this broader cinematic modality that was particularly visible at Tashkent in the 1960s and 1970s. Constituting perhaps the largest portion of the festival selections, this body of work was extremely varied; even so, it is worth keeping in mind that it was merely a fraction of the many forms of socialist cinema of armed struggle at large.

Beyond the genre of “war movies,” this cinematic formation extended to documentary combat films, reportages and newsreels from contemporary war zones, commemorative documentaries, and films dealing with the experience of dislocation brought about by war and violence. In fiction, it included an even wider range—from historical epics and biopics, as well as films depicting episodes from the revolutionary and anticolonial liberation struggles, to stories about more recent and ongoing anti-imperialist conflicts. And while many of these films represented different positions within the debates concerning the aesthetics and politics of leftist cinema (polemics that are themselves reflective of the combative, high-stakes environments in which they were rooted), they are bound by an overall problematic of the role of armed struggle in the history of global socialism as manifested through cinema.

This cinema was articulated explicitly in opposition to US war media (even in the cases where the stylistic features and generic conventions were, indeed, derived from Hollywood), but it differed widely in narrative and stylistic conventions and production modes. Collectively, these films offer profound continuities that point to a shared field of audiovisual references formed through international exchanges, sites of filmmakers’ training, and sites of exhibition (both formal and informal). Finally, these films demonstrate significant conceptual affinities, albeit filtered through specific historical experiences.

Elements distinguishing the shared representational regime of a socialist cinema of armed struggle include the prominence of historical analysis, intended to

create an integral link between the memories of past wars and the experiences of contemporary political struggle; the emphasis on the agency of the people, including women and children; the celebration of heroism in terms of self-sacrifice for the common good, inclusive of revolutionary martyrdom; and the foregrounding of resilience as a form of heroism. Thus, while the spectacularization of violence associated with Hollywood's genre conventions was frowned upon, many socialist war films heighten affect by featuring strikingly graphic depictions of torture, violence (including sexual), and death, deliberately eschewing traditional taboos. Narratively, happy endings in fiction films were rare, and the deaths of the main characters, whether onscreen or off, almost expected. The enormity of the struggle was thus fully recognized and amply visualized through cinematic narratives. The foundational role of war for the history of the modern (socialist) nation-state was exposed, explored, and celebrated. Dialectically, this narrative template was balanced by the explicit appeal to international solidarity in the struggle, transcending national, ethnic, or racial identities. The latter were consistently presented as secondary to the overarching goal of revolutionary transformation and preservation of the path toward communism. Perhaps paradoxically, this shared emphasis did not differentiate between state-sanctioned military warfare and insurgencies; wars of liberation could be fought *with* the state or *against* the state. These two modalities not only produced different cinematic narratives but also projected divergent visions of political struggle and were, therefore, often the source of both internal and international tensions. But by the 1970s, positing warfare as the foundational reality within both the socialist nation-state and the Third World proved to be more productive, culturally and politically, than emphasizing the differences in conceptions. This ambivalence vis-à-vis the role of the state apparatus within this large body of cinematic works allowed for the broadest possible range of affective solidarities around the notion of armed resistance to emerge.

THE MARXIST WORLDVIEW AND THE VIOLENCE OF (SOCIALIST) MODERNITY

Just as Marxism produced both the fiercest criticism and the most ardent implementation of modernity at large, it was equally attuned to modernity's underlying organized violence. Soviet socialist rhetoric demanded "fighting fire with fire" for as long as these global conditions prevailed. All of this created a temporality of armed struggle as immanent: it was the foundational historical event, part of collective memories and day-to-day lives, and a constant future threat. This immanence is reflected in the slippage between the cinematic genres, from historical epics to the most up-to-date newsreels, as equally representative of the cinema of armed struggle. By bringing out the structural violence of capitalism and imperialism (including slavery), against which insurgent violence and resistance are directed, these films simultaneously exposed, questioned, and yet ultimately

affirmed the use of violence as “a means to mediate the political . . . as the sphere of actions, attitudes, and processes that revolve around forms of social organization, generally in the form of a state, and around power.”⁶ Given that all colonial histories are, to a large degree, histories of organized violence, most postcolonial historical film narratives inevitably fell into the same category.

This commitment to the fight was shared, to varying degrees, by all socialist states. The specificities of the war in question differed in both its historical and contemporary manifestations, but the underlying logic remained constant, whether it was China or Poland, Cuba or Algeria, Yemen or Yugoslavia. Since state socialism in Eastern European countries and their absorption into the Soviet bloc were results of World War II, even for countries like Yugoslavia and Albania, which subsequently left the bloc, these countries would continue to represent not only the historical memory of standing up to Nazi aggression (with the figures of partisans carrying a particularly heavy and complex symbolic load) but also the original moment of the formation of the new socialist nation. These films were often results of the official impositions of the Soviet cinematic models, either copying or otherwise responding to them. At the same time, war films were also undoubtedly rooted in genuine and distinctive historical experiences, far beyond ideological prescriptions. In short, the socialist cinema of armed struggle was simultaneously a part of state-supported efforts to create and sustain an understanding of war as foundational for the national(ist) self-image and, for the filmmakers and audiences, a way to tap into, reflect on, and transform the deeply traumatic legacies of violence.

This recognition of the centrality of war and violence in the creation of the nation-state resonated in the postcolonial world, where independence was rarely won except at the point of a gun. Wars of liberation were foundational for many of the countries’ identities, as were civil wars, in addition to the violence of forced divisions and foreign interventions.⁷ These histories were mirrored in the shock of accelerated (uneven) development. As Bhaskar Sarkar elaborates: “Even in the West, as new structures and nationalist ideologies supplanted older political regimes and frameworks, modernity precipitated cataclysmic dislocations. Nevertheless, as the new frameworks emerged out of premodern European paradigms, there was a semblance of continuity. For the postcolonies, in the absence of this gradual and rooted emergence of the assemblage of processes, attitudes, and institutions that we typically call modernity, modern nationhood wrought a form of violence—epistemic, material, and psychic.”⁸

Thus, in addition to the impact of military aggressions associated with colonial legacies and neocolonial realities, accelerated modernization by way of large-scale national industrial projects was similarly frequently experienced and narrativized using war tropes, and this metaphor was often used to justify the human costs (as we saw in the discussions of the cinema of industrial modernity in chapter 6). Preparedness for wars, present and future, in turn, required further industrialization. Revolution and accelerated modernization were profoundly violent processes,

mutually constitutive of the socialist and postcolonial state as it fought for survival in the face of imperialism.

It was not simply a matter of Soviet propaganda to point out that the Soviet experience—combining the traumas of the two world wars, revolution, the Civil War, forced industrialization, and state violence on a mass scale—was on par with the experiences of “The Third World.” Between 1917, the year of the revolution, and 1920, both Petrograd and Moscow’s population was cut in half as the Civil War claimed several million combatant lives, and seven million more died of malnutrition and disease.⁹ More than thirty million Russians died in World War II, and many millions were displaced by the German advance, with around fifteen million evacuated to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The immediate consequences of war and its devastation on infrastructure, both urban and rural, was enormous, leading to a famine, which cost another million lives and possibly more.¹⁰ In addition, millions were lost during the Stalinist purges and famines of the 1930s, which resulted from accelerated industrialization and state terror that was justified in the name of the danger of impending war.¹¹ The continuous threat of military aggression was predicated on an analysis of capitalism that saw its need for expansion as the driver of new wars. With the end of wars predicated on the end of capitalism, war was an immanent part of socialist peace.

After all, as exemplified by the slogan of the Tashkent festival (“For Peace, Social Progress, and Freedom of the Peoples”), *peace* was as much a catchword for the socialist and socialist-aligned bloc as *freedom* or *liberty* was for the other side. This antiwar discourse, however, rejected pacifism; the fight against the common enemy (imperialism) was the only way to achieve a social order in which peace would not be a cover for the violence of capital and imperialism. This was encapsulated in the frequently used slogan “fight for peace.” As Miriam Dobson explains, “Peace was not just the absence of war; it was the future that revolution was meant to bring. The concept of peace became a metonym for communism itself. As was the case with communism, peace was a cause that required a fighting spirit.”¹² When the “peace offensive” was launched in 1949 at the founding of the World Peace Council, the largest international peace organization in the world, Soviet discourse made explicit the socialist proprietary claim to the “fight for peace.”¹³

THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

The centrality of the “fight for peace” was reflexively transposed to socialist cinema. Most coproductions of the early period of the Cold War, whether involving the Soviet Union, China, or Eastern Europe (including Albania and Yugoslavia), were war movies.¹⁴ Film production within the army was itself an important site of international collaboration, as Alice Lovejoy explores through the examples of those between Czechoslovakia and China in the 1950s.¹⁵ The same dynamic impacted the way Soviet cinema circulated beyond the socialist bloc. By the 1960s, virtually all world-renowned Soviet and Eastern European films dealt directly with

the experience of revolution or war, making a canon of films of armed struggle.¹⁶ This canon certainly included art cinema: socialist auteurs from Tarkovsky to Wajda first became famous for their war films, although they approached the subject of war from a distinctly liberal, Thaw-influenced perspective.

The status of the socialist bloc's cinema of armed struggle in Cold War Asia, Africa, and Latin America by the late 1960s thus perfectly mirrored the geopolitical position of the Soviet Union in these regions. Its frequent focus of the socialist bloc's role in the Second World War demonstrated its credentials as a potentially powerful military ally against the increasingly expansionist militarism of the US, which threatened postcolonial independence gains. James Mark and Quinn Slobodian explain this logic:

Many of the states formed after World War I in Eastern Europe were recolonized under Nazi Empire from 1939 to 1945. Their experience of the abrogation of national independence after a short period of self-determination demonstrated that decolonization was reversible. From the late 1950s, Communist regimes sought to make these links tangible. Despite formal independence in Asia and Africa, they warned, the world was witnessing the rise of heirs to Nazi imperialism in the form of the US and the fascist successor state of West Germany. The Eastern European experience was invoked to suggest that formal independence was not enough. Progressive nations needed to support each other against a return to the principles that had undergirded Nazi Empire.¹⁷

This argument was illustrated perfectly by Pinochet's "fascist" coup in Chile, which overthrew Allende's democratically elected socialist government, whose political ideology was rooted in the idea of a peaceful road to socialism. The US support of the coup further demonstrated the fragility of such a path, as the US rise to global dominance in the postwar period relied on using certain national elites as proxies to douse any threat to global capitalism. This sense of fragility vis-à-vis the US, most acutely felt by smaller nations like Cuba or Vietnam, nonetheless extended to all of the socialist world, including the Soviet Union, for whom the economic cost of controlling a considerably smaller global military sphere was proportionally much greater than for its opposing superpower.¹⁸ This is perhaps one of the reasons why the phrase "Cold War," coined in the US, was used only by the socialist side in reference to US ideological discourses, as seeking to obscure the degree to which real (and not just imaginary or potential) military conflicts—from Korea and Vietnam to the Central American dirty wars—were being fought all over the Global South. The metaphor of "cinema as a weapon"—so often repeated at Tashkent by both hosts and guests, as we saw in chapter 4, was the cultural articulation of this logic, which goes as far back as Eisenstein's notion of cine-fist, and the consensus on the notion of cinema as a weapon across global leftist and socialist cinemas emphasized the importance of representing armed struggle.

Soviet film criticism was always eager to expose the way the US, unlike its socialist counterparts, disguised the fundamental links between military and cinematic apparatuses: from the intertwined relationship between the MPAA

and the US military to the enormous scale of activities of USIA in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.¹⁹ In other words, Soviet critical discourses exposed that cinema was used as a weapon by the other side, too, but covertly; cinema, the socialists argued, was part of an arms race, too. As anti-imperialist struggles continued well past formal declarations of national independence, war and insurgency marked the social reality of great swathes of the Third World. It is not surprising, then, that Korean and Vietnamese national cinemas throughout the mid-twentieth century were de facto “war cinemas,” as were Palestinian and Algerian revolutionary cinemas, which constituted the core of leftist Arab filmmaking in the 1960s and 1970s. Even in cases where neocolonialism was economic, the threat of violence and armed aggression (from death squads as well as official police and militia action) was an ordinary factor in daily life, forming a motif well captured by radical Latin American filmmakers in particular. In those rare cases where revolutions were peaceful, the threat of military coup loomed large, as was reflected in Chilean cinema in exile, which became an important example of the socialist cinema of armed struggle.

At the same time, socialist cinema of armed struggle normalized violence and military organization as foundational narratives for the path to state modernization and socialist development. Arab socialism, in particular, was led by the military elite, which assumed the role of agents of development.²⁰ In the case of Syria, Iraq, and Libya, militarization would stand increasingly for modernization. By the end of the 1970s, the reality of violence had outpaced the dream of a socialist path, and regional wars could no longer fit under the category of wars of national liberation. This historical fact has tended to distort our vision of both the plausibility and forcefulness of the cinema of armed struggle under the sign of socialism of those earlier decades of the Cold War, diminishing our ability to truly assess the degree to which they represented the interlocking epistemologies of anticolonialism and Cold War socialism.

1970s SOVIET WAR FILMS

Paradoxically, although in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s Soviet film production continued to foreground the theme of war and peace with renewed vigor, in contrast to the classics of the 1920s (or even the late 1950s), few of these films had the desired international impact. This was particularly true of the “prestige productions” explicitly made, as Alexander Prokhorov and Elena Prokhorova argue, to be “public relations vehicles for the state and its agendas.”²¹ The epic war “prestige films” of the period—the most emblematic of which was *Liberation* (*Osvobozhdeniie*, Iurii Ozerov, 1968–72), divided into five parts and running 445 minutes—were massive in their scale and length, coproduced with other European studios, and deliberately designed to counter the Hollywood narratives of the Second World War by emphasizing Soviet contributions and victories in the war.²² Their narratives tended to oscillate between large-scale battle scenes and

behind-the-battle-lines discussions among the top commanders, showcasing only a handful of individualized characters, all of them ethnically Russian.²³ Designed for international exhibition and sold to many countries around the world—including Iraq and Syria, where *Liberation* was shown on television as a mini-series in forty-minute installments, and Afghanistan, where it was screened in mobile cinemas, such bombastic propaganda vehicles were largely unsuccessful in creating the intended impact. At the same time, many Soviet auteurs continued making war films in the Thaw-period cinema mode, with the overall emphasis on the highly subjective personal experiences of the war and the fragility of humanity in the face of trauma. Many of these films (made by, among others, Marlen Khutsiev, Larisa Shepitko, Elem Klimov, Aleksei German, and Grigorii Chukhrai) had considerable difficulties passing through the Brezhnev-era censorship protocols, their exhibition largely limited to the European art cinema circuits.

Neither of these two modes of filmmaking were prominent at Tashkent, which instead promoted the Central Asian and Transcaucasian studios' engagement with the topic of war, which did not fit in with either of the two templates offered by Russophone Soviet war cinema. Instead, turning away from World War II (in which Central Asia mostly served as an evacuation destination), most of the films shown at Tashkent belonged to the category of "historical-revolutionary" films, set during the revolutionary Civil War, and focused on the Sovietization of the Soviet Union's eastern and southern borders. Stylistically and ideologically, these films often occupy an ambiguous space between the poetic cinema(s) of the Thaw, national epics emphasizing cultural heritage of the republics, and the entertainment genres of the 1970s, some of them borrowing from the conventions of the western, thus acquiring the designation "Eastern westerns."²⁴ As in many other anticolonial historical epics shown at the festival, the thematic core of these films is ultimately modernization, which includes methods of governance and warfare, as well as ideology—all seen in the service of a national culture and the national interests of the Central Asian republics, albeit necessarily channeled through Soviet authority. Made mostly by directors at the local studios and with non-Russian protagonists in the leading roles, these films, like their Algerian and Brazilian counterparts, exceed a simplistic orientalist understanding of the western, where the classic plot pits the civilizing mission of a settler colonialist agenda against the unruly reactionary native hordes.²⁵

Despite their historically and ideologically positioned specificity, these films fit comfortably in the broader trends of world socialist cinemas of armed struggle represented at Tashkent. Other examples included historical revolutionary epics, such as Sergio Giral's trilogy on the history of slavery in Cuba; sub-Saharan films exploring the region's history of colonialism and anticolonialism; Algerian liberation war films (known as *cinema moudjahid*); North Korean and Vietnamese war films; Chilean exilic cinema; combat documentaries from hotspots of the global cold war—Vietnam, Palestine, Bangladesh, Yemen, Angola, and Mozambique—

and “solidarity” documentaries, as well as Egyptian, Jordanian, Syrian, and Iraqi films, both fiction and documentary, in support of the Palestinian struggle.²⁶ Within this highly varied cinematic constellation, Japanese antiwar epics held a special status because the history of the US bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki provided a rare representational space for discussing the omnipresence of nuclear threat, which otherwise remained undervalued on the socialist side of the Cold War.

JAPANESE ANTIWAR EPICS

As we saw in chapter 2, Japan occupied an anomalous status at the Tashkent festival, entirely outside the geopolitical realm of the socialist bloc’s influence or anticolonial imaginary. Yet its antiwar films were unequivocally celebrated by the Soviet press and included in every selection of the Tashkent festival, with Japan’s fiction films dealing with World War II becoming central to the festival’s critical discourse. These films ranged from epics, such as Fukasaku Kinji’s *Under the Flag of the Rising Sun* (*Gunki hatameku moto ni*, 1972), to melodramas focusing on women and family life (although, importantly, not on women’s direct contribution to the war), such as Kurahara Koreyoshi’s *The Flame of Devotion* (*Shuen*, 1964), to detailed exploration of the war’s impact on the soldiers, such as Kobayashi Masaki’s *Hymn to a Tired Man* (*Nihon no seishun*, 1968), following on his earlier *The Human Condition* film series (*Ningen no joken*, 1959–61), which had been showered with acclaim in the Soviet press.

It may seem counterintuitive that it was the cinema of a capitalist country aligned with the US who had fought against the Soviet Union in World War II that would occupy a place of honor in the global socialist film formation presented at Tashkent. The political inclusion of Japan at Tashkent would seem to clash, for example, with the history of the Soviet Union, revealing to the world the Japanese germ warfare experiments, directed against Koreans and Chinese, during the Soviet trials at Khabarovsk in 1949, at the same time that the US was whitewashing them. The two major factors behind this are the long-established ties between the Soviets and the Japanese communists and the fact that the war theme almost inevitably touched on the impact of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The continuous return to the history of the US atomic bombing of Japan was crucial for bringing together the two central themes of Soviet ideology in the Cold War: the struggle for peace and the anti-American rhetoric. This was particularly important since the socialist bloc, unlike the US, largely avoided the imagery of “the bomb” (such as photographs of the mushroom cloud, fictional reconstructions, or speculative fictions featuring nuclear explosions), reproaching Hollywood’s representations of it as overtly sensationalist, fear-mongering, and antihumanist.²⁷ Instead of featuring nuclear explosions as either sublime, spectacular, fantastic, or, alternatively, as a cautionary tale emphasizing the need for preparedness, as was the

case in the West, the imaginary of nuclear war in the socialist context was concentrated on the concrete historical events and their impact (without acknowledging, of course, the realities of its own nuclear testing program). As a result, at least until the mid-1980s and the Chernobyl nuclear plant disaster, Hiroshima and Nagasaki served as the primary focal point and visualization of Cold War nuclear anxiety in Soviet culture.

From Maruki Toshi and Maruki Iri's murals depicting gruesome effects of the A-bomb attacks, exhibited in Moscow's Gorky Park in 1959, to Alfred Schnittke's cantata "Nagasaki," broadcasted on Moscow radio in 1960, together with the readings of "The Songs of Hiroshima—Poems of Contemporary Japanese Poets," Hiroshima and Nagasaki assumed a privileged place in the Soviet cultural politics of war and peace.²⁸ The canonical story of Sasaki Sadako, the most famous *hibakusha* (nuclear bomb survivor), who tried to fold one thousand origami cranes before eventually dying of radiation poisoning ten years after the explosion, became a charged symbol not only in Japan, where her statue was included in the Hiroshima memorial—but in the socialist sphere as well. In lieu of more spectacular representations, the myth of Sadako was invested with all the great anxieties about nuclear war. Sadako's story in the Soviet Union took many media forms: most famously as a 1968 song "The Cranes" (*Zhuravli*), based on a poem by the Dagestani writer Rasul Gamzatov, which he allegedly wrote on his way back from visiting the Hiroshima site. The poem (and the song's lyrics) explicitly blends together the Soviet experience of World War II and the story of Sadako. It became the last song performed by the legendary actor and singer Mark Bernes, himself most famous for starring in Soviet war dramas and for his war-themed songs, instantly making "The Cranes" a classic. Sadako was also fictionalized as a character in Mark Donskoi's *Hello, Children! (Zdravstvuite, deti!)*, 1964), a film taking place at a Soviet international children's camp.²⁹

Aside from such cultural appropriations, Japanese films dealing with this topic were prevalent on Soviet screens from the mid-1950s on. Shindo Kaneto's film *Children of Hiroshima (Genbaku no ko)*, 1952), which was the first Japanese film to dramatize the atomic bombing of the city, secured Shindo's privileged status in the Soviet Union. Shindo went on to become one of the most influential Japanese directors in the Soviet bloc, along with other antiwar Japanese directors—like the documentarian Fumio Kamei, whose films were the earliest to be circulated in the postwar Soviet Union.³⁰ Sekigawa Hideo's *Hiroshima* (1953)—produced by Japan's Teachers Union and focusing on the experiences of a group of teachers, their students, and their families following the bombing—was also released in the USSR in 1957. Importantly, these films constructed Hiroshima not only as a site of historical memory and trauma but also as a contemporary Cold War ideological battleground, including depictions of the anticommunist "Red purge" in Japan and the protests against the use of Japanese territory for military stations by the US, thus extending the ongoing geopolitical relevance of the war experience.³¹

This argument is made especially apparent in Shindo's *Lucky Dragon No. 5* (*Daigo Fukuryu Maru*, 1959), based on a true story of a Japanese fishing boat whose crew suffered acute radiation syndrome from the nuclear tests conducted by the US at Bikinni Atoll. *The Last Women* (*Saigo no onnatachi*, Kusuda Kiyoshi, 1954), which was also released in the Soviet Union in 1957, depicts the decisive battle of the Pacific campaign of World War II that resulted in a particularly high number of civilian casualties (not least owing to the US military's use of napalm) while exposing the Japanese army-enforced collective suicide of civilians leading up to the fall of Saipan.

Progressive filmmakers in Japan—like other artists and intellectuals—found the war a particularly charged topic, one leading to questions about Japan's own history of modernization and empire. In this view, the Japanese experience of World War II, the trauma of nuclear bombing, and the US occupation were all consequences of the Japanese imperial enterprise, with its historical propensity for war-making—still revered by its contemporary Japanese far-right nationalists. This insight was particularly crucial for Japan's leftist participation in internationalist and pan-Asian movements: while antiwar and antinuclear discourse in Japan was largely shared and employed by both the right and the left, which allowed Japan to represent itself as a peaceful power all over Asia following Bandung, it fell to the Left and, specifically, to communist culture, to analyze Japan's own history of imperialism. As Kristine Dennehy argues, "For most Japanese, while postwar pacifism might call for a repudiation of Japanese militarism in the 1940s, this same kind of repentant attitude was not necessarily invoked in evaluations of earlier stages of Japanese imperialist expansion."³² Often this history was modified or ignored in the rhetoric of pan-Asian alliances and Afro-Asian People's Solidarity, where Japan's colonization of Korea and Manchuria and its invasion of China were ignored in favor of celebrating, for example, its victory over the Russian Empire in the 1905 war as the first instance of "the new awakening among the colored peoples" in the fight against (white) Western colonialism.³³ This is why, for the Japanese Marxists, it was particularly important to unmask the economic motivations and xenophobic history behind Japan's own imperialist past. Dennehy elaborates:

Leading Japanese historians like Toyama Shigeki combined their scholarly critiques of Japan's imperialist past with an explicit political agenda that was extremely critical of the conservative ruling elite of Japan after 1945. By condemning their own nation's modern history as one of aggression in Asia, Marxists like Toyama were also sending a message that the Japanese people should be on guard against repeating the mistakes of the past. As intellectuals, they felt a particular responsibility to speak up against the actions of conservative politicians who they argued were leading Japan down an eerily familiar path of remilitarization and renewed economic aggression in postwar Asia.³⁴

As early as 1946, Kamei, together with his fellow Prokino critic and producer Iwasaki Akira, had attempted to make a four-part documentary, *A Japanese Tragedy*

(*Nippon no higeki*), to explore Japan's involvement in World War II as a culmination of a longer story of the development of capitalism and imperialism, going back to the invasion of Manchuria in 1931. Using mostly newsreels and other found-footage materials, the film is also a reflection on the importance of dialectical "contextualization and conceptualization in documentary."³⁵ *A Japanese Tragedy* was banned by the American Occupation Forces with direct intervention by the Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru.³⁶ The argument the film presented, however, grew increasingly more important for the Japanese Left in the subsequent decades as historical reckoning of its own imperial wars was crucial to the Left's ability to place Japan in alignment with countries fighting against US imperialism, Korea and Vietnam in particular—movements that historically crystallized around the struggle against Japanese invaders. As a result, a historical epic like Yamamoto Satsuo's *Men and War* trilogy (*Senso to ningen*, 1970–1973), also shown at Tashkent, was seen within the international socialist community explicitly as an important demonstration of solidarity against ongoing imperialist aggressions such as those committed by the Japanese.

YAMAMOTO'S *MEN AND WAR* TRILOGY

Like Kobayashi's *The Human Condition*, Yamamoto's *Men and War* was an adaptation of Gomikawa Junpei's novel. Junpei's fiction mirrored Toyama Shigeki's scholarship as discussed by Dennehy in violating the established cultural representation of the Japanese as victims, not perpetrators, breaking the taboo against representing the "detestable and distasteful" aspects of the war.³⁷ Yamamoto recounts in his autobiography that his decision to turn to this historical novel was motivated by his contemporary political engagements. Seeing his first North Vietnamese war films at the Afro-Asian film festival in Jakarta in 1964 (the fiction film *Kim Dong* [*Kim Đông*, Nong Ich Dat, 1963], as well as documentaries from the Liberation Front) led him to participate in the making of the film *Vietnam* (Masuda Kentaro and Koizumi Takashi, 1968), which was shot on location. In turn, this experience allowed him to see clearly the continuities between US imperialism and Japanese aggression against the Chinese, which resulted in his decision to adapt Gomikawa's epic novel *Men and War* to the screen.³⁸

Kobayashi's and Yamamoto's adaptations shown at Tashkent stood in sharp contrast to the "8.15" series of films (referring to the date of Japanese surrender), which were very popular in Japan at exactly the same time.³⁹ Except for *Japan's Longest Day*, which depicted in minute detail the events of the day when the speech of the Japanese emperor announced the country's surrender on the radio (and was originally supposed to be directed by Kobayashi), the other films in this series were in the entertainment genre, aestheticizing or glorifying the Japanese participation in the war through spectacular battle scenes.⁴⁰ *Japan's Longest Day* was screened at the first symposium organized jointly by the Union of Soviet Filmmakers' and

FIGURE 8.1. Yamamoto Satsuo (center) filming episode 3 of *Men and War*, Soviet Union, 1973. Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.



Japanese Screenwriting Guild in Moscow in 1968, and at the discussion of the film, which included its screenwriter Hashimoto Shinobu (who was renowned for his collaboration with Kurosawa on his most famous films), the Soviet filmmakers and critics indeed criticized the film for its overemphasis on the fates of the highest echelons of the Japanese military at the expense of the people, represented as faceless victims, as well as for insufficient historical analysis of the causes of the war. In response, the film's producer pointed to the pressure on the company from "reactionary militarist circles" in Japan, which included physical intimidation of the filmmakers over the representation of the figure of the emperor.⁴¹

In contrast to the "8.15" series, the epic narrative scale of Kobayashi's and Yamamoto's films framed an in-depth critical analysis of Japanese imperialism and its structural likeness to contemporary US imperialist policy. Moreover, both films lingered on the complex ethical dilemmas and harrowing emotional and physical experiences of war, complicating its legacy and resisting the trope of victimhood of the Japanese. Soviet critical response to Yamamoto's and Kobayashi's film was unequivocally positive both in Moscow and at Tashkent. Predictably, the third installment of Yamamoto's *Men and War* trilogy, which takes place from 1937 to 1939 and deals with the Sino-Japanese war, ending with the defeat of the Japanese by the Red Army at Nomonhan, attracted the most attention. It was filmed with Moscow Film Studio's participation: shot on location in Volgograd, the production used Soviet army personnel—several companies of soldiers, engineers, and tank forces—and armed vehicles to create its battle scenes (fig. 8.1). Soviet staff members even agreed to work overtime without pay on the extremely demanding shooting schedule "for the sake of Russo-Japanese friendship."⁴²

A certain overlap between this project and the Soviet War epic *Liberation*, also released in 1973, did not escape critics' attention. The Soviet film magazine *Sovetskii ekran* published a letter from its Tokyo correspondent citing essays purportedly written by Japanese school and university students after seeing

Liberation. *Liberation* was grander in scale than *Men and War*: though Yamamoto had planned five parts, he could only afford three, given his studio's resources. *Liberation*, as I mentioned earlier, had five parts and a total running time of 445 minutes. A Japanese student was quoted as marveling at the immense battle scene in the Soviet film, which featured twelve hundred tanks. The surprisingly well-informed young man comes to this conclusion: "only socialist cinema could provide such a number of tanks and people in the making of the film. Soviet cinema belongs to the state and not to private persons. . . . This is what allows it to provide the cinematic interpretation of such historical episodes on the scale worthy of the great people who committed these heroic acts."⁴³

Despite such unflattering comparisons, Yamamoto's trilogy was celebrated unanimously in the Soviet Union for "the clarity of its conception, demonstrating not only the catastrophe of war but its ideology"; for the breadth of its historical analysis, which spans the experiences of all ranks; and for its formal qualities, such as the skillful combination of fiction and documentary footage.⁴⁴ Its reception outside the socialist bloc was not so enchanted. In Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party's New Liberal Press (Jiyu Shimpō) denounced its incitement to "antiestablishment ideology by playing on the antiwar sentiments of the Japanese people," while Yao Wenyuan, one of the Gang of Four in China, described it as "an extremely reactionary film that goes so far as to glorify fascists and aggressors."⁴⁵

Following the logic of the cinema as a weapon, these films became themselves sites of contention on which geopolitical and ideological conflicts played out: the film of battlefields, the film as battlefield. In place of the spectacularization of war narratives as popular entertainment, films such as Yamamoto's foregrounded historical analysis and the contemporary relevance of past wars to the contemporary anti-imperialist struggles. Rejecting the trope of victimhood, these films nonetheless often included unflinchingly brutal depictions of wartime atrocities, transgressing many traditional representational taboos. They also demonstrated that internationalist solidarity necessarily had to face up to the colonialist legacies of one's own nation—an inward look that continuously proved much harder to follow than the more outward-looking ethos of internationalist solidarity.

CINEMAS OF THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST MILITARY HOT SPOTS

Notwithstanding the importance of the World War II epics, it was the films that focused on the ongoing wars in the 1960s and 1970s—reportage from combat zones, films documenting war atrocities and commemorating victims, and explorations of war's aftermath—that constituted the most iconic examples of socialist internationalist cinema of armed struggle. Many of these were so-called solidarity films, made by foreign directors (that is, foreign vis-à-vis the particular struggle depicted). While they had some kinship to films in the traditional genre of international war coverage, the latter maintained an ethos in which the

camera assumes a supposedly neutral bystander's view of the conflict, while the former were overtly aimed at lending support to the struggle.⁴⁶ In many ways, solidarity films were a socialist (internationalist) genre par excellence.⁴⁷ It is worth emphasizing their importance in serving multiple roles, from effectively providing an alternative global news outlet and political education to viewers, to providing de facto training for local filmmakers, who often assisted with the filming.⁴⁸ Nor should the sincere political commitment of many of the filmmakers (especially those whose cinematic engagements were self-directed and not given as "assignments" by state film bureaucracies) be underestimated. In the case of South-South solidarity films in particular, such experiences were crucial for maintaining much needed international networks of support. But given the priority accorded by anti-colonial movements to the development of an independent culture, the combat and commemoration films made by the filmmakers who were embedded in the experience they were depicting were frequently most compelling.

VIETNAMESE REVOLUTIONARY CINEMA

Striking examples, celebrated at Tashkent, included films by participants in the independence and resistance movements, which included the Palestinian Film Unit, as well as many militants in the Portuguese African liberation struggles and exiled filmmakers of the Patriotic Forces of Chile. Vietnamese and North Korean cinemas, in particular, served as obvious points of reference for "hot" struggles directly with American troops, creating a bridge between the various narratives of colonial experiences and decolonial struggles. Importantly, the colonialist power in these films was rarely essentialized through easily identifiable national or ethnic markers: the enemy could be French, British, Israeli, American, or Japanese. This diversity, on the one hand, allowed for an imaginary of solidarity as equally not bound by geography or race. On the other hand, it did not preclude the centrality of recognizably national(ist) iconographies such as, for example, the gendered imagery of women standing in for the nation. Early Vietnamese combat documentaries, in particular, had considerable impact and provided the earliest iconography for the cinema of anti-imperialist struggle that subsequently circulated through both Latin American and (pro-) Palestinian militant filmmaking networks.⁴⁹ But while largely dismissed in film history scholarship for being overtly propagandistic, Vietnamese fiction war films also had considerable impact, including on sympathetic Western audiences who had a chance to see them at Tashkent. The most famous of these films were Huy Thành's *Rising Storm* (*Nổi gió*, 1966); Hải Ninh's *The 17th Parallel Day and Night* (*Vĩ tuyến 17 Ngày và đêm*, 1972), and especially *The Little Girl of Hanoi* (*Em bé Hà Nội Hải Ninh*, 1974), which included documentary footage shot during the 1972 bombing of Hanoi. All of these films were shown at Tashkent and were lauded by international critics and fellow filmmakers. As Christina Schwenkel observes:

In contrast to recurring images in US media and popular culture of Vietnamese women as passive and helpless victims of US military violence, socialist representations regularly portrayed women as assertive, rational, and compassionate actors in war. In both cases the female body stood in for the Vietnamese nation: in the former, the violated female body alluded to US might and triumph (or, to more critical readers, the war as debacle), while in the latter case, images of young, gun-toting women, often in the act of apprehending American pilots, emerged as an international socialist symbol of Vietnamese resilience and defeat of US imperialism.⁵⁰

This observation holds equally true of the socialist war iconography more generally, whether Palestinian women fighters or Soviet women in World War II. The emphasis on resilience was, indeed, as much a part of the socialist understanding of heroism as the more conventional imagery of individual bravery on the battlefield: given the uneven power balance and lengthy duration of the struggle, the people's endurance as an absolutely necessary aspect of heroism, with the endurance of Vietnamese people being emblematic, given the three-decade-long struggle against first the French and then the Americans was, indeed, legendary.⁵¹ Schwenkel also makes the crucial point that resilience was part of the narrative of the eventual triumph of the socialist path to modernization. The construction of industrial and living infrastructures was a matter of learning the lesson that winning wars requires collective mobilization, not the highly inegalitarian, atomistic, and ultimately self-indulgent individualism of the Western capitalist system. This, too, was part of the broader ethos emphasized throughout world socialist cinema, as we have repeatedly seen throughout the previous chapters, linking its various strands.

Vietnamese fiction war films were also praised for their lyricism, which successfully combined national pictorial tradition with familiar international cinematic iconographies. Brynn Hatton teases out the canonical Cold War iconography of the Vietnamese propaganda poster in which the image of an AK-47, a female guerilla soldier, and a flower in bloom are all brought together under the caption "Hold your gun arm steady to keep the color of the flower": here, in addition to the Soviet-made Kalashnikov, the image of the woman and the flower are equally evocative of both a specifically Vietnamese (pictorial and "lyrical") visual vocabulary and an emphasis on the woman fighter as the guarantor of a better, brighter future.⁵² These tropes reflected the real battlefield origins of independent filmmaking in Vietnam. Beginning in 1947, the cameramen of the Southern Cinematography and Photography Branch (SCPB) developed their own style of combat photography and documentary during the French and American wars. SCPB artists such as Mai Lộc, Khương Mỹ, Trần Kiêm, Tuyết Trinh, and Nguyễn Thế Đoàn made a series of films, the most famous of which was *Mộc Hóa Battle* (*Trận Mộc Hóa*, 1948), by Khương Mỹ and Mai Lộc (Khương, the reader will recall, told Azhdar Ibragimov the anecdote about the fisherman that opens this chapter).

But, of course, such imagery also functioned to join nationally specific and internationally recognized iconography, constituting the shared visual language of socialist cinema worldwide. Indeed, most Vietnamese filmmakers were educated at VGIK in the late 1950s, where they were exposed to a wide range of films, both Soviet and foreign. These international contacts developed further with frequent visits by foreign artists interested in making films in solidarity with Vietnamese struggles, providing a cosmopolitan network of references for local filmmakers, in contrast to the common assumption in English-language scholarship. Vietnamese film training was also more structured than it is sometimes presented: between 1959 and 1962, Soviet filmmakers Malik Kaïumov and Ibragimov (both subsequently important figures in the organization of the Tashkent festival) were sent to North Vietnam to support the founding of the National Film School of Vietnam (Trường Điện ảnh Việt Nam). Kaïumov led the documentary section, and Ibragimov taught fiction filmmaking. Ibragimov helped organize the school from the very beginning—in his memoirs he describes the first admission process, when, after the government announced the formation of the film school, more than ten thousand people applied.⁵³ The admissions committee traveled around the country conducting auditions. The conditions in which these were conducted are hinted at by the first project students and teachers embarked on: clearing the rubble and constructing and outfitting the school building and all its facilities. When classes began, more Soviet staff were sent to the school, including instructors of the economics of film industry and art direction. Young director Đặng Nhật Minh, fresh from VGIK, worked as an interpreter and translator.⁵⁴ Other courses taught by Vietnamese artists emphasized traditional plastic and performance arts.⁵⁵ In the first years of the school's existence, many Soviet and Eastern European specialists (filmmakers and scholars) visited the school to give lectures and hold workshops. Graduates of the school began producing its first feature films. In his three-year stay, Ibragimov made two shorts and one feature in collaboration with his Vietnamese students: *White-eyed Bird* (*Chim vành khuyên*, 1962), *Two Soldiers* (*Hai người lính*, 1962), and *A Day in Early Spring* (*Một ngày đầu thu*, 1962), which won awards at Karlovy Vary's Symposium of Young Cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Young Vietnamese filmmakers' experience of working on these films certainly created an exchange of techniques and ideas that flowed into representations of war and peace, forming a vital part of world socialist cinema.

