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Porous Empire: Foreign Visitors And The Post-Stalin Soviet State

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Abstract

“Porous Empire” is a study of the relationship between Soviet institutions, Soviet society and the millions of foreigners who visited the USSR between the mid-1950s and the mid-1980s. “Porous Empire” traces how Soviet economic, propaganda, and state security institutions, all shaped during the isolationist Stalin period, struggled to accommodate their practices to millions of visitors with material expectations and assumed legal rights radically unlike those of Soviet citizens. While much recent Soviet historiography focuses on the ways in which the post-Stalin opening to the outside world led to the erosion of official Soviet ideology, I argue that ideological attitudes inherited from the Stalin era structured institutional responses to a growing foreign presence in Soviet life. Therefore, while Soviet institutions had to accommodate their economic practices to the growing numbers of tourists and other visitors inside the Soviet borders and were forced to concede the existence of contact zones between foreigners and Soviet citizens that loosened some of the absolute sovereignty claims of the Soviet party-state, they remained loyal to visions of Soviet economic independence, committed to fighting the cultural Cold War, and profoundly suspicious of the outside world.

The gap between Soviet concessions to the era of international mobility and Soviet attitudes to the outside world shaped the peculiar nature of globalization in its Soviet context: even as the Soviet opening up to the world promoted Westernization and undermined some of the ideological foundations of Soviet power, it also generated, within the bowels of Soviet institutions, a profound and honestly-held commitment to authoritarianism and social discipline as an instrument of geopolitical resistance, a mental attitude that still shapes Russian official approaches to the outside world 25 years after the fall of the USSR.

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**POROUS EMPIRE:
FOREIGN VISITORS AND THE POST-STALIN
SOVIET STATE**

Alexander Hazanov

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In

HISTORY

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Dedication

For Emma

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Abstract

POROUS EMPIRE: FOREIGN VISITORS AND THE POST-STALIN SOVIET STATE

Alexander Hazanov

Benjamin Nathans

“Porous Empire” is a study of the relationship between Soviet institutions, Soviet society and the millions of foreigners who visited the USSR between the mid-1950s and the mid-1980s. “Porous Empire” traces how Soviet economic, propaganda, and state security institutions, all shaped during the isolationist Stalin period, struggled to accommodate their practices to millions of visitors with material expectations and assumed legal rights radically unlike those of Soviet citizens. While much recent Soviet historiography focuses on the ways in which the post-Stalin opening to the outside world led to the erosion of official Soviet ideology, I argue that ideological attitudes inherited from the Stalin era structured institutional responses to a growing foreign presence in Soviet life. Therefore, while Soviet institutions had to accommodate their economic practices to the growing numbers of tourists and other visitors inside the Soviet borders and were forced to concede the existence of contact zones between foreigners and Soviet citizens that loosened some of the absolute sovereignty claims of the Soviet party-state, they remained loyal to visions of Soviet economic independence, committed to fighting the cultural Cold War, and profoundly suspicious of the outside world.

The gap between Soviet concessions to the era of international mobility and Soviet attitudes to the outside world shaped the peculiar nature of globalization in its Soviet context: even as the Soviet opening up to the world promoted Westernization and undermined

some of the ideological foundations of Soviet power, it also generated, within the bowels of Soviet institutions, a profound and honestly-held commitment to authoritarianism and social discipline as an instrument of geopolitical resistance, a mental attitude that still shapes Russian official approaches to the outside world 25 years after the fall of the USSR.

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Mister Twister	34
Figure 1.2: Hotel Viru, Tallinn	81
Figure 1.3: Intourist Information Transfer Scheme	84
Figure 2.1 Intourist Bus, Scale Model	121
Figure 2.2: Gilbert Becaud and “Nathalie”	128
Figure 3.1: Black Marketeers on Nevskii Prospekt	160
Figure 3.2 Ian Rokotov	186
Figure 3.3 Scene from <i>Dual Trap</i> 1	219
Figure 3.4 Scene from <i>Dual Trap</i> 2	219
Figure 4.1 Daily KGB Report, Ukraine	243
Figure 4.2 Closed Zones, c. 1989	251
Figure 5.1: Moscow Synagogue, Sep. 1948	293
Figure 5.2: Mark Glotter	299
Figure 5.3: Gifts Seized From Zionist Emissaries	300

Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
Abstract	v
List of Figures	vii
Contents.....	viii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Serving Mister Twister, or the Political Economy of Intourist	32
Chapter 2: Truth? Which Truth? Contesting the Tourist Gaze in the Soviet Union.....	93
Chapter 3: Speculators, Frivolous Girls and Other A-Social Elements.....	155
Chapter 4: Vigilance is Our Weapon! The KGB, Foreigners, and the Limits of Surveillance.....	224
Chapter 5: Transnational Nationalists: ‘Zionist Emissaries’ Tour the Soviet Union	289
Conclusion.....	336
Bibliography.....	352

Introduction

In the late 1960s, the travel writers Delia and Ferdinand Kuhn joined the hallowed tradition of Western travelers going to Muscovy/Russia/Soviet Union in order to decipher the mysteries of the “Rude and Barbarous Kingdom.”¹ In what was no doubt a major coup by their literary agent, in the run-up to the publication of their travelogue, the Kuhns were able to publish a summary of their findings on the pages of the *New York Times* travel section.²

The Kuhns’ *Times* account of their travels begins with the following caveat: “When the tourist enters the Soviet Union, the test tube of Communism, he is an alien body not germane to the experiment.” From this perspective, the Kuhns explain the alienating effects of travelling in the alternate universe that was the Soviet Union: the “giant squid” of the Soviet state that engulfs the traveler, the myriad ways in which the famed Soviet tourist monopoly, Intourist, both hinders the foreigner and shields him or her from the vagaries of Soviet material life, and above all, the psychological costs of “routine surveillance.” And yet, the Kuhns argue, as long as one follows Soviet law, has the gumption to stand up to Intourist, and possesses curiosity and an open mind (and no doubt, a copy of their travelogue), one could overcome the barriers the Soviets erected between foreigners and unvarnished (and uncomfortable) truths about the Soviet Union.

¹ Marshall Poe, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom: Russia in the Accounts of Sixteenth Century English Voyagers* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).

² Delia and Ferdinand Kuhn, “Foreign Bodies in the Communist Test Tube,” *New York Times*, 4/10/1970.

This perspective on the incommensurability of foreign bodies and the Soviet system was shared by many Soviet officials - albeit from a radically different angle. A 1963 report on the misbehavior of one such foreign body, the American sociologist Lewis Feuer, by the head of the Academy of Sciences Institute of Philosophy F.V. Konstantinov, can serve as a useful case in point. During his four-month stay in the Soviet Union, Feuer, Konstantinov complained, neglected his research topic, the “theoretical foundations of historical materialism.” Instead, he spent his time “talking to Soviet people on the street, in markets, in synagogues, in open meetings in educational institutions”- all the while refusing the services of an officially assigned translator. Feuer even enrolled his daughter in a Soviet school with the express purpose (according to Konstantinov), of “spying on [vyvedat’] the moods of Soviet children and their parents’ opinions.” Even worse, Feuer not only shared his decidedly non-historical-materialist perspective on Soviet society with many Soviet colleagues, but also caused a public scene by declaring that Soviet Marxism was “at a crossroads,” that antisemitism was rife there, and that the younger generation of Soviet people displayed a “powerful drift away from Marxism” in a public address at the Institute.³

Based on Feuer’s behavior, Konstantinov concluded that he and other American exchange participants were not scientists at all, but simply “functionaries of the State Department.” Therefore, he recommended, the Soviet Union should discontinue its

³ “F.V Konstantinov to TsK KPSS, 10/6/1965,” Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv noveishei istorii [RGANI], f. 5, op. 55, d. 3, ll. 215-216.

exchange agreements with the Americans. These, he argues, served no useful purpose but to provide a channel “for the infiltration of ideological spies, of blatant anticommunists into our country.”⁴ This *cri de coeur* received a cold and laconic reply from the Central Committee: Soviet officials in charge of the exchange program were well aware of Feuer’s anti-Soviet proclivities, but could not reject his candidacy according to the terms of the Soviet-American scientific-cultural exchange agreements.⁵

While their ideological predilections could not be further apart, Konstantinov, the anonymous Central Committee official who rejected his request, and the Kuhns all agreed on two crucial points. First, foreigners were indeed “alien bodies” quite unlike anyone else in bloodstream of Soviet society. Second, the mighty immune system of the Soviet state found itself rather ill-adapted to deal with the threats they posed. Seen from the perspective of Soviet authorities, the Kuhns’ experimental metaphor was extremely apt if, but not at all in the way the Kuhns envisioned it. Foreign visitors to the post-Stalin Soviet Union were indeed participants in an experiment, but not quite the one the Kuhns were thinking about: rather, the experiment involved the introduction of large numbers of foreigners into a society organized along largely autarchic lines between the 1920s and the 1950s, thus forcing its institutions to face a new social force they were not designed to accommodate. *Porous Empire* traces the unfolding of this experiment from the initial Soviet opening up to the world in the mid-1950s to the demise of the Soviet system in

⁴ Ibid, 217.

⁵ “Spravka na no. 20791, 7/25/1965,” RGANI, f. op. 55, d. 3, l. 218.

1991, exploring how Soviet institutions sought to benefit from, accommodate to, and limit the socio-cultural consequences of the ever-growing presence of “alien bodies” on Soviet soil.

The decisions that led to the partial Soviet opening up to the world were anything but a careful experimental process. Like so much else during the Khrushchev period, the opening up of Soviet borders to foreign traffic was the product of a series of ad hoc decisions that together amounted to a profound historical shift. In the late Stalin era, the number of foreigners visiting the Soviet Union dropped to nearly zero.⁶ In 1956, the country received 56,000 tourists and numerous other visitors.⁷ By 1963, the yearly number of tourists amounted to 168,000 people, and other forms of travel (everything from exchanges like Feuer’s to transit passengers going from Europe to the Far East and vice versa) amounted to over one million.⁸ By the early 1970s, the Soviet Union was receiving 4 million travelers yearly,⁹ and the foreign presence on Soviet soil became dense enough to provide a market for both phone directories aimed at resident foreigners

⁶ For example, according to a 1948 report by Intourist, foreign tourism in the Soviet Union was “nonexistent” [*ne imeet mesta*] “Otchet inostrannogo otdela VAO Inturist za 1 kvartal 1948 g.,” Gosudarevnyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [GARF], f. 9612, op.2, d. 142, l. 18. In the same year, VOKS, the body in charge of hosting writers, artists and intellectuals, received only 89 guests. “Spravka o kolichestve inostrannykh delegatsii i otdelnykh deiatelei inostrannoi kul'tury priniatykh VOKSom v 1949 godu po sravneniiu s 1948 godom,” GARF, f. 5283, op. 8, d. 332, l. 2.

⁷ “Ob itogakh raboty Inturista v 1956 godu i zadachakh kollektiva na 1957 god,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2. d. 237, l. 65.

⁸ “Otchet ob ekskursionnom obsluzhivannii inostrannykh turistov v SSSR v 1963 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 557, l. 2.

⁹ “Bulletin turisticheskoi informatsii, nomer 1, 1977,” GARF f. 9612, op. 3, d.1119, l. 3.

and instruction manuals on the Moscow night scene aimed at “active bachelors.”¹⁰ Given the global explosion of cross-border traffic in the postwar decades¹¹ or even the numbers of foreigners received by small East European socialist countries (Hungary, for instance, received near 10 million tourists yearly in the 1970s),¹² these were not especially impressive figures. However, in the context of Soviet history, these numbers represented a profound transformation, making foreigners, for the first time since the imperial period, part of the tapestry of social life in major Soviet cities.

