

## 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> Infuriated by the public defeat in Bangladesh, Nixon dramatically increased US aid to Israel in 1972; in a countermove, the Soviet Union intensified its efforts in the Middle East by strengthening its ties to Libya and signing a treaty with Iraq in 1972.<sup>3</sup> 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 privatization 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.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

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.<sup>7</sup>

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.<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup> 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).<sup>10</sup> 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.<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup>

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.”<sup>15</sup>

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.<sup>16</sup>

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.<sup>17</sup> 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.<sup>18</sup> 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.<sup>19</sup>

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.”<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup> 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.<sup>22</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup> 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.<sup>24</sup> 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.<sup>25</sup>

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.<sup>26</sup> 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.<sup>27</sup> 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.<sup>28</sup>

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 Kardar'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).<sup>29</sup>

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.<sup>30</sup> 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 Kardar 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.<sup>31</sup>

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.<sup>32</sup> 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.<sup>33</sup> 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.”<sup>34</sup> 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.<sup>35</sup>

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.<sup>36</sup> 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.<sup>37</sup> 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.<sup>38</sup>

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*.<sup>39</sup> 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.<sup>40</sup> 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.<sup>41</sup>

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 dhallika 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.<sup>42</sup> 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.<sup>43</sup>

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."<sup>44</sup> The film's cinematography was done by one of the cofounders of the PFU, Sulafah Jadalalah, who was shot during the making of the film, causing her partial paralysis.<sup>45</sup> 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.<sup>46</sup> 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.<sup>47</sup>

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.<sup>48</sup>

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'â 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.<sup>49</sup> 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.<sup>50</sup>

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.<sup>51</sup> 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.<sup>52</sup> 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."<sup>53</sup> 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."<sup>54</sup> 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.<sup>55</sup>

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.<sup>56</sup> 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.<sup>57</sup>

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.<sup>58</sup> 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.<sup>59</sup>

### 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).<sup>60</sup> 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.<sup>61</sup> 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.<sup>62</sup>

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.<sup>63</sup> 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.<sup>64</sup> 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.<sup>65</sup> 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.<sup>66</sup> 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.<sup>67</sup>

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.<sup>68</sup> 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.<sup>69</sup> 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.<sup>70</sup> 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."<sup>71</sup> 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.<sup>72</sup>

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.<sup>73</sup> 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).<sup>74</sup>

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.<sup>75</sup> 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.<sup>76</sup>

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).<sup>77</sup> 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.<sup>78</sup> 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 guerrilla warfare, whose theory and practice was identified with Che Guevara. For the radical Left, including its filmmaking members, the idea that guerrilla *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 guerrilla 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).<sup>79</sup> 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.<sup>80</sup> 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.<sup>81</sup> 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.<sup>82</sup> 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 (Ranchedor, 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.<sup>83</sup> 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.<sup>84</sup> 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.<sup>85</sup>

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.<sup>86</sup> 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.<sup>87</sup> 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.<sup>88</sup>

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.<sup>89</sup> 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.<sup>90</sup>

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.<sup>91</sup> 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.<sup>92</sup> 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.<sup>93</sup> 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.<sup>94</sup> 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.<sup>95</sup>

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.<sup>96</sup> 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.<sup>97</sup> 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)).<sup>98</sup> 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-tin served on the jury of the Carthage festival (JCC) alongside Sen and Madanat.<sup>99</sup> 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).<sup>100</sup> 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.<sup>101</sup> 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.<sup>102</sup> 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).<sup>103</sup> 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.<sup>104</sup> 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.<sup>105</sup>

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.<sup>106</sup> 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.