Despite their international success, however, these films were harshly attacked for their pacifism and lack of combat spirit by certain Vietnamese hardliners. The concern that Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence would leave Vietnam without any support led to a shift in the cultural policy orientation toward China, among a hail of attacks on "Soviet revisionism."⁵⁶ The war films of the Soviet Thaw, which had enormous success with the audiences in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, were thus a causality of this shift, decried in powerful quarters for embracing liberal humanist values, contrary to the spirit of the war in Vietnam.



FIGURE 8.2. Grigori Chukhrai (left) and Azhdar Ibragimov (USSR) receive an honorary gift at the second edition of the Tashkent festival (1972). Photo used by permission of Sputnik International.

Among the films that were explicitly singled out for criticism were Mikhail Kalatozov's *The Cranes Are Flying* (*Letiat zhuravli*, 1957); Sergei Bondarchuk's *Destiny of a Man* (*Sud'ba cheloveka*, 1959); and especially Grigori Chukhrai's *The Forty First* (*Sorok pervyi*, 1956) and *Ballad of a Soldier* (*Ballada o soldate*, 1959), as well as Ibragimov's Vietnamese productions.⁵⁷ Although Vietnam fully realigned itself with the post-Khrushchev Soviet Union by 1965 (ironically, perhaps, owing to the dire need for Soviet military support—the kind that could actually shoot the enemy!), the cinema remained at the center of official suspicion. And even as filmmakers, after several years' hiatus, were being allowed to return to the Soviet bloc for training, they were officially advised to avoid contact with their hosts' culture, which was labeled overly decadent and potentially corrupting.⁵⁸ This historical context throws light on the absence of any Vietnamese filmmakers at the 1968 festival and puts Ibragimov's and Chukhrai's comments into a different perspective, revealing the complexity behind the seeming uniformity of the discourse on armed struggle at the festival and in the socialist world at large (fig. 8.2).

STOP GENOCIDE: BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR CINEMA

Alongside Vietnam (as well as Palestine, Chile, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau), another important front of revolutionary struggle and a rallying cry for socialist internationalist cinema in the 1970s was one that is largely forgotten now: solidarity with Bangladesh. Although, unlike Korea and Vietnam, these were not direct acts of US aggression, these proxy wars and National Security States (NSS) were operationalized through overt support (the case of Israel), covert support (the case of Latin America), or by a half-hidden alliance (in Africa), between apartheid South Africa and the US. During the Bangladesh Liberation War, in which as many as three million people, mostly civilians, were killed and several million people took shelter in neighboring India, the US supplied Pakistan troops as they attacked the poorly armed Bangladeshis with M-24 Chaffee light tanks, .50 caliber machine guns, and planes such as F-86s and C-130s.⁵⁹ Nixon's (in)famous "tilt" to

Pakistan, even in the face of its committing war atrocities on an enormous scale, was motivated both by anticommunism and by Pakistan's recent role as a backdoor channel for communication with China, a move that put two major regional players in alliance against the Soviet bloc. India's support of Bangladesh independence, on the other hand, was entangled in China's involvement in the Pakistan-India conflict, whose escalation would have led to disastrous consequences.⁶⁰ Despite the efforts of UN diplomats to prevent the bloodshed and the denunciations of the Soviets, Nixon and Kissinger disregarded all humanitarian appeals. But with considerable Soviet military support (as well as Soviet diplomatic pressure, twice vetoing the US-controlled UN Security Council's resolution demanding the withdrawal of Indian troops), India and Bangladesh retaliated, leading to a standoff between Soviet and US naval forces in the Bay of Bengal in December 1971. When Pakistani forces finally surrendered, Bangladesh declared independence in 1972. The newly created state proclaimed itself a socialist parliamentary democracy, nationalizing its major industries and joining the Non-Aligned Movement.⁶¹

The complex role Bangladesh played in the Non-Aligned Movement and the reshuffling of Cold War geopolitical alliances has received little treatment in Europe and North America. Rarely are films dealing with this history discussed outside the nationally specific context. And yet, the genocide in Bangladesh, known in the West primarily via George Harrison and Ravi Shankar's organized Madison Square Garden concert, significantly strengthened ties between India and the Soviet Union, authenticating Soviet anti-imperialist rhetoric within the Third World community. It also temporarily ignited hope for an alliance between Islam and socialist internationalism; a hope that, as we will see, was short-lived. For artists and intellectuals in Soviet Central Asian republics, Bangladesh's combination of socialist orientation, Bengali culture, Soviet-supported literary production, and Islamic identity, which they shared, was a promising development in terms of cultural relations. Given the centrality of the Liberation War, not only its role in the formation of Bangladesh and the geopolitics of the whole Indian continent but its spillover effects across the Third World, it is surprising that its cinematic representation has largely been ignored and forgotten, if not actively repressed.⁶² To counter this tendency, my analysis of Zahir Raihan's war documentary *Stop Genocide* (1971), which was screened at Tashkent that year, will fully contextualize it within both the representational tropes of the Liberation War of Bangladesh and the conventions of Marxist socialist war documentaries. Moreover, I argue that the issue of the representation of women operates as a kind of litmus test for the degree of their compatibility and bring together many of the intersecting themes of this book as its concluding discussion.

Stop Genocide is best known as the first documentary on the Liberation War of Bangladesh to be both made and shown during the war. Along with S. Sukhdev's *Nine Months of Freedom*, it came to represent the war to the rest of the world. The 1972 screenings of these two films at Tashkent was the first cinematic projection of

the war outside of India (Sukhdev, who was a regular at the Leipzig festival, earned a Silver prize for his film there later that year).⁶³ But while *Nine Months of Freedom* was a classic solidarity film, commissioned by India's Films Division and made by an Uttarakhandi Sikh, it was *Stop Genocide*, made by a Bangladeshi, that provided the internationalist perspective on the war.

Its director, Zahir Raihan, a native of East Bengal, had already established his reputation as a revolutionary artist, writer, and filmmaker at the Dhaka film studio. He was a communist, having worked as a courier secretly transporting messages and letters (in fact, Raihan was a pseudonym given to him by the Communist Party).⁶⁴ Although he kept his party affiliation secret, he openly expressed his political views. For instance, at the Pakistan Film Festival in Dhaka, which he organized in 1965, he had this to say about the commercial film studio system: "By destroying this system, we may foil the insidious plot of the imperialist. Let us create the right mental attitude for collective work."⁶⁵ Although the chance for an alternative mode of filmmaking did not come until the war, his film *Glimpses of Life* (*Jibon theke neya*, 1970) did express the rising tide of Bengali nationalism that overflowed into war just a year later. A family melodrama produced within the Pakistani studio system, it instantly became notorious for its allegorical representation of the exploitation of Bengalis by the military dictatorship of Ayub Khan.⁶⁶

When the war broke out, Raihan, like many others, escaped to Calcutta. From there, he began to put out feelers for a project to document the atrocities of war in what he envisioned along the lines of Vietnamese, Cuban, or Palestinian films—a guerilla cinema. Gaining support from the Motion Picture Association of Bengal and two independent groups—the Bangladesh Film Artist-Performers Support Union and Bangladesh Liberation Council of the Intelligentsia (neither of them state-affiliated)—Raihan began his documentary project.⁶⁷ Using whatever equipment he could come up with, he and his fellow filmmaker and critic Alamgir Kabir traveled across the liberated zones and battlefields, filming the plight of refugees, guerilla training, and the horrors of war all around them.⁶⁸ Inspired by Sergei Eisenstein, Santiago Álvarez, and Andrzej Wajda, whose films had been recently screened at the Calcutta Film Society, Raihan's *Stop Genocide* earned him the epithet "the guerrilla filmmaker of Bangladesh."⁶⁹ Rather than seeing references to Álvarez or Wajda as an homage or as a set of influences, I would argue that they are best understood as signs of belonging to the artistic community around socialist cinema of armed struggle.

Stop Genocide is structured as a travel narrative. Raihan follows refugees and guerilla fighters, with voice-over commentary and several conversations with refugees and soldiers. The narrative is framed by found footage documenting atrocities—from East Bengal and Vietnam—and a dramatized reading of the UN charter of human rights. The film starts with Lenin's quote about supporting national self-determination, set to the music of "The Internationale" (which will return again in crucial moments of the narrative). It is followed by a brief sequence depicting

a Bengali woman and a smiling girl, working the traditional husking pedal—a pastoral image of the type often used in cultural heritage films. But as Fahmida Akhter suggests, this image is made dialectically complex by its political framing, signifying “the collective image of the Bengalis as an exploited working class.”⁷⁰ This sequence is perhaps too brief and the images too beautiful to fully convey oppression, but as the monotonous sound of the pedal carries over to the next shot, it becomes both oppressive and foreboding, as the sequence fades to black and the soundtrack of bombing, sounds of marching, and dogs barking. Finally, intertitles appear, whose agitprop style draws on a lineage that stretches from Vertov to Álvarez, synchronized to the sound of gunshots. The text is set against an iconic but generic backdrop of barbed wire and ruins—their origin purposefully unclear—some being destroyed huts, others collapsing European buildings. This is simply twentieth-century war. The message is reinforced by the footage that follows, which is from Vietnam: air bombing and dead children, with the American voice-over celebrating the advanced war technology alternating with the Dateline news teleprinter reading the UN charter declaration of human rights. We return to Vietnam War footage intermittently throughout the film, with images of US war criminals intercut with footage of dead bodies and destruction.

After this initial narrative framing, the film begins tracking the plight of the refugees and their camp in India, accompanied by a more lyrical text, strikingly punctuated by freeze-frames in sync with the period at the end of each sentence (the voice-over announcing, “Stop!”). One of the first refugees we are introduced to is a sixteen-year-old girl, on whose face the camera lingers, while her story is narrated: she was repeatedly raped by the Pakistani soldiers. Her family was slaughtered. Another refugee delivers a speech comparing Yahya Khan, the Pakistani president, to Mussolini and Hitler. We see more testimonies of survivors. They describe the murders, rapes, and destruction. Most of their testimony is voiced-over by the narrator, while we see more documentary footage. The film proceeds to show refugees gathered in the ruins of the ancient palaces of the Kingdom of Bengal. The narrator intones that it is the place of the ancestry of the people now returning to it, threatened with extermination by “some barbarous hordes straight from the pages of medieval history,” despite all the promises of modernity and progress.

While the narrative sets up the Pakistani aggressors as “barbarous hordes” and the refugees as innocent victims, their strength and resilience, which is foregrounded in the footage, pulls us toward a sense of their resistance. This is exemplified by a woman “somewhere between eighty and a hundred in age,” half blind, having to use her arms as well as a bamboo stick to move. In response to every question, she repeats, “It’s all gone, everything is gone.” But the important thing about this woman is that she keeps moving, the camera following her relentless progress.

The following sequence takes us to the military camp, documenting the training of the Liberation Army—depicted first through Eisensteinian abstracted

montages of guns followed by the routines of military mobilization: young boys learning to march, glimpses of guerilla fighters returning from an assignment. We first see them as mere silhouettes, from afar. The voice-over notes that they are all peasants, but all carry guns. In another training camp, an officer of the Bengal regiment speaks (in English) about the will and the moral readiness of the Bangladeshi people to fight. "The Internationale" is again played on the soundtrack as we see the military training in the camp. This is intercut with the officer continuing his rousing speech.

The concluding narrative sequence returns us to the refugee camp. Another very young girl has newly arrived there. She is clearly traumatized and unable or unwilling to speak. We see a long montage sequence of her beautiful, stern face staring at the camera, but her emotions are illegible. She seems on the verge of saying something—but doesn't. Her silence—which fully occludes her identity—occasions the narrator to reflect on it as a sign of belonging to a shared space as "one of the million, ten million, seventy-five millions of women and children" whose suffering is part of the history "in Paris and Spain, in Auschwitz and Buchenwald, in Algeria and Palestine, in South Africa, Congo and Haiti and Vietnam." Having drawn this conclusion, saluting "the relentless struggle for better life being waged all around the world by working men and women," the film ends with a direct appeal to the communist internationalist community for support of Bangladesh.

Though its running time is only twenty minutes, the documentary is structurally complex and remarkably effective. Lenin's quote, the cueing up of "The Internationale," and the final frame leave no doubt as to the film's condemnation of the historical march of imperialist oppression. Raihan's distinctly Marxist vision of liberation puts the struggle for Bangladesh in a historical line that goes through the Paris Commune and the Spanish Civil War, Nazi concentration camps, and contemporary anticolonial movements (Algeria, Congo), together with anti-imperialist wars (Palestine, Vietnam, Haiti) and antiapartheid agitation. Liberation struggle is positioned within a the broad "call for the oppressed to rise up against all forms of exploitation and demand their freedom from their oppressors,"⁷¹ with its reference to Lenin and even the Siege of Leningrad through the inclusion of a photograph by Boris Kudaiaarov, a Soviet photographer and journalist who witnessed the blockade for its horrific nine hundred days. In the 1920s Kudaiaarov, alongside Rodchenko, was a member of the avant-gardist photography group October. Wearing these influences on his sleeve, it is no surprise that Alamgir Kabir, remembering Raihan, compares him to both Rossellini and the Soviet agit-train filmmakers (a combination that is, admittedly, a commonplace of radical filmmaking of the era).⁷²

As befitting the conventions of militant collectivist filmmaking, Raihan's name is not listed in the credits, and neither the title of the film nor its opening sequence positions it in Bangladesh, putting the viewer in the widest possible context of

political identification. The insistence on the dialectical thesis of the universal—internationalist—framework creates certain tensions with the antithetical specificity of Bangladesh's nationalist liberation struggle. The films stubborn dialectical framing—between the general and the particular, the iconic image and a situated one, the collective and the individual—is indissociable from the way the film signifies.

Another, slightly less deterministic, tension is present between the liberal discourse on human rights and the Marxist vision of history. It is not enough to say, as many commentators have, that the film unmasks the hypocrisy of international institutions and their complicity in war crimes. By insisting on the ineffectiveness and hypocrisy of UN human rights guarantees that coexist with the UN's close ties to the US and, by extension, all the war crimes perpetrated by it, the film challenges the liberal understanding of human rights under the (capitalist) modernity associated with global human rights institutions. This critique is behind the narrator's allusion to the Bengal Sultanate's Golden Age (which was known for its religious and linguistic pluralism), which inflects the label he uses for the Pakistani army ("the barbarous hordes") and his unmasking of the blind eye the UN turns to US-associated crimes: all subtle signs that negate the liberal notion of a linear historical progress toward individual freedoms guaranteed by liberal institutions, even international ones like the UN.

WOMEN AS WAR HEROES: THE *BIRANGONA*

This critique of liberal modernity becomes particularly relevant when we look at the film's representation of women, which follows the patriarchal norm that assigns the fighter role to men and the victim role to women. Indeed, the only women we see are refugees who are either accompanied by children or are so young that they themselves are almost children. The training camp, on the other hand, is a male-only space, and these young fighters are exalted as "freedom-snatching young lions."⁷³ Unlike the films that Raihan quotes as influences, neither in camps nor among the guerillas do we catch any glimpses of women as agents in the struggle. This is consistent with the mainstream Bangladesh historical construction of freedom-fighters; only recently has the direct participation of women in the Liberation War in Bangladesh been admitted in the historiography. The uncovering of women's roles challenges the iconic masculinization of the struggle, which Raihan's film clearly helps to ground.⁷⁴

The editing of the camp footage is smooth, and although it intercuts abstract symbols of the uprising (boots, rifles) with the military training of the "young lions," there is certainly a cohesive triumphant tone, underscored by another inclusion of "The Internationale" on the soundtrack, in contrast to the disruptive strategies (freeze-frame, rapid montage of the same shot from different angles) that characterize the footage of the refugees. While the anxiety of the latter invites

a complex response from the audience, one of alienated reflection, shock, and shame, the former is affectively unambiguous.

Yet, arguably, this filmic decision leaves the viewer with a greater sense of the women in the film as individuals, which, save for the opening vignette, produces a certain resistance against an easy and uncomplicated identification of them as symbolic figures representing the archetypal “endangered mother” of the nation so beloved in the epics of national liberation. The new Bangladeshi government in December 1971, the year *Stop Genocide* was made, created a new class of war hero: the *birangona*, literally a brave or courageous woman, a survivor of sexual violence of the Liberation War.⁷⁵ We see *birangona* in the first refugee testimony of the woman whose description of her rape is explicit, horrifically detailed, and almost forensic. Disconcertingly, the story is told not in the woman’s own voice but in a translation narrated in Alamgir Kabir’s highly educated upper-class English over the montage of the close-ups of her face intercut with an image of a crying child running away and a montage of the extreme close-up of her eye, punctuated with the sound of a round of shots, alluding to the execution of her family following the rape. The effect of the sequence is jarring in its extreme stylization tending toward abstraction. The disheveled long black hair in sharp contrast with the skin (emphasized by the black and white cinematography), the sideways glances: these visual signifiers fully conform to the iconography of *birangona*, which emerged immediately after the war. Nayanika Mookherjee powerfully describes this mode of representation: “The face stands in as a marker for the shame and the inner, muted pain of rape. The body is thus facified, where the face is reduced to a physiognomic likeness and becomes a symbol of the suffering the body hides. . . . S. Mulgaokar evocatively describes the face of the *birangona* as one ‘where neither forgiveness nor pain nor memory can ever enter. It’s a face at the very edge of suffering—a suffering denied its own understanding.’”⁷⁶

Yet the images in *Stop Genocide* also differ significantly from the most iconic image of a *birangona*—a photograph by Naibuddin Ahmed, published in the *Washington Post*, which depicts a woman whose face is covered with her disheveled hair and her crossed, bangle-clad fists.⁷⁷ Unlike Ahmed’s photograph, the woman in Raihan’s film is not completely anonymous or isolated: although we do not hear her speak, the film still tells her story, positioning her in the refugee camp within a community of survivors. The silence of the traumatized woman is further thematized in the second sequence, at the end of the film, with the young girl who is new to the camp and seemingly unable to speak. Although the girl isn’t explicitly treated as a rape victim, the film’s foregrounding of sexual violence and its traumatic impact leads us to assume this was her case as well—for which we would have every reason given the actual history of the war.

It would be easy to read this sequence merely as an example of the aestheticization of this young, silent, nameless woman, for whom the narrative voice-over speaks as the sequence of a series of shots of her beautiful face allows audiences

to project their own ideas and fantasies of victimhood, suffering, and sexual violence. Her anonymity seems to make it even easier to perceive her as an allegory of the traumatized nation, especially when the narrator refers to her as “merely one of millions,” depriving her of agency or individuality. Her diminishment as a particular seems to be entailed by the overall framing of a film that features other silent women, armed men, and a Marxist historical analysis.⁷⁸

CONCRETE UNIVERSALS OF SOCIALIST WAR

I would argue that the sequence depicting the young girl produces a much more complex effect on the audience, one that allows for multiple coexisting interpretations. Lingering on her image creates a series of contradictory effects: the focus on her unreadable face lasts long enough for viewers to register their own reactions and expectations, prompted, in part, by the questions the narrator repeatedly poses to her (with the violence that comes from being in the interrogator’s place). We become uncomfortably aware of our own desire to know her, place her, identify her—as her image acquires further visual specificity through its multiple angles and attention to the smallest changes in her facial expression. This technique brings out the contradictory nature of such spectatorial desires, foregrounding, even if unintentionally, the irreducibility of her experience to the forms of knowledge that cinema can provide, evoking Édouard Glissant’s notion of a “right to opacity”—that is, accepting unknowability as a form of resistance to reducing, normalizing, and assimilating the singularity of experience.⁷⁹ We become aware of our urge to know—and of the ultimate impossibility and futility of such knowledge.

The duration also disturbs the calm with which the image assumes allegorical status, as we keep returning to the material situation of the girl. As the narrator lists her possible religious identities, a tactic that seems at first to be part of the allegorizing process, the list, as it goes on, begins to disallow a simple equivalence. The indeterminacy and multiplicity of her possible identifications counter the nationalist discourse of certainty, so crucial for the war discourses. If we do not have clear identitarian markers, how can we separate “us” from “them”? As the narrator proposes that the girl is “one of . . . seventy five millions,” he further disturbs the allegorizing move, inscribing her instead within what Ranabir Samaddar calls “a concrete universal” (“a coexistence of singularities in a fold, of dialogues and contentions, of power and resistance, of particular desires toward universality, of the persistence of a spectrum of locality, region and the nation”) as a postcolonial predicament.⁸⁰ Raihan’s tactic thus differs in crucial ways from the standard audiovisual representation of a *birangona*, which tends to emphasize the impossibility of integrating these women war heroes into the postwar community of Bangladesh, their cinematic narratives ending in madness or suicide (in Sukhdev’s *Nine Months to Freedom*, for example, a survivor of multiple rapes appears only briefly onscreen, and the film concludes with a confirmation of her death after the footage was shot).

This difference in the social significance of *birangona* in the film is crucial as it ties in to the subsumption of her story, which deprives her of individuality; this is where the critique of liberal modernity presses on the narrative of “the oppressed,” for it is precisely the failure of liberal modernity to stand up to imperialist/capitalist oppression that makes the subjective individual story impossible without making it bathetic. By drowning it in the sea of other such stories, just as individual death is subsumed under millions of dead bodies in the genocidal war, we, dialectically, mark the space of solidarity and collective action, transcending the individual bravery of the young lions. If the sheer scale of oppression and exploitation, historically and geographically, is what robs her of an individuated story, it is also this scale that, Raihan wagers, provides the possibility of the revolutionary collectivity required to take on this struggle. Only such revolutionary collectivity can be mobilized to fight—as was painfully clear to the East Bengalis struggling for independence when they were drastically outgunned not only by Pakistan but by Pakistan’s Western supporters. It is crucial to the girl’s identity that her sequence ends in the call for solidarity: she is included in the millions of the oppressed who can be liberators and revolutionaries, the international rising up against all oppression, and its particular instantiation embodied in the Bangladesh War of Liberation—liberation that depends on solidarity that is based not on shared identities or individual experiences but precisely the dialectic of the “concrete universal.”

Something similar applies to the treatment of the old woman I mentioned earlier. When the narrator poses the question about what could possibly empower this old woman to flee her home and walk for hundreds of miles, a montage responds: advancing tanks, rivers full of dead bodies. But it is not just the horror that punctuates this sequence: as the camera continues to follow her uncannily determined movement through space, one is left with an image of a deeply wounded but strikingly resilient and resolute people. It evokes the beggars in Ousmane Sembene’s *Xala* (1976), another film that played at Tashkent and across the broader socialist Third-Worldist festival circuit. The people in Sembene’s film are also under the ban of various forms of legal and economic oppression but remain resilient and resistant and are the ultimate agents of history in that film’s political critique of postcoloniality. *Xala* is populated by mostly unnamed, crippled figures who use their arms and sticks for support in moving yet are also continuously in motion, seized by a relentless urge to act: dispossessed of their land, removed by the police and the military to the outskirts of the city, they are determined to return, to confront the guilty, and demand retribution. These are people bearing the chronic marks of the violence of postcolonial modernization, which leaves them behind—where they become agents of the revolt of the “Wretched of the Earth,” which occurs on the margins and not through the agency of a party. The resilience one sees in the old woman in *Stop Genocide* is so uncanny that it cannot be contained within the usual patriarchal associations of femininity with natural endurance and preservation of life that runs through the cinema of armed struggle. The use

value of this resilience in the discourse on the preservation of national identity and culture is exceeded by that margin of uncanniness, *Unheimlichkeit*—literally, un-homeness—which signals that here we have a transition to a socialist ideology of struggle against transnational conditions of oppression, a dimension of history transcending Bangladesh. It is a struggle that continues even after the genocide is stopped and independence is achieved. Raihan's film, then, like Sembene's, continues to resonate not as a historical document but as a contemporary one.

Placing the film within this Marxist framework and providing a different reading of its depiction of gender is not a way of neatly resolving the film's problems from the feminist perspective, but it does demonstrate the push-and-pull of coexisting narratives at work in the text. In other words, if the socialist framework does not fully transcend the cultural and religious legacies of patriarchy so evident in these representations, it does at times exceed its boundaries by pointing to the utopian possibilities beyond what is imaginable within the framework of liberal modernity, coalescing around the moments of historical breaks—even if these possibilities that tend to be quickly foreclosed while the legacies of patriarchy, on the contrary, reemerge with greater force. And despite its emphasis on historical analysis, the film is surprisingly complicit in the total obfuscation of another history and another violent trauma embedded in the 1971 war, one much closer to Raihan's home than all the ones alluded to in the film: the 1947 Partition, when Bengal was first divided. While we can see an indirect allusion to this history in the segment taking place in one of the Mint Towns, which presents the specter of pre-Partition unity, the trauma of Partition itself (which was linked to many similar experiences of violence, including sexual violence) is markedly absent.⁸¹ Of course, as Mookherjee notes, "to raise the specter of Partition today is to betray the cause of secularism or to acknowledge the power of communalism, as a large segment of the Bengali Muslim middle classes and rich peasants swung toward the Partition in the 1940s, leading to the creation of Pakistan."⁸² The secular Marxist ideology of Raihan (as well as many of his peers) thus contributed to the suppression of this particular memory in a way that is consistent with the nationalist discourses on Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh alike.⁸³

TRAGIC ENDINGS

Despite this complicity with official ideology of the liberation movement, *Stop the Genocide*'s form of nationalist discourse was sufficiently distinct from the official state articulation to be rejected by the new Bangladesh government. Several Bangladeshi film producers and intellectuals even campaigned to ban the film right after it was made, pointing to the opening image of Lenin and the pointed absence of Kheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Liberation War hero and leader of independent Bangladesh.⁸⁴ According to the recollections of MA Khayer, who in 1971 was in charge of the Film Division of the Mujibnagar Government's Information Ministry,

it was only after a “secret screening” of the film in India to a group of Bangladeshi and Indian politicians that the film was approved. Indira Gandhi was so personally moved by the film that she had it distributed by India’s Films Division.⁸⁵ Raihan was asked by the Bangladeshi government to make another film, and he used the budget to make three more documentaries with Kabir and Babul Choudhury. The films, however, apparently disappeared on their way from Calcutta to Dhaka. Raihan himself was killed less than a year after making this film while looking for his missing brother Shahidullah Kaiser, an eminent writer and intellectual, who had been seized during the war in the “collaborator-infested Mirpur suburb of Dhaka.” Neither man’s body was ever found.⁸⁶

The fate of socialism in Bangladesh was no less tragic. While Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the first prime minister vowed to establish an independent nation founded on the four principles of secularism, nationalism, socialism, and democracy, his rule quickly evolved into “Mujibism, which was a mixture of populism and personality cult.”⁸⁷ Although he pronounced a general amnesty for the Pakistani collaborators, some forty thousand of whom had been arrested soon after the war, no one affiliated with the leftist parties was released.⁸⁸ By 1974, in the midst of an enormous famine, Sheikh Mujibur instituted a one-party rule, and by 1975, after a series of coups and countercoups, General Ziaur Rehman became head of state. Military rule extended to 1990, marked by Islamization, trade liberalization, an increase in foreign aid and debt, and the growth of NGOs.⁸⁹ Despite its original geopolitical alignments, Bangladesh radically changed its allegiances from the Non-Aligned Movement and toward the Saudi-centered Organization of Islamic Cooperation.⁹⁰ With these changes came a different mode of war commemoration. While Raihan and Kabir undertook several projects aimed at documenting the war and its aftermath, Raihan’s death marked the end of state support for such documentary film production, along with various other commemorative projects. Although some fiction films of the early and mid-1970s still dealt with this topic (albeit in a considerably more melodramatic and nationalist vein), after the 1975 coup, virtually no film depicted the war until the 1990s. The political shifts in the government raised the already high stakes of such a charged topic, which discouraged filmmakers from pursuing projects dealing with the war or its direct legacies.⁹¹ As film scholar Zakir Hossain Raju puts it in deceptively simple terms, “by 1975, the genre [had] lost its popular appeal.”⁹²

During the Mujibism era of the 1970s, the Tashkent festival continued to be a major site for the exhibition of Bangladeshi cinema, screening most of its significant fiction productions of the period, including virtually all of the fiction war films and hosting several of its most important stars, directors, and critics.⁹³ Tashkent was probably the only significant international exhibition space of Bangladeshi cinema at this time. For instance, the two most famous Bangladeshi actresses—sisters Shuchanda (Kohinoor Akhtar), the widow of Zahir Raihan, and Babita (Farida Akhtar Poppy)—were frequent and much celebrated guests at the

festival. In their frequent interviews, the sisters' personal stories were intimately linked to their country's traumatic history. By implication, the role cinema played in the history of the people's resistance movement was kept alive at Tashkent. The revolutionary movement's symbolic legacy, according to Soviet critics, survived in their performances as well as in their offscreen histories, even if the films would otherwise be seen as apolitical. Shuchanda's emphasis on tragic performances as "best responding to the conditions of life for the people of Bangladesh" fueled a reading of folkloric romantic films as political allegories of resistance in the face of historical trauma.⁹⁴

This broader historical and cultural context of attempts to inscribe the narrative of the Liberation War into the broader framework of communist internationalist solidarity points to an additional question related to the centrality of the representation of war and armed resistance in the socialist context: the problem of how the public memory of war and the integration of traumatic experiences were transformed in postwar everyday life. Civic commemorations in socialist states (as elsewhere) have tended toward grandiosity and a heroic narrative arc determined by the centrality of the "leaders" to victory, which is in turn treated as a historical inevitability. These official acts of remembrance stand in sharp contrast to the actual experiences of everyday people's adjustments to postwar life, pointing to the frequent incommensurability of the two. In the postwar (postrevolutionary, postliberation) context, the pathos of unity and of the total fusion of the personal and public/collective, as conveyed by Raihan and other war filmmakers, are often frustrated and rendered futile by the routine of reconstruction, which is often nearly as brutal as the war itself yet considerably more difficult to exalt. The liberatory, transformative affects that characterize the intensity of the struggle prove ephemeral, and the promises of leadership are forgotten.

Here, an extension of the socialist cinema of armed struggle—films that explicitly explore the multiple psychic and cultural effects of these experiences and address the problem of war as part of peacetime—often offered a sharp contrast to the other forums of public commemoration. Socialist cinema, at its best, provided a rare public imaginary in which to articulate the continuous stress placed on subjects who carried both the burdens of survival and the burdens of reconstruction. This is why, as we saw in chapter 5 in my discussions of films by Maldoror, Shepitko, and Djebbar, cinema dealing with armed struggle proved to be such a rich field for women filmmakers—and vice-versa. In the cinema of armed struggle—films that explicitly explore the multiple psychic and cultural effects of these experiences and address the problem of war as part of peacetime—there is a sharp contrast to other forms of public commemoration by the visual density of the memory of the war inherent to the film form. For the Soviet Union, war was an experience that allowed for fusion of the public and the personal/intimate; here, art (including cinema) could fulfill its function as truly "popular"—genuinely heartfelt, full of sincere pathos, and a liberating experience—in a way that could not only serve the

state's objectives but also allow for a much broader range of liberatory possibilities.⁹⁵ As Samir Weiner asserts, "the supra-class, cross-ethnic aspect of the myth provided the polity with a previously absent integrating theme and folded large groups previously excluded into the body politic."⁹⁶ A strong case for the fusion of differences came out of the war; the effect was, indeed, a platform in the collective memory that supported a much wider and inclusive imaginary of a socialist polity, which could assert the legitimacy of diverse groups and their respective identities without threatening the hegemonic state formation. In this way, socialist cultural institutions could promote an imaginary in which the agency awarded to the individuals under the overall direction of the state made cinematic engagement with the memories and imaginaries of armed struggle so powerful and yet, to the state, nonthreatening.

Cinema provided one of the symbolic spaces for such engagement not only nationally but also internationally: shown together and forming a shared representational space at a festival like Tashkent, these films articulated a vision of international cross-racial, cross-ethnic solidarity that dubbed over the once potent vision—in the 1920s and 1930s—of international proletariat solidarity. Cinema not only offered a powerful historical and political education for viewers but functioned in many cases as a direct call for action in support of ongoing armed struggles—as well as justifications for external military aid. In its shared historiography, it proposed a general narrative of the postcolonial condition that put it in the historical trajectory of socialist development (albeit one that granted the Soviet side a privileged position). In the case of Japanese cinema, it provided the socialist world with a rare intervention in the cinema of nuclear weaponry, which, in socialist discourse, was an omnipresent threat yet one oddly absent from visual culture. Finally, cinema provided a living form of commemoration; unlike, say, an architectural monument or a parade, cinema was narratively saturated enough to reflect the shifting ideologies of real life—both on terms dictated by state power and in those written by the agency of the people, whose real experiences were legitimized onscreen. There, experiences—both traumatic and, at times, empowering—were recapitulated, their aftermath teased out, enacting, at times, a genuine affective solidarity.

Yet the traumatic power of the war topos made it a complicated basis for the inevitable reconciliation with postwar needs, challenging not just the Soviet Union but all of the socialist world to build some kind of normality. The continuous—and enormously expensive—militarization had correspondingly enormous costs on psychic, social, and cultural life of the socialist world, manifested as an enduring excess of violence and military discipline that seemed to give no place for peacetime, while exacting a high human toll in continual war-making. It was not only the Soviet Union that got caught up in an arms race. As my analysis of the centrality of the tropes of warfare and armed struggle to the cinemas far beyond the Soviet Union demonstrates—and as we are all sadly aware—this

predicament bedeviled Arab and African socialisms, too, with an elite predator class all too often developing in tandem with the military to exploit the wealth of new and supposedly socialist nation-states. The logic of war imposed on the postwar social organization meant that prisons served as a “natural” continuation of the military regime, putting the state’s elite increasingly at odds with the worldview and desires of its citizens—or, for that matter, with the emancipatory vision of Marx or Fanon. Overall, cinema’s continuous affirmation of the ethos of armed struggle and war’s immanence within the socialist world played a vital and malign role in normalizing violence and suffering—what Jean Franco in relation to Latin America refers to as “cruel modernity”—even as it was intended to combat it.⁹⁷ When different forms of “progressive” armed struggle, from partisan struggle to popular revolt, were domesticated in the form of the socialist “people’s army,” with its own infrastructure and interests, it quickly absorbed individual and collective agency into the body of the state (of which the military is the representative), thus legitimizing a permanent state of emergency that empowered the most violent—paradoxically, reproducing the very conditions that popular insurgencies had originally revolted against.

CONCLUSION

The prioritization of war and militarization had an enormous impact on the lives of the citizens of the socialist bloc, as well as on international geopolitics in the 1970s. The fate of socialism in Bangladesh as I have sketched it is just one example: although massive Soviet military support was crucial for Bangladesh’s victory, the famine that devastated the country after the war proved of little concern to the former allies. Thus, during the first four months of its existence, Bangladesh received economic aid worth US\$142 million from India, but only US\$6 million from the Soviet Union. Eventually, Indian aid decreased dramatically, leaving the newly independent country still devastated, providing further motivation for the fickle leaders to look for political and economic alliances elsewhere. All over Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the 1970s, the money to solve such problems came increasingly from loans offered by the IMF and the World Bank. These loans came with conditions. Thus, in building crippling international debts into the very foundations of the new struggling economies, the stage was set for ferocious privatizations, freezing of wages, and a flow of money out of Third World countries into First World banks. Domestically, the leadership turned their economic priorities toward neoliberal reform.⁹⁸

By the late 1970s, the Soviet Union was the largest supplier of arms, military and intelligence training, and energy products to the Global South, virtually replacing all other forms of aid to Asia, Africa, and Latin America (with the exception of education and professional training). Yet this proved to be as ineffective as it was unsustainable. By the mid-1970s, the Soviet Union’s military budget

was approximately \$200 billion, at least \$100 billion less than the United States.⁹⁹ These numbers constituted less than 7 percent of the GDP of the US, whereas for the USSR, they added up to 15 percent of its economy, while the GNP, per capita income, and labor productivity were less than half of those of the United States.⁹⁹ Soviet interventionism infamously dead-ended in the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Over the course of the 1980s, internationalist rhetoric within the Soviet bloc was replaced with competing nationalist discourses, while its aid programs withered away. As so many scholars have argued, the Afghan war precipitated the collapse of the USSR, the end of the socialist bloc, and the Cold War; but this end did not bring us closer to world peace. Instead, as Samir Amin, a lifelong, fierce critic of Soviet state socialism and one of the leading intellectuals of the Third World(ism), concludes in his personal memoir-cum-political-history of the twentieth century, with all its failures, moral and political, rather than enforcing a Cold War bipolarity, Soviet-led socialist internationalism enabled “from 1945 to 1990 a ‘multipolar’ organization of the world.”¹⁰⁰ The socialist cinemas of armed struggle, the outlines of which I have drawn here, provide us with a powerful record of this multipolar world—a body of work that fully reflected and, in many cases, attempted to negotiate many of its key internal contradictions, conflicting agendas, and shared aspirations. The same is true, more generally, of the broader subject of this book—world socialist cinema of the late Cold War period, into which the Tashkent festival provided a particularly effective aperture.