Despite this rapid and drastic transformation, there is no evidence that the problem of foreigners on Soviet soil was ever discussed systematically by Soviet authorities. The archival trails of the decisions to close the Soviet Union to foreign traffic in the late 1940s and reopen it in the mid-1950s are both rather scant. In the immediate postwar years, when discussing the fact that foreign tourism, the *raison d’être* of their organization, was non-existent, Intourist officials usually said little more than that they were “not ready” to open up their system for tourists.¹³ According to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ replies to postwar Western inquiries, foreigners could apply for tourist visas to the Soviet Union without any difficulty. However, given that such visas were provided only after one purchased an Intourist package, packages that were not on

¹⁰ On the phone directory, produced by Soviet journalist (and probable KGB agent) Viktor Louis, see Kevin Kruse, *Russia and the Russians: Inside the Closed Society* (New York: Norton, 1984), 274-276. For the night life manual, see Jeffrey Bocca, *The Moscow Scene* (New York: Stain and Day, 1974).

¹¹ Between 1950 and 1970, global tourist flows grew tenfold, from 25 million to near quarter billion. Elizabeth Becker, *Overbooked: the Exploding Business of Travel and Tourism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013), 17.

¹² József Böröcz, *Leisure Migration: a Sociological Study of Tourism* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1996), 73.

¹³ Quoted in Salmon, “Land of Future,” 139.

sale, this was a rather weak rejoinder.¹⁴ In 1947, control over other avenues of entry to the Soviet Union, private (i.e. family) visits and delegation travel, were transferred to, respectively, a newly established Committee on Entrances and Departures of the Council of Ministers and the Foreign Ministry, undoubtedly part of Stalin's effort to tamp down on the last shreds of wartime tolerance for contacts with the outside world.¹⁵ Another key decision from the same year banned marriages between Soviet citizens and foreigners.¹⁶ In the atmosphere of hysteria against foreign subversion and campaigns against "kowtowing to the West" and "cosmopolitanism," these resolutions not only sharply curtailed travel to the Soviet Union but also helped to create a zone of exclusion around the few foreigners (mostly diplomats and journalists) inside Soviet borders, a zone that few Soviet people dared enter.¹⁷

In a similar manner, while historians are confident that the reopening of the Soviet Union to foreign traffic fit Khrushchev's overall strategy of peaceful coexistence, spreading the Soviet gospel to the Third World, and modernization by means of

¹⁴ Harry Schwartz, "Soviet Aide Says Soviet Visas are Easy to Get," *New York Times*, 8/8/1951.

¹⁵ Polozhenie o Biuro o po v'ezdam v SSSR i vyezdami za granitsu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR," RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 1065, ll. 77-78. (Accessed online via: <http://www.alexanderyakovlev.org/fond/issues-doc/69337>, on 3/3/2015).

¹⁶ "Ukaz Prezidiuma VS SSSR ot 15 fevralia 1947 goda 'O vospreschenii brakov mezhdru grazhdanam SSSR i inostrantsami.'" Accessed online, at: <http://base.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc;base=ESU;n=20128>, on 4/1/2015. For a first person account of the impact of this decision on foreign-Soviet couples, see Eddy Gilmore, *Me and My Russian Wife* (London: Foulsham, 1952).

¹⁷ For an account of life as diplomat in late Stalinist Moscow, see Richard Hilton, *Military Attache in Moscow* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1949). Also see Whitman Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents: Covering the Soviet Union from Revolution to Glasnost* (New York: Morrow and Company, 1988), 119-148.

knowledge transfers from the West,¹⁸ the exact bureaucratic process by which Soviet borders were opened to foreign travel is difficult to reconstruct. In general, the Soviet opening seems to have consisted of two distinct phases: a gradual repeal of Stalin-era restrictions by his erstwhile underlings and the bureaucracies they led, part of their general policy to disarm the tense atmosphere of the dictator's final years,¹⁹ followed by a series of iconic events and high-level interventions that established foreign presence as a fact of life in the late socialist USSR.

The reversal of Stalin's policies regarding foreigners began nearly immediately after his death. As early as June 1953, Soviet authorities allowed foreign diplomats to travel outside Moscow, subject to prior coordination and apart from specifically designated zones – a principle that would define Soviet regulation of foreign travel for all categories of foreigners until 1991 (and, to a much more limited extent, even today).²⁰ In October of the same year, the decree banning marriages between foreigners and Soviet citizens was abolished.²¹ In March 1954, the Foreign Ministry drafted a resolution calling

¹⁸ See, for example, Pia Koivunen, "The 1957 Moscow Youth Festival: Propagating a New, Peaceful Image of the Soviet Union" in Melanie B. Ilic and Jeremy Smith (ed.) *Soviet State and Society under Nikita Khrushchev* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 46-65. Rosa Magnusdottir, "Mission Impossible? Selling the Soviet Socialism to Americans, 1955-1968," in Jessica Glenow Hecht and Mark C. Donfield (ed.) *Searching for Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 51-72. On Khrushchev's overall strategy, see Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Raleigh, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 94-192.

¹⁹ Sheilla Fitzpatrick, *On Stalin's Team: The Years of Living Dangerously in Soviet Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 224-254.

²⁰ "Dudorov to TsK KPSS, 1/5/1959," GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 506, ll. 16-17. This letter refers to a Sovmin Resolution from 1953 ("Postanovlenie Sovmin SSSSR, n. 1560/617SS, 20/6/1953"). This resolution has not yet been declassified.

²¹ "Ukaz ot 26 Noiabria 1953 goda ob otmene ukaza Prezidiuma VS SSSR ot 15 fevralia 1947 goda "O vospreschenii brakov mezhdru grazhdanam SSSSR i inostrantsami." Accessed online, at: <http://base.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc;base=ESU;n=16717>, on 4/1/2015

for the resumption of foreign tourism, and by early 1955, Intourist was already selling tour packages to Western tourists.²² In the same year, Soviet authorities drastically loosened control over inter-socialist borders and allowed visa-free travel to residents of Czechoslovak, Polish and Hungarian regions bordering on the Soviet Union.²³

Under Khrushchev, the Soviet opening up to the world quickly evolved beyond such mundane bureaucratic measures. The 1957 Moscow Youth Festival and the 1959 American Sokolniki exhibit were iconic moments in this regard, and still, as we shall see below, form the focal point of the historiography of the Soviet opening up to the world. Tourism and other forms of exchange with Eastern Europe were substantially expanded.²⁴ Following Khrushchev's whirlwind tours of Asia and his infatuation with the prospects of the Soviet Union serving as the trailblazer for the developing world, Soviet universities started receiving students from the Third World in the late 1950s, a process that culminated in the establishment of the Patrice Lumumba Friendship of the Peoples University in 1960.²⁵

When it came to accepting "capitalist" foreigners, the picture was more complicated. While Khrushchev was often enthusiastic about receiving Western visitors

²² "Gromyko to Molotov, 15/3/1954." GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 449, ll. 3-9.

²³ "Spravka k voprosu ob izmenenii porogichnogo rezhima na granitse so stranami narodnoi demokratii, 14/9//1955," GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 466, ll. 86-89.

²⁴ Rachel Appelbaum, "Friendship of the Peoples: Soviet-Czechoslovak Cultural and Social Contacts from the Battle for Prague to the Prague Spring, 1945-1969," PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago, 2012, 144-190.

²⁵ For bureaucratic details of the establishment of Soviet education for Third World Students, see this excellent document collection: T. Iu Krasovitskaia et al (ed.), *Vozvratit domoi družiami SSSR: obuchenie inostrantsev v Sovetskom Soiuzе 1956-1965* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi fond Demokratii, 2013).

and engaging in rhetorical swordplay with Western journalists, his attitude to the problem of “capitalists” on Soviet soil was ambiguous. The honeymoon of the Moscow Youth Festival, for instance, was quickly supplanted by the hysteria triggered by the *Doctor Zhivago* affair – and with good reason, as far as Soviet authorities were concerned, as not only was the novel’s manuscript smuggled abroad by departing journalists, but printed copies of the volume were smuggled into the Soviet Union by a host of foreigners who received them from CIA-connected publishers.²⁶ Perhaps for this and similar reasons, Khrushchev was distinctly unenthusiastic about American plans to, as he put it in his memoirs, “make us open our borders, to increase the flow of people back and forth” during negotiations of the 1958 Soviet-American exchange agreement.²⁷ As I will demonstrate, by the early 1960s, these concerns led to a full-fledged campaign warning of the dangers of foreign espionage and subversion.

Yet even on this issue, the overall thrust of Khrushchev’s policy was towards rapid expansion of Western travel to the Soviet Union, with an eye to the both the economic and propaganda benefits it could bring. Thus, impressed by tales of the Brussels 1958 World Exhibit and the masses of tourists it brought, he arranged for Moscow to apply to host the 1967 iteration of the same event. Moscow’s bid won the day, but was withdrawn when Khrushchev learned of the costs associated with the

²⁶ Peter Finn and Petra Couvée, *The Zhivago Affair: The CIA, the Kremlin and the Battle over a Forbidden Book* (New York: Prometheus, 2014).

²⁷ Cited in Yale Richmond, *Soviet-American Cultural Exchanges: Who Wins?* (Boulder, CO and London: Westview Press, 1968, 8.

exhibit.²⁸ Furthermore, according to his son Sergei, during his 1963 vacation in Yugoslavia, Khrushchev became so impressed with the open Yugoslav borders and the prosperous tourism industry they fostered that he came back to Moscow resolved to both expand Soviet travel abroad and compete with the Yugoslavs for European tourists by rapidly building up the Soviet hospitality industry and drastically loosening Soviet border restrictions – plans that were allegedly foiled only by his ouster.²⁹

Khrushchev's inconsistency on the desirability of a “capitalist” presence in Soviet life highlights an important reality. According to all available archival evidence, it seems the Soviet Union opened itself to the outside world, if not quite in a feat of absentmindedness, then without any sustained discussion of the implications of this dramatic shift. None of the major sources available for the study of decision-making in the Khrushchev period, the protocols of the TsK presidium, the files of the Central Committee *apparatus*, and the contents of Nikita Khrushchev's special file [*osobaia papka*], contain evidence that the “foreign question” was ever discussed in a coherent manner, or even conceived as such.³⁰ The Central Committee never possessed a department in charge of coordinating the activities of institutions handling foreigners inside the Soviet Union. The only governmental body that could have served this function, the State Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries,

²⁸ Sergei Khrushchev, *Nikita Khrushchev: Reformer* (Moscow: Vremia, 2010), 598-599.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 997-998.

³⁰ A.A. Fursenko (ed.) *Prezidium TsK KPSS, 1954-1964*, (Moscow: Rosspen, 2004); V.A. Kozlov and S.V. Mironenko, *Osobaia papka Nikity Khrushcheva* (Moscow: Blagovest, 1995).

established in 1958, seems to have been still-born and was folded into the Foreign Ministry Cultural Affairs Department in 1967.³¹

What this omission meant was that, like so many other Khrushchevian reforms, the opening-up of Soviet borders to mass foreign travel was not conceived by Soviet policy-makers as a systemic transformation, but as a series of tactical moves meant to improve both the hard currency balance and international standing of the first socialist state. However, for institutions charged with handling, propagandizing and surveilling foreigners, growing numbers of foreigners did indeed represent a systematic transformation. In relatively short order, and without much guidance and coordination from above, a plethora of organizations that were used to working with a relative handful of ideologically sympathetic foreigners were thrown into the deep end of the pool, forced to accommodate themselves to a new reality under which nearly anyone who wanted to go to the U.S.S.R (and could afford an Intourist package) could do so. *Porous Empire* is therefore an inquiry about institutional adaptation, enquiring how institutions crafted during what Stephen Kotkin famously terms “the interwar conjuncture,” a global shift to isolationism in the 1920s and 30s, functioned in the conditions of a new era defined by ever-increasing flows of people across Soviet borders.³²

Put otherwise, this dissertation is not a history of foreign travel to the late Soviet Union, but rather a study of the interaction between Soviet institutions and

³¹ Richmond, *Exchanges*, 9-10.

³² Stephen Kotkin, “Modern Times: The Soviet Union and the Interwar Conjuncture,” *Kritika* 2, no. 1 (2001), 111-164.

foreigners. This institutional focus forced me into some difficult narrative and analytic choices. First and most obviously, *Porous Empire* is focused much more on the reaction of the Soviet bureaucracy to foreigners than to the foreign experience of the socialist life. My focus on the challenges of foreign travel as seen through the eyes of Soviet bureaucrats inevitably led me to prioritize some groups of foreigners and give short shrift to others. Trouble-makers, chronic complainers, anti-Soviet activists and black marketeers, sources of so many head-aches for Soviet authorities, are much more central to the stories told here than the no doubt more numerous tourists who dutifully followed Intourist itineraries and the lead of their guides. Eastern European visitors, who constituted the majority of foreigners in the USSR, enter my narrative to extent they deviated from the rituals of international socialist friendship that their presence within Soviet borders was supposed to celebrate, by behaving in a manner Soviet officials usually associated with “capitalist” travelers, such as expressing material or political complaints or participating in illicit activities.³³ It is my hope that whatever this approach sacrifices in human interest it gains by highlighting the clash between the institutional design of the Soviet state and realities of a “postwar conjuncture” in which mobility became a defining feature of the international world order.

³³ On “friendship” as instrument of Soviet statecraft, see Rachel Appelbaum, “Friendship of the Peoples.”

Historiography

Until very recently, accounts of post-Stalin travel in the Soviet Union were outnumbered by studies of the interwar period, in which the Soviet Union attracted prominent intellectuals in search of utopia and workers and engineers in search of employment. During the Cold War era, accounts of the “intellectual pilgrimage” of Western fellow travelers to Stalin’s Soviet Union were often written in an accusatory key, demonstrating the gullibility of leftist intellectuals and their susceptibility to Soviet propaganda.³⁴ More recently, Ludmila Stern, on the basis of archival materials unavailable to the previous generation of scholars, demonstrated how the Soviet authorities used flattery and material incentives to influence Western visitors.³⁵

However, the vast majority of post-Cold War literature on interwar travel takes a much more ambiguous and empathetic attitude to the problem. Kate Baldwin, for example, sympathetically elaborates the dilemmas of African-American intellectuals who were attracted to the Soviet Union due to its uncompromising denunciation of racism, while also demonstrating the continuing attractions of Soviet anti-racism for radical African-Americans well into the 1960s.³⁶ Sergei Zhuravlev reconstructs the life histories of foreign (mostly German) workers in Moscow’s Elektrozavod conglomerate, their

³⁴ See, for example, Sylvia Margulies, *The Pilgrimage to Russia: The Soviet Union and the Treatment of Foreigners, 1917–1937* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968); Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: American Intellectuals in Search of the Good Society*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998).

³⁵ Ludmila Stern, *Western Intellectuals and the Soviet Union, 1920-1940: From the Red Square to the Left Bank* (London, Routledge, 2006).

³⁶ Kate A. Baldwin, *Beyond the Color Line and the Iron Curtain: Reading Encounters between Red and Black, 1922-1963*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

contribution to Soviet industrialization, and the clash between their ideals and Soviet reality.³⁷ Tim Tzouliadis describes the tragedy of American workers and engineers who had taken Soviet citizenship and were imprisoned or killed in the purges of the 1930s.³⁸

While works, in the “fellow travelers” paradigm take the totalitarian nature of the Soviet system for granted, using duped foreign travelers to cast it in sharp relief and more recent literature focuses heavily on foreign experience within the totalitarian system, Michael David-Fox’s *Showcasing the Great Experiment* rewrites the history of encounters between the Soviet Union and the “intellectual pilgrims” not as a story of Soviet perfidy and leftist gullibility but as a complex interchange, predicated on the Soviet tendency towards self-measurement by Western yardsticks. Even as Stalin’s USSR limited entry to small numbers of carefully managed travelers, and allowed only small cohorts of “Stalinist Westernizers” access to foreigners, David-Fox argues that the Soviet leadership’s conviction that arriving at socialism meant leaping over the most advanced capitalist countries required obsessive comparison, and at least limited engagement, with Western ideas, institutions, and technological achievements. In this telling, the total isolation of the last Stalin years was a relative aberration, an amalgam of a “Stalinist superiority complex” that led Soviet ideologues to imagine that they had

³⁷ Sergei Zhuravelv, *Malenkie liud' i 'bol'shaia istoriia': inostrantsy Moskovskogo Elektrozavoda v Sovetskom obshchestve 1920-kh-1930-kh godov* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2000).

³⁸ Tim Tzouliadis, *The Forsaken: An American Tragedy in Stalin's Russia* (New York: Penguin, 2008).

already learned all they needed from the West, and a xenophobic reaction to wartime encounters with the West and its material superiority.³⁹

Compared to this richness of perspectives and interpretations and despite its incomparably greater scale, foreign travel to the post-Stalin Soviet Union has received relatively little scholarly attention. Somewhat paradoxically, before the collapse of the USSR, this omission had much to do with the relative opening up of Soviet borders: travel was no longer limited to a select few and became a commonplace activity for both scholars of the Soviet Union and the general public, thus losing much of its ideological significance and hint of scandal. Subsequently, work on contemporary foreign travel to the Soviet Union focused on policy-related issues: the dangers of Soviet outreach to Third World students and intellectuals and the virtues and flaws of the cultural exchanges between East and West.⁴⁰ A rare volume from this era that treats the topic as history is Whitman Bassow's *The Moscow Correspondents*. Written in the *perestroika* era, it focused not on policy implications but on the experiences of foreign journalists in the Soviet Union as a mirror to the advance and retreat of reform across Soviet history.⁴¹

While in the immediate post-Cold War era, historians' attention was focused on the Stalin period, in recent years, as first "the Thaw" and then the long 1970s became the

³⁹ Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to Soviet Russia, 1921-1941* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁴⁰ See, for example, Herbert Kupferberg, *The Raised Curtain: Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Soviet-American Scholarly and Cultural Exchanges* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1977), Frederick C. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), and Richmond, *Exchanges*.

⁴¹ Whitman Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents: Reporting on Russia from the Revolution to Glasnost* (New York: William Morris and Company, 1988).

focal point of recent Soviet historiography, literature on Western travel to the post-Stalin Union proliferated. Crucial events in the history of travel to the Soviet Union, first and foremost the 1957 Moscow Youth Festival, then the 1959 Sokolniki Exhibition, and much later and to a much more limited extent, the 1980 Moscow Olympics, all found multiple chroniclers.⁴² The chiefs of both American and Soviet cultural exchange projects composed histories of cultural and academic exchanges between the Cold War foes.⁴³ Intourist and its Komsomol counterpart Sputnik both found their institutional historians.⁴⁴ Other scholars focused on specific groups, for instance, British prison reformers, Greek leftist intellectuals, or East Europeans working on the BAM railroad.⁴⁵ The experience of

⁴² For the Festival, see: Koivunen, "Propagating a Peaceful image"; Margaret Peakock, "The Perils of Building Cold War Consensus at the 1957 Moscow World Festival of Youth and Students" *Cold War History* 12, no. 3(2012), 515-535; Kristin Roth-Ey, "Loose Girls on the Loose? Sex, Propaganda and the 1957 Moscow Youth Festival," In Melanie Ilic, ed. *Women in the Khrushchev Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago's Children: the Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009), 100-111. On Sokolniki, Walter Hixson, *Parting the Iron Curtain: Culture, Propaganda and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997), 151-214; Susan E. Reid, "Who will Beat Whom? Soviet Popular Reception of the American Cultural Exhibit in Moscow, 1959," *Kritika* 9, no. 4 (2008); Tomas Toivasas, "Cold War Bridge Building: US Exchange Exhibits and their Reception in the Soviet Union, 1959-1967," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12, no. 4 (2010), 3-31. On the Olympics, Aleksei Popov, "Marafon gostepriimstva: Olimpiada 1980 i popytka modernizatsii Sovetskogo servisa," *Cahiers du Monde Russia* 54, no. 1/2(2014), 256-293 and Jennifer Parks, "Red Sport, Red Tape: The Olympic Games, the Soviet Sports Bureacracy and the Cold War, 1952-1980," PhD Dissertation, University of North Carolina, 2009, ch. 5, 6.

⁴³ Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain*, (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press), 2003 and E.A Ivarian, *Kogda govoriat muzy: istoriia rossiisko-amerikanskikh kul'turnykh svyazei*, (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 2007).

⁴⁴ Salmon, "Land of Future," V.E Bagdasarian, A.A Fedulin et alia, *Sovetskoe zazerkal'e: inostrannyi turizm v SSSR v 1930-e-1980e gody* (Moscow: Forum, 2007), Andrei Kozovoi, "The Way to the Man's Heart: How the Soviet Travel Agency Sputnik Struggled to Feed Western Tourists," *Journal of Tourism History*, 6, no. 1 (2014), 57-73.

⁴⁵ Alexandra Ionnaidou, "Travel Writing: Greek Intellectuals in the Soviet Union," in: Jolanta Sujecka (ed.) *Semantyka Rosji na Balkanach* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo zbiorow, 2011), 129-148, Jeff Hardy, "Gulag Tourism: Khrushchev's Show Prison in the Cold War Context," *Russian Review* 70, no. 1 (2011), 49-78, Chris Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly: The Building of BAM and Late Soviet Socialism* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 126-151.

African students received much scholarly attention, focusing on questions of race and Soviet perceptions of backwardness and progress.⁴⁶

Despite the impressive scope and variety of these works, they form but a subset of the wider literature on Soviet engagement with the outside world after Stalin. The earliest key work in this corpus is Robert English's *Russia and the Idea of the West*, a history of the formation of Gorbachev's cohort of Westernizing reformers under the influence of international engagement.⁴⁷ The Russian-French historian Larissa Zakharova showed how various forms of engagement with the West, from black market jeans purchases to international technology transfers, irrevocably altered both the shape of Soviet material culture.⁴⁸

In a similar vein, Vladislav Zubok shows how Khrushchev's opening to the outside world helped spark the surge of optimism and internationalism that produced "the last Russian intelligentsia."⁴⁹ Sergei Zhuk, in his *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*, shows how even in cities closed to foreigners, the post-Stalin surge of Western culture and consumer goods eroded fealty to official ideology and Soviet identity.⁵⁰ Finally, Aleksei Yurchak's *Everything was Forever*, probably the most influential work on late Soviet culture published to date, shows how unbridled enthusiasm for cultural materials

⁴⁶ See among many others, Julie Hessler, "Death of an African Student in Moscow: Race, Politics, and the Cold War," *Cahiers du monde Russe*, 47, no. 1/2(2006). 33-63.

⁴⁷ Robert English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals and the End of the Cold War*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

⁴⁸ Larisa Zakharova, *S'Habiller à La Soviétique: La Mode et le Dégel En URSS* (Paris: CNRS, 2011).

⁴⁹ Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 88-120.

⁵⁰ *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity and Ideology in Soviet Dniepropetrovsk* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Institute Press, 2012).

imported from the “True West” became central to the identities of educated Soviet urbanites in the 1970s and 1980s.⁵¹

As varied and illuminating as they are, the works cited above share two common features. First, with the exception of institutional histories, all accounts of Soviet-Western intercourse are written from the perspective of either foreigners or, more often, the educated Soviet urbanites who partook in cross-border exchanges and Westernized cultural consumption, while Soviet officials charged with managing these exchanges are reduced to not much more than stumbling blocks against the surge of Westernization of late Soviet society.