Not many of the films mentioned or discussed here have achieved global circulation in our present day—as evidenced by the lack of subtitles, whether official or fan-made, available even when one locates copies of the films themselves. Some are lost together with the whole archives of their countries. Others continue to be watched around the world—in some places and times as nationalist propaganda or as objects of nostalgia; in others as kitsch or objects of ridicule; in still others as illustrations of communist propaganda and documents of atrocities; and in still others as a source of political inspiration. To me, as time goes on, they continue to present endless moral and political dilemmas, whose ongoing relevance urges us to seek an alternative to a post-Cold War triumphalist narrative that has done nothing to address these dilemmas—in fact, has obscured them. To undo the epistemic regime of the Cold War, whose political rhetoric is still predominant within both former superpowers and whose effects impact the rest of the world daily, we have to interrogate this history. And like much of history, interrogation often provides fewer answers than questions. But world socialist cinema continues to offer a unique archive and record of that history, a record that we can turn to in our ongoing collective task of making sense of this past—as we continue to seek new alliances, affinities, and solidarities of the global present.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. See Rossen Djagalov and Masha Salazkina, "Tashkent '68: A Cinematic Contact Zone," *Slavic Review* 75, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 279; and Rossen Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema between the Second and the Third Worlds* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020).
2. Paul Stronski, *Tashkent: Forging a Soviet City, 1930–1966* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010), 253.
3. Si-Lan Chen, *Footnote to History* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1984), 295.
4. Chen, 295.
5. Chen, 295.
6. Chen, 296.
7. Chen, 296.
8. Adeeb Khalid, *Islam after Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 232.
9. Kate A. Baldwin, *Beyond the Color Line and the Iron Curtain: Reading Encounters between Black and Red, 1922–1963* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 93.
10. Stronski, *Tashkent*, 255.
11. For more on Chen, see Yunxiang Gao, *Arise, Africa! Roar, China! Black and Chinese Citizens of the World in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).
12. Masha Salazkina, "Defeats That Were Almost Victories: Jay Leyda's (Soviet) Archives," in *Histories of Film Histories* (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, forthcoming).
13. See Mikhail Tsvigun, "K 90-letiiu diplomata i pisatel'ia Sarvara Alimdzhanovicha Azimova, 1923–1994: Missiia v Livan," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, no. 5 (May 2013): 192–95; and Igor' Khalevinskii, "Nastavnik pakistanskogo prem'era," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, no. 5 (May 2013): 196–98.

14. For more on Jumblatt and progressive Arab cinema, see Jeremy Randall, “Affective Alternative to Sectarianism in Maroun Baghdadi’s Documentaries,” in *Cinema of the Arab World: Contemporary Directions in Theory and Practice*, ed. Terri Ginsburg and Chris Lippard (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 285–90.

15. Sarvar Azimov, “Iasnymi glazami smotret’ v litso miru,” *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 5 (May 1984): 5–6.

16. Stronski, *Tashkent*, 235.

17. Stronski, 253. Elena Razlogova, “An Air Map for World Cinema: Aeroflot as an Infrastructure for Cinematic Internationalism,” *Russian Review* 80, no. 4 (Oct. 2021): 665–66; Masha Kirasirova, “Building Anti-colonial Utopia: The Politics of Space in Soviet Tashkent in the ‘Long 1960s,’” in *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties: Between Protest and Nation-Building*, ed. Chen Jian et al. (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018), 53–62.

18. Djalalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism*, 65–111; Elena Razlogova, “Cinema in the Spirit of Bandung: The Afro-Asian Film Festival Circuit, 1957–1964,” in *The Cultural Cold War and the Global South: Sites of Contest and Communitas*, ed. Kerry Bystrom, Monica Popescu, and Katherine Zien (New York: Routledge, 2021), 111–29.

19. For more on Iarmatov, see Kirasirova, “Building an Anti-colonial Utopia,” 60–61.

20. Russian State Archive of Literature and the Arts, Moscow (hereafter RGALI), f. 2918, op. 6, d. 28, l. 2.

21. Kamil Iarmatov, *Vozvrashchenie: Kniga vospominanii* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1980), 257–58.

22. Djalalov gives a representative list of African political figures who were also writers (of both fiction and nonfiction): Leopold Senghor (president of Senegal), Marcelino dos Santos (vice president of Mozambique), Agostinho Neto (president of Angola), Kwame Nkrumah (president of Ghana), Julius Nyerere (president of Tanzania), Jomo Kenyatta (president of Kenya), Sekou Toure (president of Guinea), and Amilcar Cabral (leader of the Guinea-Bissau independence movement). Djalalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism*, 42. For a different articulation of this argument, which traces its origins to the Persianate literary culture, see the introduction to Samuel Hodgkin, *Red Nightingales: The Poetics of Eastern Internationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2024).

23. Djalalov and Salazkina, “Tashkent ’68”; Djalalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism*; Elena Razlogova, “The Liberation Politics of Live Translation: Global South Cinemas in Soviet Tashkent,” *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* 59, no. 4 (Summer 2020): 183–88.

24. For a detailed discussion of this, see 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), 88–98.

25. Djalalov and Salazkina, “Tashkent ’68.” The notion of the contact zone is borrowed from Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 4–5.

26. Harry Harootunian, “‘Memories of Underdevelopment’ after Area Studies,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 20, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 7–35.

27. My understanding of the categories of socialism and the socialist world coincides with the recent historical formulations as articulated in, for example, James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung’s introduction to *Alternative Globalizations*:

Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World, ed. James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 1–2; James Mark and Tobias Rupprecht's "The Socialist World in Global History: From Absentee to Victim to Co-producer," in *The Practice of Global History: European Perspectives*, ed. Matthias Middell (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 81–84; and James Marks and Paul Betts's *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).

28. See Kodwo Eshun and Ros Gray, "The Militant Image: A Ciné-Geography," *Third Text* 25, no. 1 (2011): 1–12.

29. See Stephen Lovell, "Communist Propaganda and Media in the Era of the Cold War," in *The Cambridge History of Communism*, vol. 3, *Endgames? Late Communism in Global Perspective, 1968 to the Present*, ed. Juliane Fürst, Silvio Pons, and Mark Selden (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 362.

30. Régis Debray, "Socialism: A Life-Cycle," *New Left Review*, no. 46 (July–August 2007): <https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii46/articles/regis-debray-socialism-a-life-cycle>.

31. Some examples in different geographic contexts, in addition to those already mentioned, include works by Marsha Siefert, Ros Gray, and Mariano Mestman.

32. See Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*; and Marina Kosinova, "Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia sovet'skoi kinematografii v gody ottepli," *Sovremennye issledovaniia sotsial'nykh problem* 50, no. 6 (2015): 631–48.

33. Paul Gilroy, *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture beyond the Color Line* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 272.

34. See Łukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021).

35. Samir Amin, *The Long Revolution of the Global South: Toward a New Anti-Imperialist International* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2019), 42.

36. Mark and Rupprecht, "The Socialist World in Global History," 86.

37. Paul R. Josephson, *An Environmental History of Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 185.

38. For work that influenced this sense of periodization, see Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2007); Vijay Prashad, *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South* (London: Verso, 2014); Amin, *The Long Revolution*; Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Sergey Radchenko, eds., *The End of the Cold War and the Third World: New Perspectives on Regional Conflict* (New York: Routledge, 2011); and Timothy Nunan, *Humanitarian Invasion: Global Development in Cold War Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

39. For exemplary scholarship that represents such exciting new work, in addition to the already mentioned work by Djagalov, Razlogova, Popescu, and Kirasirova, see Kay Dickinson, *Arab Cinema Travels: Transnational Syria, Palestine, Dubai and Beyond* (London: BFI, 2016); Caroline Moine, *Screened Encounters: The Leipzig Documentary Film Festival, 1955–1990*, trans. John Barrett (New York: Berghahn, 2018); Rasha Salti and Gabrielle Chomentowski, eds., *Saving Bruce Lee: African and Arab Cinema in the Era of Soviet Diplomacy* (Berlin: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2017); Gabrielle Chomentowski, "African Cinemas: The Soviet Experience after Decolonization," *Le temps des médias* 26, no. 1 (2016): 111–25; Gabrielle Chomentowski, "Filmmakers from Africa and the Middle East at VGIK during

the Cold War,” *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* 13, no. 2 (2019): 189–98; Ros Gray, *Cinemas of the Mozambican Revolution: Anti-colonialism, Independence and Internationalism in Filmmaking, 1968–1991* (London: Boydell and Brewer, 2020); Elidor Mëhilli, “Globalized Socialism, Nationalized Time: Soviet Films, Albanian Subjects, and Chinese Audiences across the Sino-Soviet Split,” *Slavic Review* 77, no. 3 (2018): 611–37; Tina Mai Chen, “Film and Gender in Sino-Soviet Cultural Exchange, 1949–1969,” in *China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949–Present*, ed. Thomas P. Bernstein and Hua-Yu Li (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), 421–45; Simon Shen and Cho-kiu Li, “The Cultural Side-Effects of the Sino-Soviet Split: The Influence of Albanian Movies in China in the 1960s,” *Modern China Studies* 22, no. 1 (Jan. 2015): 215–31; Tereza Stejskalov, ed. *Filmmakers of the World, Unite! Forgotten Internationalism, Czechoslovak Film and the Third World* (Prague: translit.cz, 2017); Patryk Babiracki and Austin Jersild, eds., *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War: Exploring the Second World* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Séan Allan and Sebastian Heiduschke, eds., *Re-imagining DEFA: East German Cinema in Its National and Transnational Contexts* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2016); and Aga Skrodzka, Xiaoning Lu, and Katarzyna Marciniak, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Communist Visual Cultures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

40. See Laura Zoë Humphreys, “Death to Bureaucrats! The Socialist Bureaucrat Comedy from the Soviet Union to Cuba (1928–1966),” *Discourse*, forthcoming.

41. A good example of this is Algeria, which in the early to mid-1960s was the center of the Non-Aligned Movement’s militancy, as determined to forge and support tricontinental internationalist revolutionary solidarity networks as it was to maintain its independence from the superpowers (whether the Soviet Union, the US, or China). Yet, as Jeffrey Byrne demonstrates in *Mecca of Revolution*, its nonalignment geopolitics was anything but neutral, and despite their preference for Yugoslavia and Cuba over the Soviet Union or China, socialist alliances often trumped regional ones, as long as they were part of anti-imperialist solidarity—as was evident in Algeria’s condemning Congolese president Tshombe and arranging for his exclusion from the Second Non-Aligned Movement summit in Cairo in 1964 in support of the communist (and Soviet-supported) Congo-Brazzaville. See Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 253.

42. Mark, Kalinovsky, and Marung, introduction, 6.

43. Michael Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics and the Real Life of States, Societies, and Institutions* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

44. David Featherstone, *Solidarity: Hidden Histories and Geographies of Internationalism* (London: Zed, 2012), 7.

45. Sune Haugbolle, “Entanglement, Global History and the Arab Left,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 51, no. 2 (May 2019): 301–4.

1. SETTING THE STAGE FOR SOVIET AND AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY AT TASHKENT

1. Abdulakhad Abdullaev, “Tashkent-78. Mir, progress, svoboda!” *Sovetskii Ekran*, no. 15 (August 1978): 1.

2. Marijke de Valck, *Film Festivals: From European Geopolitics to Global Cinephilia* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), 16–17.

3. David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 276.
4. See Denise J. Youngblood, *Russian War Films: On the Cinema Front, 1914–2005* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 10.
5. Nikita Markov, “Sistema gosudarstvennogo upravleniia sovetskim kinematografom, 1963–1968” (PhD diss., Russian State Academic University of the Humanities, 2019), 305.
6. See Rossen Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema between the Second and the Third Worlds* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020), 153.
7. Djagalov, 152–58.
8. RGALI, f. 3159, op. 1, ed. khr. 18, l. 1–19.
9. Marina Kosinova, “Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia sovetskoi kinematografii v gody Ottepeli,” *Sovremennye issledovaniia sotsial’nykh problem* 50, no. 6 (2015): 644.
10. Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism*, 153.
11. Elena Razlogova, “Cinema in the Spirit of Bandung: The Afro-Asian Film Festival Circuit, 1957–1964,” in *The Cultural Cold War and the Global South: Sites of Contest and Communitas*, ed. Kerry Bystrom, Monica Popescu, and Katherine Zien (New York: Routledge, 2021), 111–29.
12. *III Kinofestival’ stran Azii i Afriki v Tashkente. Otkliki zarubezhnoi pressy* (Moscow: Soiuz kinematografistov SSSR, 1975), 7–8.
13. Ali Khamraev, in discussion with the author, Feb. 2021.
14. Dzhasur Iskhakov, “Festival’naia mozaika,” *My Tashkent*, June 11, 2020, <https://mytashkent.uz/2020/06/11/festivalnaya-mozaika/>.
15. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1200, l. 2–3.
16. *III Kinofestival’*, 100.
17. RGALI, f. 2936, op. 4, ed. khr. 2662, l. 18–19.
18. See Tobias Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 39–42, 87–124.
19. See Yuri Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism,” *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 448.
20. The use of rock music and youth culture is as visible in the Eastern European New Wave cinemas as it is in their French counterpart.
21. See N. I. Zhulanova, “Molodezhnoe fol’klornoe dvizhenie,” and S. Iu. Rumiantsev, “Liubitel’skii muzykal’nyi teatr. Avtorskaia pesnia,” both in *Samodeiatel’noe khudozhestvennoe tvorchestvo v SSSR: Ocherki istorii, Konets 1950-k—nachalo 1990-kh godov*, ed. L. P. Solntsev et al. (Saint Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1999), 107–33, and 19–72, respectively. See also Theodore C. Levin, *The Hundred Thousand Fools of God: Musical Travels in Central Asia (and Queens, New York)* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).
22. Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 109–20.
23. Iskhakov, “Festival’naia mozaika.”
24. Khamraev, in discussion with the author; see also Elena Razlogova, “Listening to the Inaudible Foreign: Simultaneous Translators and Soviet Experience of Foreign Cinema,” in *Sound, Music, Speech in Soviet and Post-Soviet Cinema*, ed. Lilya Kaganovsky and Masha Salazkina (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 168.

25. The most immediate historical precursors of the Bandung meeting were the Pan-African and Pan-Asian People's Congresses, as well as the Universal Races Congress and the League against Imperialism and other such series of meetings that began to take place as early as 1900. Communist International (Comintern) meetings, starting with its 1919 Second "anticolonial" Congress, promoted shared efforts toward anti-imperialist struggle and national self-determination, albeit by means of a socialist revolution modeled on the Russian one. Different forms of regional alliances and visions for shared geopolitical unity, such as an Arab national project (which included various forms of socialist or communist orientation) also formed part of what we refer to as the Bandung Spirit.

26. Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2007); see also Quỳnh N. Phạm and Robbie Shilliam, eds., *Meanings of Bandung: Postcolonial Orders and Decolonial Visions* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016).

27. N. S. Khrushchev, *Report of the Central Committee to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party: Moscow, Feb. 14, 1956* (London: Soviet News, 1956), 16, 19.

28. Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way: The KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 66.

29. Quoted in Lindiwe Dovey, *Curating Africa in the Age of Film Festivals* (New York: Palgrave, 2015), 92.

30. Aaron Han Joon Magnan-Park, Gina Marchetti, and See Kam Tan, "'Asia' and Asian Cinema," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Asian Cinema*, ed. Aaron Han Joon Magnan-Park, Gina Marchetti, and See Kam Tan (New York: Palgrave, 2018), 1–12.

31. Eleonory Gilburd, *To See Paris and Die: The Soviet Lives of Western Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 32.

32. The largest delegations came from China (1,566), Egypt (725), and India (356), and a total of ninety-six countries represented by small groups, often consisting of students who were already studying in Eastern or Western Europe. See Pia Koivunen, "Friends, 'Potential Friends,' and Enemies: Reimagining Soviet Relations to the First, Second, and Third Worlds at the Moscow 1957 Youth Festival," in *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War: Exploring the Second World*, ed. Patryk Babiracki and Austin Jersild (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 224–25.

33. Gilburd, *To See Paris*, 60.

34. Elena Razlogova, "An Air Map for World Cinema: Aeroflot as an Infrastructure for Cinematic Internationalism," *Russian Review* 80, no. 4 (Oct. 2021): 661–80.

35. Outside the Soviet Union, similar festivals were also becoming increasingly prevalent: on these developments in India, see Jeremiah Wishon, "Peace and Progress: Building Indo-Soviet Friendship," in *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War: Exploring the Second World*, ed. Patryk Babiracki and Austin Jersild (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 253.

36. Anne E. Gorsuch, "'Cuba, My Love': The Romance of Revolutionary Cuba in the Soviet Sixties," *American Historical Review* 120, no. 2 (April 2015): 509.

37. Eren Tasar, *Soviet and Muslim: The Institutionalization of Islam in Central Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 248.

38. Gabriel Figueroa won three consecutive "best cinematography" awards between 1948 and 1951. See *25 Editions of the IFF in Karlovy Vary* (Prague: Czechoslovak Film Institute, 1986), 23.

39. Devendra Kumar, *Fifteen Years of World Cinema at Karlovy Vary, 1946 to 1966* (Delhi: Federation of Film Journalists, 1966), 70–78.
40. Kumar, 14–40.
41. Although the Asian Film Festival in 1956 in Hong Kong included a forum, it was reserved for issues related to the economic concerns of the regional industry players such as coproductions, exchange of resources, and market expansion. See Sangjoon Lee, *Cinema and the Cultural Cold War: US Diplomacy and the Origins of the Asian Cinema Network* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021), 85–89.
42. Jindřiška Bláhová, “Political Significance of a Butcher in Love: The 1956 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, *Marty* (1955) and the Restoration of Contact between Hollywood and Czechoslovakia during the Cold War,” *Studies in European Cinema* 17, no. 2 (2020): 99.
43. Elena Razlogova, “World Cinema at Soviet Festivals: From Cultural Diplomacy to Personal Ties,” *Studies in European Cinema* 17, no. 2 (2020): 143.
44. 25 Editions of the IFF in Karlovy Vary, 18.
45. 25 Editions of the IFF in Karlovy Vary, 10.
46. In the course of the 1960s, this format became increasingly popular, as evidenced by the UNESCO-sponsored seminars as part of the Santa Margherita/Sestri Levante Latin American Film Festival (Rassegna Internazionale) in the early 1960s and the critical roundtables at the Pesaro Festival of New Cinema. See de Valck, *Film Festivals*, 167.
47. Valerii Fomin, “The First International . . . : About the History of the Moscow International Film Festival,” in *Directory of World Cinema: Russia 2*, ed. Birgit Beumers (Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2015), 19–27.
48. Kirill E. Razlogov, “International Film Festivals from Modernism to Post-Postmodern Age,” *The Art and Science of Television/Nauka Televideniia*, no. 16.1 (2020): 38.
49. Caroline Moine, *Screened Encounters: The Leipzig Documentary Film Festival, 1955–1990*, trans. John Barrett (New York: Berghahn, 2018), 47.
50. Moine, 64–65.
51. Additional in-kind exchanges were also supported. As Caroline Moine mentions, in 1965, the Uruguayan president of the Independent Union of Latin American Producers (which did not otherwise favor the Soviet bloc) agreed to send films to Leipzig in exchange for film stock; and in 1976, José Luandino Vieira, an Angolan writer and independence movement fighter (whose novel was adapted by Sarah Maldoror into her famous film *Sambizanga*, 1972), brought back from Leipzig film stock and a camera purchased through this fund. Moine, 160–61.
52. See Tony Cliff, “The 22nd Congress of the Russian Communist Party,” *New Politics*, no. 1 (Winter 1962): 51–65.
53. Jeremy Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 30.
54. Friedman, 30.
55. Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 211.
56. Among the shifts in Soviet tone was Brezhnev’s more conciliatory line toward Third World—especially Latin American—communist parties. After the 1964 Havana Congress of communist parties in Latin America, the Soviet Union ratified its resolutions, pledging

support for armed struggles in six countries: Venezuela, Columbia, Paraguay, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti. This was a gesture toward compromise, a diplomatic acknowledgment of Cuba's leadership in dealing with the communist parties on the continent. Thus, while the Soviet worst-case scenario—de facto alignment of Latin American communist parties with China—was obviated, the Soviet side gave, too, moving toward giving them broader support. See Nicola Miller, *Soviet Relations with Latin America, 1959–1987* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 113; Rafael Pedemonte, “La guerre pour les idées en Amérique latine: Relations politiques et culturelles avec l'Union soviétique: Une approche comparative (Cuba-Chili, 1959–1973)” (Thèse de doctorat, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne—Paris I; Universidad católica de Chile, 2016), 142–43.

57. Natalia Telepneva, “Our Sacred Duty: The Soviet Union, the Liberation Movements in the Portuguese Colonies, and the Cold War, 1961–1975” (PhD diss., London School of Economics, 2014), 149–50.

58. In this sense, it was actually more in line with the earlier Communist International conception of the role of the radical black US intellectuals as the leaders of antiracist progressive liberatory movements, a position advanced by the Soviet Union in the earlier period (1920s–1930s) but that was replaced first by Stalinist antic cosmopolitanism and during the Thaw with the enthusiasm toward postcolonial nations as new fellow travelers on the way to socialism. It was not until the 1970s that the Soviet Union would extend its notion of solidarity back toward the black radicalism in the US (culminating in Angela Davis's visit to Moscow in 1974), amid a rather different political and cultural context.

59. Anne Garland Mahler, *From the Tricontinental to the Global South: Race, Radicalism, and Transnational Solidarity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 21.

60. Robert J. C. Young, “Disseminating the Tricontinental,” in *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties: Between Protest and Nation-Building*, ed. Chen Jian et al. (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018), 520.

61. See Artemy M. Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development: Cold War Politics and Decolonization in Soviet Tajikistan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 511.

62. Mahler, *From the Tricontinental to the Global South*, 77.

63. Young attributes the iconic status of the conference as exemplary of the global 1960s to the use of this aesthetic. See Young, “Disseminating the Tricontinental,” 545.

64. Telepneva, “Our Sacred Duty,” 178–79.

65. See *The Forgotten War* (*La guerra olvidada*, Santiago Álvarez, 1967) on Laos; *Hanoi, March 13* (*Hanoi, Martes 13*, Santiago Álvarez, 1967) on the Vietnam War; *Madina Boé* (José Massip, 1968) on African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) and its leader (and an important participant in the Tricontinental Congress) Amílcar Cabral; and *79 Springs* (*79 Primaveras*, Santiago Álvarez, 1969), a eulogy to Ho Chi Minh. Whereas Álvarez's work has (justifiably) been widely celebrated, Massip's film has been rarely acknowledged as part of the OSPAAAL production, yet it demonstrates perfectly the range of Cuban cinematic engagements in the internationalist hotspots. See Alexsandro de Sousa e Silva, “Os esboços da nação guineense em Madina Boé (1968), de José Massip,” *Significação: Revista de Cultura Audiovisual* 45, no. 50 (2018): 104.

66. Olivier Hadouchi, *La Tricontinental: Cine, utopía e internacionalismo* (Madrid: Museo Centro Nacional de Arte Reina Sofía, 2017), n.p.

67. See Engerman, *The Price of Aid*; Constantin Katsakioris, “Soviet Lessons for Arab Modernization: Soviet Educational Aid towards Arab Countries after 1956,” *Journal of*

Modern European History 8, no. 1 (April 2010): 85–106; and Gabrielle Chomentowski, “Filmmakers from Africa and the Middle East at VGİK during the Cold War,” *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* 13, no. 2 (2019): 189–98.

68. Masha Kirasirova, “The Eastern International: The ‘Domestic East’ and the ‘Foreign East’ in Soviet-Arab Relations, 1917–68” (PhD diss., New York University, 2014), 315.

69. Kirasirova, 333.

70. Byrne, *Mecca of the Revolution*. This same issue would resurface in the late 1960s, when racial tensions shaped many of the internal debates among the factions of national liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau, influencing their geopolitical alliances with the socialist bloc. See Natalia Telepneva, *Cold War Liberation: The Soviet Union and the Collapse of the Portuguese Empire in Africa, 1961–1975* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022).

71. Razlogova, “Cinema and the Spirit of Bandung.”

72. Razlogova, 112.

73. Razlogova, 123.

74. Quoted in Kirasirova, “The Eastern International,” 366–67.

75. Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development*, 20.

76. Kalinovsky, 21.

77. Michael Rouland, “An Historical Introduction,” in *Cinema in Central Asia: Rewriting Cultural Histories*, ed. Michael Rouland, Gulnara Abikeeva, and Birgit Beumers (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 1.

78. See Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014); Oksana Sarkisova, *Screening Soviet Nationalities: Kulturfilms from the Far North to Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016); Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment”; Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); and Douglas T. Northrop, *Veiled Empire: Gender and Power in Stalinist Central Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016).

79. Malek Khouri, *The Arab National Project in Youssef Chahine’s Cinema* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010); Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*, 14, 146.

80. This led Alexander Etkind, for example, to develop the notion of “internal colonization” in relation to the legacy of the Russian Empire within the Soviet Union. See Alexander Etkind, *Internal Colonization: Russia’s Imperial Experience* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011).

81. Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*, 13.

82. See Lisa Lowe, *Intimacies of the Four Continents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015); Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); and Ariella Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (London: Verso, 2019).

83. Gilburd, *To See Paris*, 29–30.

84. For a detailed discussion of this for both the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc at large, see Tereza Stejskalová, ed., *Filmmakers of the World, Unite! Forgotten Internationalism, Czechoslovak Film and the Third World* (Prague: translit.cz, 2017); Katsakioris, “Soviet Lessons for Arab Modernization”; and Lindiwe Dovey, “Listening between the Images: African Filmmakers’ Take on the Soviet Union, Soviet Filmmakers’ Take on Africa,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Communist Visual Cultures*, ed. Aga Skrodzka, Xiaoning Lu, and Katarzyna Marciniak (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 364–84.

85. Maria Belodubrovskaya, *Not According to Plan: Filmmaking under Stalin* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 228.

86. Uzbek was the first Central Asian film industry to be developed, in the 1920s. In the 1940s, during the Second World War, Russian and Ukrainian film production was evacuated East, and the whole film industry was sited in Central Asia (mainly in Kazakhstan but also in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). As a result, by the late 1940s, these areas were fully subsumed into the Soviet cinematic apparatus, but they were run primarily by nonlocal filmmakers. Over time, even as the first cohort of Soviet-trained Central Asian filmmakers (figures such as Kamil Iarmatov, Malik Kaiumov, and Boris Kimiagarov) came to occupy more prominent positions within their republican film studios, they were still indiscriminately assigned projects in studios across the Asian part of the Soviet Union. As script approval was still tasked to the central (Moscow-based) studio, any concern for cultural specificities was watered down or lost under the official hierarchy and the pervasive official censorship. See Rouland, “An Historical Introduction,” 8; and Sharofat Arabova, *Istoriia tadjikskogo kinematografa* (Dushanbe: Institut istorii, arkheologii, etnografii im. A. Donisha, 2014), 71–72.

87. Kirasirova, “The Eastern International,” 376–78.

88. Arabova, *Istoriia tadjikskogo kinematografa*, 154.

89. Arabova, 150.

90. 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), 86–88.

91. Arabova, *Istoriia tadjikskogo kinematografa*, 93.

92. Arabova, 154.

93. The status of some countries could shift between “capitalist” and “developing” (as was the case for India). See Valerii Fomin, *Istoriia kinootrasli v Rossii: Upravlenie, kinoproizvodstvo, prokat* (Moscow: VNIIG VGIK, 2012), 1311.

94. See Fomin, *Istoriia kinootrasli v Rossii*, 1310; and Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, 44–49.

95. Kosinova, “Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia,” 638.

96. Fomin, *Istoriia kinootrasli v Rossii*, 1146.

97. Markov, “Sistema gosudarstvennogo upravleniia,” 49–55.

98. Between 1968 and 1972 more Soviet films were denied release (“shelved”) than during any other period from Stalin’s death to perestroika. See Valerii Fomin, *Polka*, 172.

99. See D. B. Dondurei, “Gumanizm zhanra,” *Kinovedcheskie zapiski*, no. 11 (1991): 82–85; D. A. Khriukin, “‘Zhanr’ kak kliuchevaia problema sovetskogo kinematografa 1968–1985 gg. Gosudarstvo, kinematografisty, zritel’,” *Istoricheskaia i sotsial’no-obrazovatel’naia mysl’* 9, no. 2 (2017): 74–83.

100. See Christina Gerhardt and Sara Saljoughi, eds., *1968 and Global Cinema* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2018).

101. Susana Draper, *1968 Mexico: Constellations of Freedom and Democracy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), ix.

102. See Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, “Towards a Third Cinema: Notes and Experiences for the Development of a Cinema of Liberation in the Third World,” in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Scott MacKenzie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 230–50. The reception of the cinematic

form of the manifesto, *The Hour of the Furnaces* (1968), which was screened at the Pesaro and Cannes festivals that year, likewise crystalized the divisions between the old, Communist Party aligned Left in France, Spain, and Italy from the new “extra-parliamentary” Left associated with the ’68 movement. It was denounced by the communist parties in Europe as “glorifying the quasi-fascist ideology of Peron and Peronismo”—an accusation that had enormous impact on its reception among older communists, who identified themselves with the antifascist struggles. See Mariano Mestman, “Tracing the Winding Road of *The Hour of the Furnaces* in the First World,” in *A Trail of Fire for Political Cinema: “The Hour of the Furnaces” Fifty Years Later*, ed. Javier Campo and Humberto Pérez-Blanco (Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2018), 135–58.

103. “Declaraciones del Cine Latinoamericano en Pesaro,” *Cine Cubano*, no. 49–51 (1968), 84. As the cancellation of Cannes led to pressure to cancel Pesaro, counterpressure came from the Latin American group, which consisted of the leading figures of the new cinema (Fernando Birri, Leon Hirszman, Julio Garcia Espinosa, Alex Viany, Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, Carlos Álvarez, Fernando Solanas) agitating to put the festival on and to make it more radical, in opposition to Cannes. See Mestman, “Tracing the Winding Road,” 6.

104. Moine, *Screened Encounters*, 144.

105. See Malte Hagener, *Moving Forward, Looking Back: The European Avant-Garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919–1939* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007).

106. See Alice Lovejoy, *Army Film and the Avant Garde: Cinema and Experiment in the Czechoslovak Military* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015); Petr Szczepanik, “‘Veterans’ and ‘Dilettantes’: Film Production Culture vis-à-vis Top-Down Political Changes, 1945–1962,” in *Cinema in Service of the State: Perspectives on Film Culture in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, 1945–1960*, ed. Lars Karl and Pavel Skopal (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 71–88; and Dorota Ostrowska, “An Alternative Model of Film Production: Film Units in Poland after World War Two,” in *A Companion to Eastern European Cinemas*, ed. Anikó Imre (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 453–66.

107. See Ignacio del Valle Dávila, *Cámaras en trance: El Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, un proyecto cinematográfico subcontinental* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Cuarto Propio, 2014). The Third World Film Library in Uruguay (1969–73), run by Mario Handler, José Wainer, Walter Achugar, and Mario Jacob (which, despite the name, was engaged in film distribution and exhibition), and subsequently the formation of the Third World Cinema Committee (with meetings in 1973 and 1974), further underscore the connection between the cinematic movements and the Tricontinental political formations. See Mariano Mestman, ed., *Las rupturas del 68 en el cine de América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Akal, 2016); Alfredo Guevara and Raúl Garcés, eds., *Los años de la ira, Viña del Mar 67* (Havana: Ediciones Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, 2007).

108. Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*, 176.

109. See Young, “Disseminating the Tricontinental.”

110. Yuriko Furuhashi, *Cinema of Actuality: Japanese Avant-Garde Filmmaking in the Season of Image Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

2. TASHKENT 1968

1. RGALI, f. 2936, op. 4, ed. khr. 1845, l. 11.

2. Examples include the Indian blockbusters *Ram and Shyam* (*Ram aur Shyam*, Tapi Chanakya, 1967), starring Dilip Kumar; *Affection* (*Mamta*, Asit Sen, 1966), starring Dharmendra (both films would prove to be big hits with the Soviet audience in subsequent years); Ramanand Sagar's *Desire* (*Arzoo*, 1965); *Amrapali* (Lekh Tandon, 1966), a lavish historical epic with an antiwar message starring Sunil Dutt; and two Japanese horror/gothic crowd pleasers, Tokuzō Tanaka's *The Snow Woman* (*Kaidan Yukijoro*, 1968) and Kaneto Shindo's *Black Cat* (*Kuroneko*, 1968).

3. Examples include the Uzbek film *Riders of the Revolution* (*Vsadniki revoliutsii*, Kamil Iarmatov, 1968) and the Azerbaijan film *26 Baku Commissars* (*26 bakinskikh komissarov*, Azhdar Ibragimov, 1966).

4. Tolomush Okeev's *The Sky of Our Childhood* (*Nebo nashego detstva*, Kirgizstan, 1966) and Shaken Aimanov's *Land of the Fathers* (*Zemlia ottsov*, Kazakhstan, 1966). Perhaps surprisingly, the two extremes—the highly staged and overproduced *Makhtumkuli* (Alty Karliev, 1968) and the poetic-realist *The Sky of Our Childhood*—proved to be the foreign critics' favorites. RGALI, f. 2936, op. 4, ed. khr. 1993, l. 1–2.

5. For an overview, see Binayak Bhattacharya, "The Left Encounter: Progressive Voices of Nationalism and Indian Cinema to the 1950s," in *Salaam Bollywood: Representations and Interpretations*, ed. Vikrant Kishore, Amit Sarwal, and Parichay Patra (London: Routledge, 2016), 25–45; and Manishita Dass, "Cinetopia: Leftist Street Theatre and the Musical Production of the Metropolis in 1950s Bombay Cinema," *positions* 25, no. 1 (2017): 101–24.

6. Bhaskar Sarkar, *Mourning the Nation: Indian Cinema in the Wake of Partition* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 175–84.

7. See Amitava Nag, "Chhinnamul: The First Indian Attempt at Neo-realism," *Cinemaazi*, March 25, 2020, www.cinemaazi.com/feature/cinnamul-the-first-indian-attempt-at-neo-realism.

8. An important international player in this process was Marie Seton, a famous UK film critic and activist, a close friend and biographer of Eisenstein's, and a tireless promoter of his films and writings, who lived in India during that period. She brought to India her own reconstruction of Eisenstein's unfinished *Que Viva Mexico*, as well as English translations of Eisenstein's writings, which further enhanced his status as a canonical figure for film societies all over India, as well as for the many independent filmmakers who were shaped by them. See V. K. Cherian, *India's Film Society Movement: The Journey and Its Impact* (London: Sage, 2016), 55.

9. Although Ghatak would remain a committed Marxist throughout his life, just a few years after Pudovkin's visit he would break away from the Communist Party and not cultivate any further direct contacts with the Soviets. See Diamond Oberoi Vahali, *Ritwik Ghatak and the Cinema of Praxis: Culture, Aesthetics and Vision* (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 15.

10. Paul M. McGarr, "'A Rather Tedious and Unfortunate Affair': The *Rahi* Saga and the Troubled Origins of Indo-Soviet Cinematic Exchange," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 36, no. 1 (2016): 13–14.

11. McGarr, 6–8.

12. Sudha Rajagopalan, "Emblematic of the Thaw: Early Indian Films in Soviet Cinemas," *South Asian Popular Culture* 4, no. 2 (2006): 85. On *Awara*'s global circulation, see Dimitris Eleftheriotis and Dina Iordanova, "Introduction: Indian Cinema's Global Reach," *South Asian Popular Culture* 4, no. 2 (2006): 79–82.

13. Neepa Majumdar, “Importing Neorealism, Exporting Cinema: Indian Cinema and Film Festivals in the 1950s,” in *Global Neorealism: The Transnational History of a Film Style*, ed. Robert Sklar and Saverio Giovacchini (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012), 181.

14. See Sudha Rajagopalan, *Indian Films in Soviet Cinemas: The Culture of Movie-Going after Stalin* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 12–13; Ran Ma, “A Genealogy of Film Festivals in the People’s Republic of China: ‘Film Weeks’ during the ‘Seventeen Years’ (1949–1966),” *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 14, no. 1 (2016): 49–50; and Alice Lovejoy, “František Vlačil’s China Notebook,” in *Filmmakers of the World, Unite! Forgotten Internationalism, Czechoslovak Film and the Third World*, ed. Tereza Stejskalová (Prague: translit.cz, 2017), 185. In the 1980s, with China’s reopening to international cinema, the film reemerged, its popularity intact. See Krista Van Fleit Hang, “‘The Law Has No Conscience’: The Cultural Construction of Justice and the Reception of *Awara* in China,” *Asian Cinema* 24, no. 2 (Oct. 2013): 141–59.

15. For more on this, see Samhita Sunya, *Sirens of Modernity: World Cinema via Bombay* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2022).

16. Rajagopalan, *Indian Films in Soviet Cinemas*. For an analysis of the utopian impulse via IPTA aesthetics in the song-and-dance sequences in these films, see Dass, “Cinetopia.”

17. Madhu Jain, *The Kapoors: The First Family of Indian Cinema* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2005), 15.

18. K. A. Abbas, *I Am Not an Island: An Experiment in Autobiography* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1977), 228–29.

19. Marina Kosinova, “Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia sovetskoi kinematografii v gody Otpepli,” *Sovremennye issledovaniia sotsial’nykh problem* 50, no. 6 (2015): 640; Severyan Dyakonov, “L’URSS in cerca di attenzioni: l’Esportazione di film sovietici in India negli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta,” *Cinema e Storia*, no. 10 (2021): 105–22.

20. Rini Bhattacharya Mehta, *Unruly Cinema: History, Politics, and Bollywood* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2021), 105. In fact, the organizers of the Tashkent festival made several efforts to include Ray’s films or the filmmaker himself. Ray, however, wasn’t in need of another film festival platform. He thus politely declined these invitations. Although Ray’s *The Big City* (*Mahanagar*, 1963) was in wide release in the late 1960s, his films would largely remain unknown in the USSR except for very narrow circuits of film critics. This only changed in the 1980s, when Naum Kleiman and Davlat Khodonazarov, then the head of the Union of Cinematographers of Tajikistan, were invited to Calcutta to visit the Film Society (in honor of the ninetieth anniversary of Eisenstein) and came back with the idea of starting a film club named after Ray in Dushanbe. Originally housed in the Filmmakers Union building (*Dom Kino*), its inaugural screening was *Song of the Little Road* (*Pathar Panchali*, 1955), which was put on the schedule together with films by Eisenstein and Vertov. There was an attempt to revive the club in 2016, but it ceased to exist in the post-Soviet period. Davlat Khodonazarov, in conversation with the author, Jan. 2021.