More importantly, whether because they seek to explain the sources of the Soviet collapse or because so many historians of the late Soviet period are products of Westernized late Soviet milieus, nearly all accounts of Soviet engagement with the outside world take Westernization and the hollowing-out of official ideology and, gradually, Soviet identity as a central organizing principle. Shawn Salmon, in her excellent unpublished dissertation on the history of Intourist, narrates a story of transformation from an ideological organization to “one of many players in the rapidly expanding network of international tourism agencies.”⁵² Along with many of his subjects, Zubok views the Thaw-era opening to the West in general, and the Moscow Festival in particular, as a crucial turning point which produced “the first cracks” in the Soviet

⁵¹ Aleksei Yurchak, *Everything was forever, until it was no More: The Story of the Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

⁵² Salmon, “Land of Future,” 290.

edifice, and thus set the course for subsequent dissolution of Soviet power.⁵³ English takes a similar line, showing how foreign travel, readings of Western literature, and engagement with transnational networks eroded Soviet intellectuals' fealty to Marxism-Leninism. Taking a different tack, Zhuk argues that cultural consumption made Ukrainian urbanites view New York, London, and Paris rather than Moscow as their cultural capitols- thus shaking loose their Soviet cultural identity in a way that fostered their embrace of European-oriented Ukrainian nationalism in the 1980s.⁵⁴ Even Yurchak, who is more skeptical of linear explanations of the Soviet collapse than most scholars, grounds his analysis in the absolute disconnect between official ideology and social life under late socialism.

Another strain in the literature takes a more critical view of such quick dismissals of official ideologies and Soviet identities. Susan E. Reid, for example, famously demonstrates that many Soviet attendees at the Sokolniki Exhibit genuinely rejected much of what was on display as crass, impractical materialism.⁵⁵ Rachel Applebaum shows that, after 1953, Soviet propagandists were genuinely interested in forging a transnational socialist culture all across Eastern Europe - "an Empire of friendship."⁵⁶ Kristin Roth-Ey similarly argues that Soviet media officials were committed to a vision of high culture for the masses, which they viewed as superior to American promotion of

⁵³ Zubok, *Failed Empire*, 163-191.

⁵⁴ Zhuk, *Rocket City*, 303-318.

⁵⁵ Reid, "Who will Beat whom."

⁵⁶ Applebaum, "Friendship of the Peoples."

mass consumerism.⁵⁷ Anne Gorsuch, in her study of domestic and outgoing tourism, describes how Soviet domestic tourism officials creatively applied official slogans like patriotism, friendship of the peoples, and cultured consumption, to forge a distinctly Soviet practice of tourism-as-enlightenment.⁵⁸ While much of this work is focused on the 1950s and 1960s, Natalya Chernyshova shows that even under Brezhnev, many Soviet officials were genuinely committed to the idea of cultured consumption as the highest expression of socialist culture.⁵⁹

Porous Empire builds on these insights regarding the vitality of official institutions and seeks to apply them to the problem of foreign travel to the Soviet Union, but does so in a darker and more pessimistic key than these relatively sunny accounts. The perspective with which I approach the topic draws from a larger debate in the theoretical and historical literature about the socio-political import of travel and international exchanges. In these fields, one school of thought, popularized by *New York Times* journalist Thomas Friedman's paeans to globalization, argues that international exchange is the handmaiden of liberalization and erosion of authoritarian regimes. Two key historiographic works in that regard are Christopher Endy's study of tourism as a key component in the making of a stable, liberal, trans-Atlantic Cold War alliance between the United States and France, and Sasha D. Pack's masterful demonstration of how

⁵⁷ Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire that Lost the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).

⁵⁸ Anne Gorsuch, *All this is Your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁵⁹ Natalya Chrenyshova, *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

tourism officials formed a pro-European, liberalizing lobby in Franco's Spain, and thus helped ease the path to Spain's post-Francoist, democratic path.⁶⁰

Another strain of thought in travel studies takes a rather darker perspective. For instance, the political scientist Walid Hazboon, building on the work of geographer Gearoid O'Tuathail,⁶¹ describes how, in the authoritarian Arab states he studied, “the processes of globalization unevenly generate deterritorialization and reterritorialization... resulting in the heightened importance of territory, location and boundaries.”⁶² Put simply, Hazboon argues that the introduction of mass travel into hitherto closed, authoritarian societies creates new social dynamics and shakes up state control over its citizenry. And yet, this process does not necessarily lead to the dissolution of authoritarianism, as successful authoritarian states are quite adept at reorganizing their institutions to meet this challenge – often using resources generated by successfully integrating themselves into global networks of exchange.

Porous Empire applies these insights to the work of Soviet institutions that sought to maximize benefits and minimize risks of mass travel. More specifically, it is a study of how various Soviet institutions attempted to adapt autarchic, authoritarian and

⁶⁰ Christopher Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill: University of Colorado Press, 2004). Sasha D. Pack, *Tourism and Dictatorship: Europe's Peaceful Invasion of Spain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

⁶¹ Gearoid O'Tuathail *Critical Geopolitics: The Politics of Writing Global Space* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

⁶² Walid Hazboon, *Ruins, Beaches and Resorts: the Politics of Tourism in the Arab World* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), xxv. The terms deterritorialization and reterritorialization to describe the dialectical process by interaction between global trends and local institutions were coined by French theorists Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (*Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (New York: Viking, 1977)).

xenophobic ideological attitudes inherited from the Stalin period to a world in which millions of foreigners demanded Western levels of service, claimed the right to express their opinions freely, brought pernicious “bourgeois culture” to Soviet soil, and forged sundry transnational networks with ideologically suspect Soviet citizens. In short, in the same way David-Fox found profound commitment to internationalism underneath the isolationist façade of Stalin’s time, I argue for the existence of a deep autarchic-xenophobic institutional substratum that structured Soviet official responses to the global age.

Sources

As is the case with all contemporary histories, a major challenge of writing this dissertation was managing the enormous mass of materials pertaining to foreign travel to the USSR. In line with my goal to write the history not of foreign travel to the Soviet Union but of institutional responses to it, Soviet sources, archival and published, form the lion’s share of the evidentiary base of this dissertation. Since, as noted above, there was no single coordinating body charged with formulating policy towards foreigners in the Soviet Union, the vast majority of the archival documents used here was produced by the two institutions most intimately involved with visiting foreigners: Intourist and the KGB.

Like all Soviet institutions, Intourist was exceptionally adept at producing copious paperwork. However, both its peculiar organizational structure and subsequent decisions by archivists circumscribe the kind of narratives historians can reconstruct from its records. At the heart of the Intourist collection at the State Archives of the Russian Federation are protocols of the monthly meetings of Intourist's board of directors and the orders and instructions issued by its central management to its local offices, hotels, and other facilities. Until 1980, these stenograms were usually accompanied by supporting documentation and the texts of presentations to the board; from 1980 onward, such documents disappear from the record and by the *perestroika* years, the archival trail becomes vanishingly small. Additionally, the files of Intourist's First Department, handling relations with the KGB and other high level institutions, are still partially classified up to 1965, and totally absent from the archive after that year. The files of the Moscow and Leningrad Intourist local offices, its most important sub-units, were not preserved. The archival holdings of the Russian republican branch of Intourist, formed in 1964, are spotty, but add important perspective on the organizational rivalries that, as I demonstrate, helped bring Intourist to an ignominious end. Supplementing these materials are files from the party organization of the Leningrad branch of Intourist that allow us a glimpse of the everyday life of an Intourist office.

The source problems presented by the KGB are, of course, much more complicated. The former KGB archives are currently and for the foreseeable future closed to researchers. Other sources of information, say, memoirs by veterans or

defectors, tend to be opaque and self-serving and focus more on foreign intelligence than the less prestigious domestic work of the KGB. Furthermore, as historian Julie Fedor shows, these memoirs often veer into wild conspiracy theorizing about Western plots that brought down the Soviet Union.⁶³

However, sufficient materials exist for taking a stab at the problem of deciphering KGB approaches to the dangers of foreign travel. KGB archives from Lithuania and materials from Ukraine that became available in the wake of the Maidan revolution contain many materials on day-to-day KGB operations in these border republics, frequented by “regular” foreigners as well as large numbers of “ethnic” visitors.⁶⁴ Some published collections of KGB documents shed useful light on the problem, as does an internal history of the KGB used as a textbook in its Higher School.⁶⁵ Memoir literature, with all its distortions, provides useful hints as to the nature of the KGB’s epistemic community, as do official Soviet publications on the pernicious activities of foreigners on Soviet soil - often composed by KGB officers working under thin journalistic cover.

Beyond the institutional views of the KGB and Intourist, I tapped a host of other printed, visual, and non-Soviet archival materials. Many published Soviet materials,

⁶³ Julie Fedor, “Chekists Look Back on the Cold War: The Polemical Literature,” *Intelligence and National Security* 26, no.6 (2011), 842-863.

⁶⁴ On security anxieties related to these republics, see Amir Weiner, “Déjà vu All Over Again: Prague Spring, Romanian Summer and Soviet Autumn on the Soviet Frontier,” *Contemporary European History* 15, no. 2 (2006), 159-194. Archival materials from Ukraine’s KGB Archives, available for researchers in theory but now undergoing processing before they become the foundation of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, were provided to some Western researchers in digital form immediately after the Maidan Revolution. I am deeply grateful to Orysia Kulick and Beth Kerley for sharing them with me.

⁶⁵ *Istoriia Sovetskikh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti* (Moscow: Vyshaia shkola KGB, 1977).

especially films, often subverted the official line on foreigners and Soviet people who interacted with them, in ways that highlighted the difficulties Soviet institutions faced in controlling the “foreign problem.” Memoir literature, some of it published in the burgeoning on-line world of *Runet*, provides an important window onto the impact of foreigners on Soviet life. Soviet travelogue literature is immense, and I used it to highlight both Soviet methods of control and their impact on foreigners’ experiences of the Soviet Union.⁶⁶ Western periodicals provided a running commentary on the problems faced by Westerners who interacted with Soviet institutions. Finally, the New York-based Soviet Jewry Movement Archives provide a rare opportunity to analyze an organized effort to exploit the weaknesses in the Soviet firmament created by foreign travel. As we shall see in Chapter Five, these documents nicely complement Soviet sources by speaking to issues on which official archives are silent.

Structure and Argument

This dissertation consists of five thematic chapters. The first four offer case studies of how Soviet institutions wowed with particular set of challenges wrought by mass foreign

⁶⁶ The most prominent Cold War era accounts of Soviet life were composed by journalists posted in Moscow: Hedrick Smith, *The Russians* (New York: New York Times Books, 1976); Robert G. Kaiser, *Russia: The People and the Power* (New York: Atheneum, 1976); David Shipler, *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams* (New York: New York Times Books, 1983); Kevin Klose, *Russia and the Russians: Inside the Closed Society* (New York: Norton, 1984). See Dina Fainberg, “Notes from the Rotten West, Reports from the Backward East: Soviet and American Foreign Correspondents in the Cold War,” PhD Dissertation, Rutgers University, 2012, for an excellent analysis of this literature.

travel. The fifth chapter offers a shift in perspective, showing how foreign travel could be used by both foreigners and dissenting Soviet citizens to challenge Soviet institutions.

My first chapter is a business history of Intourist along two major axes. First, I examine how Intourist functioned simultaneously as an institutional player in the industrial, producer-oriented Soviet economy and as a competitor in the global market for tourism services, one of the key sectors of the global transformation to “post-Fordist,” service-oriented economic order.⁶⁷ Second, I argue that the tension between Intourist’s goal of competing in a global market on the one hand, and Soviet resource and organizational constraints on the other, forced it into a new relationship with the global economy. Charged with obtaining hard currency to be used for imports of machinery that would help make the Soviet Union independent of global markets, Intourist found that the Soviet planned economy could not provide it with the resources it required to fulfill its mission statement. Therefore, it became increasingly dependent on Western imports, knowledge, information technology, and credits. Paradoxically, therefore, it was the profoundly non-capitalist nature of the Soviet economy that drove Intourist towards a growing dependence on the very same capitalist networks it was charged with aiding the Soviet state to escape.

In the following chapter, I reconstruct the struggles of Soviet propagandists to disseminate “the truth about the Soviet Union” to a skeptical foreign audience. These

⁶⁷ On post-Fordist transformation see Charles Maier, “The World Economy and the Cold War in the Middle of the Twentieth Century,” in Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (ed.) *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 44-66.

efforts were responses to the urgent requirements of the cultural Cold War. The great advantage of “imperialist” propaganda was the way in which it could employ superior material culture to stimulate the senses at a distance. One could watch Hollywood films, listen to jazz and rock and roll, and taste bubble gum without ever stepping on American shores. Soviet achievements (with the important exception of the space race) were of a more abstract nature. Universal literacy, the advancement of formerly “backward” nationalities, free education, housing, healthcare, and the other hallmarks of socialist modernity could not be communicated at a distance in such experiential ways. To truly experience Soviet socialism one had to observe it at close quarters.

The problem that Soviet propagandists faced as they struggled to craft narratives about the superiority of the Soviet way of life was that their Western, and to a surprising extent, their “socialist” visitors as well,⁶⁸ often arrived with their own, rather skeptical views regarding the “truth about the Soviet Union.” Because Soviet propagandists realized that in order to perceive “the truth” about Soviet claims for the superiority of Soviet life, foreigners’ sensitivities and materialist proclivities had to be respected, they increasingly came to observe Soviet reality through the eyes of “imagined tourists.” Yet,

⁶⁸ See for example, a report by a Czechoslovak visitor on his 1955 visit to Hotel Metropol. “O poriadkakh v gostinitse Metropol, [n/d, 1955], Tsentralnyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Moskvyy. Tsentr khraneniia dokumentov posle 1917 goda [TsKhD posle 1917.], f. 4961, op.1, d. 183, ll. 15-18. Similar feelings were voiced even by tourist from less materially prosperous socialist countries, like Romania. “Protokol soveshchania nachalnikov upravlenii po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovetakh Ministrakh soiuznykh Respublik, upravliaiushchikh otdeleniami i zaveduiushchikh agentsvami VAO Intourist, 19-21/3/1968,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 255, ll. 198-200.

since they remained loyal servitors of the Soviet state, this realization did not stop Soviet propagandists from engaging in Cold War battles. Rather, arguments between foreigners and Soviet tour guides ceased to be attempts at persuasion and became ritual reenactments of “the unity of party and people” – reminders that the Soviet Union still claimed absolute authority to define what truth meant within its borders.

My third chapter deals with Soviet official responses to what I term the demimonde: a complex ecology of unsanctioned networks and interactions woven around foreigners by black marketeers, sex workers, informal artists and other socially marginal actors. After sketching out the contours of the demimonde, I demonstrate how policy towards its denizens reflected the rise and fall and rise again of official efforts at rejuvenation of the Soviet project, and the intrinsic links between these reformatory urges and coercive practices. Thus, I show that the Khrushchev years saw not only the opening of Soviet borders, but also a sustained drive to use social mobilization to isolate and repress Soviet citizens who engaged in unsanctioned exchanges with foreigners, as well as a bonafide security panic that revived Stalin-era suspicions regarding the links between cosmopolitanism and espionage. In the Brezhnev era, this assault ebbed, and the demimonde became a de-facto recognized part of Soviet urban life. Yet, the language of vigilance and excision directed at it by Soviet authorities survived and was reoriented towards “renegades and dissidents.” Most strikingly, the early 1980s, a period I term “the Andropov interlude,” witnessed a renewed campaign against the demimonde, again attempting to cleanse the Soviet body politic of harmful elements clinging to foreigners.

However, in an era in which every Soviet urbanite was somehow engaged with Western cultural consumption, this attempt to name and shame black marketeers and hard currency prostitutes as a path towards moral regeneration backfired spectacularly, as more and more Soviet citizens found the values of the demimonde more appealing than official morality.

The fourth and fifth chapters of this dissertation deal with a far smaller, but even more politically charged ecology woven around foreigners: the world of Soviet non-conformists, dissidents, and nationalist activists, and the foreigners who crossed Soviet borders in order to give them aid and succor. In Chapter Four, I reconstruct the ways in which the KGB “read” this problem through the prism of what sociologist Andreas Graeber termed state paranoia - the deep and abiding conviction that all unsanctioned contacts between Soviet people and foreigners were by definition suspect. I also sketch out the vast machinery of surveillance the KGB erected to keep tabs on these contacts. As I demonstrate, however, the KGB failed to either fully operationalize its paranoia or convince other Soviet institutions to take its lead and seriously restrain cross-border flows.

In Chapter Five, I go beyond the Soviet archives in an attempt to provide an explanation for this systematic failure. Using American and Israeli aid to Soviet Jewish nationalist and religious activists as a case study, I show how Soviet freedom of action was constrained by the demands of the era of mass cross-border exchanges. By nestling themselves into the channels of exchange that increasingly linked the Soviet Union to the

outside world, activists of the international Soviet Jewry movement could provide Soviet Zionist activists with vast amounts of material and spiritual aid. Furthermore, the Soviet Jewry movement could credibly threaten harm to the international channels of exchange in case Soviet authorities moved to seriously restrict the activities of Zionist travelers or attempted to dismantle Zionist networks on Soviet soil. Thus, they forced the Soviet authorities to tolerate that which it could not destroy, demonstrating how mass foreign travel allowed the existence of late Soviet lifeworlds not only outside (*vnye*) the bounds of official Soviet norms,⁶⁹ but in active opposition to Soviet power.

Overall, I argue, the Soviet adaptation to the ever growing flow of foreigners across Soviet borders highlights both the extent of the challenges the post-Stalin opening to the outside world created for Soviet institutions, and the robustness of Soviet institutional attitudes inherited from the Stalin era. On the one hand, stunted as it was by the structures of the planned economy and restrictions on Soviet travel abroad, the growing Soviet integration into a global regime based on mobility of people, information, and capital undermined the autarchic structures of the Soviet state and forced Soviet institutions into a series of compromises that loosened some of the absolute sovereignty claims of the Soviet Union over its citizenry. On the other hand, Soviet exposure to the effects of international exchanges was severely limited by organizational and ideological structures inherent to Soviet-style socialism. Stalin-era stereotypes about the irreducible hostility of foreigners, well-based fears about the Cold War agendas of foreign visitors,

⁶⁹ Yurchak, *Everything was forever*, 126-157.

and the practicalities of the Soviet planned economy blunted the economic possibilities that mass tourism offered, created an adversarial relationship between hosts and guests, and spurred a massive surveillance effort that limited unsanctioned contacts with foreigners to marginal elements. Above all, these mental and institutional structures maintained, among both Soviet elites and the wider Soviet population, a strong distinction between “us” and “them,” East and West that remained intact even as the Soviet Union grew ever-more connected into global networks dominated by “them.” I conclude with the observation that as scholars and policy-makers ponder the combination of cultural and economic Westernization and resurgent xenophobic and anti-Western attitudes that defines Russian contemporary political culture, they would do well to ponder how these phenomena may be traced back to practices and habits of thought rooted deep in the Soviet practice of power.

Chapter 1: Serving Mister Twister, or the Political Economy of Intourist

The eponymous protagonist of Samuil Marshak's classic Stalin-era fairytale *Mister Twister* is an American billionaire on a pleasure tour of the USSR. Overcoming his initial reluctance to visit a socialist land, Twister and his family board a prestigious, racially segregated, ocean liner. When they disembark in Leningrad, the American party arrives at the hotel *Angleterre*, a *grand hotel* from the tsarist period that now belongs to Intourist, the already famous Soviet foreign tourism monopoly. There, he is shocked to discover that colored guests are welcome in the hotel. Unable to sustain the blow to his racial pride, Twister flees, only to learn that all his money cannot provide accommodation for the night: Leningrad's hotels are all at full capacity due to a coming international congress. Despondent, he is reduced to spending the night on a chair provided by a kindly hotel concierge.⁷⁰

Marshak's story is, of course, a grossly inaccurate representation of Intourist's practices. From its earliest days, Intourist was a market operation, and earning hard currency, not making ideological points, was its primary objective.⁷¹ However, *Mister Twister* sheds light on two incongruities that would haunt Intourist down to the final days of the Soviet state. First, it was both a commercial enterprise that operated in the context

⁷⁰ Samuil Marshak, *Mister Twister* (Moscow: Detgiz, 1959).

⁷¹ For overviews of Intourist's early years, see Salmon, "To the Land of the Future," 1-124; Bagdasarian, Fedulin, *Sovetskoe zazerkal'e*, 11-87; David Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment*, 175-206.

of a global market for luxury products, and a Soviet organization set in a socioeconomic order where money was often not the decisive factor in economic transactions. Second, the hard currency Intourist earned was but a means for a greater goal: the purchase of machinery and other capital goods that would allow the Soviet Union to construct socialism and achieve economic independence.⁷² Intourist, in short, was to exist within global markets, but not be of them.

This chapter is a business history of Intourist in the postwar era, focusing on the challenges Intourist faced as it attempted to live out this double existence. First, I will show how Intourist, a bit player in the Soviet institutional latticework, navigated the labyrinths of the Soviet administrative-command economy. Then, I shall address the ways in which in which the peculiarities of the Soviet socio-economic order shaped the managerial practices of Intourist. Finally, I will closely examine two case studies – Intourist’s hotel construction program and its effort to integrate computer technology into its business, demonstrating how the failures of the party-state to mobilize resources sufficient to fulfill Intourist ambitions pushed it inexorably away from the transactional model of trade with the West that was its *raison d’etre*, to ever-deepening integration with and dependence on, global financial and technological networks.

⁷² On the interaction between the chase for foreign currency and ideology in Intourist's market operations, see Shawn Salmon, "Marketing Socialism: Intourist in the Late 1950s and Early 1960s," in Anne Gorsuch and Dianne Koenker (ed.) *Turizm: the Russian and East European Tourist under Socialism and Capitalism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 186-202.



Figure 1.1: Mister Twister

Source: Samuil Marskhak, Mister Twister

Before proceeding deeper into the weeds, we must tackle a fundamental, but surprisingly difficult question: was Intourist a successful business or a failing one? On some measures, Intourist may indeed be seen as a success story. As *Twister* makes clear, in its early days, Intourist was a boutique enterprise. In its best prewar year, it served slightly more than 13,000 extremely well-heeled tourists.⁷³ In the postwar years, however, it grew into a genuine corporate behemoth: by the mid-1980s, it was receiving more than 2.5 million foreign tourists (and large numbers of other categories of guests) in its facilities *per annum*. To accommodate this mass clientele, it employed over 50,000 people, owned 107 hotels and 102 restaurants, a plethora of office buildings, foreign

⁷³ Michael David Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment*, 178.

offices and other real estate, and a large fleet of cars and buses.⁷⁴ According to the authoritative *Financial Times*, towards the end of the Soviet era, Intourist was the world's largest tourist corporation.⁷⁵

The transformation of Intourist from a boutique service into to a corporate giant was also visible in its facilities and services. By the 1908s, Intourist's flagships were no longer imperial heirlooms like the *Angleterre*, but capacious modernist hotels in Moscow, Leningrad, Tallinn and the “Red Riviera” on the Black Sea shores. While some of the old luxuries sold to Twister were still on offer, Intourist now focused on the provision of mass-market niceties like air conditioned rooms, comfortable buses, high quality souvenirs, tennis courts, saunas, well-stocked bars, ethnic restaurants, and even American style video-games terminals and bowling alleys.⁷⁶ If, as sociologist Louis Turner argues, the second half of 20th century was the era of the “pleasure economy,” of “golden hordes” of mass-market, pleasure-seeking travelers aiming to reproduce Western notions of comfort and service wherever they went, Intourist retooled itself to accommodate their needs.⁷⁷

Still, for better or worse, the Soviet Union was not easily reduced to the kind of homogenized, depoliticized and americanized space described by Turner. Even if tourists

⁷⁴ “Informatsiia o razvitiu turizma v SSSR v 1985-1986 godakh i perspektivakh ego razvitiia v 1987 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1888, ll. 1. 8.