21. Mehta, *Unruly Cinema*, 108.

22. Parag A. Amladi, “The Rule and the Exception: Good Offices and Bad in *Bhuvan Shome*,” in *The Enemy Within: The Films of Mrinal Sen*, ed. Sumita S. Chakravarty (London: Flicks, 2000), 22.

23. See Peter Sutoris, *Visions of Development: Films Division of India and the Imagination of Progress, 1948–75* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 165–212. For an

in-depth analysis of the state power in the figurations of Films Division of India (FD), see Priya Jaikumar, *Where Histories Reside: India as Filmed Space* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 75–124.

24. Mrs. Ghandi also directly mediated more politically thorny situations, such as allowing the screening of *Doctor Zhivago* (David Lean, 1965), “with minimum cuts to safeguard the relationship with the Soviet Union,” as the film was based on Boris Pasternak’s famously anti-Soviet novel that had to be smuggled out of the Soviet Union and published in Italy in 1957, making Pasternak a Cold War symbol of resistance to communism. See Rochona Majumdar, “Debating Radical Cinema: A History of the Film Society Movement in India,” *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 3 (2012): 737.

25. Rajagopalan, *Indian Films*, 80.

26. Raj Kapoor’s and K. A. Abbas’s presence at the festival—with Abbas presenting his film *In the Arms of a Bombay Night* (*Bambai Raat Ki Bahun Mein*, 1967) and Raj Kapoor starring in Basu Bhattacharya’s *The Third Vow* (*Teesri Kasam*, 1966)—provided obvious continuity with the 1950s. This was Bhattacharya’s first film, and he would also become a regular at Tashkent throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

27. Another regular at Tashkent was the actor Balraj Sahni, an IPTA and Communist Party activist, the star of *Children of the Earth* and *Two Acres of Land*, and an early participant in Soviet-Indian cinematic exchanges. His brother Bhisham was a famous writer and translator of Russian literature into Indian languages for the Soviet press, who lived for several years in the Soviet Union and whose son studied at VGIK. Bhisham Sahni, *Today’s Past: A Memoir*, trans. Snehal Shingavi (New Delhi: Penguin, 2015).

28. Anastasia Fedorova, “Japan’s Quest for Cinematic Realism from the Perspective of Cultural Dialogue between Japan and Soviet Russia, 1925–1955” (PhD diss., Kyoto University, 2014), 34–45. See also Naoki Yamamoto, *Dialectics without Synthesis: Japanese Film Theory and Realism in a Global Frame* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2020).

29. Fedorova, “Japan’s Quest,” 98.

30. Satsuo Yamamoto, *My Life as a Filmmaker*, trans. Chia-ning Chang (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 72–73.

31. Kyoko Hirano, *Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo: Japanese Cinema under the American Occupation, 1945–1952* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 253.

32. Akira Iwasaki, *Istoriia iaponskogo kino*, trans. V. Grivnin, L. Levin, and B. Raskin (Moscow: Progress, 1966), 180.

33. Quoted in Iwasaki, 166.

34. Michael Baskett, “Japan’s Film Festival Diplomacy in Cold War Asia,” *Velvet Light Trap*, no. 73 (Spring 2014): 7.

35. See Olga V. Solovieva, “The Erased Grave of Dersu Uzala: Kurosawa’s Cinema of Memory and Mourning,” *Journal of Japanese and Korean Cinema* 2, no. 1 (2010): 63–79.

36. Stephen Prince, *A Dream of Resistance: The Cinema of Kobayashi Masaki* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2017), 3.

37. Khodzhauli Narliev, “Sotri sluchainye cherty,” *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 11 (Nov. 1974): 57–67.

38. See, e.g., Baurzhan Nogerbek, “Dva fil’m a Begalina,” in *Kogda dusha ne mozhet molchat’*, ed. Kasym Begalin (Astana: Elorda, 2014), 125; and Oleg Artiukhov, “Sovremennoe kirgizskoe dokumental’noe kino (problem razvitiia)” (PhD diss., VNIIC, 1985), 63.

39. Kaneto Shindo, *Ikite iru kagiri Watashi no Rirekisho* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 2008).
40. Sangjoon Lee, “The Emergence of the Asian Film Festival: Cold War Asia and Japan’s Reentrance to the Regional Film Industry in the 1950s,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema*, ed. Daisuke Miyao (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 226.
41. Lee, 231.
42. Lee, 231.
43. Oguma Eiji, “The Postwar Intellectuals’ View of Asia,” in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History*, ed. Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann (London: Routledge, 2007), 200–212.
44. Eiji.
45. Elena Razlogova, “Cinema in the Spirit of Bandung: The Afro-Asian Film Festival Circuit, 1957–1964,” in *The Cultural Cold War and the Global South: Sites of Contest and Communitas*, ed. Kerry Bystrom, Monica Popescu, and Katherine Zien (New York: Routledge, 2021), 121. Yamamoto, *My Life as a Filmmaker*, 215.
46. Huyen Nga, “Japan’s Documentary Recounts Vietnam’s Images of Days Past,” *Nhan Dan*, Sept. 1, 2015, <https://en.nhandan.vn/japans-documentary-recounts-vietnams-images-of-days-past-post35027.html>.
47. Yamamoto, *My Life as a Filmmaker*, 216.
48. Yamamoto, 216.
49. Peter Berton, “The Japanese Communists’ Rapprochement with the Soviet Union,” *Asian Survey* 20, no. 12 (1980): 1211–12. For an overview of the JPC and the New Left, see Gavin Walker, “Revolution and Introspection” in *The Red Years: Theory, Politics, and Aesthetics in the Japanese ’68*, ed. Gavin Walker (London: Verso, 2020), 4–7.
50. Baskett, “Japan’s Film Festival Diplomacy,” 7; RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1200, l. 22–25.
51. Yamada Kazuo, *Nihon eiga no rekishi to gendai* (Tokyo: Shin Nihon Shuppan-sha, 2003), 197–204.
52. Quoted in Baskett, “Japan’s Film Festival Diplomacy,” 15.
53. Baskett, 15.
54. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1200, l. 26–28.
55. Sangjoon Lee, *Cinema and the Cultural Cold War: US Diplomacy and the Origins of the Asian Cinema Network* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021), 160.
56. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1200, l. 22–25.
57. Walter Z. Laqueur, *The Struggle for the Middle East: The Soviet Union and the Middle East, 1958–68* (London: Routledge, 2017), 139.
58. Viola Shafik, *Arab Cinema: History and Cultural Identity* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2007), 31.
59. Shafik, 31.
60. Ivar Spector, “Soviet Cultural Propaganda in the Middle East,” in *The Middle East in Transition: Studies in Contemporary History*, ed. Walter Z. Laqueur (London: Routledge, 2016), 385–86; Mohamed Heikal, *The Sphinx and the Commissar: The Rise and Fall of Soviet Influence in the Middle East* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 283.
61. See Margaret Litvin, *Hamlet’s Arab Journey: Shakespeare’s Prince and Nasser’s Ghost* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

62. Malek Khouri, *The Arab National Project in Youssef Chahine's Cinema* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 14–15, 53–57.
63. Quoted in Ibrahim Fawal, *Youssef Chahine* (London: BFI, 2001), 88.
64. “Magda—egipetskaia zvezda,” in *Ekran 68/69* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1969), 242–45.
65. For more on the history of the FIAPF in the Cold War context and France’s role in it, see Caroline Moine, “La Fédération internationale des associations de producteurs de films: Un acteur controversé de la promotion du cinéma après 1945,” *Le mouvement social*, no. 243 (2013): 91–103.
66. Anatolii Shakhov, “Arabskoe kino sovetskoi epokhi,” *Fantazii Vostoka*, Sept. 26, 2014, <https://arab-new.ru/news/40/1664>.
67. Shafik, *Arab Cinema*; Kay Dickinson, *Arab Cinema Travels: Transnational Syria, Palestine, Dubai, and Beyond* (London: BFI, 2016).
68. Kay Dickinson, *Arab Film and Video Manifestos: Forty Five Years of the Moving Image amid Revolution* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 26.
69. Samir Farid, “Periodization of Egyptian Cinema,” in *Screens of Life: Critical Film Writing from the Arab World*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Alia Arasoughly (St-Hyacinthe, Quebec: World Heritage Press, 1996), 3.
70. Dickinson, *Arab Film and Video Manifestos*, 43.
71. Titles included Hussein Kamal’s *The Postman* (*Al-Bustagi*, 1968), Salah Abu Seif’s *Cairo 30* (*Al-Qahira 30*, 1966), Tewfiq Saleh’s *The Rebels* (*Al-Mutamarridun*, 1968), Kamal El Sheikh’s *The Saboteurs* (*Al-Mukharribun*, 1967).
72. Farid, “Periodization of Egyptian Cinema,” 12.
73. Karen Dawisha, “Soviet Cultural Relations with Iraq, Syria and Egypt, 1955–70,” *Soviet Studies* 27, no. 3 (July 1975): 431–32.
74. Elena Razlogova, “An Air Map for World Cinema: Aeroflot as an Infrastructure for Cinematic Internationalism,” *Russian Review* 80, no. 4 (Oct. 2021): 661–80.
75. Like other Maghreb countries, Tunisia’s film production before its independence (in 1956) consisted largely of colonial (French) production, which was nonetheless considerable. When the French left, they continued to exercise their monopoly over the film distribution (through block-booking). Meanwhile, the new country was left with virtually no film infrastructure. Shafik, *Arab Cinema*, 20.
76. Shafik, 21.
77. Mariano Mestman, “From Algiers to Buenos Aires: The Third World Cinema Committee (1973–1974),” *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* 1, no. 1 (2002): 40–53. In 1969, Tunisia turned away from socialism toward increasing privatization. The architect of Tunisian socialism, Ahmed Ben Salah, condemned to prison and ten years of hard labor in Tunisia, would escape to Algeria. See Idriss Jebari, “Ben Salah and the Fate of Destourian Socialism in Tunisia in the 1960s,” *Jadaliyya*, Sept. 23, 2020, <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/41752/Ben-Salah-and-the-Fate-of-Destourian-Socialism-in-Tunisia-in-the-1960s>.
78. Mahir Şaul, “FESPACO and Cultural Valorization,” *Black Camera* 12, no. 1 (Fall 2020): 129–132.
79. See K. Maslov, “Ch’ei stanet boginia Tanit?” *Sovetskaia kul’tura*, Oct. 19, 1968, 4. Eastern European directors were often included on the jury of the JCC (Miklos Jansco in 1968, Alexandre Petrovic in 1970, Istvan Dosai in 1976, Kamil Pixa in 1980, and Soviet Grigorii Chukhrai in 1984). Sayda Bourguiba, “Finalités culturelles et esthétiques d’un cinéma arabo-africain en devenir: Les Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage (JCC)” (Thèse de doctorat, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne—Paris I, 2013), 70–74.

80. Tahar Cheriaa, *Écrans d'abondance . . . ou cinémas de libération en Afrique?* (Tunis: STD, 1979), 153.
81. Cheriaa, 126–30.
82. Tahar Cheriaa's interview in the documentary *Tahar Cheriaa: Under the Shadow of the Baobab* (Tahar Chériaa: *A l'Ombre du Baobab*, Mohamed Challouf, 2014).
83. Shafik, *Arab Cinema*, 40.
84. Cheriaa, *Écrans d'abondance*, 157.
85. Khlifi, whose films, while political in their position, largely followed the commercial formulas of Egyptian popular cinema, became a fixture at the Tashkent festival, representing Tunisia in 1968, 1972, and 1974.
86. Syria's first feature, produced by the National Film Organization (NFO), was also screened at Tashkent: *The Truck Driver* (*Sa'iq al-Shahinah*, 1967), directed by Yugoslav Počko Počkovic. Iraqi Khalil Shawqi presented *The Night Watchman* (*Al-Haris*, 1968), a film dealing with the failures of the Iraqi revolution and noted for its realism in terms of class and gender issues. See Shakir Nouri, *À la recherche du cinéma irakien, 1945–1985* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1986), 131–32.
87. Dickinson, *Arab Cinema Travels*, 55.
88. Ahmed Bedjaoui, *Cinema and the Algerian War of Independence: Culture, Politics, and Society* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 93.
89. See Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). Yugoslavia, another key nonaligned player from the late 1950s, was in active dialogue with the nascent Algerian film industry, providing significant support in developing the Cinema School in Algiers (established in 1957) with artistic and technical training, developing film stock for Algerian documentaries in Belgrade, as well as maintaining a film archive of the Algerian struggle. See Mouny Berah, "Algerian Cinema and National Identity," in *Screens of Life: Critical Film Writing from the Arab World*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Alia Arasoughly (St-Hyacinthe, Quebec: World Heritage Press, 1996), 64; and Olivier Hadouchi, *Images of Non-Aligned and Transcontinental Struggles* (Belgrade: MSUB, 2019), xiv.
90. Mariano Mestman, "Tracing the Winding Road of *The Hour of the Furnaces* in the First World," in *A Trail of Fire for Political Cinema: "The Hour of the Furnaces" Fifty Years Later*, ed. Javier Campo and Humberto Pérez-Blanco (Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2018), 135–58.
91. Mestman, "From Algiers to Buenos Aires."
92. Gabrielle Chomentowski, "Filmmakers from Africa and the Middle East at VGIK during the Cold War," *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* 13, no. 2 (2019): 189–90.
93. In 1968, in addition to the two widely celebrated epics by Slim Riad and Lakhdar-Hamina, the festival included a portmanteau film *Hell for a 10 Year Old* (*Al-Jahim fi Sin al-Ashirah*, 1968), which consisted of sketches made by several young filmmakers (Youssef Akika, Sid Ali Mazif, Abderrahmane Bouguermouh, Amar Laskri, and Ghaouti Bendeddouche) depicting the experiences of children during the War of Liberation. The Algerian program in the 1970s would also include several important coproductions (albeit directed by foreigners with little involvement of Algerian crew) such as *Elise or Real Life* (*Élise ou la Vraie Vie*, Michel Drach, 1970) and *The Most Gentle Confessions* (*Les aveux les plus doux*, Edouard Molinaro, 1971).
94. Laila Hotait Salas, *Siempre nos quedará Beirut: Cine de autor y guerra(s) en el Líbano, 1970–2006* (Mexico: Akal, 2020).
95. Dickinson, *Arab Film and Video Manifestos*, 82.

96. Nadia Yaqub, *Palestinian Cinema in the Days of Revolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2018), 2.
97. Yaqub, 142.
98. Yaqub, 55.
99. Lindiwe Dovey, *Curating Africa in the Age of Film Festivals* (New York: Palgrave, 2015), 94.
100. See André Pâquet, ed., *Hommage aux journées cinématographiques de Carthage; 12 ans de cinéma africain et arabe, 1966–1978* (Montreal: Cinémathèque québécoise, 1980), 9–10.
101. Rachel Gabara, “Complex Realism: Paulin Soumanou Vieyra and the Emergence of West African Documentary Film,” *Black Camera* 11, no. 2 (Spring 2020): 32–59. For more see Razlogova, “Paulin Soumanou Vieyra.”
102. For an overview, see Elena Razlogova, “Paulin Soumanou Vieyra, the Soviet Union, and Cold War Circuits for African Cinema, 1958–1978,” *Black Camera* 13, no. 2 (Spring 2022): 451–73.
103. See Manthia Diawara, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).
104. See Imruh Bakari and Mbye B Cham, eds., *African Experiences of Cinema* (London: BFI, 1996).
105. For a detailed account of the organization of Soviet educational aid, see Constantin Katsakioris, “Soviet Lessons for Arab Modernization: Soviet Educational Aid towards Arab Countries after 1956,” *Journal of Modern European History* 8, no. 1 (April 2010): 85–106.
106. See Gabrielle Chomentowski, “Going Abroad to Study the Craft of Filmmaking: African Students in the USSR during the Period 1960–1970,” in *Saving Bruce Lee: African and Arab Cinema in the Era of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy*, ed. Rasha Salti and Gabrielle Chomentowski (Berlin: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2017), 28.
107. Łukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021), 94–95.
108. Diawara, *African Cinema*, 185–87.
109. Paulin S. Vieyra, *Le cinéma africain: Des origines à 1973* (Paris: Présence africaine, 1975), 105.
110. See Vieyra; see also Cheriaa, *Écrans d’abondance*.
111. Chomentowski, “Going Abroad to Study,” 29.
112. Paulin S. Vieyra, *Le cinéma et l’Afrique* (Paris: Présence africaine, 1969), 67–68.
113. Semion Chertok, *Tashkent’s festival* (Tashkent: Izdatel’stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1975), 120.
114. Vieyra, *Le cinéma africain*, 99, 107.
115. Françoise Pfaff, “Paulin Soumanou Vieyra pionnier de la critique et de la théorie du cinéma africain,” *Présence Africaine* 2, no. 170 (2004): 33–34.
116. See, e.g., his discussion of Costa Diagne in Vieyra, *Le cinéma africain*, 107.
117. Quoted in Lindiwe Dovey, “Towards Alternative Histories and Herstories of African Filmmaking: From Bricolage to the ‘Curatorial Turn’ in African Film Scholarship,” in *A Companion to African Cinema*, ed. Kenneth Harrow and Carmela Garritano (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2019), 470. The film Vieyra likely is alluding to is *The Lost Children* (*Ztracenci*, 1956), a historical antiwar drama directed by Miloš Makovec that received a prize in Moscow and was also screened in the main competition section of the 1957 Cannes festival.

118. Chertok, *Tashkentskii festival'*, 60–68, 117–20.
119. Samba Gadjigo, *Ousmane Sembene: The Making of a Militant Artist*, trans. Moustapha Diop (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 144. De Andrade was also Sarah Maldoror's partner and the father of her children.
120. See Rossen Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema between the Second and the Third Worlds* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020), 65.
121. Gadjigo, *Ousmane Sembene*, 35.
122. Gerald Peary and Patrick McGilligan, "Ousmane Sembène: An Interview," in *Ousmane Sembène: Interviews*, ed. Annett Busch and Max Annas (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), 48.
123. Michael Dembrow and Klaus Troller, "Interview with Ousmane Sembène," in *Ousmane Sembène: Interviews*, ed. Annett Busch and Max Annas (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), 62.
124. Raquel Schefer, "Sarah Maldoror: O cinema da noite grávida de punhais. Entrevista de Raquel Schefer a Sarah Maldoror," in *Angola: O nascimento de uma nação*, vol. 3, *O cinema da independência*, ed. Maria Do Carmo Piçarra and Jorge António (Lisboa: Guerra e Paz, 2015), 142–43.
125. Celluloid Liberation Front, "The Mother of African Cinema: Sarah Maldoror," *LA Review of Books*, May 31, 2020, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/mother-african-cinema-sarah-maldoror>.
126. *Sarah Maldoror or the Nostalgia for Utopia / Sarah Maldoror ou la nostalgie de l'utopie*, dir. Anne-Laure Folly (RFO and Amanou Production, 1999).
127. Marissa Moorman, "Of Westerns, Women and War: Resituating Angolan Cinema and the Nation," *Research in African Literature* 32, no. 3 (Fall 2001): 111.
128. It comprised Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mali, and Morocco—and, in particular, Guinea under the leadership of Sekou-Toure, who provided political shelter to Nkrumah, and the liberation parties of Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea Bissau, also supported by Sekou-Toure.
129. W. A. E. Skurnik, "Ghana and Guinea, 1966—A Case Study in Inter-African Relations," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 5, no. 3 (Nov. 1967): 369–84; Vieyra, *Le cinéma et l'Afrique*, 107; Yair Hashachar, "Guinea Unbound: Performing Pan-African Cultural Citizenship between Algiers 1969 and the Guinean National Festivals," *Interventions* 20, no. 7 (2018): 1004.
130. Jihan El Tahri, "On Costa Diagne and Guinean Filmmakers," Jan. 21, 2018, www.hkw.de/en/app/mediathek/audio/62469. Another feature fiction film presented at the festival was Somalia's *Town and Village (Miyi Iyo Magaalo)*, 1968), directed by El Hadj Mohamed Guimale. The film is an anomaly among the other African entries: it was funded personally by Guimale and took several years to make, shot in Somalia in its native language, in color and cinemascope, developed in Paris, and edited in Rome. It was a big success when finally screened in Mogadishu, and after Tashkent it was sold to Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia (as well as the Soviet Union); Guimale, who attended the festival, was also invited to serve on the jury of the Moscow film festival the subsequent year. See Vieyra, *Le cinéma et l'Afrique*, 194–95; and Chertok, *Tashkentskii festival'*, 124–27.
131. Tom Rice, "Gold Coast Film Unit," June 2010, www.colonialfilm.org.uk/production-company/gold-coast-film-unit.

132. Diawara, *African Cinema*, 6.

133. This film had already been screened at the African festival in Saint-Cast, in France, and in 1969, along with Sembene's *The Money Order* (*Mandabi*, 1968), was included by Teshome Gabriel in his small festival of African cinema at UCLA. See Kayalo Mativo, "Criteria for the Criticism of African Literature," *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 13, no. 1 (1983): 134.

134. Nwachukwu Frank Ukadike, ed., *Questioning African Cinema: Conversations with Filmmakers* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 21.

3. TASHKENT 1972–1980

1. Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet-Egyptian Influence Relationship since the June War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 314; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 200.

2. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, 149–50.

3. Rubinstein, 181.

4. Natalia Telepneva, "Our Sacred Duty: The Soviet Union, the Liberation Movements in the Portuguese Colonies, and the Cold War, 1961–1975" (PhD diss., London School of Economics, 2014), 182.

5. For an overview in English, see Doreen Weppeler-Grogan, "Cultural Policy, the Visual Arts, and the Advance of the Cuban Revolution in the Aftermath of the Gray Years," *Cuban Studies* 41 (2010): 143–65. For a Cuban account, see Jorge Fornet, *El 71: Anatomía de una crisis* (Havana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 2013).

6. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 26, ed. khr. 52, l. 2.

7. On Iran, see Kaveh Askari, *Relaying Cinema in Midcentury Iran: Material Cultures in Transit* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2022).

8. Abdulakhad Abdullaev, *Mezhdunarodnyi forum kinematografistov v Tashkente: Materialy* (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1978), 18.

9. Nikita Markov, "Sistema gosudarstvennogo upravleniia sovetskim kinematografom, 1963–1968" (PhD diss., Russian State Academic University of the Humanities, 2019), 214, 260–63.

10. Valerii Fomin, *Istoriia kinootrasli v Rossii: Upravlenie, kinoproizvodstvo, prokat* (Moscow: VNIIG VGIK, 2012), 1311.

11. Valerii Golovskoi, *Mezhdru ottepel'iu i glasnost'iu: Kinematograf 70-kh* (Moscow: Materik, 2004), 209.

12. S. D. Tavanets, ed., *Apparat TsK KPSS i kul'tura, 1965–1972: Dokumenty* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2009), 842–43.

13. Markov, "Sistema gosudarstvennogo upravleniia," 181–91.

14. This process was similar to the 1930s, when Boris Shumiatskii, the head of the then newly centralized state film organization Soiuzkino, imposed "entertainment genre cinema, accessible to the masses" in opposition to the kind of "plotless cinema" of montage exemplified by Kuleshov, Vertov, and Eisenstein. In the Brezhnev era, unlike the 1930s, foreign entertainment cinema was deemed acceptable by the authorities. See Richard Taylor, "Boris Shumyatsky and the Soviet Cinema in the 1930s: Ideology as Mass Entertainment,"

Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television 6, no. 1 (1986): 43–64. On ETK, see 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), 57–65.

15. Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, 62.

16. For an analysis of this genre in Cuba, see Aleksandro de Sousa e Silva, “A câmera e o canhão: A circulação das imagens cinematográficas entre Cuba e países africanos (1960–1991)” (PhD diss., Universidade Estadual Paulista, 2020), 40–41.

17. As Heloise Weber notes in her discussion of NIEO as an extension of the spirit of the Bandung, “the addition of the language of restitution and full compensation for colonial exploitation captures the essence of the political project of Third Worldism.” Heloise Weber, “The Political Significance of Bandung for Development: Challenges, Contradictions and Struggles for Justice,” in *Meanings of Bandung: Postcolonial Orders and Decolonial Visions*, ed. Quỳnh N. Phạm and Robbie Shilliam (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 158.

18. See Mushtaq Gazdar, *Pakistan Cinema, 1947–1997* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998); Ali Nobil Ahmad, “Explorations into Pakistani Cinema: Introduction,” *Screen* 57, no. 4 (2016): 468–79; and Lotte Hoek, “Mirrors of Movement: Aina, Afzal Chowdhury’s Cinematography and the Interlinked Histories of Cinema in Pakistan and Bangladesh,” *Screen* 57, no. 4 (2016): 488–95.

19. “Tashkent-78: Govoriat poslantsy trekh kontinentov,” *Sovetskii ekran*, no. 14 (July 1978): 21.

20. RGALI, f. 2936, op. 4, ed khr. 2662, l. 9.

21. RGALI, f. 2936, op. 4, ed khr. 2662, l. 14

22. *Box Office India*, Nov 3, 2011.

23. See Mrinal Sen’s *Views on Cinema* (Calcutta: Ishan, 1977); *Montage: Life, Politics, Cinema* (Kolkata: Seagull Books, 2002); and *Always Being Born* (New Delhi: Stellar, 2004).

24. Sukhdev emphasized the powerful impact the Tashkent festival had on his political beliefs. See *Symposium on Cinema in Developing Countries* (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1979), n.p. For more on Sukhdev, see Jag Mohan, ed., *S. Sukhdev, Film Maker: A Documentary Montage* (Pune: National Film Archive of India, 1984).

25. For an in-depth discussion of the role of the state ideologies in the work of the Films Division, see Priya Jaikumar, *Where Histories Reside: India as Filmed Space* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 75–124. See also Peter Sutoris, *Visions of Development: Films Division of India and the Imagination of Progress, 1948–75* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); and Ritika Kaushik, “‘Sun in the Belly’: Film Practice at Films Division of India 1965–1975,” *BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies* 8, no. 1 (2017): 103–23.

26. The exhibition and production history of these two films are intertwined: Raihan appears in Sukhdev’s *Nine Months to Freedom*, while *Stop Genocide* was distributed by the FD.

27. Zakir Hossain Raju, “Bangladesh: A Defiant Survivor,” in *Being & Becoming: The Cinemas of Asia*, ed. Aruna Vasudev, Latika Padgaonkar, and Rashmi Doraiswamy (Delhi: Macmillan India, 2002), 12; Alamgir Kabir, *Film in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1979), 44–45.

28. Kabir, *Film in Bangladesh*, 50–51.

29. Semion Chertok, *Festival’ trekh kontinentov* (Tashkent: Izdatel’stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1978), 55–56.

30. Chertok, 53; see also Semion Chertok, *Tashkentskii festival'* (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1975), 35–36.
31. Harisur Rahman, *Consuming Cultural Hegemony: Bollywood in Bangladesh* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Lotte Hoek, "Mirrors of Movement"; Lotte Hoek, "Cross-Wing Filmmaking: East Pakistani Urdu Films and Their Traces in the Bangladesh Film Archive," *BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies* 5, no. 2 (2015): 99–118.
32. *III Kinofestival' stran Azii i Afriki v Tashkente: Otkliki zarubezhnoi pressy* (Moscow: Soiuz kinematografistov SSSR, 1975), 16–32.
33. Saadia Toor, *The State of Islam: Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan* (London: Pluto, 2011), 120.
34. Toor, 121.
35. Igor' Khalevinskii, "Nastavnik pakistanskogo prem'era," *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn'*, no. 5 (May 2013): 196–98.
36. Toor, *The State of Islam*, 122.
37. V. Nesterov, "Ekran bor'by i nadezhd. K itogam III Tashkentskogo mezhdunarodnogo kinofestivalia," *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 2 (Feb. 1975): 129–45.
38. Azimov's role as a cultural intermediary was already well established given his long-standing prominent position within the Afro-Asian Writers Association (he would become a Lotus prize winner in 1983).
39. Nadia Yaqub, *Palestinian Cinema in the Days of Revolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2018), 127.
40. Barbara Harlow, *After Lives: Legacies of Revolutionary Writing* (London: Verso, 1996), 179.
41. Yaqub, *Palestinian Cinema*, 89, 94–95.
42. Shakir Nouri, *À la recherche du cinéma irakien, 1945–1985* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1986), 189.
43. Budiak, *Tashkentskii mezhdunarodnyi festival'* (Moscow: Znanie, 1985), 19.
44. For more on this, see Yaqub, *Palestinian Cinema*, 61–62.
45. Lan Duong and Lila Sharif, "Displaced Subjects: Revolution, Film, and Women in Vietnam and Palestine," *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* 6, no. 1 (2020): 174.
46. Kay Dickinson, *Arab Film and Video Manifestos: Forty-Five Years of Moving Image amid Revolution* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 81–107.
47. Yaqub, *Palestinian Cinema*, 67–68.
48. *Kino v bor'be za mir, sotsial'nyi progress i svobodu narodov: Tvorcheskaiia diskussia na IV Mezhdunarodnom kinofestivale v Tashkente* (Moscow: Nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut teorii i istorii kino, 1976), 25–26.
49. For a detailed elaboration of this, see Dickinson, *Arab Film and Video Manifestos*, 85–89.
50. Adnan Madanat, *Bahthan 'an al-sinema* (Beirut: Dar Al-Quds, 1974); *Sinema tabhath 'an thatiha* (Damascus: Ministry of Culture of Syria, 2006).
51. Cheryl A. Rubenberg, "The Civilian Infrastructure of the Palestine Liberation Organization: An Analysis of the PLO in Lebanon until June 1982," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 12, no. 3 (Spring 1983): 69.
52. See Kay Dickinson, *Arab Cinema Travels: Transnational Syria, Palestine, Dubai and Beyond* (London: BFI, 2016); and Yaqub, *Palestinian Cinema*.

53. Chertok, *Festival' trekh kontinentov*, 67.
54. Kassim Hawal, "Regard sur le cinéma irakien," in *Septième biennale des cinémas arabes* (Paris: Institut du Monde Arabe, 2004), 101.
55. Muhammad Malas, *Qais al-Zubaidi: Al-Hayat, Scraps on the Wall* (Beirut: Hachette Antoine, 2019), 40.
56. Kais al-Zubaidi, "Esli vzglianut' na obshchestvo glazami rebenka," in *Ekran 74/75*, ed. E. Bauman and G. Dolmatovskaia (Moscow: Iskustvo, 1976), 171.
57. *III Kinofestival'*, 45–46, 87. The program also included Muhammad Shahin's debut feature, *Another Face of Love* (*Wajh Akhar lil-Hubb*, 1973), on which al-Zubaidi worked as an editor, starring Muna Wassef. Soviet critics dismissed it for its "dubious quality" and insufficiently articulated political position. The film contrasted with Muhammad Shahin's previous cinematic work as one of the three directors of the Syrian portmanteau film *Men under the Sun* (*Rijal Tahta al-Shams*, 1970), an early National Film Organization production (with the other two episodes directed by Nabil Maleh and Marwan al-Mu'azzin), all dealing with Palestinian experience, which was also screened that year. See Chertok, *Tashkentskii festival'*, 43.
58. Dickinson, *Arab Cinema Travels*, 42, 46–47; Margaret Litvin, "Fellow Travelers? Two Arab Study Abroad Narratives of Moscow," in *Illusion and Disillusionment: Travel Writing in the Modern Age*, ed. Roberta Micallef (Boston: Ilex, 2018), 96–119.
59. Al'il's *Mother's Advice* (*Andarz-e madar*, 1972), shown at the second edition, was followed by Latifi's *Difficult Days* (*Rozha-ye dashwar*, 1974) at the third. The rare instances of Afghan cinema's international exhibition include the 1976 screening of *The Statues Are Laughing* (*Mujasema ha Mekhandan*, Toryalai Shafaq, 1976) at the Teheran film festival and several documentaries in the New York film festival that same year.
60. Hamid Naficy, *A Social History of Iranian Cinema*, vol. 2, *The Industrializing Years, 1941–1978* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 270–94.
61. On Baizai, see Naficy, 363–68.
62. William Van der Heide, *Malaysian Cinema, Asian Film: Border Crossings and National Cultures* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), 124–32; Jean-Pierre Guinhut, "The Man Who Loved Too Much: The Legend of Leyli and Majnun," *Azerbaijan International* 6, no. 3 (Autumn 1998): 33–38. Most recent renditions of this story are an internationally popular Turkish TV soap opera and an Indonesian Netflix movie, which depicts Leyla as Indonesian and Manjun as Azerbaijani.
63. Abdullaev, *Mezhdunarodnyi forum*, 18.
64. Ibrahima Signaté, *Med Hondo: Un cinéaste rebelle* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1994), 19–20.
65. Signaté, 19–20.
66. Tat'iana Tsarapkina, "Med Khondo," in *Rezhisserskaia entsiklopediia: Kino Azii, Afriki, Avstralii, Latinskoi Ameriki*, ed. T. N. Vetrova (Moscow: Materik, 2001), 126–27. For more on the reception of West Indies films abroad, see Françoise Pfaff, "The Films of Med Hondo: An African Filmmaker in Paris," *Jump Cut*, no. 31 (March 1986): 44–46.
67. Aleksandr Lipkov, *Iz festival'nogo bloknota: Kniga o Tashkentskom festivale. Reportazh-issledovanie* (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1984), 148.
68. Tat'iana Tsarapkina, "Sukheil' Bena Barki," in *Rezhisserskaia entsiklopediia: Kino Azii, Afriki, Avstralii, Latinskoi Ameriki*, ed. T. N. Vetrova (Moscow: Materik, 2001), 16–17.

Ben Barka's most popular film in the Soviet Union, *Amok* (1983), dealing with the Soweto uprising in Apartheid-ruled South Africa, was an experiment in trans-African coproductions (involving Morocco, Senegal, and Guinea), featuring Miriam Makeba. Although the Tashkent audiences would remember her from the documentary on FESTAC-77, a pan-African arts festival, which took place in Nigeria in 1977 and where Makeba gave one of her famous performances, *Amok* introduced Mama Africa to the broader Soviet public when the film won the Moscow film festival and was screened widely both in Soviet theaters and on television.

69. *A Party for Life* was the first in the series of *Angola 76, It's Time for the Voice of the People* (*Angola 76, É a vez da voz de povo*, 1977), an impressive multiyear effort to document the country's transition, which was screened in part at the 1979 Moscow film festival.

70. José Mena Abrantes, "Cinema angolano: Um passado com o presente sempre adiado," in *Angola: O nascimento de uma nação*, vol. 3, *O cinema da independência*, ed. Maria Do Carmo Piçarra and Jorge António (Lisboa: Guerra e Paz, 2015), 17–18.

71. Elena Razlogova, "An Air Map for World Cinema: Aeroflot as an Infrastructure for Cinematic Internationalism," *Russian Review* 80, no. 4 (Oct. 2021): 673.

72. For a detailed discussion of Third Cinema in relation to Soviet cinema, see Rossen Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema between the Second and the Third Worlds* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020), 177–79.

73. For the US reception, see Hector Amaya, *Screening Cuba: Film Criticism as Political Performance during the Cold War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010). Eastern Europe's relationship to militant cinema was quite distinct in this respect: Latin American political documentaries were regularly screened at Leipzig, and feature films won awards at Karlovy Vary; Chilean, Colombian, and Bolivian filmmakers had particularly strong ties with East Germany throughout the 1970s, where many of them were exiled.

74. With some important exceptions, such as Masao Adachi and Koji Wakamatsu's participation with the Red Japanese Army in the Palestinian Revolution in the 1970s, Japanese filmmakers, unlike their Latin American counterparts, had fewer ties with the cinematic community beyond East Asia.

75. See Laura Rodríguez Isaza, "Branding Latin America Film Festivals and the International Circulation of Latin American Films" (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2012); Carolina Rocha, "Brazilian Cinema at the Berlin International Film Festival," *Research in Film and History: New Approaches* (March 2019): 1–14; and Regina Câmara, "From Karlovy Vary to Cannes: Brazilian Cinema Novo at European Film Festivals in the 1960s," in *Cultural Transfer and Political Conflicts: Film Festivals in the Cold War*, ed. Andreas Kötzing and Caroline Moine (Göttingen: V&R, 2017), 63–76.

76. Michael Chanan, "The British Contingent in Montreal," *Revue canadienne d'études cinématographiques / Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 24, no. 2 (Oct. 2015): 96–108.

77. See Tobias Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

78. Nicola Miller, *Soviet Relations with Latin America, 1959–1987* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 15.

79. Ramón Grosfoguel, "Developmentalism, Modernity and Dependency Theory in Latin America," in *Nepantla: Views from South*, no. 1 (2000): 347–74.

80. See Ignacio del Valle Dávila, *Cámaras en trance: El Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, un proyecto cinematográfico subcontinental* (Santiago: Cuarto Propio, 2014), 74–75.

81. In addition to Santiago Álvarez, other Cuban directors also made films in this genre throughout the 1970s—e.g., *Third World, Third World War* (*Tercer mundo, tercera guerra mundial*, Julio García Espinosa, with Iván Nápoles, Miguel Torres, Luis Costales, Jerónimo Labrada, and Roberto Fernández Retamar, 1970); *The Road of Myrrh and Incense* (*El camino de la mirra y el incienso*, Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Constante Diego, 1975, dedicated to Yemen); and *Song of Chile* (*Cantata de Chile*, Humberto Solas, 1975).