⁷⁵ “Tourism to the Soviet Union Grows, with Intourist being the Largest Travel Organization in the World,” *Financial Times*, 8/20/1982.

⁷⁶ “Informatsiia o khode peregovorov s inostrannymi firmami po stroitelstvu gostinits Glavinturista,” GARF f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1005, l. 68.

⁷⁷ Louis Turner, *The Golden Hordes: International Tourism and the Pleasure Periphery* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1976).

were repeatedly forewarned to lower their expectations (*Fodor's Soviet Union*, for instance, delicately reminded its readers that one went to the Soviet Union to expand one's mind, not to pleasure one's senses), the encounter between Soviet hosts and foreign guests often ended as sadly as did Twister's tale. In the real-world Soviet Union, just as in its fictional counterpart (albeit for very different reasons), money could not always buy pleasure. As we shall see in Chapter Two, Intourist's flaws - its uncomfortable hotels, bad food, rude staff, and deficient restrooms - provided fodder for generations of complaining tourists. These complaints were succinctly summarized by the editors of *Science* magazine, who published a letter from a scientist returning from a conference in the Soviet Union under the succinct headline "Curse of Russia is Intourist."⁷⁸

One would be well justified to consider such drastic statements as exaggerated expressions of Cold War hostility or playing out of stereotypes about Russian backwardness going back to the pre-Soviet period and still extant today,⁷⁹ if not for a curious fact: in their internal debates, Intourist's leading cadres were, by and large, in full agreement with the harshest critiques made by their foreign guests. Internal inspections, for example, revealed that even in prestigious and newly built hotels, rooms were often dirty, restrooms clogged, construction flaws visible everywhere, expensive imported equipment and furniture in dire conditions, elevators more often than not broken down,

⁷⁸ Alfred S. Romer, "Curse of Russia is Intourist," *Science*, 4/23/1971, 326.

⁷⁹ See, for instance, the near universal glee with which Western media and social networks received news and images of construction difficulties during the Sochi Olympics. For a typical example, see Max Seddon, "Photographic Proof that Sochi is a Godforsaken Hellscape Right Now," *Buzzfeed* 2/6/2014 (accessed online at: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/bennyjohnson/proof-that-sochi-is-a-godforsaken-hellscape-right-now#.yrYOn3Ejr>, 4/1/2016).

hot water and heating not guaranteed.⁸⁰ The Soviet tourism industry, fretted one official in 1960, was unable provide service on the level of even such relatively backward fraternal countries as Bulgaria.⁸¹ More than two decades later, another official voiced essentially the same complaint. Intourist staff, he declaimed, “poisons the tourists' lives [otravliaet zhizn'] with their rudeness, lack of professionalism [neakuratnost'], surliness, tardiness and so forth.”⁸²

Even more concerning from the point of view of Intourist's management was the fact that, despite heavy capital investments, it could never fulfill its promise of becoming a major source of badly needed foreign currency. Exact figures for Intourist's earnings are difficult to come by: reports filed to the Ministry of Finance and other state and Party bodies about the organization's hard-currency earnings are available in the holdings of the secret First Department of Intourist, but only until 1965.⁸³ Still, available numbers paint a problematic picture. In 1964, Intourist earned about 7.9 million foreign exchange rubles (rubles pegged to the dollar at a rate set by the Soviet state – equivalent to about 7

⁸⁰ Among literally hundreds of examples, see: “Protokol no. 5 pravleniia VAO Inturist, 12/4/1954,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 340, ll 24-25. “Prikaz po pravleniiu Vsesoiuzogo aktsionernogo oshchestva po inostrannomu turizmu ‘Inturist’, N. 57-B, 4/9/1965,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 6, ll. 135-136. “O prebyvanii v SSSR delegatsii ETLI turistkoi organizatsii Itaianskikh trudiashchikhsia, 29/12/1967,” GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 1244, ll. 13-15, “Protokol Soveshchaniia nachalnikov upravlenii po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovetakh Ministrakh Soiuznykh respublik, upravlaiushchikh otdeleniami i zaveduiushchikh agentsvami VAO Intourist, 19-21/3/1968,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 255, ll. 172-177. “Spravka o sostoianii materialnoi bazy i obsluzhivaniia inostrannykh turistov v gorodakh Nobosibirsk, Bratsk, Khabarovsk, 27/9/1974,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 832, l. 191, “S.S Nikitin, Doklad na zasedanii Soveta pri Glavnom Upravlenii po inostrannomu turizmu, 26.5.1976,” GARF, op. 3, d. 1014, ll. 50-51.

⁸¹ “Stenogramma vsesoiuznogo soveschaniia rukovodiashchikh rabotnikov VAO Inturista, 17/1/1961”, GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 286, l. 96.

⁸² “Stenogramma zasedaniia komissii po inostrannym delam Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR, 2/2/1985,” GARF, A-385, op. 13, d. 61116, l. 25.

⁸³ Salomon, “Marketing Socialism,” 198n.

million dollars in contemporary and 16 million in 2015 dollars, according to official Soviet conversion rates). However, in the same year, it suffered a total operational loss in rubles of 1.8 million.⁸⁴ These figures underlay an important dynamic. The Soviet state subsidized Intourist's daily domestic ruble-denominated operations it could freely issue, so that it could earn hard currency it could not. Given the fact that Soviet exchange rates did not reflect the purchasing power of the ruble, the economic benefit of its operations is impossible to compute.⁸⁵

Scattered figures showing up in the Intourist archives after 1965 tell a similarly murky story. In 1989, its foreign currency proceeds grew by a factor of nearly 30, to 200 million foreign exchange rubles. In the same year, however, imports of equipment, computers, payments to foreign firms for new construction and other hard currency expenses stood at over 120 million. These figures, moreover, did not include the 46 million foreign exchange rubles assigned for ongoing construction projects in the Twelfth Five-Year Plan (1986), extensive purchases of imported goods for resale to foreign tourists, and the hundreds of millions the Soviet government paid foreign firms for hotel construction and imports of furniture, equipment and technology for Intourist facilities since the late 1960s - operations often not included on Intourist's balance sheets.⁸⁶

In short, given the state of our sources, it is quite impossible to ascertain how

⁸⁴ "Balans dokhodov i raskhodov VAO Inturist za 1964 god," GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 313, ll. 2-3.

⁸⁵ I thank Jacob Feygin for helping me make sense of Intourist balance statements.

⁸⁶ For income see, "Ob usovershenstvovanii upravleniia i dalneishem razvitie inostrannogo turizma v RSFSR, 3/12/1990," GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 806, l. 2. For expenditures, "Postanovlenie kollegiii Gosudarstennogo komiteta SSSR po inostrannomu turizmu, n. 31/7, 1989," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 2108, ll. 8-14. For construction costs: "B.N Temnikov [Chair, Main Administration of Foreign Tourism, RSFSR] to N.I Maslennikov [Chair, Gosplan RSFSR], 8/1/1986," GARF, f. A-10004, op.1, d. 735, l. 20."

much foreign currency Intourist contributed to Soviet state coffers. We can however conclude that based by the words and deeds of its principals, it fell far short of the expectations they set for themselves. As Intourist officials freely conceded in internal discussions from the early 1970s, their institution was chronically ailing: hard currency proceeds were growing not because of improving efficiency of Intourist operations, but due to the 'natural' year over year growth in foreign tourism (the income Intourist derived per tourist remained constant or deteriorated, even as tourist flows to the Soviet Union grew steadily).⁸⁷ As a result, as the Central Committee official M.A Anisimov put it in remarks laying bare the Soviet state's vision of Intourist's role in the political economy of socialism, Intourist was failing in its one and only task: obtaining foreign currency that could be exchanged for new factories, a condition he and the Central Committee he represented found "shameful."⁸⁸

Despite Anisimov's insistence on economic rationality, the language of shame and anxiety invoked by him indicates that more was at stake than just foreign currency proceeds. After all, throughout our period, Intourist generally met the targets set by central planners, and whenever it fell short, it could always receive subsidies from the state- conditions that would have left most Soviet enterprise managers overjoyed. Their emotive response to Intourist's failures evokes therefore a series of important questions.

⁸⁷ "S.S Nikitin to Aleksei Kosygin, 16/11/1972," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 611, ll. 37-38; "Stenogramma zasedaniia Soveta pri Glavnomu Upravleniiu po inostrannomu turizmu pri SM SSSR po voprosu o podbore, podgotovke, povyshenii kvalifikatsii kadrov, zanimaiushchikhsia obsluzhivaniem inostrannykh i sovetskikh turistov, 27/1/1974," GARF, f. 9612, op.3 d. 837, l. 70.

⁸⁸ "Stenogramma," GARF f. 9612, op.3 d. 931, l. 53.

Why did Intourist officials endorse so uncritically the complaints of their guests? Why weren't they happy with using state subsidies to pad their balance sheets, as so many Soviet officials did? If, as it might be argued, the story of Intourist can be told in an optimistic key, depicting the abandonment of Stalinist autarchy in favor of global interaction,⁸⁹ why were Intourist officials so harsh on themselves? Should historians follow their lead, or describe how, despite systemic constraints, Intourist grew into a corporate giant and a global brand to boot?

Furthermore, the story depicted in Intourist's archives captures its story as perceived from the center. From this point of view, the history of Intourist consisted in carefully navigating between the Scylla of the Soviet state and the Charybdis of Intourist's foreign clientele. This story is, of course, not the only one could tell. If, for example, much of Intourist's history, as told by the documents left by its central management, depicts it as an impoverished body struggling for its place in the sun, other stories could be told depicting Intourist as a machine hoovering desperately needed foreign proceeds from the republics to the center,⁹⁰ or as a centralist bully ignoring the needs of cities other than Moscow and Leningrad.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Salomon, "Land of Future," p. 291. Radchenko, *Inturist v Ukraine*, and Aleksei Popov, "Marafon gostepriimstva" take a rather more skeptical view of Intourist's performance, a point of view I share.

⁹⁰ One Estonian researcher argues that Intourist siphoned hundreds of millions of hard currency rubles from the Republic to the Center, (Reiner Jaakson, "Tourism in Transition in Post-Soviet Estonia," *Annals of Tourism Research* 43, no.3 (1996), 620-621.

⁹¹ "M.A. Ponomarev and T. S. Sushkov, [Vladimir Oblispolkom] to K.T. Mazurov, [First Deputy Chairman Sovmin SSSR], n/d, 1976," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 1004, l. 69.

However, a business history of Intourist from the perspective of its management has much to offer to scholars of the late Soviet period. Such a history offers a view of the economic development of late socialism from the point of view of one, not particularly important, actor, in the exceptionally complex institutional network that constituted the Soviet party-state.⁹² At the same time, it was one of the few Soviet bodies for which engagement with the outside world was not an onerous duty, but a core activity.⁹³ As such, the difficulties Intourist management encountered in providing the level of service it wished to offer its guests, failures that often look like pages from a dark comedy in both the archival record and in the pages of this dissertation, underscore a serious reality: the perils the Soviet economy and way of life faced when they opened up to the outside world and started to measure themselves by the Western yardstick. The tales of woe covered in this chapter, in other words, are reflections not so much of objective failures as of the ways the dreams of Intourist officials clashed with the realities of the socialist system. Given the crucial importance of the imaginations and perceptions of socialist elites to the ultimate unraveling of the socialist system,⁹⁴ the subjective, discursive nature of the seemingly dry and business-like pages of Intourist's records

⁹² Valerie Bune, *Subversive Institutions: the Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁹³ On export aversion in socialist systems, see, János Kornai, *The Socialist System: the Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton: NJ, 1992), 345-351 and Per Högselius, *Red Gas: Russia and the Origins of European Energy Dependence* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 37-38. For empirical evidence from the Soviet case, see Oscar Sanchez-Sibony, "Red Globalization: the Political Economy of Soviet Economic Relations in the 1950s and 1960s," PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago, 2009, ch. 4.

⁹⁴ See Stephen Kotkin, *Uncivil Society: 1989 and the Implosion of the Communist Establishment* (New York: Modern Library, 2009).

makes them that much more important for understanding the encounter between the Soviet Union and the West.

Another, less discursive reason to study the business history of Intourist relates to what it can teach us about the nature of the modernization of the Soviet Union's famously deficient service sector. Recent works by Dianne Koenker on Soviet domestic tourism and Natalya Chernyshova on Soviet consumerism in the long 1970s point out that towards the end of the Brezhnev period the Soviet services sector was rapidly modernizing and producing what was at least a reasonable facsimile of the Western consumer experience.⁹⁵ By examining the history of a Soviet organization committed to reproducing the experience of capitalist consumption in a socialist country as the only way to fulfill its overall production goals, we can evaluate the possibilities, dangers, and limitations of the nascent Soviet post-industrial transformation.

Still more important, Intourist, as noted above, was a highly peculiar institution. On the one hand, it was clearly recognizable to a Western observer as a vertically integrated corporation, working in a changing, logistically and technologically complex market. As provider of goods and services, it was a commercial enterprise competing a global capitalist market intensely focused on serving the needs of consumers. On the other hand, to obtain the goods it marketed to its clients, it acted as a consumer in a wholly different institutional context, in which consumers were, all too often, an afterthought. A business history of Intourist is therefore an opportunity to explore from

⁹⁵ Koenker, *Club Red*, and Chernyshova, *Soviet Consumer Culture*.

the ground up the economic transformations that growing Soviet exposure to global markets created, as well as the strict limits imposed on such transformation by the political economy of state socialism.

Intourist and the Soviet Economy

The most basic fact about any economic order, writes János Kornai in his seminal study of state socialism, is that “whenever a relation subsists between two or more persons or organizations, their activity requires coordination of some sort.”⁹⁶ While, as generations of observers and scholars agreed, the planned Soviet economy was largely a myth, bureaucratic coordination mechanisms (administrative price setting, production quotas, central distribution of resources and labor and, when all else failed, extra-economic coercion) played a much larger role in the Soviet economy than they did in market-oriented economies.⁹⁷ This correlation of political and economic power led, among other things, to the creation of economic conglomerates monopolizing entire economic fields, with Intourist assuming that role for the international tourist industry. However, even the most powerful Soviet trust or branch ministry faced a struggle for power and resources between itself and its economic peers and between its central managers and their local agents. Paraphrasing Marx, one might say that the history of the Soviet economy is the

⁹⁶ János Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton: NJ, 1992), 91.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 91-156; Paul Gregory and Mark Harrison, “Allocation under Dictatorship: Evidence from Research in Stalin Archives,” *Journal of Economic Literature* 43, no.3 (2005), 721-761.

history of such struggles. This holds especially true for Intourist, a body that on the one hand relied on widespread cooperation from other bodies in order to house, feed, transport and entertain its guests, and on the other hand, possessed little political power and had therefore to negotiate its way on largely hostile terrain.

The most salient fact for the institutional history of Intourist is that, for much of its existence, this universally recognized brand name was somewhat of a misnomer. From its foundation in 1929 to the 1960s, Intourist was officially known as the All-Union Joint Stock Company Intourist [*vsesoiuznoe aktsionernoe obshchestvo, (VAO) Inturist*] a peculiar legal form that allowed it to deal with foreign partners on a commercial basis.⁹⁸ However, in 1964, Intourist was subsumed into a new body, the State Foreign Tourism Administration [*Upravlenie po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR*]. This body was initially composed of the logistical and administrative *apparat* of the old Intourist, the joint stock company itself, and newly-formed republican Foreign Tourism Administrations.⁹⁹ In 1969, the joint stock company ceased separate existence, and was merged into the Administration, which was renamed into the Main Foreign Tourism Administration [*Glavnoe upravlenie po inostrannomu turizmu pri Komitete Ministrov SSSR*]. In 1983, the Main Administration was re-organized into the State Committee for Foreign Tourism [*Gosudarstvennyi Komitet po inostrannomu turizmu*], and thus for the

⁹⁸ Salmon, "Land of Future," 32.

⁹⁹ "Polozhenie ob Upravleniiu po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR," GARF, f. 9612, op. 4, d. 4, ll. 93-97.

first time became a ministerial-level institution.¹⁰⁰ Finally, between 1988 and 1990, the State Committee was abolished, and the Joint Stock Company Intourist reappeared- only to be subsumed in a devastating privatization struggle.¹⁰¹

These bureaucratic transformations are seemingly negligible enough so that clients, contemporary observers, historians, and indeed this author all use Intourist as a useful shorthand for the varieties of organizational forms the Soviet foreign tourism monopoly took. However, these name changes are directly related to the most precious of currencies in the Soviet economic realm: institutional affiliations and the power inherent in them.

From its formation to 1965, Intourist was not an independent institution, but an appenage of other institutions, including, briefly, the NKVD. From 1939 until 1964, Intourist settled in as a division of the Foreign Trade Ministry. Given the Ministry's mandate to earn foreign currency for the Soviet state, this seemed like a natural arrangement. However, perhaps because between 1945 and 1955 Intourist did nothing particularly meaningful, it had a difficult relationship with the Ministry, with Intourist officials bitterly complaining about ministerial neglect.¹⁰² The pay scale was far below those of other divisions in the Ministry, as did their prestige levels. For example, when an

¹⁰⁰ "Ukaz Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR 'O preobrazovanii Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR v Gosudarstvennyi Komitet po inostrannomu turizmu' i polozenie o Komitete'," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1633a, ll. 1-8.

¹⁰¹ "Protokol n. 1 sobraniia aktsionerov i ustav VAO Inturist," GARF, op. 3, d. 2194, ll. 1-18.

¹⁰² "Ankudinov to Khrushchev, (n/d, 1958)," GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 247, ll. 66-68,

Intourist employee was moved to a position in the Protocol Department of the Ministry, he was warned to “unlearn the ugly habits you picked up at Intourist.”¹⁰³

Due to its marginal status, Intourist struggled with its role as coordinating mechanism for the flow of foreign traffic when tourism in the Soviet Union picked up in the late 1950s. In a memorandum he penned for Khrushchev, Vladimir Ankudinov, Intourist’s chief, drew up a long list of institutions with which Intourist had to cooperate. The Ministries of Civilian Fleet, Civil Aviation, and Railroads were in charge of transporting tourists. The Ministry of Trade supplied Intourist facilities with food and other consumer goods and the Ministry of Culture was in charge of providing them with entertainment. The KGB and MVD policed tourist traffic, and republican organizations and ministries, local Soviets and party organizations had to attend to their care in their areas of jurisdiction.¹⁰⁴ None of these organizations, Ankudinov implied, viewed tourism as a pressing concern, and a mere division of the Foreign Trade Ministry did not have enough bureaucratic heft to force them to do so. Therefore, he concluded, a Foreign Tourism Administration with the right to impose its will on other state institutions in its field of competence was required.¹⁰⁵ This memorandum was initially rejected by the state authorities in a way that demonstrated Intourist’s marginal status: Anastas Mikoyan, then the First Deputy Chair of the Soviet of Ministers, responded to a previous appeal on the

¹⁰³ “Protokol n. 9 zasedaniia Pravleniia VAO Inturist, 26/4/1961,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 515, l. 114.

¹⁰⁴ “Ankudinov to Khrushchev, n/d, 1958,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 247, l. 67;

¹⁰⁵ “Spravka v sviazi s predlozheniem o sozdanii Soveta po inostrannomu turizmu v SSSR,” *ibid*, l. 76.

topic with a terse and vaguely threatening note: “so, you want a committee?!” (*chto, komitet zakhote li?*).¹⁰⁶

Despite this snub from above, Ankudnov's plan was realized in 1964.

Unfortunately, I was not able to find documents shedding light on the lobbying that led to this policy reversal. But the reasons for Intourist's sudden ascent are easy enough to guess. The early 1960s saw a sharp upswing in Soviet imports of Western technology that had to be paid for in hard currency. Especially before oil and gas became major Soviet exports, tourism was one of the most appealing options for improving the Soviet balance of payments. We've already seen that Khrushchev toyed with the idea of making the Soviet Union into a tourist Mecca. Even before his Yugoslav trip described in the Introduction, he personally initiated the construction of a hotel for wealthy foreigners not far from his favorite vacation haunt in the Crimea.¹⁰⁷ Even after his ouster, his more sober successors viewed tourism development as a priority item, and accordingly approved a massive expansion plan for Intourist.¹⁰⁸

And yet, as both Intourist clients and managers knew, neither money nor institutional independence was a panacea for Intourist's ailments. Here again, institutional arrangements were key. According to the charter of the new Administration, it bore total responsibility for the planning, development, financing, marketing, and administration of foreign tourism. The charter also established two other bodies: a

¹⁰⁶ “Ankudinov to Khrushchev,” *ibid*, 1. 66.

¹⁰⁷ “K. Lvov to I.G Bolshakov, 24/9/1958,” *ibid*, 1. 32.

¹⁰⁸ Salmon, “Land of Future,” 217.

Council for Foreign Tourism [*Sovet po turizmu*], a coordinating body that brought together Intourist and the other all-Union institutions involved in foreign tourism, and republican-level Foreign Tourism Administrations, tasked with conveying Intourist's wishes to republican and local institutions.¹⁰⁹

However, this institutional design was not enough to overcome Intourist's significant weaknesses as a player on the Soviet institutional field, weaknesses that were furthermore exacerbated by flaws in its new institutional scheme. Most fundamentally, in an economy in which producers had significant advantages over consumers, Intourist was at a significant disadvantage as a consumer that produced no tangible material goods and could not sell or barter its goods to other Soviet organizations.¹¹⁰ To overcome this handicap, it needed administrative power – which it sorely lacked. Perhaps because of the political nature of Intourist's work with foreigners, it was the politically-oriented Foreign Cadres Department,¹¹¹ and not one of the powerful departments that oversaw various sectors of the Soviet economy that served as Intourist's curator at the Central Department.¹¹² Neither of Intourist's chiefs between the 1950s and the 1980s, Ankudinov and his 1968 replacement, Sergei Nikitin, was a member of the Central Committee or any

¹⁰⁹ “Polozhenie ob Upravlenii.”

¹¹⁰ On the relations between consumers and producers in the Soviet economy, see Kornai, *Socialist System*, 245-252.

¹¹¹ On this department, see Nikolai Mitrokhin, “Elita zakrytogo obshchestva: MGIMO, mezhdunarodnye otdely TsK KPSS i prosografiia ikh sotrudnikov,” *Ab Imperio*, 4 (2013), 153-154. Regrettably, one of the side effects of this affiliation is the fact that the files of this department are not available at the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History, and therefore the dealings it had with Intourist and its partners cannot be investigated.

¹¹² On the rise of economic departments in the Central Committee Apparatus, see Alexander Titov, “The Central Committee Apparatus under Khrushchev,” in: Jeremy Smith and Melanie Ilic (ed.), *Khrushchev in the Kremlin: Policy and Power in the Soviet Union, 1953-64* (London: Routledge, 2011), 26-40.

other important party-state institution.¹¹³ The Foreign Tourism Council was more or less politely ignored by Intourist's partners, rarely met, and did not improve inter-institutional coordination to any significant extent.¹¹⁴

Coordination *within* Intourist also far from given. While republican tourism administrations coordinated relationships between Intourist departments and republican institutions, the center maintained managerial and financial authority over all Intourist facilities.¹¹⁵ This arrangement meant that, by and large, Intourist facilities were outside the logistical chains and networks of exchange that defined economic life in their localities.