82. Such films as *Luanda Doesn't Belong to Saint Paul Anymore* (*Luanda ya no es de San Pablo*, Santiago Álvarez, 1976); *Angola, Victory of Hope* (*Angola, victoria de la esperanza*, José Massip, 1976); *New Meridian* (*Maputo: Meridiano novo*, Santiago Álvarez, 1976); *Cabinda* (Fernando Pérez, 1977); *The War in Angola* (*La guerra en Angola*, Miguel Fleitas, 1978). See Ros Gray, “Linhas claras num mapa internacionalista: Cineastas estrangeiros em Angola durante a independência,” in *Angola: O nascimento de uma nação*, vol. 3, *O cinema da independência*, edited by Maria Do Carmo Piçarra and Jorge António (Lisboa: Guerra e Paz, 2015), 47–61.

83. José Massip, “Tashkent: Breve crónica de un festival,” *Cine Cubano*, no. 58/59 (1969): 68–73.

84. See Megan Feeney, *Hollywood in Havana: US Cinema and Revolutionary Nationalism in Cuba before 1959* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).

85. See Leon Gouré and Morris Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration of Latin America* (Miami, FL: University of Miami Press, 1975).

86. Rafael Pedemonte, “La guerre pour les idées en Amérique latine: Relations politiques et culturelles avec l’Union soviétique: Une approche comparative (Cuba-Chili, 1959–1973)” (Thèse de doctorat, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne—Paris I; Universidad católica de Chile, 2016), 170.

87. See Rupperecht, *Soviet Internationalism*, 234.

88. The week of Chilean cinema included *Bloody Nitrate* (*Caliche sangriento*, Helvio Soto, 1969), *Valparaíso, My Love* (*Valparaíso, mi amor*, Aldo Francia, 1969), and *The Jackal of Nahueltoro* (*El chacal de Nahueltoro*, Miguel Littín, 1969). The Moscow film festival screened *We Will Win* (*Venceremos*, 1970), a short by Pedro Chaskel and Héctor Ríos, and Littín’s *The Promised Land* (*La tierra prometida*, 1972), while Tashkent’s second edition featured *El diálogo de América* (Alvaro Covacevich, 1972), a forty-five-minute conversation between Fidel Castro and Salvador Allende comparing their respective revolutions and paths toward socialism.

89. Alfredo Riquelme Segovia, *Rojo atardecer: El comunismo chileno entre dictadura y democracia* (Santiago: DIBAM, 2009), 113.

90. Guzmán and Chaskel continued working in Cuba and France, Littín in Mexico, Soto in France, Sergio Castillo and Claudio Sapiaín in Sweden, and Beatriz González, Juan Forch, Álvaro Ramírez, and Douglas Hübner in East Germany. José Miguel Palacios, “Passages of Exile: Chilean Cinema, 1973–2016” (PhD diss., New York University, 2017), 68–75.

91. Anne E. Gorsuch, “‘Cuba, My Love’: The Romance of Revolutionary Cuba in the Soviet Sixties,” *American Historical Review* 120, no. 2 (April 2015): 497–526.

92. Caroline Moine, “La RDA à l’heure de la ‘Solidarité internationale’: Le festival de la jeunesse de Berlin-Est, août, 1973,” in *La république démocratique allemande: La vitrine du*

socialisme et l'envers du miroir (1949–1989–2009), ed. Chantal Metzger (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2010), 289–300.

93. David Featherstone, *Solidarity: Hidden Histories and Geographies of Internationalism* (London: Zed, 2012), 131–57.

94. It also included films by Labarca and Sergio Castilla's *I Wish I Had a Son (Quisiera, quisiera tener un hijo, 1974)*. RGALI, f. 3064, op. 1, d. 150, l. 15.

95. Quoted in Aleksandr Karaganov, *V sporakh o kinematografe* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1977), 138.

96. See Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism*, 270–72.

97. See Palacios, “Passages of Exile,” 67. The Leipzig festival, which hosted a 1983 retrospective of Chilean cinema, was also important in this regard, especially as Pinochet's coup was openly embraced by the Far Right and neofascist groups in Europe. Palacios, “Passages of Exile,” 70–71.

98. The 1978 edition included Sapiain's *Foreigners (Estranjeros, 1978)*, depicting the life of Chilean exiles in Sweden, but the film went largely unnoticed by audiences or critics.

99. Sayda Bourguiba, “Finalités culturelles et esthétiques d'un cinéma arabo-africain en devenir: Les Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage (JCC)” (Thèse de doctorat, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne—Paris I, 2013), 72. Littin is of Palestinian origins, which probably further facilitated the connections with the FCC.

100. Abdullaev, *Mezhdunarodnyi forum*, 18.

101. For a detailed account, see Vijay Prashad, *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South* (London: Verso, 2014).

102. See Manthia Diawara, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 44.

103. Diawara, 159–61. See also, Férid Boughedir, “Thiaroye or Yeelen? The Two Ways of African Cinemas,” *Black Camera* 12, no. 1 (Fall 2020): 255–59; and Manthia Diawara, “Souleymane Cissé's Light on Africa,” *Black Film Review* 4, no. 4 (Fall 1988): 12–15.

104. Azadeh Farahmand, “Disentangling the International Festival Circuit: Genre and Iranian Cinema,” in *Global Art Cinema: New Theories and Histories*, ed. Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 263–83.

105. See James Tweedie, *The Age of New Waves: Art Cinema and the Staging of Globalization* (London: Oxford University Press, 2013); and Song Hwee Lim, “Taiwan New Cinema: Small Nation with Soft Power,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Chinese Cinemas*, ed. Carlos Rojas and Eileen Cheng-Yin Chow (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 152–69.

106. Cindy Hing-Yuk Wong, *Film Festivals: Culture, People, and Power on the Global Screen* (Rutgers, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011).

4. TASHKENT FESTIVAL CRITICAL DISCOURSES

1. This formal presentation format was also typical of the Western festivals at the time, as is evident from the published selections of texts from Pesaro, *Per una nuova critica: I convegni pesaresi, 1965–1967* (Venice: Marsilio, 1989).

2. Sayda Bourguiba, “Finalités culturelles et esthétiques d'un cinéma arabo-africain en devenir: Les Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage (JCC)” (Thèse de doctorat, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne—Paris I, 2013), 277.

3. Jocelyn Olcott, *International Women's Year: The Greatest Consciousness-Raising Event in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 95.
4. Mariano Mestman and Masha Salazkina, "Introduction: Estates General of Third Cinema, Montreal '74," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 24, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 4–17.
5. "Final Resolutions / Résolutions finales," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 24, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 130.
6. Lindiwe Dovey, *Curating Africa in the Age of Film Festivals* (New York: Palgrave, 2015), 91.
7. Dovey, 91.
8. Dovey, 94.
9. See Gordon Hitchens, in *III Kinofestival' stran Azii i Afriki v Tashkente: Otkliki zarubezhnoi pressy* (Moscow: Soiuz kinematografistov SSSR, 1975), 35.
10. *III Kinofestival'*, 37.
11. *III Kinofestival'*, 38–39.
12. *Kino v bor'be za mir, sotsial'nyi progress i svobodu narodov: Tvorcheskaiia diskussia na II Mezhdunarodnom kinofestivale v Tashkente* (Moscow: Soiuz kinematografistov SSSR, 1972), 16.
13. Ousmane Sembene, "Lecture: Man Is Culture," quoted in Dovey, *Curating Africa*, 92.
14. *Kino v bor'be za mir, sotsial'nyi progress i svobodu narodov: Tvorcheskaiia diskussia na III Mezhdunarodnom kinofestivale v Tashkente* (Moscow: Nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut teorii i istorii kino, 1974), 17.
15. José Massip, "Tashkent: Breve crónica de un festival," *Cine Cubano*, no. 58/59 (1969): 70.
16. Massip, 72.
17. Paulin S. Vieyra, *Le cinéma africain: Des origines à 1973* (Paris: Présence africaine, 1975), 107.
18. For more on Vieyra, see Elena Razlogova, "Paulin Soumanou Vieyra, the Soviet Union, and Cold War Circuits for African Cinema, 1958–1978," *Black Camera* 13, no. 2 (Spring 2022): 451–73.
19. Massip, "Tashkent," 72; *III Kinofestival'*, 75.
20. See, e.g., the JCC and Third World Cinema committee resolutions; FEPACI (Fédération panafricaine des cinéastes), "The Algiers Charter on African Cinema (Algeria, 1975)," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Scott MacKenzie (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 296–97; Bolivians Jorge Sanjinés and Grupo Ukamau, *Teoría y práctica de un cine junto al pueblo* (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1979); and FEPACI, "Niamey Manifesto of African Filmmakers (Niger, 1982)," in MacKenzie, *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures*, 303–6.
21. Tahar Cheriaa, *Écrans d'abondance . . . ou cinémas de libération en Afrique?* (Tunis: STD, 1979), 9.
22. Nikita Markov, "Sistema gosudarstvennogo upravleniia sovetskim kinematografom, 1963–1968" (PhD diss., Russian State Academic University of the Humanities, 2019), 328.
23. V. Molchanov, "Kinoiskusstvo dvukh kontinentov," *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 9 (Sept. 1968): 20–21.
24. Elena Razlogova, "World Cinema at Soviet Festivals: From Cultural Diplomacy to Personal Ties," *Studies in European Cinema* 17, no. 2 (2020): 140–54.

25. *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1972), 15.
26. *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1974), 30.
27. *Kino v bor'be za mir, sotsial'nyi progress i svobodu narodov: Tvorcheskaiia diskussia na IV Mezhdunarodnom kinofestivale v Tashkente* (Moscow: Nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut teorii i istorii kino, 1976), 20.
28. *Kino v bor'be za mir, sotsial'nyi progress i svobodu narodov: Tvorcheskaiia diskussia na V Mezhdunarodnom kinofestivale v Tashkente* (Moscow: Nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut teorii i istorii kino, 1978), 16, 22, 53.
29. Rossen Djalalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema between the Second and the Third Worlds* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020), 200–202.
30. This episode is included in Azhdar Ibragimov, *Kinoiskusstvo srazhaiushchegosia V'etnama* (Moscow: Biuro propagandy sovetskogo iskusstva, 1968), 44. For more, see chapter 8 herein.
31. RGALI, f. 2936, op. 4, ed. khr. 1834, l. 3, 18, 31.
32. *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1972), 17, 34.
33. Kay Dickinson, *Arab Film and Video Manifestos: Forty-Five Years of the Moving Image Amid Revolution* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 81–107; Rasmi Abu Ali's speech in *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1974), 22.
34. Markov, "Sistema gosudarstvennogo upravleniia," 70.
35. Markov, 71–74.
36. Vladimir Baskakov, *Spor prodolzhaetsia: stat'i, retsenzii, zametki* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1968); Vladimir Baskakov, *Ekran i vremia* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1974); Vladimir Baskakov, *Protivorechivyi ekran: Dukhovnyi krizis burzhuaznogo obshchestva i kino* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1980); and Vladimir Baskakov, *Srazhaiushchiisia ekran: Sovremennaia ideologicheskaiia bor'ba i kinoiskusstvo* (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1984).
37. Baskakov, *Ekran i vremia*, 22.
38. Georgii Bogemskii, "Ital'ianskoe kino: Svet i teni," in *Mify i real'nost': Burzhuaznoe kino segodnia*, vypusk 2, ed. G. A. Kapralov (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1971), 71.
39. Mark Edele, *Soviet Veterans of World War II: A Popular Movement in an Authoritarian Society, 1941–1991* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
40. Markov, "Sistema gosudarstvennogo upravleniia," 77.
41. Recent scholarship illustrates a certain validity to this claim. See Anna Krylova, *Soviet Women in Combat: A History of Violence on the Eastern Front* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
42. See Laura Feliu, Ferran Izquierdo-Brichs, and Frances Serra, "Communist Parties in the Middle East and North Africa: An Overview," in *Communist Parties in the Middle East: 100 Years of History*, ed. Laura Feliu and Ferran Izquierdo-Brichs (New York: Routledge, 2019), 1–41.
43. Djalalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism*, 134.
44. *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1972), 40.
45. RGALI, f. 2936, op. 4, ed. khr. 1834.
46. *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1972), 16.
47. *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1972), 39–40.
48. This did not prevent Turkey from nominating him in 2008 as a Turkic language writer for the Nobel Prize for Literature. For more on the complications of the concept of national culture, see chapter 7.

49. Mirna Radin Sabadoš, Dorota Gołuch, and Sue-Ann Harding, “Fanon in the Second World,” in *Translating Frantz Fanon across Continents and Languages* (London: Routledge, 2017), 177.
50. Aleksandr Gordon, *Problema natsional’no-osvoboditel’noi bor’by v tvorchestve Frantsa Fanona* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), 42–49.
51. Gordon, 6.
52. James Mark and Quinn Slobodian, “Eastern Europe,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, ed. Martin Thomas and Andrew Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 362.
53. *Kino v bor’be za mir* (1978), 19.
54. Such discursive formation is, in fact, closer to what Lúcia Nagib foregrounds in her analysis in *World Cinema and the Ethics of Realism* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011).
55. For a detailed analysis of the film, see Randal Johnson and Robert Stam, “São Bernardo: Property and Personality,” *Brazilian Cinema*, 2nd ed., ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 200–207.
56. *III Kinofestival’*, 45.
57. *III Kinofestival’*, 50.
58. See Tobias Rupperecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 52.
59. “Kompositor-kommunist Orasio Guarani (Argentina): ‘Moi bednyi otets,’ ‘Eslī smolknet pevets,’ ‘Pesnia politzakliuchennogo,’” *Krugozor*, no. 10 (1975): 12.
60. See Peter Sutoris, *Visions of Development: Films Division of India and the Imagination of Progress, 1948–75* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 189.
61. Quoted in Parag R. Amladi, “The Rule and the Exception: Good Offices and Bad in *Bhuvan Shome*,” in *The Enemy Within: The Films of Mrinal Sen*, ed. Sumita S. Chakravarty (London: Flicks, 2000), 24.
62. See Roy Armes, *Roots of the New Arab Film* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018), 110–11; Manthia Diawara, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 42; and Sada Niang, *Nationalist African Cinema: Legacy and Transformations* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), xv.
63. See Françoise Pfaff, *Twenty-Five Black African Filmmakers* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1988), 164.
64. Peter Limbrick makes a similar argument in *Arab Modernism as World Cinema: The Films of Moumen Smihi* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2020).
65. Aleksandr Karaganov, *V sporakh o kinematografe* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1977), 191.
66. Alexander Prokhorov and Elena Prokhorova, *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 5.
67. For another articulation of this argument, see Masha Salazkina, “Transnational Genealogies of Institutional Film Culture of Cuba, 1960s–1970s,” in *The Routledge Companion to Latin American Cinema*, ed. Marvin D’Lugo, Ana M. López, Laura Podalsky (London: Routledge, 2017), 192–203. Emblematic in this respect is the debate in the journal *Screen* between Teshome Gabriel and Julianne Burton. See Teshome Gabriel, “Colonialism and ‘Law and Order’ Criticism,” www.teshomegabriel.net/colonialism-and-law-and-order-criticism.
68. L. M. Budiak, *Tashkentskii mezhdunarodnyi festival’* (Moscow: Znanie, 1985), 7.
69. *Kino v bor’be za mir* (1974), 19.

70. Muhammad Malas, *Qais al-Zubaidi: Al-Hayat, Scraps on the Wall* (Beirut: Hachette Antoine, 2019), 40.

71. For more on filmmakers' role in the development of VGIK, see Masha Salazkina, "(V)GIK and the History of Film Education in the Soviet Union, 1920s–1930s," in *A Companion to Russian Cinema*, ed. Birgit Beumers (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2016), 45–65.

72. See Valerii Fomin et al., eds., *Istoriia kinootrasli v Rossii: Upravlenie, kinoproizvodstvo, prokat* (Moscow: VNIIG VGIK, 2012), 1068.

73. Valerii Fomin, *Kinematograf otpepli: Dokumenty i svidetel'stva* (Moscow: Materik, 1998), 245–48.

74. Fomin et al., *Istoriia kinootrasli v Rossii*, 1138.

75. In 1965, after the Filmmakers Union had its first congress, Karaganov and Kalatozov were in charge of "international ties." Fomin et al., 1147.

76. Despite the implication of the title, the "experiment" refers to market socialism, as Roth-Ey explores. The studio followed a self-financing model, financially rewarding the film crew from the box-office performance of their films. Although its fame rests on its being an outlet for the production of highly successful entertainment genre films, in the 1960s ETK also produced such "controversial" directors as Larisa Shepitko and Elem Klimov. See 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), 57–62.

77. *III Kinofestival'*, 20. The other two criteria stated are also incorrect: the report claims that capitalist films were forbidden in socialist countries (which was not the case—although the festival did exclude films from Western countries from the main program) and that films shown at the festival could not concern countries other than that of the film's origins (which was also not the case because that would exclude the many "solidarity" films that were presented every year). It is hard to pinpoint where exactly the translation errors have taken place, especially as all such rules tended to be unwritten.

78. See Laurie Essig, *Queer in Russia: A Story of Sex, Self, and the Other* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999). While medical and sex education manuals in the early 1960s included occasional mention of homosexuality, mostly in reference to Western bourgeois culture (attributing it to unemployment and lack of financial stability, as well as same-sex school education), by the late 1960s even such accounts became increasingly rare, and public discussions of it were simply nonexistent. See Rustam Alexander, "Sex Education and the Depiction of Homosexuality under Khrushchev," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Women and Gender in Twentieth-Century Russia and the Soviet Union*, ed. Melanie Illic (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 361–62.

79. Quoted in Viola Shafik, *Arab Cinema: History and Cultural Identity* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2007), 34.

80. RGALI, f. 3159, op. 1, d. 18.

81. Semion Chertok, *Festival' trekh kontinentov* (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1978), 30.

82. Stanislav Panin, "Astral Karate as a Phenomenon of Late-Soviet Esoteric Underground," *Open Theology* 3, no. 1 (2017): 410–11.

83. See Roland Domenig, "A Brief History of Independent Cinema in Japan and the Role of the Art Theatre Guild," *Minikomi*, no. 70 (2005): 14.

84. *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1972), 22. For a discussion of the depiction of sex as constitutive of the Cold War culture in Japan, see Anna Sherif, "Sex and Democracy: *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in Cold War Japan," in *Japan's Cold War: Media, Literature, and the Law* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 54–84.
85. Raymond Leader, "Filming on the Thames: Undress Parade," *Filmfare* 17, no. 23 (1968): 57–59.
86. *Kino v bor'be za mir* (1972), 5–7.
87. See, e.g., Elena Razlogova, "Listening to the Inaudible Foreign: Simultaneous Translators and Soviet Experience of Foreign Cinema," in *Sound, Music, Speech in Soviet and Post-Soviet Cinema*, ed. Lilya Kaganovsky and Masha Salazkina (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 162–78.
88. Quoted in Valerii Fomin, *Kino i vlast': Sovetskoe kino, 1965–1985: Dokumenty, svidetel'stva, razmyshleniia* (Moscow: Materik, 1996), 43.
89. Iurii Murashov, "Liubov' i politika: O medial'noi antropologii liubvi v sovetskoi kul'ture," in *SSSR: Territorii liubvi*, ed. Natal'ia Borisova, Konstantin Bogdanov, and Iurii Murashov (Moscow: Novoe izdatel'stvo, 2008), 22.
90. See Eleonory Gilburd, *To See Paris and Die: The Soviet Lives of Western Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 209.
91. Liudmila Mel'vil', "Seks—politika—kommertsiiia," in *Kino i vremia, vypusk 1*, ed. Iu. M. Khaniutin (Moskva: Iskustvo, 1977), 219–42.
92. Mel'vil', 242.
93. Grigorii Chukhrai, *Moe kino* (Moscow: Algoritm, 2001), 149–57.
94. Martin Grossheim, "The Lao Dong Party: Culture and the Campaign against 'Modern Revisionism': The Democratic Republic of Vietnam before the Second Indochina War," *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 9, no. 1 (2013): 105.
95. Chukhrai's 1977 film *Untypical Story* (*Triasina*) powerfully stages precisely this set of problems within the context of not sexual but motherly love—in a tragic story of a mother harboring her only remaining child as a deserter during the war.
96. Andrey Shcherbenok, "Russian/Soviet Screened Sexuality: An Introduction," *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* 3, no. 2 (2009): 140.
97. Shcherbenok, 141, 140.
98. M. Madhava Prasad, *Ideology of the Hindi Film: A Historical Construction* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 103.
99. Prasad, 103.
100. See Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).
101. See Essig, *Queer in Russia*, 55–82.
102. See Jini Kim Watson, *Cold War Reckonings: Authoritarianism and the Genres of Decolonization* (Fordham, NJ: Fordham University Press, 2021).
103. For different articulations of the private-public divides in the socialist context, see Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); and Josie McLellan, *Love in the Time of Communism: Intimacy and Sexuality in the GDR* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
104. Lauren Gail Berlant, "Intimacy: A Special Issue," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (1998): 286.

105. Bhaskar Sarkar, *Mourning the Nation: Indian Cinema in the Wake of Partition* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009), 58.
106. Berlant, “Intimacy,” 287.

5. THE WOMAN QUESTION AT TASHKENT AND WORLD SOCIALIST (WOMEN’S) CINEMA

1. For contrasting accounts of the history of *hujum*, see Marianne Kamp, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan: Islam, Modernity, and Unveiling under Communism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006); and Gregory J. Massell, *The Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia, 1919–1929* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).
2. Malik Kaiumov, *Zhizn’ moia—kinematograf* (Tashkent: Izdatel’stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1982).
3. Kaiumov, 163.
4. “Tashkent-78: Govoriat poslantsy trekh kontinentov,” *Sovetskii ekran*, no. 14 (July 1978), 20.
5. Kaiumov, *Zhizn’ moia—kinematograf*.
6. The story of Faizova and the photograph with Krupskaiia is reconstructed in S. Efimov and B. Petrov, “Spustia 28 boevykh let.” *Pravda Vostoka*, March 8, 1964, 2. I thank Zukhra Kasimova for bringing it to my attention and helping identify Faizova in the film. See Kasimova, “Hybridizing Sovietness: Modernity, Nationality and Provinciality in the Post–World War II Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic (UzSSR), 1941–1984” (PhD diss., University of Illinois, 2022), chap. 4.
7. Anne McShane, “Bringing the Revolution to the Women of the East: The Zhenotdel Experience in Soviet Central Asia through the Lens of *Kommunistka*” (PhD diss, University of Glasgow, 2019), 74.
8. McShane, 205.
9. See Eren Tasar, *Soviet and Muslim: The Institutionalization of Islam in Central Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).
10. Massell, *The Surrogate Proletariat*, xxiii.
11. Kristen Ghodsee, *Second World, Second Sex: Socialist Women’s Activism and Global Solidarity during the Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 42.
12. Negar Elodie Behzadi and Lucia Direnberger, “Gender and Ethnicity in the Soviet Muslim Peripheries: A Feminist Postcolonial Geography of Women’s Work in the Tajik SSR (1950–1991),” *Central Asian Survey* 39, no. 2 (2020): 207.
13. See Gregory Carleton, *Sexual Revolution in Bolshevik Russia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005); Dan Healey, *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia: The Regulation of Sexual and Gender Dissent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); and Melanie Ilić, ed., *Women in the Stalin Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).
14. On Tereshkova’s status and her own struggles, see Sue Bridger, “The Cold War and the Cosmos: Valentina Tereshkova and the First Woman’s Space Flight,” in *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, ed. Melanie Ilić et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 222–37.
15. See Jocelyn Olcott, *International Women’s Year: The Greatest Consciousness-Raising Event in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 19; Ghodsee, *Second World*,

Second Sex; and Yulia Gradskaia, *The Women's International Democratic Federation, the Global South and the Cold War: Defending the Rights of Women of the 'Whole World'?* (New York: Routledge, 2021).

16. Olcott, *International Women's Year*, 38.
17. Ghodsee, *Second World, Second Sex*, 10.
18. Ghodsee, 7.
19. Olcott, *International Women's Year*, 142.
20. Moema Viezzer, "El Comité de Amas de Casa de Siglo XX: An Organizational Experience of Bolivian Women," trans. James Dietz and Paula Tuchman, *Latin American Perspectives* 6, no. 3 (July 1979): 80–86.
21. Lan Duong and Lila Sharif, "Displaced Subjects: Revolution, Film, and Women in Vietnam and Palestine," *Verge: Studies in Global Asia* 6, no. 1 (2020): 177.
22. Kateřina Lišková, *Sexual Liberation, Socialist Style: Communist Czechoslovakia and the Science of Desire, 1945–1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 32.
23. Olcott, *International Women's Year*, 38; Ghodsee, *Second World, Second Sex*, 7.
24. Maya Turovskaya poses a similar argument on representation of women as moral arbiters in Soviet cinema in her essay "Woman and the 'Woman Question' in the USSR," in *Red Women on the Silver Screen: Soviet Women and Cinema from the Beginning to the End of the Communist Era*, ed. Lynne Attwood (London: Pandora, 1993), 133–40.
25. See the description of these films in L. M. Budiak, *Tashkentskii mezhdunarodnyi festival'* (Moscow: Znanie, 1985).
26. Nataliia Borisova, "'Liubliu—i nichego bol'she': Sovetskaia liubov' 1960–1980-kh godov," in *SSSR: Terroreia liubvi*, ed. Nataliia Borisova, Konstantin Bogdanov, and Iurii Murashov (Moscow: Novoe izdatel'stvo, 2008), 38.
27. Lišková, *Socialist Liberation, Socialist Style*, 35.
28. Borisova, "'Liubliu—i nichego bol'she,'" 38; Alexander Prokhorov and Elena Prokhorova, "Reinventing Desire: Late-Socialist Melodrama," in *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 149–90; Kateřina Lišková, "The Privatized Family: Atomized Hierarchy during Normalization," in *Sexual Liberation, Socialist Style: Communist Czechoslovakia and the Science of Desire, 1945–1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 157–227.
29. Prokhorov and Prokhorova, "Reinventing Desire," 174.
30. For examples in Soviet cinema, see Prokhorov and Prokhorova.
31. The difference between Soviet gender discourses in the western part of the country and Central Asia is at least partially attributable to concerns about the demographic crisis with plummeting birth rates in Russia but not the eastern and southern republics of the USSR, where labor shortages were common and often ascribed to women staying at home to raise their children. See Lynne Attwood, *The New Soviet Man and Woman: Sex-Role Socialization in the USSR* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990), 4.
32. At Tashkent this included Vladimir Gorikker's *Sevil'* (1970); Khodjakuli Narliev's *Daughter-in-Law* (*Nevestka*, 1971) and *When a Woman Mounts a Horse* (*Kogda zhenshchina osedlaet konia*, 1974); and Tolomush Okeev's *Bow to the Fire* (*Poklonis' ogniiu*, 1971)—all historical dramas centered on women. For a critique of these films, see Gul'nara Abikeva, "Dinamika zhenskikh obrazov v kino Tsentral'noi Azii," *Vestnik VGIK*, no. 6 (2010): 37–45; and Aida Mashurova, *Zhenskie obrazy v igrovom kinematografе istoricheskogo zhanra*

Kazakhstan i Tsentral'noi Azii (PhD diss., Kazakh National Academy of Arts, 2018). As we will see, the Transcaucasian republican studios (Armenia's and especially Georgia's) occupied a somewhat intermediary but otherwise ultimately unique position in this respect.

33. See Elena Razlogova, "Listening to the Inaudible Foreign: Simultaneous Translators and Soviet Experience of Foreign Cinema," in *Sound, Music, Speech in Soviet and Post-Soviet Cinema*, ed. Lilya Kaganovsky and Masha Salazkina (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 162–78; and Elena Razlogova, "The Liberation Politics of Live Translation: Global South Cinemas in Soviet Tashkent," *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* 59, no. 4 (Summer 2020): 183–88.

34. Luis de la Hidalga, *Sonia Amelio: Mexicana universal* (Mexico: Fundación Ingeniero Alejo Peralta y Díaz Ceballos, 2002).

35. See "Rinden homenaje póstumo a director de Películas Nacionales," *Corre camara*, May 31, 2011, www.correcamara.com.mx/inicio/int.php?mod=noticias_detalle&id_noticia=2701.

36. De la Hidalga, *Sonia Amelio*, 37.

37. Ali Khamraev, in discussion with the author, Feb. 2021; Kaiumov, *Zhizn' moia—kinematograf*.

38. 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), 110–21.

39. Roth-Ey, 115–18.

40. See Xiaoning Lu, "Zhang Ruifang: Modelling the Socialist Red Star," in *Chinese Film Stars*, ed. Mary Farquhar and Yingjin Zhang (London: Routledge, 2010), 97–107.

41. Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, 119–20.

42. Masha Salazkina, "(V)GIK and the History of Film Education in the Soviet Union, 1920s–1930s," in *A Companion to Russian Cinema*, ed. Birgit Beumers (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2016), 45–65; Mikhail Yampolsky, "Kuleshov's Experiments and the New Anthropology of the Actor," in *Inside the Film Factory: New Approaches to Russian and Soviet Cinema*, ed. Richard Taylor and Ian Christie (London: Routledge, 1991), 31–50. Vestiges of this are visible, for example, in the way that the Stanislavsky system was transformed by Stella Adler and Lee Strasberg and trickled down as method acting in the US.

43. See Neepa Majumdar, *Wanted Cultured Ladies Only! Female Stardom and Cinema in India, 1930s–1950s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 8–9.

44. Masha Kirasirova, "The Eastern International: The 'Domestic East' and the 'Foreign East' in Soviet-Arab Relations, 1917–68" (PhD diss., New York University, 2014), 375.

45. It is significant, if possibly accidental, that the other was Shirley MacLaine, who, in the 1970s, along with Jane Fonda, became a major Hollywood cultural ambassador and political activist.

46. Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, 16–17.

47. "Issa N'iang, Iunus N'Diai—pervye aktrisy Afriki," in *Ekran 68/69*, ed. M. Dolinskii and S. Chertok (Moscow: Iskustvo, 1969), 235–36.

48. Semion Chertok, *Tashkentskii festival'* (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1975), 178–79; Semion Chertok, *Festival' trekh kontinentov* (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1978), 57–58.

49. Chertok, *Tashkentskii festival'*, 172–75.

50. "Magda—egipetskaia zvezda," in *Ekran 68/69*, ed. M. Dolinskii and S. Chertok (Moscow: Iskustvo, 1969), 243–45; Chertok, *Tashkentskii festival'*, 174–76.

51. Budiak, *Tashkentskii mezhdunarodnyi festival'*, 47. Şoray's presence at the festival was particularly remarkable since virtually none of the Turkish directors of the Yeşilçam era (1960s–1970s) who were discussed in the Soviet film press as exemplary of socially conscious filmmaking—Yılmaz Güney, Metin Erksan, or Bilge Olgaç—ever managed to attend the festivals (it is unclear whether it was the Turkish government or the Turkish Left, with its negative relations with the Soviet Union, that interdicted their travel).

52. "Tashkent-78: Govoriat poslantsy," 21.

53. Rakhshanda Jalil, *Liking Progress, Loving Change: A Literary History of the Progressive Writers' Movement in Urdu* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

54. Shaukat Kaifi, *Kaifi and I: A Memoir*, trans. Nasreen Rehman (New Delhi: Zubaan, 2010).

55. "Shabana Azmi: 'Sud'ba zhenshchiny," in *Ekran* 76/77, ed. Iu. Tiurin and G. Dolmatovskia (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1978), 248–50.

56. "Tashkent-78: Govoriat poslantsy," 20.

57. Maithili Rao, "Perfect Pitch," *Film Comment* 38, no. 5 (Sept./Oct. 2002): 62–65.

58. See Rona Sela, "Seized in Beirut: The Plundered Archives of the Palestinian Cinema Institution," *Anthropology of the Middle East* 12, no. 1 (Summer 2017): 83–114; Isabel Seguí, "Auteurism, Machismo-Leninismo, and Other Issues: Women's Labor in Andean Oppositional Film Production," *Feminist Media Histories* 4, no. 1 (Winter 2018): 11–36; and Viviane Saglier, "Decolonization, Disenchantment, and Arab Feminist Genealogies of Worldmaking," *Feminist Media Histories* 8, no. 1 (Winter 2022): 72–101.

59. Only now, in retrospect, after their "rediscovery" in the West, have these films come to occupy a place of visibility in contemporary film scholarship and curatorial projects (and, paradoxically, one that in fact far surpasses most of the other cinematic works this book discusses, precisely because they have not been tainted by their associations with state socialist film circuits).

60. UNESCO, *Women in Cinema: Report on an International Symposium, St. Vincent, Italy, 23–27 July, 1975* (Paris: UNESCO, 1976).

61. On *communitas* see Kerry Bystrom, Monica Popescu, and Katherine Zien, eds., *The Cultural Cold War and the Global South: Sites of Contest and Communitas* (New York: Routledge, 2021).

62. Larisa Shepit'ko, "Poslednee interv'iu," in *Larisa: Vospominaniia, vystupleniia, interv'iu, kinostenarii, stat'i*, ed. Elem Klimov (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1987), 181, quoted in Lilya Kaganovsky, "Ways of Seeing: On Kira Muratova's *Brief Encounters* and Larisa Shepit'ko's *Wings*," *Russian Review* 71, no. 3 (July 2012): 498.

63. See Maria Flood, "Common Vulnerability: Community and Its Presentation in Assia Djebar's *La Nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua*," *Modern and Contemporary France* 21, no. 1 (2013): 76–77.

64. Ranjana Khanna, *Algeria Cuts: Women and Representation, 1830 to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

65. Kaganovsky, "Ways of Seeing"; Tatiana Mikhailova and Mark Lipovetsky, "Flight without Wings: The Subjectivity of a Female War Veteran in Larisa Shepit'ko's *Wings*," in *Embracing Arms: Cultural Representations of Slavic and Balkan Women in War*, ed. Helena Gosילו and Yana Hashamova (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2012), 81–106.

66. Shepit'ko, "Poslednee interv'iu," 181, quoted in Kaganovsky, "Ways of Seeing," 491.

67. Tolomush Okeev, "Kak molody my byli," in *Larisa*, 112–14.

68. See Olcott, *International Women's Year*; and Paulina Bren, "Women on the Verge of Desire: Women, Work, and Consumption in Socialist Czechoslovakia," in *Pleasures in Socialism: Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc*, ed. David Crowley and Susan E. Reid (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2010), 177–96.

69. See Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959–1971* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 244; and Inés María Martiatu Terry, "Sara Is So Very Sara!," interview by Lourdes Martínez-Echazábal, in *The Cinema of Sara Gómez: Reframing Revolution*, ed. María Caridad Cumaná and Susan Lord (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021), 46.

70. See www.kino-teatr.ru/kino/movie/sov/4434/annot (my translation).

71. Kristin Roth-Ey and Larissa Zakharova, "Foreword: Communications and Media in the USSR and Eastern Europe," *Cahiers du monde russe* 56, no. 2–3 (2015): 273–89.

72. Christine Evans, "The 'Soviet Way of Life' as a Way of Feeling: Emotion and Influence on Soviet Central Television in the Brezhnev Era," *Cahiers du monde russe* 56, no. 2–3 (2015): 545.

73. A 1965–66 Kiev study revealed that only one in five households spent as little as half an hour per day shopping; two in five spent from one to one and a half hours, and the rest spent more than two hours. See Stephen Lovell, *The Shadow of War: Russia and the USSR, 1941 to the Present* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 162.

74. For more on the dynamic of Soviet citizens' "letters to the editor," see Miriam Dobson, "Contesting the Paradigms of De-Stalinization: Readers' Responses to *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*," *Slavic Review* 64, no. 3 (Autumn 2005): 580–600; and Polly Jones, "Breaking the Silence: Iurii Bondarev's *Quietness* between the 'Sincerity' and 'Civic Emotion' of the Thaw," in *Interpreting Emotions in Russia and Eastern Europe*, ed. Mark D. Steinberg and Valeria Sobol (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 152–76.

75. Irène Bonnaud e Bernard Eisenschitz, "Buba/Užmuri," *Il cinema ritrovato*, August 30, 2020, <https://festival.ilcinemaritrovato.it/proiezione/buba-uzmuri>.

76. Lana Gogoberidze, "Interview by Gregori Antimoni," *Chas interv'iu*, April 17, 2018, www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyWp9HfB9o.

77. Gogoberidze. In 1978 at Tashkent, another Georgian film by a woman filmmaker was screened: Nana Mchedlidze's comedy *A Real Man from Tbilisi and Others* (*Nastoiashchii tbilisets i drugie*, 1976), but if Mchedlidze was present at the festival, she wasn't invited to speak or participate in the roundtables.

6. WORLD CINEMA OF SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL MODERNITY

1. Kirill Razlogov, in conversation with Elena Razlogova and the author, April 15, 2012. Quoted in Elena Razlogova, "Listening to the Inaudible Foreign: Simultaneous Translators and Soviet Experience of Foreign Cinema," in *Sound, Music, Speech in Soviet and Post-Soviet Cinema*, ed. Lilya Kaganovsky and Masha Salazkina (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 172–73.

2. Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*, 3rd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 183. Mariia Koskina, "A Boy Meets a Girl, and They Build a Dam: Transformation of Siberia in Late-Soviet Industrial Cinema," presentation, Helsinki Environmental Humanities Forum, Virtual Conference, Feb. 9, 2021.

3. Brian R. Jacobson, “Prospecting: Cinema and the Exploration of Extraction,” in *Cinema of Exploration: Essays on an Adventurous Film Practice*, ed. James Leo Cahill and Luca Caminati (New York: AFI/Routledge, 2021), 280–81.

4. For an elaboration of this argument in recent historical literature, see Artemy M. Kalinovsky, “Introduction: The Promise of Development,” in *Laboratory of Socialist Development: Cold War Politics and Decolonization in Soviet Tajikistan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 1–18; and David C. Engerman and Corinna R. Unger, “Introduction: Towards a Global History of Modernization,” *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 3 (June 2009): 375–85.

5. See Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development*, 67–90; and Lucie Česálková, “Hydropower for a Sea-less Nation: Representations of Water Energy in Czech Visual Culture,” in *Films That Work Harder: The Circulations of Industrial Film*, ed. Florian Hoof, Vinzenz Hediger, and Yvonne Zimmermann (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, forthcoming).

6. Kalinovsky shows, for example, how Khrushchev’s newly found interest in the Third World was explicitly used by Tajik officials to argue for building the Durek dam: for the policy makers in Moscow, it was important as a showcase intended to impress its southern and eastern neighbors, but for Tajikistan, it was an opportunity to jumpstart the investments in industrialization, which included the development of much-needed civic infrastructure. See Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development*.

7. Quoted in Giorgio Shani, “Spectres of the 3rd World: Bandung as a Lieu de Mémoire,” in *Meanings of Bandung: Postcolonial Orders and Decolonial Visions*, ed. Quỳnh N. Phạm and Robbie Shilliam (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 150.

8. Nathan J. Citino, *Envisioning the Arab Future: Modernization in US-Arab Relations, 1945–1967* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 10.

9. Samir Amin, *The Long Revolution of the Global South: Toward a New Anti-Imperialist International* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2019), 375.

10. For a work that foregrounds similar questions from the other side of the Cold War, see Takuya Tsunoda, “Taxonomy of Techniques: Visions of Industrial Cinema in Postwar Japan,” in *Films That Work Harder: The Circulations of Industrial Film*, ed. Florian Hoof, Vinzenz Hediger, and Yvonne Zimmermann (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, forthcoming).

11. See Douglas Rogers, “Petrobarter: Oil, Inequality, and the Political Imagination in and after the Cold War,” *Current Anthropology* 55, no. 2 (April 2014): 131–53.

12. See Michael Hardt, “Two Faces of Apocalypse: A Letter from Copenhagen,” *Polygraph*, no. 22 (2010): 265–74.

13. Martha Lampland, “The Technopolitical Lineage of State Planning in Hungary, 1930–1956,” in *Entangled Geographies: Empire and Technopolitics in the Global Cold War*, ed. Gabrielle Hecht (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 156.

14. For an account of these developments specifically in relation to media, see Lee Grieveson, *Cinema and the Wealth of Nations: Media, Capital, and the Liberal World System* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018).

15. Quoted in Lampland, “State Planning in Hungary,” 163.

16. For a discussion of such tropes in “capitalist” contexts, see Jacobson, “Prospecting,” 280–94; and Brian R. Jacobson, “Industrial Film and the Politics of Visibility in the Early

Years of North Sea Oil,” in *Petrocinema: Sponsored Film and the Oil Industry*, ed. Marina Dahlquist and Patrick Vonderau (New York: Bloomsbury, 2021), 162–78.

17. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau, introduction to *Films That Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media*, ed. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 10–11; see also Charles R. Acland and Haidee Wasson, eds., *Useful Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

18. Timothy Nunan, *Humanitarian Invasion: Global Development in Cold War Afghanistan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 15.

19. Rudmer Canjels, “Films from beyond the Well: A Historical Overview of Shell Films,” in *Films That Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media*, ed. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 247.

20. Canjels, 247.

21. Mona Damluji, “Visualizing Iraq: Oil, Cinema, and the Modern City,” *Urban History* 43, no. 4 (Nov. 2016), <https://scalar.usc.edu/anvc/urban-sights-visual-culture-and-urban-history/visualizing-iraq-oil-cinema-and-the-modern-city-by-mona-damluji>.

22. Although I have not been able to watch any of the Iraqi industrial films from that period, their large number, as listed in Shakir Nouri’s *A la recherche du cinéma irakien: Histoire, infrastructure, filmographie, 1945–1985* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1986), as well as suggestive titles on the Tashkent festival program such as *Our National Industries* (Sana’atuna al-Wataniya, 1967), *Our Spinning Wheels* (Dawalibuna al-Da’ira, 1969), *Treasure Trove* (Makman al-Kunuz, 1971, produced by the Minister of Minerals and Petrol), and *Oil-72* (Naftuna la-na, 1972), give sufficient illustration of both the prevalence of such productions and their international circulation.

23. Viola Shafik, “Broken Narratives: Egyptian Documentary, 1912–80,” *RAWI*, no. 9 (2018), <https://rawi-magazine.com/articles/documentaries>.

24. Tom Rice, “From the Inside: The Colonial Film Unit and the Beginning of the End,” in *Film and the End of Empire*, ed. Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe (London: BFI, 2011), 135–53; Rosaleen Smyth, “Images of Empires on Shifting Sands: The Colonial Film Unit in West Africa in the Post-war Period,” in *ibid.*, 155–75.

25. Andrew Apter, “The Pan-African Nation: Oil-Money and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria,” *Public Culture* 8, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 442.

26. On the importance of the “agrarian question” in the context of Soviet-African knowledge transfers, see Steffi Marung, “Entangling Agrarian Modernities: The ‘Agrarian Question’ through the Eyes of Soviet Africanists,” in *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, ed. James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 145–65.

27. On international film circulation of industrial documentaries, see Brian Jacobson, “On the Red Carpet in Rouen: Industrial Film Festivals and a World Community of Film Makers,” in *Films that Work Harder: The Circulations of Industrial Film*, ed. Florian Hoof, Vinzenz Hediger, and Yvonne Zimmermann (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, forthcoming).

28. Susan Leigh Star, “The Ethnography of Infrastructure,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 43, no. 3 (Dec. 1999): 377. See also Lisa Parks and Nicole Starosielski, introduction to *Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures*, ed. Lisa Parks and Nicole Starosielski (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 6. For a critique and rearticulation of this claim, see Brian Larkin, “The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure,” *Annual Review*

of *Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (2013): 327–43; and Sven Lütticken, “Shattered Matter, Transformed Forms: Notes on Nuclear Aesthetics, Part 1,” *e-flux*, no. 94 (Oct. 2018), <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/94/221035/shattered-matter-transformed-forms-notes-on-nuclear-aesthetics-part-1>.

29. Quoted in Nick Cullather, “Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State,” *Journal of American History* 89, no. 2 (Sept. 2002): 513.

30. This quote was actually used by Nehru in the context of the need for the secularization of India. See Jyotsna G. Singh, *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues: “Discoveries” of India in the Language of Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1996), 153.

31. See David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 275.

32. Ying Qian, “When Taylorism Met Revolutionary Romanticism: Documentary Cinema in China’s Great Leap Forward,” *Critical Inquiry* 46, no. 3 (Spring 2020): 579.

33. Salomé Aguilera Skvirsky, *The Process Genre: Cinema and the Aesthetic of Labor* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020).

34. See John MacKay, *Dziga Vertov: Life and Work*, vol. 1, 1896–1921 (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018).

35. See John MacKay, “Disorganized Noise: *Enthusiasm* and the Ear of the Collective,” *Kinokultura*, no. 7 (2005), www.kinokultura.com/articles/enthusiasm-nonoise.pdf.

36. Quoted in Pier Marco De Santi, “Il comunismo in contropiede: *La muraglia cinese*,” in Carlo Lizzani: *Un lungo viaggio nel cinema*, ed. Vito Zaggarro (Venezia: Marsilio, 2010), 290. I thank Luca Caminati for providing this quote.

37. Koskina, “A Boy Meets a Girl.”

38. I thank Mariia Koskina for bringing this film to my attention; she discusses it at length in her PhD dissertation, “Giving a Green Light to Development: State and Personal Encounters with Nature in Cold War Siberia” (SUNY Binghamton, 2022).

39. Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development*.

40. Peter Hopkinson, “The Role of Film in Development,” in *Reports and Papers on Mass Communication*, no. 64 (Paris: UNESCO, 1971), 12.

41. See Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 230.

42. Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development*; Alia Mossallam, “‘We Are the Ones Who Made This Dam ‘High!’ A Builders’ History of the Aswan High Dam,” *Water History* 6, no. 4 (Dec. 2014): 297–314.

43. Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development*, 361–62.

44. Kay Dickinson, *Arab Cinema Travels: Transnational Syria, Palestine, Dubai and Beyond* (London: BFI, 2016), 70.

45. Massimiliano Trentin, *Engineers of Modern Development: East German Experts in Ba’thist Syria, 1965–1972* (Padua: Cluep, 2010), 97.

46. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1200, l. 5.

47. See Koskina, “Giving a Green Light to Development”; and Alexander Markov’s forthcoming film on Soviet amateur films at Aswan.

48. RGALI, f. 2944, d. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 56–61.

49. Ahmad Shokr, “Hydropolitics, Economy, and the Aswan High Dam in Mid-Century Egypt,” *Arab Studies Journal* 17, no. 1 (2009): 9–31.

50. Citino, *Envisioning the Arab Future*, 197.

51. Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 265.
52. Elizabeth Bishop, "Talking Shop: Egyptian Engineers and Soviet Specialists at the Aswan High Dam" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1997).
53. Alia Mossallam, "Stories of Peoplehood: Nasserism, Popular Politics and Songs in Egypt, 1956–1973" (PhD diss., London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012).
54. Mossallam, 253.
55. "Pervyi sovestsko-egipetskii . . .," *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 5 (1972): 40.
56. Bishop, "Talking Shop," 238–39.
57. A. Vasilev, "Fil'my Iusefa Shakhina," *Pravda*, June 2, 1977, 5. On *Jamila*, see the section on Egypt in chapter 2 of this book.
58. Ibrahim Fawal, *Youssef Chahine* (London: BFI, 2019), 44.
59. Quoted in Malek Khouri, *The Arab National Project in Youssef Chahine's Cinema* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 69.
60. Soviet 1967 Report from the trip to Cairo to sign the coproduction agreement, RGALI, f. 2944, d. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 2.
61. RGALI, f. 2944, d. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 3.
62. "Pervyi sovestsko-arabskii fil'm," *Sovetskaia kul'tura*, Oct. 10, 1967, 1.
63. Viktor Sytin, *Chelovek iz nochi* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1982).
64. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 56.
65. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 42.
66. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 65.
67. Sytin, *Chelovek iz nochi*; Alia Mossallam, "Illustrated Ideologies in High Dam Comics (1960–1964)," *Forum Transregionale Studien*, Oct. 16, 2019, <https://soundcloud.com/user-555442334/alia-mossallam-illustrated-ideologies-in-high-dam-comics-1960-1964>.
68. Mossallam, "Stories of Peoplehood," 131.
69. Mossallam, 182.
70. The two versions of the film have been investigated by the artist Ala Younis, <https://alayounis.art/highdam>, and on the podcast hosted by Jose Arroyo, "The Youssef Chahine Podcast No. 9: A Return to a Later Version of *Un jour, le nil: People of the Nile* (1972)," *First Impressions: Notes on Films and Culture*, July 13, 2020, <https://notesonfilm1.com/2020/07/13/the-youssef-chahine-podcastno-9-a-return-to-a-later-version-of-un-jour-le-nil-people-of-the-nile-1972>.
71. Viktor Sytin, "Liudi na Nile," in *Chelovek iz nochi*, <https://bigliba.com/reader/720399>.
72. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 76.
73. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 94.
74. In fact, the only modifications requested by the Egyptian side that the Soviets were in agreement with was the removal of a scene with a prostitute early in the film, which the Soviets considered "unnecessary" and the Egyptians saw as degrading to the nation. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1325, l. 95.
75. Muhammed Kopt, "Cupid's Hall of Fame: Our Favorite Couples from Egypt's Golden Age of Cinema," *Scoop Empire*, Feb. 14, 2020, <https://scoopempire.com/cupids-hall-of-fame-our-favorite-couples-from-egypts-golden-age-of-cinema/>.
76. Quoted in Khouri, *The Arab National Project*, 71.
77. Khouri, 72–73.

78. “Pervyi sovestko-egipetskii . . .,” 40.

79. Even the Bologna festival Cinema Ritrovato, which screened the Cinémathèque française–restored 1968 version in 2019, failed to give a coherent account of the film’s history or its titles.

80. RGALI, f. 2944, op. 13, ed. khr. 1325.

81. The impression that the most visible changes between the versions reflect the desire to depict Egypt as a modern country and the Egyptian characters as more professionally competent than their Russian counterparts is further confirmed by Richard Layne’s detailed comparison of the two versions on Jose Arroyo’s podcast on Chahine. See Richard Layne and José Arroyo, “The Youssef Chahine Podcast No. 9: A Return to a Later Version of *Un jour, le nil: People of the Nile* (1972),” First Impressions: Notes on Films and Culture, July 13, 2020, <https://notesonfilm1.com/2020/07/13/the-youssef-chahine-podcastno-9-a-return-to-a-later-version-of-un-jour-le-nil-people-of-the-nile-1972/>.

82. For the long history of this, see Jennifer L. Derr, *The Lived Nile: Environment, Disease, and Material Colonial Economy in Egypt* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019).

83. Christina Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin: Ballet and Power in Soviet Russia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), 61.

84. Bishop, “Talking Shop,” 230–31.

85. Mossallam, “Stories of Peoplehood,” 151–55.

86. Mossallam, 182.

87. Bishop, “Talking Shop,” 238.

88. Lucia Allais, “Integrities: The Salvage of Abu Simbel,” *Grey Room*, no. 50 (Winter 2013): 6–45, quoted in Adam Hill, “‘The Battle for Abu Simbel’: Archaeology and Postcolonial Diplomacy in the UNESCO Campaign for Nubia,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 56, no. 3 (2021): 509–10.

89. Bojana Videkanić, *Nonaligned Modernism: Socialist Postcolonial Aesthetics in Yugoslavia, 1945–1985* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2019), 164.

90. Paul Betts, “The Warden of World Heritage: UNESCO and the Rescue of the Nubian Monuments,” *Past & Present* 226, no. 10 (2015): 116.

91. Louis H. Porter, “Cold War Internationalisms: The USSR in UNESCO, 1945–1967” (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 2018), 446–48.

92. Allais, “Integrities,” 21.

93. Allais, 21; Betts, “Warden of World Heritage,” 124.

94. Hill, “‘The Battle for Abu Simbel,’” 510; Allais, “Integrities,” 36.

95. Apter, “The Pan-African Nation,” 449.

96. In the case of FESTAC, too, Apter documents the way “the people,” as a symbolic construct, came at a cost of human lives—most shockingly so by the police beating people trying to get into the stadium to attend the festival. See Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 118–20.

97. Mossallam, “Stories of Peoplehood,” 140.

98. Kalinovskiy, *Laboratory of Socialist Development*, 354.

99. Mossallam, “Stories of Peoplehood,” 140–44.

100. Ala Younis, “High Dam,” lecture delivered at Concordia University, Montreal, Nov. 12, 2021.

101. For the history of the environmental impact of industrialization on Lake Sevan, see R. H. Hovhannissian, *Lake Sevan, Yesterday, Today* (Erevan: Armenian National Academy of Science, 1994).

102. Paul R. Josephson, *An Environmental History of Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 205.

7. CULTURAL HERITAGE IN WORLD SOCIALIST CINEMA

1. See Ira Bhaskar and Richard Allen, *Islamicate Cultures of Bombay Cinema* (New Delhi: Tulika, 2009). Ironically, Qasmi's contribution to Pakistani cinema was two different Punjabi *goonda* (gangster) films in the late 1970s, both based on his short story "Gandasa." See Hashim bin Rashid and Sher Khan, "Goonda Raj: Caste and Criminality in Punjabi Cinema," in *Cinema and Society: Film and Social Change in Pakistan*, ed. Ali Khan and Ali Nobil Ahmad (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 297–306.

2. Kamran Asdar Ali, *Surkh Salam: Communist Politics and Class Activism in Pakistan, 1947–1972* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 126–30; K. H. Ansari, "Pan-Islam and the Making of the Early Indian Muslim Socialists," *Modern Asian Studies* 20, no. 3 (1986): 509–37.

3. See Rossen Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema between the Second and the Third Worlds* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020).

4. See Eren Tasar, *Soviet and Muslim: The Institutionalization of Islam in Central Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017). For a detailed account of the significance of Persianate literary culture in the Soviet Union, see Samuel Hodgkin, *Red Nightingales: The Poetics of Eastern Internationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2024).

5. RGALI, f. 2936, d. 4, ed. khr. 1834, l. 19.

6. Rakhshanda Jalil, *Liking Progress, Loving Change: A Literary History of the Progressive Writers' Movement in Urdu* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 221.

7. Saadia Toor, *The State of Islam: Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan* (London: Pluto, 2011), 55.

8. Toor, 71.

9. Arne Haugen, *The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 160–86.

10. Mirzo Tursunzoda, "Druzhba narodov pobedit voinu," *Ogonoik*, no. 42 (1950): 4. See also Samuel Hodgkin, "From Nationalities Studies to a Poetics of Soviet Multinational Representation," paper presented at the ASEES National Convention, 2019.

11. Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 10.

12. See Sarah Brouillette, *UNESCO and the Fate of the Literary* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019), 11.

13. See Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), chap. 4.

14. Eleonory Gilburd, *To See Paris and Die: The Soviet Lives of Western Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 32.

15. The first, 1968, edition of Tashkent included *Makhtumkuli* (Alty Karliev, 1968), the biopic of Magtymguly Pyragy, the father of Turkmen literature; Tajik *The Pawnbroker's Death* (*Smert' rostovshchika*, Takhir Sabirov, 1966), an adaptation of Sadriddin Ayni's historical novel; *Cairo 30* (*Al-Qahira 30*, Salah Abu Seif, 1966), an adaptation of Naguib Mahfouz's novel; *Amrapali* (Lekh Tandon, 1966), a lavish historical-mythological epic; the Bengali-language historical biopic *Nawab Sirajuddaula* (K. A. Rahman, 1967) from Pakistan; and the Ghanian *No Tears for Ananse* (Sam Aryeetey, 1968), based on Akan mythological stories. Subsequent editions continued this trend.

16. Kathleen D. McCarthy, "From Cold War to Cultural Development: The International Cultural Activities of the Ford Foundation, 1950–1980," *Daedalus* 116, no. 1 (1987): 108–9; see also Brouillette, *UNESCO*, 61–62.

17. For exceptions to this common assessment, see Rosalind Galt, *Pretty: Film and Decorative Image* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); and Belén Vidal, *Figuring the Past: Period Film and the Mannerist Aesthetic* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

18. The new head of the Film Division in the 1960s, Jehangir Bhowanagary, was responsible for the emergence of some of the most innovative Indian documentaries of the period. According to his memoirs, he was deeply influenced by his experience of attending an exhibition of Indian art in London, which inspired him to focus on reflecting the richness of diversity of the national culture and heritage through documentary cinema. See Peter Sutoris, *Visions of Development: Films Division of India and the Imagination of Progress, 1948–75* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 169.

19. Sutoris, 169.

20. Toor, *The State of Islam*, 110–15.

21. Ananya Jahanara Kabir, *Partition's Post-Amnesias: 1947, 1971 and Modern South Asia* (New Delhi: Women Unlimited, 2013), 138–51.

22. In fact, an Uzbek-Indian coproduction, *The Legend of Love* (*Sohni Mahiwal / Legenda o lyubvi*, Umesh Mehra and Latif Faiziev, 1984), based on a famous Punjab folkloric tale whose hero is from Bukhara, was the first Indian film screened in Pakistan after its ban on Indian cinema, illustrating the politically charged context of such constructions of a shared past. "Pakistan to Screen Indian *Sohni Mahiwal*: Exemption Granted," *Business Recorder*, Jan. 24, 2006, <https://fp.brecorder.com/2006/01/20060124380132>.

23. See Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

24. The many examples here include *Journey beyond Three Seas* (*Pardesi / Khozhdenie za tri moria*, Khwaja Ahmad Abbas and Vasilii Pronin, 1957); *Adventures of Alibaba and Forty Thieves* (*Alibaba Aur 40 Chor / Priklucheniia Ali-Baby i soroka razboinikov*, Umesh Mehra and Latif Faiziev, 1980); and *The Legend of Love*, with India; *Derzu Usala*, with Japan (Akira Kurosawa, 1975); *My Love, My Sorrow* (*Liubov' moia, pechal' moia / Bir aşk masalı: Ferhat ile Şirin*, Azhdar Ibragimov, 1978), with Turkey; and *Red Bells* (*Krasnye kolokola / Campanas rojas*, Sergei Bondarchuk, 1982), with Mexico.

25. This was not limited to literary adaptations alone but also included documentary films dedicated to famous writers, such as Kazi Nazrul Islam, a Bengali poet and musician, and the Turkish socialist writer Aziz Nesin.

26. This is only partially true since many African filmmakers—such as, notably, Ousmane Sembene—came from literary backgrounds and continued writing while also making films.

27. For the exploration of epic melodrama as a cinematic genre, see Bhaskar Sarkar, “Epic Melodrama, or Cine-Maps of the Global South,” in *The Epic Film in World Culture*, ed. Robert Burgoyne (London: Routledge, 2011), 263–95.

28. Brazilian adaptations of Jorge Amado and Miguel Littín’s *The Widow of Montiel* (*La viuda de Montiel*, 1980), based on a short story by Gabriel García Márquez, were also particularly well received in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s.

29. *III Kinofestival’ stran Azii i Afriki v Tashkente: Otkliki zarubezhnoi pressy* (Moscow: Soiuz kinematografistov SSSR, 1975).

30. Iosif Braginskii, “Pod znakom internatsionalizma,” in *Issledovaniia po tadzhikskoi kul’ture* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), 267.

31. Robert Burgoyne, introduction to *The Epic Film in World Culture*, ed. Robert Burgoyne (London: Routledge, 2011), 3.

32. Dina Iordanova, “Rise of the Rest: Globalizing Epic Cinema,” in *The Epic Film in World Culture*, ed. Robert Burgoyne (London: Routledge, 2011), 117.

33. Iftikhar Dadi, “Lineages of Pakistan’s ‘Urdu’ Cinema: Mode, Mood and Genre in *Zehr-e Ishq* / *Poison of Love* (1958),” *Screen* 57, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 481.

34. Bhaskar Sarkar, *Mourning the Nation: Indian Cinema in the Wake of Partition* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 84.

35. Sarkar, 50.

36. Michael Rouland, “An Historical Introduction,” in *Cinema in Central Asia: Rewriting Cultural Histories*, ed. Michael Rouland, Gulnara Abikeyeva, and Birgit Beumers (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 19.

37. See Artemy M. Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development: Cold War Politics and Decolonization in Soviet Tajikistan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 502–3; and David C. Engerman, “Learning from the East: Soviet Experts and India in the Era of Competitive Coexistence,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 33, no. 2 (2013): 227–38.

38. See Hanna Jansen, “Soviet ‘Afro-Asians’ in UNESCO: Reorienting World History,” *Journal of World History* 30, no. 1–2 (June 2019): 208–12; and Michael Kemper, “Propaganda for the East, Scholarship for the West: Soviet Strategies at the 1960 International Congress of Orientalists in Moscow,” in *Reassessing Orientalism: Interlocking Orientologies during the Cold War*, ed. Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Michael Kemper (London: Routledge, 2015), 170–210; as well as other essays in the volume.

39. Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development*, 504.

40. See, e.g., Gulnara Abikeyeva’s works such as *Kino Tsentral’noi Azii (1990–2001)* (Almaty: Kompleks, 2001); *The Heart of the World: Films from Central Asia* (Almaty: Complex, 2003); and *Dve epokhi natsional’nogo samoopredeleniia v kino Tsentral’noi Azii: 60-e i 90-e gody* (Almaty: Tsentr tsentral’no-aziatskikh kinematografii, 2006).

41. Sadullo Rakhimov, “Tajik Cinema at the End of the Soviet Era,” in *Cinema of Central Asia: Rewriting Cultural Histories*, ed. Michael Rouland, Gulnara Abikeyeva, and Birgit Beumers (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 119; Rouland, “An Historical Introduction,” 19–20.

42. Rakhimov, “Tajik Cinema,” 120; see also most other essays in Rouland, Abikeyeva, and Beumers, *Cinema of Central Asia* for a similar assessment.

43. Alexander Prokhorov and Elena Prokhorova, “Reinventing Desire: Late-Socialist Melodrama,” in *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 21–22.

44. The predominance of Central Asian genre films in the collection of Soviet embassies all over the Middle East speaks to the assumption that they were assumed to be particularly effective for local audiences.

45. RGALI, f. 2918, op. 3, ed. khr 167, l. 1. Cited in Kristin Roth-Ey, “Cinema and the ‘soft power’ business: Sovexportfilm and the Global South in the Cold War,” unpublished manuscript.

46. This was the lesson learned from the scandal around Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Anndrei Rublev* (1966).

47. Nikita Markov, “Sistema gosudarstvennogo upravleniia sovetским kinematografom, 1963–1968” (PhD diss., Russian State Academic University of the Humanities, 2019), 151.

48. Markov, 288–89.

49. Sharofat Arabova, *Istoriia tadjzhikskogo kinematografa* (Dushanbe: Institut istorii, arkheologii, etnografii im. A. Donisha, 2014), 92.

50. Throughout the 1970s, Bulat Mansurov, the celebrated Turkmen filmmaker, kept proposing a multipart project on the travels of Ármin Vámbéry, the first European to (clandestinely) traverse all of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century. Mansurov proposed that Ali Khamraev, Tolomush Okeev, and Otar Ioseliani could direct different parts of this historical adventure. Goskino always turned him down. Historical epics focusing on the Genghis Khan or Timur (Tamerlan) were also repeatedly proposed by Central Asian filmmakers—Okeev, Khamraev, and Mansurov among them—but were also rejected. See Valerii Fomin, *Kino i vlast’: sovetskoe kino, 1965–1985: Dokumenty, svidetel’sstva, razmyshleniia* (Moscow: Materik, 1996), 334, 362–63.

51. Aleksandr Lipkov, “Rukopisi ne goriat: Abu-Reikhan Biruni,” *Sovetskii ekran*, no. 16 (1968): 2.

52. Iosif Braginskii, “Formirovaniie sovetskoi literatury i prosvetitel’skie traditsii,” in *Issledovaniia po tadjzhikskoi kul’ture* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), 210. Similar debates were going on with respect to Nasimi’s poetry as part of Azerbaijan’s literary legacy; in fact, one of the other heritage films screened at Tashkent was his biopic, *Nasimi* (Hasan Seyidbeyli, 1973).

53. Haugen, *Establishment of National Republics*, 33–35.

54. Haugen, 33–35; for more, see Adeeb Khalid, *Making Uzbekistan: Nation, Empire and Revolution in the Early USSR* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

55. On different facets of this process, see Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Michael Kemper, eds., *Reassessing Orientalism: Interlocking Orientologies during the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 2015); Elif Kale-Lostuvali, “Varieties of Musical Nationalism in Soviet Uzbekistan,” *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 4 (2007): 539–58; Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*; and Theodore C. Levin, *The Hundred Thousand Fools of God: Musical Travels in Central Asia (and Queens, New York)* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

56. Adeeb Khalid, *Islam after Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 174–75.

57. Haugen, *Establishment of National Republics*, 143.

58. Haugen, 153.

59. Masha Kirasirova, “The Eastern International: The ‘Domestic East’ and the ‘Foreign East’ in Soviet-Arab Relations, 1917–68” (PhD diss., New York University, 2014), 329–30.

60. Marlène Laruelle, “The Concept of Ethnogenesis in Central Asia: Political Context and Institutional Mediators (1940–50),” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 9, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 179.

61. B. G. Gafurov, *Tadzhiki: Drevneishaia, drevniaia i srednevekovaia istoriia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1972), quoted in Laruelle, 184.
62. Kemper, "Propaganda for the East," 174; Masha Kirasirova, "Sons of Muslims in Moscow: Soviet Central Asian Mediators to Foreign East, 1955–1962," *Ab Imperio: Studies of New Imperial History and Nationalism in Post-Soviet Space*, no. 4 (2011): 106–32.
63. Jansen, "Soviet 'Afro-Asians' in UNESCO," 206.
64. Jansen, 206.
65. Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism*; Elena Razlogova, "Cinema in the Spirit of Bandung: The Afro-Asian Film Festival Circuit, 1957–1964," in *The Cultural Cold War and the Global South: Sites of Contest and Communitas*, ed. Kerry Bystrom, Monica Popescu, and Katherine Zien (New York: Routledge, 2021), 111–29.
66. Quoted in Jansen, "Soviet 'Afro-Asians' in UNESCO," 217.
67. Jansen, 207; see also B. G. Gafurov, *Tadzhikskii narod v bor'be za svobodu i nezavisimost' svoei Rodiny* (Stalinabad: Gosizdat pri SNK Tadzhikskoi SSR, 1944).
68. Jansen, "Soviet 'Afro-Asians' in UNESCO," 208.
69. Jansen, 208–12.
70. "Al-Biruni on the Screen," *UNESCO Courier*, no. 6 (June 1974): 27–28.
71. "Edareye kole omoure cinamayi keshvar," *Cinema* (Tehran) 52, no.1 (1973): 54.
72. "Filmhaye markaze cinamayi vezarat farhang va honar," *Cinema* (Tehran) 53, no. 7 (1974): 50.
73. B. G. Gafurov, "Al-Biruni—A Universal Genius Who Lived in Central Asia a Thousand Years Ago," *UNESCO Courier*, no. 6 (June 1974): 4.
74. L. Mamatova, "Realizm istoriko-biograficheskogo fil'ma," in *Kino i vremia, vypusk 1*, ed. Iu. M. Khaniutin (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1977), 130–31.
75. *III Kinofestival'*, 58.
76. *III Kinofestival'*, 58.
77. Mamatova, "Realizm istoriko-biograficheskogo fil'ma," 132–33; Anri Vartanov, "Fakt, legendy, vymysel," *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 8 (August 1975): 35–41.
78. Joobin Bekhrad, "The Book of Kings: The Book That Defines Iranians," *BBC Culture*, August 16, 2018, www.bbc.com/culture/article/20180810-the-book-of-kings-the-book-that-defines-iranians.
79. Hamid Dabashi, *The Shahnameh: The Persian Epic as World Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 8.
80. Anri Vartanov, "Eshche odna glava eposa: Obreteniia i poteri. Skazanie o Siiavushe," *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 7 (July 1978): 78.
81. Samuel Hodgkin, "Persian Poetry in the Second-World Translation System," in *The Routledge Handbook of Persian Literary Translation*, ed. by Pounesh Shabani-Jadidi, Patricia J. Higgins and Michelle Quay (New York: Routledge, 2022), 431.
82. Hodgkin, 431. See also Katerina Clark, *Eurasia without Borders: The Dream of a Leftist Literary Commons, 1919–1943* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021), 114–21.
83. Vartanov, "Eshche odna glava eposa," 78. Vartanov and Neia Zorkaia, another prominent Soviet film critic, were part of the television sector of the All-Soviet Research Institute for Art Studies and became the leading scholars of popular media forms in the Soviet and post-Soviet context. See Anri Vartanov, "Neprochitannaia kniga, ili grustnaia saga o tom, chto Chinovnik i Zritel' okazvaiutsia sil'nee Khudozhnika." In *Bol'shoi format: Ekrannaia kul'tura v epokhu transmediinosti. Chast' 1*, ed. Iu. Bogomolov and E. Sal'nikova, (Moscow: Izdatel'skie resheniia, 2018), 120–49.

84. Vartanov, "Eshche odna glava eposa," 78.
85. Iosif Braginskii, "Poeziia iranskogo vrozozhdeniia," in *Issledovaniia po tadzhikskoi kul'ture* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), 144.
86. Dabashi, *The Shahnameh*, 101.
87. Michael M. J. Fischer, *Mute Dreams, Blind Owls, and Dispersed Knowledges: Persian Poesis in the Transnational Circuitry* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 7.
88. Franklin Lewis, "The *Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi as World Literature," *Iranian Studies* 48, no. 3 (2015): 320.
89. "Jashnvareha," *Cinema* (Tehran) 55, no. 22 (1976): 77.
90. Roham Alvandi, "Introduction: Iran in the Age of Aryamehr," in *The Age of Aryamehr: Late Pahlavi Iran and Its Global Entanglements*, ed. Roham Alvandi (London: Gingko Library, 2018), 21.
91. For a detailed discussion of the Soviet celebration of Ferdowsi's Jubilee, see Hodgkin, *Red Nightingales*, chap. 4.
92. Dabashi, *The Shahnameh*, 167.
93. Ravi Vasudevan, *The Melodramatic Public Film Form and Spectatorship in Indian Cinema* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 35.
94. Jamal Omid, *Tarikh-e Cinema-ye Iran, 1289–1375* (Tehran: Entesharat-e Rowzaneh, 1374/1995), 71–72.
95. See Clark, *Eurasia without Borders*, 116–19.
96. Dabashi, *The Shahnameh*, 168.
97. Quoted in Arabova, *Istoriia tadzhikskogo kinematografa*, 180.
98. Arabova, 178.
99. See Boris Kimiagarov, *Doroga ukhodit v gory* (Moscow: Soiuz kinematografistov SSSR, 1970).
100. Kimiagarov, 13.
101. Dabashi, *The Shahnameh*, 106.
102. Arabova, *Istoriia tadzhikskogo kinematografa*, 172–73; James Steffen, *The Cinema of Sergei Parajanov* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), 115.
103. Steffen, *Cinema of Sergei Parajanov*, 117.
104. See Clark, *Eurasia without Borders*, 117; and Naum Kleiman, "Neosushchestvleniye zamysly Eizenshteina," *Iskusstvo kino*, no 6 (1992): 16.
105. Galt, *Pretty*, 74.
106. Galt, 210. See also Peter Limbrick's discussion of this aesthetic in relation to Arab cinema in *Arab Modernism as World Cinema: The Films of Moumen Smihi* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2020), 72.
107. Vartanov, "Eshche odna glava eposa," 76.
108. Vartanov, 78.
109. I borrow the phrase "interreferential parable logic" from Fischer, *Mute Dreams, Blind Owls* (passim).
110. Fischer, 18.
111. Anri Vartanov, "Dykhaniye eposa: *Rustam i Sukhrab*," *Iskusstvo kino*, no 7 (1973): 38.
112. Edmund Hayes, "The Death of Kings: Group Identity and the Tragedy of *Nezhad* in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*," *Iranian Studies* 48, no. 3 (2015): 385; Dabashi, *The Shahnameh*, 143.
113. Vartanov, "Dykhaniye eposa," 36.
114. Dabashi, *The Shahnameh*, 146.

115. Mohammad Jafar Amir Mahallati, "Ethics of War and Peace in the *Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi," *Iranian Studies* 48, no. 6 (2015): 911.
116. Mahallati, 926.
117. Dabashi, *The Shahnameh*, 155–56.
118. Dabashi, 173.
119. Boris Kimiagarov—*The Chronicle of Memory* (Boris Kimiagarov—*khronika pamyati*), Lilia Kimiagarova (Tajikfilm, 1989), YouTube video, www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wkpeiLGeoI.
120. See, for example, the interview with Kimiagarov's daughter Lilia on Radio Ozodi, "Beseda s Liliei Kimiagarovoi—docher'iu znamenitogo tadzhikskogo rezhissera Borisa Kimiagarova," Ozodivideo, March 3, 2015.
121. Duncan M. Yoon, "Bandung Nostalgia and the Global South," in *The Global South and Literature*, ed. Russell West-Pavlov (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 26.
122. Yoon, 26.
123. Yoon, 31.
124. Apter, *The Pan-African Nation*, 59. For a discussion of "specific universals" in such contexts, see Ignacio Sánchez-Prado, "Latin America, Uneven Development, Political Economy, and the Global South," in *The Global South and Literature*, ed. Russell West-Pavlov (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 56–69.
125. Samera Esmeir, "Bandung: Reflections on the Sea, the World, and Colonialism," in *Bandung, Global History, and International Law: Critical Pasts and Pending Futures*, ed. Luis Eslava, Michael Fakhri, and Vasuki Nesiah (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 93–94.

8. WORLD SOCIALIST CINEMA OF ARMED STRUGGLE

1. Azhdar Ibragimov, *Kinoiskusstvo srazhaiushchegosia V'etnama* (Moscow: Biuro propagandy sovetskogo iskusstva, 1968), 44.
2. See Man-Fung Yip, "Art in Propaganda: The Poetics and Politics of Vietnamese Revolutionary Cinema," in *The Cold War and Asian Cinemas*, ed. Poshek Fu and Man-Fung Yip (New York: Routledge, 2019), 9–34; and Thong Win, "Screening the Revolution in Rural Vietnam: Guerilla Cinema across the Mekong Delta," in *The Colonial Documentary Film in South and South-East Asia*, ed. Ian Aitken and Camille Deprez (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 171–85.
3. Martin Grossheim, "The Lao Động Party, Culture and the Campaign against 'Modern Revisionism': The Democratic Republic of Vietnam before the Second Indochina War," *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 8, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 80–129.
4. For exemplary work on socialist military film production, see Alice Lovejoy, *Army Film and the Avant Garde: Cinema and Experiment in the Czechoslovak Military* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).
5. Paul B. Rich and Isabelle Duyvesteyn, "The Study of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," in *The Routledge Handbook of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, ed. Paul B. Rich and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2012), 5.
6. See Sophie Esch, *Modernity at Gunpoint: Firearms, Politics, and Culture in Mexico and Central America* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018), 17.

7. For an overview, see Robert J. C. Young, *Empire, Colony, Postcolony* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2015).
8. Bhaskar Sarkar, *Mourning the Nation: Indian Cinema in the Wake of Partition* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 6.
9. Timothy J. Clark, *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 240–41; Denise J. Youngblood, *Russian War Films: On the Cinema Front, 1914–2005* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 45.
10. Stephen Lovell, *The Shadow of War: Russia and the USSR, 1941 to the Present* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 4–5.
11. Eleonory Gilburd, *To See Paris and Die: The Soviet Lives of Western Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 32.
12. Miriam Dobson, “Building Peace, Fearing the Apocalypse? Nuclear Danger in Soviet Cold War Culture,” in *Understanding the Imaginary War: Culture, Thought and Nuclear Conflict, 1945–90*, ed. Benjamin Ziemann and Matthew Grant (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 55.
13. Melissa Feinberg, *Curtain of Lies: The Battle over Truth in Stalinist Eastern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 32.
14. Marsha Siefert, “Soviet Cinematic Internationalism and Socialist Film Making, 1955–1972,” in *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War: Exploring the Second World*, ed. Patryk Babiracki and Austin Jersild (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 161–93; Elidor Mëhilli, “Globalized Socialism, Nationalized Time: Soviet Films, Albanian Subjects, and Chinese Audiences across the Sino-Soviet Split,” *Slavic Review* 77, no. 3 (2018): 611–37.
15. See Alice Lovejoy, “František Vláčil’s China Notebook,” in *Filmmakers of the World, Unite! Forgotten Internationalism, Czechoslovak Film and the Third World*, ed. Tereza Stejskalová (Prague: translit.cz, 2017), 185. See also her *Army Film and the Avant Garde*.
16. This is the case for the 1920s classics and the Thaw period films alike (Mikhail Kalatozov’s *The Cranes Are Flying* [*Letiat zhuravli*, 1957]; Grigorii Chukhrai’s *The Ballad of a Soldier* [*Ballada o soldate*, 1959]; Sergei Bondarchuk’s *The Destiny of a Man* [*Sud’ba cheloveka*, 1959]; and Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Ivan’s Childhood* [*Ivanovo detstvo*, 1962]). The only exception to this would be the work of Vertov and occasional adaptations of literary classics, such as Grigorii Kozintsev’s *Hamlet* (1964), which also had important international reception (incidentally, many of the literary classics also happened to be war films).
17. James Mark and Quinn Slobodian, “Eastern Europe in the Global History of Decolonization,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, ed. Martin Thomas and Andrew Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 7.
18. Perry Anderson, “Imperium,” *New Left Review*, no. 83 (Sept.–Oct. 2013): 49–50.
19. V. Molchanov, “Kinoiskusstvo dvukh kontinentov,” *Iskusstvo kino*, no. 9 (September 1968): 19–24.
20. Ali Kadri, *The Unmaking of Arab Socialism* (London: Anthem, 2016), 30.
21. Alexander Prokhorov and Elena Prokhorova, *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 22.
22. These films also included *Blockade* (*Blokada*, Iurii Ozerov, 1974–77), which was 337 minutes long; *They Fought for the Motherland* (*Oni srazhalis’ za rodinu*, Sergei Bondarchuk, 1975); and *Soldiers of Freedom* (*Soldaty svobody*, Iurii Ozerov, 1977), 390 mins long and coproduced with East Germany, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, and Romania. *Liberation* was

coproduced by Dino De Laurentiis, the legendary Italian producer, and involved Yugoslavia, Poland, East Germany, and Italy; *Across the Gobi and the Khingan* (*Cherez Gobi i Khingan*, 1981), directed by Vasilii Ordynskii and Badrahin Sumhu, was coproduced with East Germany and Mongolia.

23. For an excellent detailed discussion of *Liberation*, see Prokhorov and Prokhorova, *Film and Television Genres*, 43–59; and Youngblood, *Russian War Films*, 158–62.

24. Among films shown at Tashkent were *Riders of the Revolution* (*Vsadniki revoliutsii*, Kamil Iarmatov, 1968); *26 Baku Commissars* (*26 bakinskikh komissarov*, Azhdar Ibragimov, 1966); *The Seventh Bullet* (*Sed'maia pulia*, Ali Khamraev, 1973); *The Burning Shore* (*Ognennyi bereg*, Uchkun Nazarov, 1973); *When a Woman Mounts a Horse* (*Kogda zhenshchina osedlaet konia*, Khodzhauli Narliev, 1974); *Meeting in the Canyon of Death* (*Vstrecha v ushchel'e smerti*, Takhir Sabirov, 1980)—all examples of “Eastern westerns,” as were the historical dramas *The Pawnbroker's Death* (*Smert' rostovshchika*, Takhir Sabirov, 1966) and *Bow to the Fire* (*Poklonis' ogniu*, Tolomush Okeev, 1972).

25. I am not referring here to the Russophone Eastern westerns, such as the extremely commercially popular *White Sun of the Desert* (*Beloe solntse pustyni*, Vladimir Motyl', 1969). Despite its massive popularity, especially in Russia (which accounts for the prominence of this film in scholarly discussions of this genre), it was, in fact, an exception. For a more detailed engagement with the topic of Eastern westerns, see Alexander Morrison, “Settler Bolsheviks in the Soviet ‘Eastern,’” in *Cinematic Settlers: The Settler Colonial World in Film*, ed. Janne Lahti and Rebecca Weaver-Hightower (New York: Routledge, 2020), 52–60.

26. Other titles include Sergio Giral's *The Other Francisco* (*El otro Francisco*, 1974), *Run-away Slave Hunter* (*Rancheador*, 1975), and *Maluala* (1979); Oumarou Ganda's *Cabascabo* (1968); Ousmane Sembene's *God of Thunder* (*Emitai*, 1971) and *The Outsiders* (*Ceddo*, 1977); and Sarah Maldoror's *Sambizanga* (1972).

27. See Dobson, “Building Peace.”

28. Peter J. Schmelz, “Alfred Schnittke's *Nagasaki*: Soviet Nuclear Culture, Radio Moscow, and the Global Cold War,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 62, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 444; Ann Sherif, *Japan's Cold War: Media, Literature, and the Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 46–47.

29. Donskoi was the director of many famous wartime films—like *The Rainbow* (*Raduga*, 1943)—and the mentor of several African and Asian filmmakers trained at VGIK. *Hello Children!*, incidentally, was the very film on which Sarah Maldoror, the future director of *Sambizanga* (1972), worked as an assistant.

30. Fumio Kamei's documentaries on this topic included *Still, It's Good to Live* (*Ikite ite yokatta*, 1956); *The World Is Terrified: The Reality of the “Ashes of Death”* (*Sekai wa kyofu suru: “Shi no hai” no shotai*, 1957); *Fluttering Pigeons* (*Hato wa habataku*, 1958); *Voice of Hiroshima* (*Hiroshima no koe*, 1959); and *Toward a World without Arms* (*Gunbi naki sekai o*, 1961).

31. Sherif, *Japan's Cold War*, 128.

32. Kristine Dennehy, “Overcoming Colonialism at Bandung, 1955,” in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders*, ed. Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann (London: Routledge, 2007), 220.

33. David Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement: Ideology and Foreign Policy of the Third World* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1973), 1.

34. Dennehy, “Overcoming Colonialism at Bandung,” 220.
35. Markus Nornes, *Japanese Documentary Film: The Meiji Era through Hiroshima* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 187.
36. Nornes, 190.
37. Naoko Shimazu, “Popular Representations of the Past: The Case of Postwar Japan,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 1 (2003): 105.
38. Satsuo Yamamoto, *My Life as a Filmmaker*, trans. Chia-ning Chang (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 214.
39. These included *Japan’s Longest Day* (*Nihon no ichiban nagai hi*, Okamoto Kihachi, 1967); *Admiral Yamamoto* (*Yamamoto Isoroku*, Maruyama Seiji, 1968); *The Battle of the Sea of Japan* (*Nihon kai dai kaisen*, Maruyama Seiji, 1969); *The Military Clique* (*Ginkaku*, Hori-kawa Hiromichi, 1970); and *The Decisive Battle of Okinawa* (*Gekido no Showa-shi: Okinawa kessen*, Okamoto Kihachi, 1971).
40. Sato Tadao, *Le cinéma japonais*, vol. 2 (Paris: Editions du Centre Pompidou, 1997).
41. Aleksandr Karaganov, *V sporakh o kinematografе* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1977), 259–62.
42. Yamamoto, *My Life as a Filmmaker*, 221. Volgograd, formerly Stalingrad, was the site of one of the decisive battles between the Red Army and Nazi forces during World War II.
43. V. Kassis, “Velichie podviga,” *Sovetskii ekran*, no. 24 (1973), 15.
44. Semion Chertok, *Tashkentskii festival’* (Tashkent: Izdatel’stvo literatury i iskusstva, 1975), 98.
45. Quoted in Yamamoto, *My Life as a Filmmaker*, 221–22.
46. While there numerous Western European solidarity films (the Dutch Joris Ivens being the most important auteur of this genre but French films such as *Far from Vietnam* offering a similarly outstanding example), solidarity films from the socialist bloc and the Global South (from Japan to Argentina), with the exception of Alvarez’s work, have yet to receive adequate scholarly attention.
47. See Rossen Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema between the Second and the Third Worlds* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020).
48. See, e.g., Nadia Yaqub, *Palestinian Cinema in the Days of Revolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2018); Ros Gray, *Cinemas of the Mozambican Revolution: Anti-colonialism, Independence and Internationalism in Filmmaking, 1968–1991* (Rochester, Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey, 2020); and Dennis Hanlon, “‘Operación Silencio’: Studio H&S’s Chile Cycle as Latin American Third Cinema,” in *Re-imagining DEFA: East German Cinema in Its National and Transnational Contexts*, ed. Séan Allan and Sebastian Heiduschke (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 127–45.
49. See Cecilia Lacruz, “Una imagen para el Tercer cine,” presentation at the “Rethinking Conceptualism: Avant-Garde, Activism and Politics in Latin American Art (1960s–1980s)” Virtual Symposium, March 25, 2021, www.youtube.com/watch?v=7D5ZaLTM8Go&list=PLPomY7utO8r7tbzS285V3OpnHvFZOxd86&index=8&t=815s.
50. Christina Schwenkel, “Imagining Humanity: Socialist Film and Transnational Memories of the War in Vietnam,” in *Transnational Memories: Circulation, Articulation, Scales*, ed. Chiara De Cesari and Ann Rigney (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 222.
51. Nick Turse, *Kill Anything That Moves: The Real American War in Vietnam* (New York: Picador, 2013), 11–15, 79–80, 174–91; Anderson, “Imperium,” 59.

52. Brynn Hatton, “Hold your Gun Arm Steady to Keep the Color of the Flower: The Propeller Group and Le Brothers,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 17, no. 3 (2018): 289.
53. Ibragimov, *Kinoiskusstvo srazhaiushchegosia V’etnama*, 12.
54. Đặng Nhật Minh, *Mémoires d’un cinéaste vietnamien* (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires de Provence, 2017).
55. Ibragimov, *Kinoiskusstvo srazhaiushchegosia V’etnama*, 19–20.
56. Ibragimov, 74.
57. See Ibragimov; see also Grossheim, “The Lao Động Party,” 87.
58. Grossheim, “The Lao Động Party,” 109.
59. Gary J. Bass, *The Blood Telegram: Nixon, Kissinger, and a Forgotten Genocide* (New York: Knopf, 2013).
60. Bass.
61. Sheelendra K. Singh et al., eds., *The Bangladesh Documents*, vol. 2 (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1999); Amit Ranjan, “Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971: Narratives, Impacts and the Actors,” *India Quarterly* 72, no. 2 (2016): 132–45.
62. For an exploration of this topic, see *Two Meetings and a Funeral*, directed by Naeem Mohaiemen (Tate and Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2017).
63. Fahmida Akhter, “Zahir Raihan’s *Stop Genocide* (1971): A Dialectical Cinematic Message to the World,” in *South Asian Film Landscapes: Transregional Encounters*, ed. Elora Halim Chowdhury and Esha Niyogi De (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2020), 233–49; Alamgir Kabir, *Film in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1979), 48; Kerstin Mauersberger, ed., *Weisse Taube auf dunklem Grund* (Berlin: Henschel, 1997), 220.
64. Khondokar Mahmudul Hasan, quoted in Akhter, “Zahir Raihan’s *Stop Genocide*,” 242.
65. Anupam Hayat, quoted in Akhter, 242.
66. Fahmida Akhter, “*Jibon Thekey Neya’* (*Glimpses of Life*, 1970): The First Political Film in Pre-Liberation Bangladesh and a Cinematic Metaphor for Nationalist Concerns,” *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh*, no. 12 (2014): 292; Kabir, *Film in Bangladesh*, 45–48.
67. Kabir, *Film in Bangladesh*, 48; Fayza Haq, “Following the Path of Freedom,” *Dhaka Daily Star*, Dec. 16, 2004, https://archive.thedailystar.net/supplements/2004/victory_day/vic11.htm.
68. Kabir, *Film in Bangladesh*, 48; Akhter, “Zahir Raihan’s *Stop Genocide*,” 237.
69. Bidhan Rebeiro. “Zahir Raihan: Ekatturer Guerilla Nirmata,” *Banglanews24.com*, Dec. 13, 2010, www.banglanews24.com/art-literature/news/bd/20455 (article no longer available).
70. Akhter, “Zahir Raihan’s *Stop Genocide*,” 237.
71. Akhter, 238.
72. Alamgir Kabir, “Short Film Movement in Bangladesh: Search for Free Cinema,” in *From the Heart of Bangladesh*, ed. Nurul Alam Atique (Dhaka: Bangladesh Short Film Forum, 1990), n.p.; Lidiia Dyko, *Boris Kudoiarov* (Moscow: Planeta, 1975).
73. Akhter, “Zahir Raihan’s *Stop Genocide*,” 244.
74. Louise Harrington, “Women and Resistance in West Bengal and Bangladesh: 1967–71,” *Journal of Postcolonial Cultures and Societies* 4, no. 2 (2013): 47–79.
75. Nayanika Mookherjee, *The Spectral Wound: Sexual Violence, Public Memories, and the Bangladesh War of 1971* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).
76. Mookherjee, 188.

77. Mookherjee, 191.
78. This, indeed, is Akhter's reading in "Zahir Raihan's *Stop Genocide*."
79. See Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 189.
80. Ranabir Samaddar, *The Nation Form: Essays on Indian Nationalism* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012), 7.
81. For a discussion of the violence that took place during Partition, see Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
82. Mookherjee, *The Spectral Wound*, 45.
83. Sarkar, *Mourning the Nation*.
84. Akhter, "Zahir Raihan's *Stop Genocide*," 236.
85. Haq, "Following the Path of Freedom"; Kabir, "Short Film Movement in Bangladesh," n.p.
86. Kabir, "Short Film Movement in Bangladesh."
87. Mookherjee, *The Spectral Wound*, 35.
88. Mushtaq Khan, "Class, Clientalism, and Communal Politics in Contemporary Bangladesh," in *The Making of History: Essays Presented to Irfan Habib*, ed. K. N. Panikkar, Terence Byres, and Utsa Patnaik (New Delhi: Tulika, 2000), 582.
89. Lamia Karim, *Microfinance and Its Discontents: Women in Debt in Bangladesh* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).
90. Mohaiemen, *Two Meetings and a Funeral*.
91. According to Mohaiemen, *Many Colors of the Clouds* (*Megher onek rong*, Harunur Rashid, 1976) was the last war film in Bangladesh, after which, given the ideological complexity of the changing political climate and modes of commemoration, war films were discouraged. The only examples of direct engagement with this topic came from the politically oppositional short-film movement of the 1980s, but they were never widely circulated. Naeem Mohaiemen, "Simulation in the Afternoon: A 'Documentary' Faces Evidence Quest," *South Asia Chronicle*, no. 10 (2020): 221.
92. Zakir Hossain Raju, "Bangladesh: A Defiant Survivor," in *Being and Becoming: The Cinemas of Asia*, ed. Aruna Vasudev, Latika Padgaonkar, and Rashmi Doraiswamy (Delhi: Macmillan, 2002), 1–25.
93. *Witnesses of the Rising Sun* (Arunodoyer Agnishakkhi, Subhash Dutta, 1972) was particularly well received.
94. Raju, "Bangladesh: A Defiant Survivor," 172–75.
95. Peter Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society: From the Revolution to the Death of Stalin* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 184; Youngblood, *Russian War Films*, 98.
96. Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 385.
97. Jean Franco, *Cruel Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).
98. Vijay Prashad, *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South* (London: Verso, 2014).
99. Paul R. Josephson et al., *An Environmental History of Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 196; Anderson, "Imperium," 80.
100. Samir Amin, *The Long Revolution of the Global South: Toward a New Anti-Imperialist International* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2019), 375.

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INDEX

- Aandhiyan. See Storms*
- Abbas, K. A., 2, 54–57, 91, 132, 163, 287n18, 288n26, 317n24
- Abbasov, Shukhrat, 17, 209, 217–18, 221–24
- Abdel Wahab, Fatin, 67
- Abdulhamid, Abdullatif, 100
- Abraham, F. Murray, 102
- Absolute Majority (Maioria absoluta)*, 131
- Abu Ali, Mustafa, 96–97
- Abu Ali, Rasmi, 96–97, 302n33
- Abuladze, Tengiz, 174, 225
- Abu Seif, Salah, 66, 198, 290n71, 317n15
- Abu Raikhan Beruni*, 17, 209, 217–226, 238
- Achugar, Walter, 285n107
- Acland, Charles, 182
- Across the Gobi and the Khingan (Cherez Gobi i Khingan)*, 324n22
- Adachi, Masao, 298n74
- Adler, Stella, 308n42
- Admiral Ushakov*, 194
- Admiral Yamamoto (Yamamoto Isoroku)*, 325n39
- Adventures of Alibaba and Forty Thieves (Alibaba Aur 40 Chor/Prikliucheniiia Ali-Baby i soroka razboinikov)*, 87, 317n24
- Affection (Mamta)*, 286n2
- Afghanistan: geopolitics, 38, 84, 111, 181–82, 273; participation at Tashkent, 13, 28, 100, 225, 249, 297n59
- Afro-Asian Film Festival (AAFF), 41, 206, 230, 276n18
- Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (OPSAA), 32, 39, 219
- Afro-Asian Writers' Association, 5–6, 163, 296n38; Congress, 6, 77–78, 210
- Ahmad, Fareed, 93
- Ahmed, Naibuddin, 265
- Aimanov, Shaken, 46, 286n4
- Aitmatov, Chingiz, 101, 127–30, 162, 169, 212
- Akhter, Fahmida, 262
- Akika, Youcef, 291n93
- Alarcón, Sebastián, 109–10,
- al-Assad, Hafez, 188
- al-Biruni (Abu Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad): 17, 207, 209, 217–25, 238, 320n70
- al-Da'ira, Dawalibuna, 312n22
- al-Debs, Nidal, 100
- Alexander Nevsky*, 233
- Alexandria, Festival for Young Directors, 66
- al-Farabi, 218
- Algeria: geopolitics, 38, 41, 71, 66, 278n41; participation at Tashkent, 70–72, 102, 144, 152, 167–68, 291n93; solidarity, 125, 248–50, 291n89
- Ali, Jaafar, 98
- A'lil, Khaleq, 100, 297n59
- Alisher Navoi*, 7
- al-Khamisi, 'Abd al-Rahman, 123
- al-Khorezmi, 218
- al-Kunuz, Makman, 312n22
- All That's Left to You (Ma Tabaqqah Lakum)*, 95

- Allais, Lucia, 202
 Allende, Salvador, 85, 109–10, 247, 299n88
 Allouache, Merzak, 152
 al-Muhandi, Husayn Hilmi, 67
 al-Sharqawi, Abdel Rahman, 194
 Alvarado, Velasco, 108
 Álvarez, Santiago, 101, 107, 261–62, 282n65, 285n103, 299n81,82
 al-Yasiri, Faysal, 99
 al-Zubaidi, Kais, 96, 99, 134, 188, 297n57
 Amado, Jorge, 318n28
 Amaldi, Parag, 57
 Amelio Garcia, Salvador, 156
 Amelio, Sonia, 156, 158, 308n34
 Amiralay, Omar, 17, 178, 188–90
 Amok, 298n68
 Amrapali, 286n2, 317n15
 Anand, Chetan, 55–56, 163
 Anand, Dev, 56
 Anand, Minakshi, 158
 Angola 76, *It's Time for the Voice of the People* (Angola 76, *É a vez da voz de povo*), 298n69
 Angola, *Victory of Hope* (Angola, *victoria de la esperanza*), 299n82
 Another Face of Love (Wajh Akhar lil-Hubb), 297n57
 And Quiet Flows the Don (Tikhii Don), 130
 Andrei Rublev, 224–25, 319n46
 And What If It's Love? (A esli eto liubov?), 152
 Apter, Andrew, 203, 315n96
 Ara, Shamin, 90, 160
 Arab Medicine (La médecine chez les Arabes), 71
 Arafat, Yasser, 95
 Aristarco, Guido, 36
 Arnshtam, Lev, 194
 art cinema, 11–12, 37–38, 52, 59–60, 81–82, 112–13, 116–21, 209, ; auteurism in, 8, 18, 23–24, 37, 65–66, 113, 134–35, 247–49. *See also* world cinema
 Aryeetey, Sam, 80, 317n15
 The Ascent (Voskhodzenie), 170
 Asian Film Festival (AFF), 28, 61–63, 281n41, 289n40
 Asian Film Week, 41
 Aslani, Mohammad Reza, 222
 Avicenna, 220–21
 Avicenna, 7, 220
 Aw, Cheik Tidiane, 132
 Away from Home (Ba'idan 'an al-Watan), 99
 Awara. *See* The Vagabond
 Ayni, Sadriddin, 317n15
 Azimov, Sarvar, 4–6, 94–95, 276n15, 296n38
 Azmi, Kaifi, 162–63, 205–6
 Azmi, Shabana, 162–63, 170
 Azmi, Shaukat, 163
 Baara, 81
 Babita, Farida Akhtar, 90, 161, 269
 Baccar, Selma, 165
 Baig, Nadeem, 94
 Baisho, Chieko, 160
 Baizai, Bahram, 100, 297n61
 Bakhtin, Mikhail, 35
 Balasanian, Sergei, 230
 Ballad of a Soldier (Ballada o soldate), 136, 259, 323n16
 Bamako, 179
 Bandung. *See* Non-Aligned Movement.
 Bangladesh: geopolitics, 84, 92–95, 210, 259–70, 272; participation at Tashkent, 2, 13, 17, 28, 85, 88, 92–95, 138, 144, 152, 161–62, 259–70
 Barbaro, Umberto, 36
 Barea, Maria, 165
 Barnet, Enrique Pineda, 106
 Barren Lives (Vidas secas), 131
 Baskakov, Vladimir, 125–26
 Baskett, Michael, 63, 288n34
 Basnet, Prem Bahadur, 91, 162
 Bassori, Timité, 78
 The Battle of Algiers (Ma'rakat al-Jaza'ir), 126
 Battle of Chile, 110
 The Battle of the Sea of Japan (Nihon kai dai kaisen), 325n39
 Battleship Potemkin (Bronenosets Potiokin), 55,
 Bazin, André, 233
 Be Human Again (Abar Tora Manush Ho), 152
 The Beginning and the End (Bidayah wa Nihayah), 66
 Bemberg, Maria Luisa, 165
 Ben Barka, Mehdi, 102
 Ben Barka, Souheil, 86, 102, 121, 132, 209, 298n68
 Ben Bella, Ahmed, 38, 168, 191
 Ben Salah, Ahmed, 290n77
 Bendeddouche, Ghaouti, 291n93
 Bendjedid, Chadli, 168
 Benegal, Shyam, 162–63
 Berlant, Lauren, 142
 Bernes, Mark, 251
 Bezhin Meadow (Bezhin Lug), 233
 Bhattacharya, Basu, 123, 163, 170, 288n26
 Bhowanagary, Jehangir, 317n18
 Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali, 5, 94, 210
 Bhuvan Shome, 132

- The Big City (Mahanagar)*, 170
 Birri, Fernando, 285n103
 Bishop, Elizabeth, 191, 196, 200
 Bissainthe, Toto, 78
Black and White, 2
Black Cat (Kuroneko), 64, 286n2
Black Jesus (Seduto alla sua destra), 126
Blockade (Blokada), 323n22
Bloody Nitrate (Caliche sangriento), 299n88
 Bogemskii, Georgii, 126
 Bondarchuk, Sergei, 102, 194, 216, 230, 259, 317n24, 323n16,22
 Bose, Nitin, 56
 Bose, Satyen, 56
 Bouguermouh, Abderrahmane, 291n93
 Bouhired, Jamila, 161
 Boumédiène, Houari, 168
 Bourguiba, Habib, 115
Bow to the Fire (Poklonis' ogniu), 324n22
 Braginskii, Iosif, 213
 Brezhnev, Leonid, 38–39, 83, 109, 115, 249, 281n56
Brief Encounters (Korotkie vstrechi), 186
The Bronze Bracelet (Le bracelet de bronze), 132
 Budiak, Luidmila, 133–34
 Bulgakov, Pavel, 223
The Burning Shore (Ognennyi bereg), 324n22
 Burton, Julianne, 303n67

Cabascabo, 324n26
Cabinda, 299n82
 Cabral, Amilcar, 39, 276n22, 282n65
 Caillet, Danielle, 165
Cairo 30 (al-Qahira 20), 317
Cairo Station (Bab al-Hadid), 193
 Calcutta Film Society, 55, 261, 287n20
 Cannes, International Film Festival, 55–56, 59, 70, 81, 101, 112, 119, 131, 133, 285n102, 292n117
The Canyon of Abandoned Fairytales (Ushchele pokinutykh skazok), 204
 Cardinale, Claudia, 102
 Carthage Film Festival (Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage, JCC), 51, 63, 68–74, 78–80, 85, 96–97, 102, 111, 115, 183, 225, 290n79, 292n100
 Carvalho, Ruy Duarte de, 102
Casablanca, 140
 Castilla, Sergio, 299n90
 Castro, Fidel, 89, 106, 109, 299n88
 Central Asian Republics: film culture, 4–7, 16, 44–47, 60, 88, 116–18, 123, 154–55, 204, 249; geopolitics, 6, 40–45, 117, 205, 215; participation at Tashkent, 53–54, 143–48, 212–240. *See also* Uzbekistan
 Chahine, Youssef, 14, 17, 65–67, 161, 178, 190, 192–203, 283n79, 314n70, 315n81
 Chakhidze, Daredjan, 158
 Chanakya, Tapi, 286n2
 Charfedine, Moncef, 225
 Chaskel, Pedro, 110, 299n88,90
 Chen, Sylvia (Si-Lan), 2–6, 164, 275n3
 Chen, Yu-Lan, 194
 Cheriaa, Tahar, 4, 68–70, 74, 77–78, 97, 115–16, 122, 132, 291n82, 301n21
 Chertok, Semion, 137
 Chiaureli, Mikheil, 174
 Chiaureli, Sofiko, 173–74
Children of Hiroshima (Gembaku no ko), 58, 251
Children of the Earth (Dharti Ke Lal), 54–55, 288n27
 Chile: exilic cinema, 23, 249, 299n90; geopolitics, 84–86, 109–10, 247–48; participation at Tashkent, 107–11, 299n88; solidarity, 106, 108–11, 299n81
 China, 12–14, 19, 33, 36, 38–41, 53, 56, 85, 101, 186, 245–46, 258–60
Chinnamul. See The Uprooted
 Choudhury, Babul, 269
Chorus, 133
Chronicle of the Years of Ember (Waq'it Sanawat al-Jamr), 133
 Chukhrai, Grigorii, 136, 138, 140, 249, 259, 290n79, 305n95, 323n16
 Chuliukin, Yuri, 186
 Chungara, Domitila Barrios de, 149–50, 155
Churning (Manthan), 163
 Chytilová, Věra, 139
 Cissé, Souleyman, 2, 80–81, 112, 300n103
 Clark, Katerina, 176
The Cold River (al-Nahr al-Bared), 95
The Color of Pomegranates (Sayat Nova), 231–32, 239
Coming of Age (Eya Dan Loku Lamayek), 91
The Communist, 194
The Congress of Abu Rayhan, 222
The Contest (Sostiazanie), 46
 coproductions, 11–13, 26, 71, 112, 246, 281n41, 291n93; with the Soviet Union, 27, 41, 48, 56, 60, 86–87, 190–94, 211, 248–50
 Costales, Luis, 299n81
The Courage of the People (El coraje del pueblo), 150, 155
 Covacevich, Alvaro, 299n88

- The Cranes Are Flying* (*Letiat zhuravli*), 152, 259, 323n15
- The Crossroads* (*Thun Man Handiya*), 91
- Cuba: film culture, 40, 50–51, 69, 103–7, 112, 282n65, 299n81; geopolitics, 10, 35–36, 38–40, 85, 102–7, 282n56; participation at Tashkent, 103, 107, 119–20
- cultural diplomacy, 4, 10, 24–26, 29–31, 108–9, 116, 143–44, 148–51, 155–64, 184–85, 208, 214–15
- Curtiz, Michael, 140
- Czechoslovakia: geopolitics, 8, 50, 111, 139, 148; participation at Tashkent, 77
- Dabashi, Hamid, 228–30, 236–38,
- Dadi, Iftikhar, 213
- Damascus, Film Festival for Young Directors, 51, 66, 73, 97
- Đặng, Nhật Minh, 258
- Darkness at Noon* (*Mahiru no ankoku*), 35
- Darwish, Mahmoud, 238
- Dash Akol*, 100, 212
- Davis, Angela, 282n58
- Dawi, Enrique, 131
- A Day in Early Spring* (*Một ngày đầu thu*), 258
- The Day Shall Dawn* (*Jago Hua Savera*), 93
- de Andrade, Mario Pinto, 77–79, 293n119
- Death of a Bureaucrat* (*La muerte de un burócrata*), 196
- Debray, Régis, 10
- The Decisive Battle of Okinawa* (*Gekido no Showa-shi: Okinawa kessen*), 325n39
- decolonization, 4–11, 32–34, 42–45, 147, 207; cinema, 122–26, 177–81, 240–41; film studies, 15
- De Laurentis, Dino, 324n22
- Dennehy, Kristine, 252–53
- Dersu Uzala*, 60, 317n24
- Desire* (*Arzoo*), 286n2
- Destiny of a Man* (*Sud'ba cheloveka*), 259, 323n16
- Dharmendra, 286n2
- El diálogo de América*, 299n88
- Dickinson, Kay, 96
- Diego, Constante, 299n81
- Difficult Days* (*Rozha-ye dashwar*), 297n59
- Diop Mambety, Djibril, 132
- distribution: alternative circuits of, 25–27, 36–38, 47, 68–70, 134–36; monopolies, 34, 64–65, 73, 111–12, 121–23, 126, 290n75
- Djagalov, Rossen, 7–8, 26, 78, 123
- Djebbar, Assia, 17, 144, 165–68, 270, 309n63
- Dobson, Miriam, 246
- Doctor Zhivago*, 288n24
- Dolls of Clay* (*Mitti Ke Putlay*), 94
- Domitila. *See* Chungara, Domitila Barrios de
- Donskoi, Mark, 78–79, 134, 251, 324n29
- dos Santos, Marcelino, 78, 276n22
- dos Santos, Nelson Pereira, 131
- Dosamantes, Susana, 156–57
- Dovey, Lindiwe, 73, 116–18
- Dovzhenko, Alexander, 174, 232
- Drach, Michel, 291n93
- Draper, Susana, 49
- Drums of Fire* (*La Batalla de los Tres Reyes*), 102
- Duru, Yılmaz, 152
- Dutt, Guru, 57, 163
- Dutt, Sunil, 91, 286n2
- Dutta, Subhash, 93, 327n93
- educational cinema, 23–24, 116–19, 162.
- Egypt: film culture, 33, 65–67, 137, 183, 191–201; geopolitics, 40–41, 84, 202–3; participation at Tashkent, 28–30, 53, 64–68, 85, 210, 250, 291n85
- Eichenberger, Ambros, 30–351
- 8½* (*Otto e Mezzo*), 140
- Eight and Twenty*, 80
- Eisenstein, Sergei, 4, 48, 51, 55, 63, 67, 118, 125, 131, 134, 174, 231, 233, 247, 261–2, 286n8, 287n20, 294n14
- El Abnoubi, Ateyyat, 165
- El Sheikh, Kamal, 66, 290n71
- Encinas, Alicia, 156–57
- Engerman, David, 25
- Erksan, Metin, 100, 309n51
- Ermash, Filipp, 86, 137
- Ermiler, Fridrikh, 59
- Eshu, Kodwo, 10
- Esmeir, Samera, 241
- Estrada, José, 123
- Everyday Life in a Syrian Village* (*Al-Hayat al-Yaomiyyah fi Qaryah Suriyyah*), 188
- Exodus* 1967
- (*Al-Khourouj* 67), 72–73
- Fairuz, 6, 29
- A Faithful Soldier of Pancho Villa* (*Un dorado de Pancho Villa*), 156
- Faiz, Faiz Ahmad, 93, 205, 210, 238,
- Faiziev, Latif, 317n22, 24
- Faizova, Asiiia, 146, 306n6
- The Fall of Berlin* (*Padenie Berlina*), 174
- Fanon, Frantz, 101, 126, 128–29, 133, 272
- Fares, Tewfik, 71

- Far from Vietnam (Loin du Vietnam)*, 325n46
 Farid, Samir, 4, 97, 290n69
The Fate of a Poet (Sud'ba poeta), 206, 220, 230
 Faziev, Latif, 29, 87
 Featherstone, David, 21, 278n44
 Fedorova, Anastasia, 58
 feminism: First- vs Second- and Third-World,
 148–51, 165–66; in film, 141–48, 151–54,
 164–170; Socialism: 170–75
 Ferdowsi, 207, 209, 218, 226–29, 232, 237, 321n88
Ferdowsi and the People (Ferdowsi Va Mardom), 229
 Fernández, Emilio, 156
 FESPACO. *See* Ouagadougou, Pan-African Film
 Festival of
Fidelity (Vernost'), 140
 Figueroa, Gabriel, 280n38
Film Essay on the Euphrates Dam
 (*Film-muhawalah 'an sadd al-furat*), 17, 178,
 188–190
 Finyé, 81
The First Page (La primera página), 110
 Fischer, Michael, 228
Five Days, Five Nights (Piat' dnei, piat' nochei/
 Fünf Tage, Fünf Nächte), 194
Five Days in a Life (Cinq jours d'une vie), 81, 194
 Fleitas, Miguel, 299n82
The Flame of Devotion (Shuen), 250
A Flood in Baath Country (Tufan fi Bilad al-
 Ba'th), 188
Fluttering Pigeons (Hato wa habataku), 324n30
 Fomin, Valerii, 49, 135
 Fonda, Jane, 163, 308n45
For Freedom for Democracy, 92
 Forch, Juan, 110, 299n90
Foreigners (Estranjeros), 300n98
Forever Yours (Hubb lel-Abad), 66
The Forgotten War (La guerra olvidada), 282n65
Forty-First (Sorok pervyi), 136, 259
 Francia, Aldo, 299n88
 Friedan, Betty, 149
 Friedman, Jeremy, 38
 Fukasaku, Kinji, 250

 Gabara, Rachel, 74
 Gabriel, Teshome, 294n133, 303n67
 Gafurov, Bobodzhan, 218–21
 Galindo, Sergio, 212
Gals (Devchata), 186
 Galt, Rosalind, 233
 Gamzatov, Rasul, 251
 Ganda, Oumarou, 152, 324n26
 Gandhi, Indira, 57, 84, 92, 269
 García Espinosa, Julio, 107, 299n81
 García Marquez, Gabriel, 137, 318n28
 Gavaldon, Roberto, 212
 Gerasimov, Sergei, 130, 135, 174
 German, Aleksei, 249
 Getino, Octavio, 50, 284n102
 Ghaboos, emir of Tabaristan, 224
 Ghatak, Ritwik, 55, 286n9
 Ghaznavi, Mahmud, 224–25, 229
 Ghodsee, Kristen, 149
 Ghosh, Nemaï, 54–55
 Gilburd, Eleonory, 34–35, 44
 Gilroy, Paul, 11
 Giral, Sergio, 106, 249, 324n26
 Girik, Fatma, 100, 162
The Girl with the Red Scarf (Selvi Boylum, Al
 Yazmalım), 100, 162, 212
Glimpses of Life (Jibon theke neya), 261
 Glinka, 194
 Glissant, Édouard, 11, 266, 327n79
God of Thunder (Emitai), 101, 324n26
 Godard, Jean-Luc, 99, 126
 Gogoberidze, Lana, 17, 144, 166–67, 170–74,
 310n76
 Gogoberidze, Levan, 174
 Gogoberidze, Nutsa, 174
 Gómez, Sara, 165, 170–71
 Gomikawa, Junpei, 253
 González, Beatriz, 110, 164, 299n90
 Gopalakrishnan, K. S., 58
 Gorky, Maxim, 55, 151
 Gorsuch, Anne, 35
 Gray, Ros, 10
The Great Ferghana Canal (Bol'shoi ferganskii
 kanal), 233
 Grierson, John, 131
 Grigorian, A., 204
 Guarany, Horacio, 131
 Guevara, Alfredo, 107, 285n107
 Guevara, Ernesto Che, 105
 Guimale, El Hadj Mohamed, 293n130
 Güney, Yılmaz, 100, 309n51
 Gurchenko, Liudmila, 90
 Gutiérrez Alea, Thomas, 14, 107, 196,
 285n103, 299n81
 Guzmán, Patricio, 86, 110, 299n90

 Habashneh, Khadijah, 165
Hamlet (Gamlet), 65, 323n16
The Hand (Al-Yad), 95
 Handler, Mario, 285n107

- Hanoi, March 13 (Hanoi, Martes 13), 282n65
 Haqqi, Haitham, 100
 Hardt, Michael, 180
 Harrison, George, 260
 Hashimoto, Shinobu, 254
 Hatton, Brynn, 257
 Haugbolle, Sune, 22
 Hawal, Kassem, 86, 95–99, 297n54
The Head (Al-Ra's), 99
Heat (Znoi), 170
 Hedayat, Sadegh, 212
 Hediger, Vinzenz, 181–82
Heights (Vysota), 186
Hello, Children! (Zdravstvuite, deti!), 79, 251, 324n29
 Hennebelle, Guy, 4, 120, 133
 Henriques, Francisco, 103
 heritage: in cinema 44–45, 88–91, 100–1, 201–41; in literature, 44, 212; regional, 46–47, 91, 132, 206–7, 218–20; world, 201–4, 207–9, 240–41, *See also* UNESCO
 Herzfeld, Michael, 20
 Hidalgo, Luis de la, 156
 Hikmet, Nâzim, 101, 238
Hiroshima, 251
 Hirsch, Francine, 43
 Hirschman, Leon, 131, 212, 285n103
 Hitchens, Gordon, 118
 Hitler, Adolf, 262
 Ho, Chi Minh, 7, 61, 282n65
 Hobsbawm, Eric, 207
 Hodgkin, Samuel, 227
 Hondo, Med, 24, 76, 86, 101, 119, 128–32, 158, 297n64, 297n66
Honor Debt (Namus Borcu), 152
 Hopkinson, Peter, 187
 Hosny, Soad, 199
 Houses in This Alley (*Maisons dans cette ruelle/ Buyut fi dhalika al-Zuqaq*), 96
The Hour of the Furnaces (La hora de los hornos), 50, 101, 131, 284n102, 291n90
 Hübner, Douglas, 110, 299n90
 Hughes, Langston, 2–3
The Human Condition, 250, 253
 Hussein, King of Jordan, 73
Hymn to a Tired Man (Nihon no seishun), 250
 Iarmatov, Kamil, 6–7, 29, 157, 220, 276n19, 284n86, 286n3, 324n24
 Ibragimov, Azhdar, 101, 124, 143, 242, 257–59, 286n2, 3, 317n24, 324n24
 Ich Dat, Nong, 253
If the Singer Is Silenced (Si se calla el cantor), 131
The Iliad, 44
Ill-tempered (Užmuri), 174
 Imai, Tadashi, 35, 59
 Imam, Syed Hasan, 93
 Imamura, Taihei, 59
 India: film culture, 34, 54–57, 120–22, 128, 138–42, 158; geopolitics, 32–33, 84, 260, 272; Indian People's Theater Association (IPTA), 54–58, 163, 287n16, 288n27; participation at Tashkent, 24, 27–30, 53–58, 89–95
 industrial cinema, 11, 89, 179–88; at Tashkent, 11, 23–24, 88–89, 176–77, 188–90, 204. *See also* nonfiction cinema
 internationalism, 6–8, 33, 43, 178, 182, 201–4, 273; cinematic, 4, 8–20, 40, 89–90, 98–99, 106–13, 209–12, 236–41, 255–64; socialist, 34–39, 116, 123, 218–20, 255, 270
Interview, 92
In the Arms of a Bombay Night (Bambai Raat Ki Bahon Mein), 288n26
 Iordanova, Dina, 213
 Iosseliani, Otar, 174, 319n50
 Iran, 100, 112, 210–12, 222, 226–38
 Iraq, 7, 13, 70, 84, 95–100, 182, 249–50, 291n86, 312n22
 Ishmukhamedov, Elyor, 46
 Iskhakov, Dzhasur, 28
 Islam, Baby, 93
 Islam, Kazi Nazrul, 317n25
 Iutkevich, Sergei, 59
Ivan's Childhood (Ivanovo detstvo), 99, 323n16
 Ivanov, Viktor, 186
Ivan the Terrible, 233
 Ivens, Joris, 38, 123, 325n46
I Want the Floor (Proshu slova), 171
 Iwasaki, Akira, 4, 59–60, 252, 288n32
 Iztileuov, Türmaghambet, 227
The Jackal of Nahueltoro (El chacal de Nahuel-toro), 299n88
 Jacob, Mario, 285n107
 Jacobson, Brian, 177
 Jadallah, Sulafa, 165
 Jalal, Ibrahim, 99, 123
 Jamil, Mohammed Shukri, 99
Jamila, the Algerian (Jamila al-Jaza'iriya), 65–67, 193, 197, 314n57
 Jansen, Hanna, 219–20
 Japan: film culture, 33, 58–62, 91, 137–38, 271; geopolitics, 34, 252–53; participation at Tashkent, 27, 53, 58, 62–64, 250–55

- A Japanese Tragedy (Nippon no higeki)*, 252–53
Japan's Longest Day (Nihon no ichiban nagai hi), 253, 325n38
 Jara, Victor, 109–10
 Jawhariyah, Hani, 72–73, 97
Jerusalem, the Flower of All Cities (Zahrat al-Mada'in), 73
 Jordan, 72–73, 120, 250
 Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage. *See* Carthage Film Festival
Journey beyond Three Seas (Pardesi/Khozhdenniia za tri moria), 56, 317n24
The Journey of the Hyena (Touki Bouki), 132
 Jumblatt, Kamal, 5, 6, 276n14
 Junnarkar, S. M., 92
- Kabir, Alamgir, 93, 261, 263, 265
Kafr Shuba, 97
 Kaiumov, Azizhon, 46
 Kaiumov, Malik, 143–47, 163, 258, 284n86
 Kalatozov, Mikhail, 152, 174, 186, 259, 304n75, 323n16
 Kalinovskiy, Artemy, 42, 187, 203, 276n27, 311n6
 Kamba, Sébastien, 121, 152
 Kamei, Fumio 2, 60, 251, 324n30
 Kamwa, Daniel, 132
 Kanafani, Ghassan, 95
 Kapoor, Prithviraj, 56
 Kapoor, Raj, 2, 24, 28, 56–57, 91, 164, 287n17, 288n26
 Kapoor, Rishi, 91
 Karaganov, Aleksandr, 132–33, 304n75
 Kardar, Ajay, 93
 Karetnikova, Inga, 154
 Kariat, Ramu, 58, 127
 Karliev, Alty, 2, 286n4, 317n15
 Karlovy Vary Festival, 13, 36–37, 60, 73–74, 102, 107, 111, 170, 258, 281n39, 298n73, 75
 Karmen, Roman, 143
Kaveh the Blacksmith (Kuznets Kova), 230
 Keitel, Harvey, 102
 Kenyatta, Jomo, 276n22
 Keosaian, Edmond, 204
 Khachikian, Samuel, 100
 Khamraev, Ali, 29, 319n50, 324n24
 Khan, Ayub, 93, 261
 Khan, Genghis, 319n50
 Khan, Mehboob, 56, 179
 Khan, Yahya, 262
 Khanum, Tamara, 2–3, 77
 Khatri, Hira Singh, 162
 Khayer, M. A., 268
- Khelifi, Omar, 70, 152, 291n85
 Khodonazarov, Davlat, 287n20
 Khoté, Durga, 165
 Khrushchev, Nikita, 32–33, 38, 43, 45, 109, 146, 191, 258–59, 280n27, 311n6
 Khuong, Mễ, 242, 257
 Khutsiev, Marlen, 186, 249
 Kiarostami, Abbas, 112
 Kiếm, Trần, 257
 Kiesłowski, Krzysztof, 14
Kim Dong (Kim Đông), 253
 Kimiagarov, Boris (Benson), 17, 205–7, 209, 215, 217–18, 220, 226–40, 284n86
 Kimiai, Masud, 212
 Kirasirova, Masha, 40–41, 45, 159
 Kirienko, Zinaida, 159
 Kissinger, Henry, 260
 Kleiman, Naum, 287n20
 Klein, William, 79
 Klimov, Elem, 249, 304n76
 Kobayashi, Masaki, 2, 60, 250, 253–54, 288n36
 Koizumi, Takashi, 61, 253
 Korgou, Claude-Françoise de, 75
 Kosinova, Marina, 47, 277n32
 Koskina, Maria, 176
 Kotkin, Stephen, 187
Kodou, 152
 Kozintsev, Grigori, 59, 65, 323n16
 Krakow, Film Festival, 73, 102
 Krupskaiia, Nadezhda, 145–46, 306n6
 Kudaiaarov, Boris, 263
 Kuleshov, Lev, 134, 294n14
 Kumar, Dilip, 286n2
Kumari, 91, 162
 Kurahara, Koreyoshi, 250
 Kurosawa, Akira, 59–60, 138, 238, 254, 288n36, 317n24
 Kusuda, Kiyoshi, 252
- Labarca, Eduardo, 109–10, 300n94
 Labrada, Jerónimo, 299n81
 Lahuti, Abdulqasem, 230
 Lakhdar-Hamina, Mohammed, 70–71, 133, 152, 291n93
 Lamine Akin, Mohamed, 80, 152
 La-na, Naftuna, 312n22
Land of the Fathers (Zemlia ottsov), 46, 286n4
 Langlois, Henri, 198
Lasanda, 91
The Last Women (Saigo no onnatachi), 252
 Laskri, Amar, 71, 291n93
 Latifi, Wali, 100, 297n59

- Layla and the Others (Layla wa-Akhawatuha)*, 152
 Lean, David, 209, 288n24
 Lebanon, 5–7, 97
 Lee, Bruce, 137
 Lee, Sangjoon, 63
The Legend of Love (Sohni Mahiwal/Legenda o lyubvi), 317n22
The Legend of Rustam (Skazanie o Rustame), 17, 209, 230. *See also* *The Shahnameh*.
The Legend of Siavash (Skazanie o Siavushe), 17, 209. *See also* *The Shahnameh*
The Legendary Outlaw (Kanneshwara Rama), 163
 Leipzig Documentary Film Week (Leipzig Dok), 13, 37–38, 50,
 Lenin, Vladimir, 33, 43, 145, 261, 263, 268
Letter Never Sent (Neotpravlennoe pis'mo), 186
Letters from Marusia (Actos de Marusia), 110
 Lewis, Franklin, 228
Leyli and Majnun (Leyli va Majnun), 100, 212
 Leyda, Jay, 2–4, 275n12
Liberation (Osvobozhdeniie), 248–49, 254–55
The Light (Yeelen), 81
 Littin, Miguel, 86, 104, 110–1, 116, 137, 299n88–90, 300n99, 318n28
The Little Girl of Hanoi (Em bé Hà Nội Hải Ninh), 256
 Litvin, Margaret, 65
 Lizzani, Carlo, 186
 Lôc, Mai, 257
The Lost Children (Ztracenci), 292n117
Love or Wealth (Panama Pasama), 58
 Lovejoy, Alice, 246
Lowly City (Neecha Nagar), 55
Luanda Doesn't Belong to Saint Paul Anymore (Luanda ya no es de San Pablo), 299n82
Lucky Dragon No. 5 (Daigo Fukuryu Maru), 252
 Lumumba, Patrick, 35, 75
 Lunacharskii, Anatolii, 207

 MacLaine, Shirley, 308n45
 Madanat, Adnan, 97–978, 111
 Magda, 2, 65–7, 161, 197, 290n64
Madina Boé, 106, 282n65
Mahabharata, 44, 234,
 Mahallati, Amir, 236–37
 Mahfouz, Naguib, 66, 212, 317n15
 Mahler, Anne Garland, 40
 Majumdar, Neepa, 158
 Majumdar, Tarun, 58
 Makeba, Miriam, 298n68
 Makovec, Miloš, 292n117
Makhtumkuli, 2, 216, 286n4, 317n15
 Malas, Mohamad, 100
 Maldoror, Sarah, 75–79, 101, 270, 281n51
 Maleh, Nabil, 100, 297n57
 Malle, Louis, 139
 Mallet, Marilù, 165
Maluala, 324n26
 Manarian, Arman, 204
 Mansurov, Bulat, 46, 319n50
 Marcuse, Herbert, 139
 Marighela, Carlos, 106
 Mark, James, 129, 247
 Markulan, Ianina, 154
The Marshes (Les marais/AI-Ahwar), 96
 Maruki, Iri, 251
 Maruki, Toshi, 251
 Marung, Steffi, 276n27
 Marx, Karl, 272
 Massell, Gregory, 147
 Massip, José, 106, 120, 282n65, 299n82, 301n15
 Masuda, Kentaro, 61, 253
 Maurer, Monica, 98
 Mayakovsky, Vladimir, 238
 Mazif, Sid Ali, 71, 152, 291n93
 McCarthy, Kathleen, 208
 Mchedlidze, Nana, 310n77
 McShave, Anne, 146
 Mechawar, Antoine, 71
 Medvedkin, Alexander, 76
Meeting in the Canyon of Death (Vstrecha v ushchele smerti), 324n24
 Mehra, Umesh, 87, 317n22
 Mehta, Rini Bhattacharya, 57
Mella, 106
 melodrama, 56–58, 66–67, 151–53, 236, 318n27
Memoirs of Vietnam (Ky uc Viet Nam), 61–62
Men and War (Senso to ningen), 62, 253–55
 Menen, Muhammed Abdel, 192
Men in the Sun (Rijal fi-a-shams), 95
Men of the Dance (Les hommes de la danse), 79
Men under the Sun (Rijal Tahta al-Shams), 297n56
 Menzel, Jiří, 139
 Merbah, Lamine, 71
 Mesnaoui, Ahmed, 71
 Mestman, Mariano, 277n31
 Mészáros, Márta, 165
 Mifune, Toshiro, 164
 militant cinema, 8–9, 12, 23, 57, 86–90, 97–98, 103–4, 112, 124–26, 242–73; audiences of, 86–90, 116–22, 133, 182–83
 Mizoguchi, Kenji, 60
Mộc Hóa Battle (Trận Mộc Hóa), 257
 Mohaiemen, Naeem, 326n62, 327n91
 Mohammad, Oussama, 100
 Mohtasham, Nosratollah, 229

- Molinaro, Edouard, 291n93
Monangambee, 79
The Money Order (Mandabi), 78, 160, 179, 294n133
Mookherjee, Nayanika, 265, 268
Moorman, Marissa, 79, 293n127
Mory, Philippe, 209
Morocco, 13, 71, 102, 120, 209–210, 293n128, 298n68
Moscow Film Institute. See VGIK
Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF), 2, 8, 31, 35, 37, 48, 60, 65–66, 70, 73, 93, 96, 101–6, 109, 111, 133, 140, 156, 162, 170, 193, 198, 281n47, 293n130, 298n69, 299n88
Mossallam, Alia, 191, 196, 201
Mother (Aama), 162
Mother (Mat), 65
Mother India (Bharat Mata), 56, 179
Mother's Advice (Andarz-e madar), 297n59
Motyl', Vladimir, 324n25
Mujibur Rahman, Sheikh, 269
Mulgaokar, S., 265
Mumbai, International Film Festival, 55
Muratova, Kira, 171, 174, 186, 309n62
The Mushroom Man (El hombre de los hongos), 212
Mussolini, Benito, 262
My Love, My Sorrow (Liubov' moia, pechal' moia/Bir aşk masalı: Ferhat ile Şirin), 101, 162, 317n24
Naficy, Hamid, 100
Nagata, Masaichi, 62–63
The Naked Island (Hadaka no shima), 60
The Naked Truth (Al-Haqiqa al-'Ariya), 197
Nápoles, Iván, 299n81
Nargis, 2, 30, 56, 91
Narliev, Khodzhakuli, 60, 307n32, 324n24
Naroditsky, Abram, 186
Naruse, Mikio, 60
Nasib, Nasibi, 228–29
Nasser, Gamal Abdel, 64, 66–67, 84, 191, 193, 196–99, 202–3, 314n53
A Nation Is Born (Une nation est née: La République du Sénégal), 74
Nawab Sirajuddaula, 93, 212, 317n15
Nazarov, Uchkun, 102, 324n24
N'Diagne, Costa, 79, 120
N'Diaye, Ynousse, 160–61
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 9, 32, 54–56, 178, 184, 219, 313n30
Neruda, Pablo, 109–10, 238
Nesin, Aziz, 317n25
Neto, Agostinho, 106, 276n22
new cinemas, 24, 36, 46–47, 50–52, 64–67, 81–82, 107–8, 139.
New International Economic Order (NIEO), 12, 83, 88–90, 149, 295n17
New Meridian (Maputo: Meridiano novo), 299n82
The New Yemen (Al-Yaman al-Jadid), 97
new waves. See New cinemas
New York Film Festival, 163, 297n59
Niang, Isseu, 160–61
Night's End (Nishant), 162
The Night Watchman (Al-Haris), 95, 291n86
Nimr, Samir, 96–99
Nine Days of One Year (Deviat' dnei odnogo goda), 186
Nine Months to Freedom: The Story of Bangladesh, 92, 260–61, 266, 295n26
Nixon, Richard, 84, 259–60
Nkrumah, Kwame, 39, 79–80, 276n22, 293n128
Non-Aligned Movement, 10–14, 19–21, 32–34, 38–41, 71, 83, 111–13, 149–51, 260, 278n41
nonfiction cinema, 23–24, 37–38, 53, 57, 74, 80–81, 88–90, 181–83, 211, 317n18
The Nomads (Les Nomades), 71
No Tears for Ananse, 80, 317n15
The Nouba of the Women from Mount Chenoua (La Nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua), 17, 165–68, 309n63
Nunan, Timothy, 181–82
Nyerere, Julius, 276n22
O Golpe, 103
Obrubov, Vladimir, 156
Okeev, Tolomush, 2, 46, 169, 204, 286n4, 307n32, 319n50, 324n24
The Oil War Will Not Take Place (La guerre du pétrole n'aura pas lieu), 102
Olcott, Jockeyln, 149
Olgaç, Bilge, 100, 309n51
One Way or Another (De cierta manera), 170
One More Sin (Eik Gunnah Aur Sahi), 152
One's Own People (Apanjan), 58
The Opium and the Baton (L'Opium et le Bâton/Al-Afiyun wa-al-'Asa), 71
Ordynskii, Vasilii, 324n22
Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (OSPAAL). See Tricontinental
Orsini, Valentino, 126
The Other Francisco (El otro Francisco), 324n26
Ouagadougou, Pan-African Film Festival of (FESPACO), 51, 69, 74–78, 102, 183, 290n78

- Our Small Houses (Buyutuna al-Saghirah)*, 96
The Outsiders (Ceddo), 324n26
 Ozerov, Iurii, 248, 323n22
 Ozu, Yasujiro, 60
- Pakistan, 84, 90–95, 112, 205–6, 210–12, 259–64
 Palacios, Beatriz, 165
 Palestine: 5–7, 23–24, 66, 72–73, 83–85, 95–99, 112, 124–25, 256, 296n51
The Palestine Red Crescent Society (Al-Hilal al-Ahmar), 98
Palestinian Visions (Ru'a Filastiniyah), 97
 Panfilov, Gleb, 171
Paper Flowers (Kagaaz Ke Phool), 163
 Paradzhanov, Sergei, 67, 174, 231–32, 239
Parandzha. See *Veil*
 Paramonova, Kira, 154
 Paranjpye, Sai, 170
A Party for Life (Uma festa para viver), 102, 298n69
 Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 139
 Pasternak, Boris, 288n24
Pather Panchali. See *Song of the Road*
 Pathiraja, Dharmasena, 91
 Patri, Purnendu, 212
Patrol from the East (Dawriyyah nahwa al-Sharq), 71
The Pawnbroker's Death (Smert' rostovshchika), 317n15, 324n24
Pedicab (Pousse-pousse), 132
People on the Nile (Al-Nass wa'l-Nil), 17, 178, 190–201,
 Perera, K. A. W., 91
 Pesaro Film Festival, 50, 71, 104, 281n46, 284n102, 285n103, 300n1
 Pinochet, Augusto, 85, 108–10, 247, 300n97
Pirosmani, 225
The Plea (Mol'ba), 225
The Polygamist's Morale (Le Wazzou polygame), 152
The Poem of the Sea (Poema o more), 186
Poem of Two Hearts (Poema dvukh serdets), 7
 Pontecorvo, Gillo, 79, 126
 popular cinema, 12, 45–49, 56–57, 86–88, 108, 112–13, 209; at Tashkent, 7–12, 41, 67, 71, 81–82, 100, 205, 209–13, 291n85; political cinema vs., 130–34, 270–73
 Porter, Louis, 202
Portrait of Teresa (Retrato de Teresa), 170
The Postman (Al-Boustagi), 290n71
 Prasad, Madhava, 141, 305n98
- Prasad, Vijay, 33
Price of a Union (La rançon d'une alliance), 152
 Prokhorov, Alexander, 215
 Prokhorova, Elena, 215
The Promised Land (La tierra prometida), 299n88
 Pronin, Vasilii, 56, 317n24
 Ptushko, Alexander, 231
 Pudovkin, Vsevolod, 54–55, 65, 67, 286n9
 Pyr'ev, Ivan, 136
 Pyragy, Magtymguly, 317n15
- Qasmi, Ahmad Nadeem, 205, 215, 240, 316n1
Que Viva Mexico, 286n8
- Rachedi, Ahmed, 71
 Rahman, Khan Ataur, 93, 152, 212, 317n15
 Rahman, Kheikh Mujibur, 268
 Raihan, Zahir, 2, 92–93, 161, 260–70, 295n26, 326n63
The Rainbow (Raduga), 324n29
 Raizman, Iulii, 152, 194
 Raj Anand, Mulk, 6
 Rajagopalan, Sudha, 54, 56
 Raju, Zakir Hossain, 269
Ram and Shyam (Ram aur Shyam), 286n
 Ramos, Graciliano, 131, 212
 Rao, Nageswara, 30
 Rashidov, Sharof, 39, 45–46
Rashomon, 59–61
 Ray, Saryajit, 14, 56–57, 59, 93, 120, 132, 161, 163, 170, 287n20
 Razlogov, Kirill, 176–77, 184
 Razlogova, Elena, 8, 27, 41, 103
 Reagan, Ronald, 111
A Real Man from Tbilisi and Others (Nastoiashchii tbilisets i drugie), 310n77
 realism, 24, 50–54, 59, 81, 91–93, 119–31, 213, 233–35; humanist, 52–56, 62, 81, 127–130, 242; socialist, 40, 107, 125–130, 134, 211
Reality (Haqeeqat), 163
 Rebelo, Asdrúbal, 103
The Rebels (Al-Mutamarridun), 290n71
Red Bells (Krasnye kolokola/Campanas rojas), 317n24
 Redgrave, Vanessa, 163
 Rehman, Ziaur, 269
 Reich, Wilhelm, 139
The Restless (Neposedy), 186
 Retamar, Roberto Fernández, 299n81
The Return (Dönüş), 162
Return to Haifa (A'id lla Hayfa), 95–96
 Riad, Mohamed Slim, 2, 70, 152, 291n93

- Riders of the Revolution (Vsadniki revoliutsii)*, 7, 286n3, 324n24
- Ríos, Héctor, 299n88
- Rising Storm (Nổi gió)*, 256
- The Road (Al-Tariq)*, 70
- The Road of Myrrh and Incense (El camino de la mirra y el incienso)*, 299n81
- Rocha, Glauber, 101
- Rodríguez, Marta, 165
- Romanov, Alexei, 139, 197,
- Romm, Mikhail, 98, 134, 136, 186, 194
- Romulo, 240
- Rossellini, Roberto, 263
- Roth-Ey, Kristin, 47, 87, 157, 304n76
- Rouland, Michael, 42
- Roy, Bimal, 56–57
- Runaway Slave Hunter (Rancheador)*, 324n26
- Rustam and Sukhrab (Rustam i Sukhrab)*, 17, 209, 235. *See also* *The Shahnameh*.
- Sabirov, Takhir, 317n15, 324n24
- The Saboteurs (Al-Mukharribun)*, 290n71
- Sadat, Anwar, 67–68, 84, 198
- Sadoul, Georges, 36, 60
- Sagar, Ramanand, 286n2
- Sahni, Balraj, 288n27
- Sahni, Brisham, 288n27
- Sailly, Eduard, 80
- Saladin (Al-Nasir Salah al-Din)*, 66, 193
- Salat, Rudolf, 219
- Saleh, Tewfiq, 24, 66, 69, 96–97, 198, 290n71
- Salem, Atef, 197
- Samaddar, Ranabir, 266
- Samb-Makharam, Ababacar, 78, 152
- Sambizanga*, 79, 101, 281n51, 324n26, n29
- Sanjinés, José, 104, 150, 301n20
- The Sanke Celebration (Fête du Sanke)*, 81
- Sanogo, Aboubakar, 116–17
- São Bernardo*, 131, 212
- Sapiaín, Claudio, 110, 299n90, 300n98
- Sarkar, Bhaskar, 54, 142, 214, 245
- Sarmiento, Valeria, 165
- Sasaki, Sadako, 251
- Sathyu, M. S., 163
- Saveleva, Liudmila, 90
- Scenes from the Occupation in Gaza (Mashahed Minal Ih'tilal Fi Ghazza)*, 96
- Schnittke, Alfred, 251
- Schwenkel, Christina, 256
- Screaming (Sourakh)*, 152
- The Seedling (Ankur)*, 162
- Sekigawa, Hideo, 251
- Sekou-Toure, Ahmed, 80, 276n22, 293n128
- Sembene, Ousmane, 2, 4, 69, 75–78, 86, 101, 119, 121, 160, 179, 212, 267–68, 293n119, 294n133, 301n13, 317n26, 324n26
- Sen, Asit, 286n2
- Sen, Mrinal, 24, 86, 92–95, 111, 119–20, 125, 127, 132–33, 163, 295n23
- Senghor, Léopold Sédar, 75, 80, 183, 276n22
- Sergeant Bakary Woolen (Le Sergent Bakary Woolen)*, 80, 152
- The 17th Parallel Day and Night (Vi tuyến 17 Ngày và đêm)*, 256
- The Seventh Bullet (Sed'maia pulia)*, 324n24
- 79 Springs (79 Primavera)*, 282n65
- Shadieva, Tojikhon, 145
- The Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors (Teni zabytykh predkov)*, 232
- Shah, Reza, 229
- The Shahnameh*, 17, 44, 207, 216–17, 226–239, 320n79, 321n88
- Shahnameh and the People (Shahnameh Va Mardom)*, 229
- Shammout, Ismail, 96–97
- Shankar, Ravi, 260
- Shantaram, V, 57
- Shaya, Riad, 100
- Shcherbenok, Andrei, 140–41
- Shelenkov, Alexander, 194
- Shengelaia, Giorgi, 225
- Shengelaia, Eldar, 174
- Shepitko, Larisa, 17, 144, 165–71, 174, 237, 249, 270, 304n76
- Shindo, Kaneto, 58–60, 63–64, 138, 251–52, 286n2, 289n39
- Shklovsky, Viktor, 174
- Shmeit, Ghassan, 100
- Shuchanda, Kohinoor Akhtar, 161, 269–70
- Shumiatskii, Boris, 233, 294n14
- Siam, Ali, 72–73
- Siefert, Masha, 277n31
- Sing, Chaitya Devi, 162
- Sinha, Tapan, 58
- Sissako, Abderrahmane, 179
- The Sky of Our Childhood (Nebo nashego detstva)*, 2, 40, 204, 286n4
- Skvirsky, Salomé, 185
- The Slave Factory (Dorei koje)*, 64
- Slezkine, Yuri, 30
- Slobodian, Quinn, 129, 247
- Smirnova, Irina, 154
- Snow Woman (Kaidan Yukijoro)*, 64, 286n2

- Solanas, Fernando, 50, 104, 284n102, 285n103
 Solas, Humberto, 299n81
Soldiers of Freedom (Soldaty svobody), 323n22
 Soleil O, 76, 101
 Solntseva, Iuliia, 186
Some Interviews on Personal Matters (Neskol'ko interv'iu po lichnym voprosam), 17, 166–67, 170–75
The Song Does Not Die, Generals! (La canción no muere, generals!), 110
Song of Chile (Cantata de Chile), 299n81
Song of the Road (Pathar Panchali), 57, 287n20
 Şoray, Türkan, 100, 160, 162, 309n51
 Soto, Helvio, 299n88
Source of Inspiration (Source d'inspiration), 80
 Soviet Union (USSR): censorship, 27, 46–49, 103–8, 116, 125, 136–42, 239, 249, 284n86, n98; cultural diplomacy, 4–6, 10, 24–32, 40–42, 108–12, 116, 159–64, 183–86, 214–18; film administration, 26–28, 48, 86, 123, 125, 137–39, 197, 216, 232, 239, 319n50; film distribution, 26–27, 47–48, 54–57, 76, 123, 135, 216; film unions, 26, 46–48, 135, 216–17, 232, 253–54, 304n75; internationalism, 4, 7–13, 19–21, 33–39, 114–16, 121–23, 127–30, 192–204, 218–23, 236–41; party politics, 4, 10, 26, 31–34, 48–50, 55, 83–87, 105, 115, 134–37, 218; popular cinema, 34–37, 47–49, 87–88, 127–34, 183–88
 Sow, Bob (Sowfu), 75–76
Spring on Zarechnaya Street (Vesna na Zarechnoi ulitse), 186
 Srour, Heiny, 165
 Stalin, Iosif, 33–34, 47, 109, 123, 148, 174, 216
 Stanek, Łukasz, 11, 277n34
 Stanislawski, Constantin, 308n42
 stardom, 2, 24–30, 56–57, 65–66, 90–93, 117, 155–65, 269
The Statues Are Laughing (Mujasema ha Mekhandan), 297n59
Still, It's Good to Live (Ikite ite yokatta), 324n30
Stop Genocide, 17, 92–93, 260–61, 265, 267, 295n27, 326n63
Storms (Aandhiyan), 56
Stranger and the Fog (Gharibeh va Meh), 100
 Strasberg, Lee, 308n42
Struggle in the Valley (Sira' fi al-Wadi), 65, 193
 Sujata, 90
 Sukarno, 159
 Sukhdev, Sandhu, 3, 30, 86, 92, 125, 163, 260–61, 266, 295n24, 295n26
 Sumhu, Badrahin, 324n22
 Svetlichnaia, Svetlana, 90
 Sytin, Victor, 197
Taken from Life (Jiban Theke Neya), 93
 Tagore, Rabindranath, 212, 240
The Tale of Rustam, 232, 234, 239
The Tale of Siiavush, 234–35
The Tam-tams Are Silent (Les tam-tams se sont tus), 210
 Tanaka, Tokuzo, 64, 286n2
 Tandon, Lekh, 286n2
 Taniguchi, Senkichi, 59
 Tarabukin, Nikolai, 231
 Tariq, Hassan, 152
 Tarkovsky, Andrei, 14, 67, 99, 224–25, 247, 319n46, 323n16
 Tashkent Festival of Cinemas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America: audiences, 7–8, 26–29, 32, 74, 86, 115–21, 131–33, 155, 159–64, 298n68; contact zone, 8, 24–26, 31–32, 276n25; debates, 31–32, 114–42, 154–55; organization, 4–7, 19–21, 26–32, 51–54, 57–58, 62–68, 86–89, 94, 101–5, 114–18, 134–36, 143–46, 154–64, 184, 205–7, 246, 256–69, 287n20
 Tazi, Mohamed, 71
 Teheran Film Festival, 30, 297n59
Tenderness (Nezhnost'), 46
10th Anniversary of Independence, 98
 Terekhova, Margarita, 90
 Tereshkova, Valentina, 148
Testimonies of Palestinian Children in Wartime (Shahadat al-Atfal al-Filastiniyin fi Zaman al-Harb), 99
 Thành, Huy, 256
 Thatcher, Margaret, 111
 Thế Đoàn, Nguyễn, 257
They Fought for the Motherland (Oni srazhalis' za rodinu), 323n22
 Thiel, Heinz, 194
The Third Vow (Teesri Kasam), 288n26
Third World, Third World War (Tercer mundo, tercera guerra Mundial), 288n81
The Thirsty (al-Zami'un), 99
A Thousand and One Hands (Alf Yad wa Yad), 102, 209
The Tiger of Mazandaran (Babre Mazandaran), 100
Three Songs about Lenin (Tri pesni o Lenine), 145
 Tito, Jozif, 83
To Live (Al-Hayatu Kifah), 71
 Todorovskii, Petr, 140
 Toeplitz, Jerzy, 36
 Tognazzi, Ugo, 102
 Tolbi, Abdelaziz, 71
 Torabi, Hossein, 229
 Torres, Miguel, 299n81
 Torrijos, Omar, 108

- Touch (Spārsh)*, 170
Toward a World without Arms (Gunbi naki sekai-o), 324n30
Town and Village (Miyi Iyo Magaalo), 293n130
 Toyama, Shigeki, 252–53
 Toyoda, Shiro, 59
 Tricontinental, 13, 32–34, 39–40, 71, 85–86, 106–111.
 Trinh, Tuyét, 257
The Truck Driver (Sa'iq al-Shahinah), 291n86
The Turning (Al-Munātaf), 99
 Turovskaya, Maya, 154
 Tursunzoda, Mirzo, 206, 239
26 Baku Commissars (26 bakinskikh komissarov), 286n3, 324n24
Two Acres of Land (Do Bigha Zamin), 56, 288n27
Two Soldiers (Hai nguõi lính), 258
 Turkey, 85, 100–1, 121, 160–62, 309n51
- Ubukeyev, Melis, 46
 Ulesov, Alexei, 192
 Ulug-Zade, Satym, 220
Under the Flag of the Rising Sun (Gunki hatameku moto ni), 250
 UNESCO, 44, 74, 85, 97–98, 165, 211, 219–23, 281n46; World Heritage, 201–4, 207–8
Untypical Story (Triasina), 305n95
The Uprooted (Chinnamul), 54–55
Urgent Call of Palestine (Al-Nida' al-Milh) 96
 Uzbekistan, Soviet Republic of: film culture, 44–46, 115–19, 220–26, 284n86; heritage, 30, 143–48, 205–7, 217–20
The Vagabond (Awara), 56, 286n12
- Vaidya, Prem, 131
 Valdés, Cristián, 109–10
Valparaíso, My Love (Valparaíso, mi amor), 299n88
 Vámbéry, Ármin, 319n50
 Vartanov, Anri, 227, 320n83
 Vataev, Bimbolat, 239
 Vázquez, Angelina, 165
 Vega, Pastor, 170
Veil (Parandzha), 143–44, 146, 163
 Vertov, Dziga, 38, 51, 98, 145, 185, 189, 262, 287n20, 294n14, 313n34, 323n16
 Vetrova, Tatiana, 154
 VGIK, 4, 6, 46–47, 71, 75–80, 100, 109–10, 125, 135–36, 157–62, 169, 174, 179, 206, 231–33, 258, 277, 283n67, 291n92, 304n71, 324n29
 Viany, Alex, 285n103
 Videkanić, Bojana, 202
 Vieira, José Luandino, 281n51
- Vietnam: film culture, 37, 61–62, 248–49; geopolitics, 10, 34, 40, 72, 83–85; participation at Tashkent, 13, 51, 54, 256–59; solidarity, 124–26, 143, 242, 256–59
Vietnam, 253
 Vieyra, Paulin Soumanou, 4, 69, 74–78, 86, 119–21, 132, 292n101, 292n102, 292n109, 292n117, 301n18
A Village Smiles, 187
 Viña del Mar Festival, 51, 105–6, 285n107
The Visit (Al-Ziyarah), 99
Voice of Hiroshima (Hiroshima no koe), 324n30
 Vonderau, Patrick, 181–82
The Vow (Kliatva), 174
 Vyjayanthimala, 90
- Wainer, José, 285n107
 Wajda, Andrzej, 247
 Wakamatsu, Koji, 298n74
The Wall (Al-Aswar), 99
War and Peace (Voina i mir), 194, 216, 231
 war cinema, 71–73, 119–121, 124–26, 242–73, 323n16, 327n91
The War in Angola (La guerra en Angola), 299n82
 Wasson, Haidee, 182
The Wayfarer (Rahi), 56
 Weber, Heloise, 295n17
 Weiner, Samir, 271
West Indies, 101
We Will Win (Venceremos), 299n88
When a Woman Mounts a Horse (Kogda zhenshchina osedlaet konia), 324n24
Where Is Friend's Home? (Khane-ye doust kodjast?), 112
White-eyed Bird (Chim vành khuyên'), 258
White Mountains (Belye gory), 46
White Shores (Belye berega/Voda nasha nasushchnaya), 204
White Sun of the Desert (Beloe solntse pustyni), 324n25
White, White Storks (Belye, belye aisty), 46
 Whitman, Walt, 174
Wife's Letter (Strir Patra), 212
Who Is the Revolution For? (Li Man al-Thawra?), 97–98
The Whole Mahalla Is Talking about It (Ob etom govorit vsia makhallia), 223
Whom I Love (Man uhibb), 67
Why Do We Plant Roses... Why Do We Carry Arms? (Limadha Nazra' al-Ward...Limadha Nahmil al-Silah?), 96
Widow of Montiel (La viuda de Montiel), 137, 318n28

- Wind from the South (Rih el Djanoub)*, 152
The Winds of Liberation (Riyah al-Tahrir), 97
The Winds of the Aures (Rih al-Awras), 70
Wings (Kryl'ia), 17, 166–69, 237, 309n62,65
With Soul, with Blood (Bi-al-Ruh, bi-al-Dam), 96
The Witness Seat (Shonin no isu), 64
Within Every Shadow There Grows a Flight
 (*Dentro de cada sombra crece un vuelo*), 110
Woman Walking Alone on the Earth (Onna hitori
 daichi o yuku), 59
 world cinema, 8, 11–14, 21–22, 32, 112–13, 121–23;
 socialist, 7–19, 88–90, 116–121, 151–53, 166,
 177–83, 205–9, 242–48, 272–73
The World Is Terrified: The Reality of the "Ashes of
 Death" (Sekai wa kyofu suru: "Shi no hai" no
 shotai), 324n30
 world-making, 11, 177, 182. *See also*
 internationalism
The Wretched of the Earth (I Dannati della
 Terra), 126

Xala, 267

 Yagi, Yasutaro, 63
 Yahyaee, Rafiq, 100
 Yamada, Kazuo, 63, 124, 138, 289n51
 Yamada, Tengo, 59

 Yamada, Yoji, 160
 Yamamoto, Satsuo, 24, 59–64, 253–55, 288n30
 Yaqub, Nadia, 72–73
 Yasemi, Siamak, 100, 212
The Yazerli (Al-Yazerli), 99
Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, 80
 Yilmaz, Atif, 100, 162, 212
Yonder Lie the Path (Paathai Theriryudhu Paar), 55
 Yoon, Duncan, 240
 Yoshida, Shigeru, 253
 Yoshimura, Kozaburo, 59–60
You Are Not an Orphan (Ty ne sirota), 223
 Young, Robert, 39
The Young Guard (Molodaia Gvardiia), 130
Young Wife (Balika Badhu), 58
 Youngblood, Denise, 25
 Younis, Ala, 314n70
 Yousef, Wadi, 100
 Yugoslavia, 14, 19, 41, 139, 202, 245–46

 Zaheer, Sajjad, 6
 Zarkhi, Alexander, 186
 Zikra, Samir, 100
Zionist Terror (al-Irhab, al-Suhyuni), 96
 Zorkaia, Neia, 154, 320n83
 Zubaida, 30, 91
 Zurlini, Valerio, 126

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