In short, whatever particular form it took, Intourist's existence was defined by a struggle to impose its will on partners which had little desire to work with it. This struggle extended to nearly all interactions Intourist had with Soviet institutions, from its failure to obtain reliable train and airline schedules from the relevant organizations, through the defeats it faced as it fought for office space,¹¹⁶ and up to the herculean efforts it had to exert in order to obtain branded briefcases for its guides.¹¹⁷ Nowhere was this

¹¹³ The first senior official to serve as the head of Intourist, the aforementioned Abrasimov, was appointed in 1983.

¹¹⁴ "Rekomendatsii Soveta pri Glavnom Upravlenii po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR ob itogakh raboty za 1969 god i zadachakh po razvitiuu inostrannogo turizma v 1970 godu." GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 429, l. 36; "Stenogramma," GARF f. 9612, op.3 d. 931, ll. 32-41.

¹¹⁵ "Krupin [Chairman, Intourist RSFSR to Sovmin RSFR, 28/6/1967," GARF f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 41, ll.161-164, "B.V Schastlivov [manager, Department of Technological and Material Supplies, Intourist [UMTS], to Nikitin, 9/11/1983," GARF, f. 9612, op.3 d. 1579, ll. 217-222.

¹¹⁶ "Spravka o sostoianii okhrany truda rabotnikov tsentralnogo apparata Glavnogo Upravlenia po inostranomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR [n/d, 1970]," GARF, f. 9612 op. 3, d. 428, ll. 76-80.

¹¹⁷ This issue was resolved after a personal appeal from Nikitin to V.N Novikov, deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers. "Nikitin to Novikov, n/d [1972]," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 611, ll. 20-21.

reality more pronounced than in the great difficulties Intourist faced when feeding and housing its clientele.

Intourist and the Deficit Economy

In the postwar period, Twister's homelessness episode could easily be read by a despairing Intourist official as an ascerbic comment about the fundamental clash between the capitalist offerings Intourist sold, and the socialist institutional arrangements it had to navigate in order to provide its clientele the services they purchased. Already by the early 1960s, tourism to the Soviet Union far surpassed its prewar level. Intourist's hotel base, however, remained more or less constant until 1965. As a result, over 85% of the hotel space used by Intourist belonged to other organizations, most often city soviets. In Moscow in 1962 for example, Intourist required 6,400 rooms in hotels owned by the city to accommodate its needs.¹¹⁸ This number of rooms reserved for Intourist was determined administratively, with a set quota of rooms assigned to Intourist at the beginning of each tourist season, and adjusted on the basis of both foreign and domestic demand (in theory) and inter-institutional haggling (in practice) throughout the year.

¹¹⁸ "V. Ankudinov. Doklad na zasedanii kollegii MVT 6/2/1962: ob ustranении serezhnykh nedostatkov v razvitii inostrannogo turizma," GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 268, l. 3.

For two major reasons, this situation created a variety of conflicts between Intourist and its hosts. First, hotel room deficits were a significant problem in all Soviet cities.¹¹⁹ This situation was even worse in Moscow, by far the most prominent tourist center of the Soviet Union, where Intourist clients had to compete for hotel rooms with out-of-town Soviet officials and foreigners visiting the Soviet Union on official business, putting both Intourist and city officials in difficult situations.¹²⁰ Second, in the 1960s, all foreign currency proceeds from foreign tourism were collected by Intourist and transferred to the central state budget, meaning that local authorities had little or no incentive in hosting foreigners. That situation was ameliorated somewhat after 1969, when the Soviet government allowed Intourist to forward up to 10% of its proceeds to republican administrations to be spent purchasing imported equipment for hotels owned by local soviets. However, this incentive was insufficient to fundamentally transform relations between local soviets and Intourist. In 1986, for instance, the RSFSR received 10 million foreign exchange rubles, a sum not nearly sufficient for its needs in equipment and construction funds.¹²¹ Given this lack of financial inducements, as far as local Soviets were concerned, their administrative needs far outweighed Intourist's commercial considerations.

¹¹⁹ Koenker, *Club Red*, 187.

¹²⁰ "Promyslov [Moscow Ispolkom] to V.N Novikov, undated draft version [1976]," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1004, ll. 31-33.

¹²¹ "Stenogramma zasedaniia komissii po inostrannym delam Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR, 2/12/1985," GARF, A-385, op. 13, d. 6116, ll. 54-55.

As a result of these realities, relations between Intourist and local soviets were extremely acrimonious. Fights broke out over the ownership of major hotels, including Leningrad's renowned tsarist-era *Evropeiskaia* and *Astoriia*.¹²² Local authorities made concerted efforts to boot foreign tourists from their hotels during major events.¹²³ The most determined fights took place over Intourist room quotas. Arguing that the needs of Soviet economic, administrative and scientific bodies (the main client base of Soviet hotels) should not be outweighed by the demands of foreign tourism, local authorities furiously tried to reduce Intourist's quotas. Since relations between the local soviets and Intourist were not based on legal contracts, but on administrative decisions, the only recourse the latter had was to appeal to Party and state authorities. However, even when Intourist managed to obtain positive administrative outcomes, success in obtaining needed hotel space was far from guaranteed.

For example, in Leningrad in 1958, the Leningrad local soviet (*Lenispolkom*) waged a valiant delaying battle against Intourist. After an initial quota of 700 rooms was assigned to Intourist, with the personal involvement of Frol Kozlov, the Vice Chairman of the all-Union Council of Ministers, the *Lenispolkom* refused to execute the decision. After further negotiations involving senior party officials, the Leningraders relented, and promised to supply the rooms. However, when the local Intourist department tried to make orders [*zaiavki*] for the rooms it was promised, it was refused. In a meeting

¹²² Bagdasarian, *Zazerkal'e*, 206.

¹²³ "Vystuplenie", GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 268, l. 4.

between Ankudinov and the chairman of the Administrative Department of *Lenispolkom*, the latter promised yet again to provide 700 rooms. However, in a subsequent meeting of the Leningrad party committee, the Leningrad official again reneged on his promise and even “indicated that in the future Intourist will receive no rooms at all.”¹²⁴

While this was an extreme case, the basic contours of the room deficit problem remained constant until the end of the Soviet era. In 1976, as *détente* brought more and more foreigners to Soviet soil, the Moscow soviet unilaterally reduced Intourist's quota in its hotels from 5,800 to 4,000, announcing the cuts in March, after Intourist had already signed most of its contracts with its Western partners. Unable to come to an agreement, as both sides had fewer rooms in their possession than their minimal plans for the year required, they had no choice but to appeal to the Soviet government to mediate.¹²⁵ A few years earlier in Kyiv, Intourist was joined in the battle for hotel rooms by the republican KGB, which argued that the local Soviet was sabotaging surveillance efforts by confiscating hotel rooms from Intourist.¹²⁶ In the absence of material incentives, only “administrative resources” could help Intourist get its way.

As was the case so often in the Soviet Union, food supplies were another serious flashpoint. Here Intourist faced problems of both production and institutional coordination. Complaints about deficits of meat, milk products, vegetables, and

¹²⁴ “Spravka o vozmozhnosti razmeshcheniia inostrannykh turistov v gostinitsakh Lengorispolkoma, 2/8/1958,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 247, ll. 60-62.

¹²⁵ See correspondence in GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1004, ll. 16-17, 26-27, 31-33.

¹²⁶ “S. Fedorchuk [Ukrainian KGB Chairman] to Ukrainian Politburo, 22/6/1972,” *Derzhavnyi Galuznyi Arkhyv Ukrainy* [DGA SBU], f. 16, op. 7, spr. 35, ark. 276-278.

especially delicatessen were a staple of Intourist correspondence. Strikingly, the situation in this regard was becoming worse, not better as the decades went by: by the early 1980s, Finnish tourists were complaining about shortages of the most basic of Soviet staples, potatoes.¹²⁷

While these deficits surely had something to do with the chronic problems Soviet agriculture faced, this was surely not the entire story: after all, production difficulties did not impact the operations of the famous “closed” food shops catering to Soviet elites. The problem was again with relatively low priority other institutions assigned to production for Intourist, which required items of a quality few Soviet consumers could dream of. For instance, breakfast items favored by foreign tourists, for instance small packages of jam and butter, were not manufactured by Soviet industry, to Intourist’s great shagrin.¹²⁸ Even when Soviet industry produced desirable items, Intourist often remained outside the supply chains that connected them to the markets. Soviet industry produced ample amounts of delicatessen items (caviar, sturgeon, and so forth) for export. Intourist restaurants, by contrast, suffered endemic shortages of such products. The reason for this situation was simple: the Ministries of Trade and Foreign Trade refused to categorize Intourist restaurants as export-oriented institutions, even though they catered to foreigners and earned hard currency, as sending produce to Intourist would have reduced their own foreign currency earnings, since Intourist paid other Soviet organizations in

¹²⁷ “Issledovanie ob osnovnykh napravleniakh v organizatsii i reklame poezdok v ramkakh programmy seriinykh turov Etumakat,” GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 667, l. 54.

¹²⁸ For one example of the numerous complaints about breakfast items, see “Protokol n. 7 zasedania Soveta Upravlenia po turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov RSFSR, 18/3/1970,” GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 110a, l. 19.

domestic rubles.¹²⁹ On the local level, the fact that Intourist facilities were outside republican chains of supply meant that trade organizations kept them at very low priority, a condition that led to serious disruptions even in such high priority locations as Sochi.¹³⁰

Supplying tourists with souvenirs and high-end products was another problem Intourist lacked the resources and administrative heft to resolve.¹³¹ A series of investigations conducted into lagging sales of such items in the mid-1960s found that production lines were obsolete, knowledge of market conditions was missing, and manufacturers showed little interest in working for the tourist market, since such work required a high level of investment, with hard currency returns going to Intourist, not to the manufacturers. Furthermore, since mass-produced souvenirs were considered luxury, and therefore low priority products [*produkty ne pervoi nadobnosti*], the Ministry of Trade set their prices at levels above what tourists were willing to pay.¹³² And even when prices were right, Soviet souvenirs failed to sell, because manufacturers lacked the capacity to package them in anything but simple cardboard.¹³³

Yet again, the problem was rooted in incentives: as long as Intourist made foreign-currency demoninated profits and paid manufacturers in domestic rubles, the latter had no particular desire to work for the demanding foreign market. The Soviet

¹²⁹ “Protokol soveshchania nachalnikov upravlenii po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovetakh Ministrov Soiuzykh respublik, upravlaiushchikh otdeleniami i zaveduiushchikh agentsvami VAO Intourist. 19-21/3/1968,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 255, l. 191.

¹³⁰ “Stenogramma zasedaniia... 2/12/1985,” GARF, f. A-385, op. 13, d. 6116, l. 31.

¹³¹ On the crucial importance assigned to this activity by Intourist chiefs, see Salmon, “Land of Future,” 234-239.

¹³² For documents pertaining to this issue, see GARF, f. 9612, op. 4, d. 3.

¹³³ “O podgotovke materialnoi bazy dlia priema inostrantsev v 1967 godu,” GARF, op.3, d. 41, l. 107.

government, concerned with the lost opportunities to earn hard currency that these conditions created, recognized this reality, and decreed in 1964 that up to 50% of all proceeds from hard currency sales of souvenirs were to be reinvested in imports of, among other items, machinery for souvenir producing factories.¹³⁴ Yet, even this measure, which after all diverted desperately needed hard currency towards the production of low priority items, was not enough to overcome the problem. In 1968, the Russian Foreign Tourism Administration complained, the Soviet Union could provide less than half of tourist demand for furs, gold, amber, and other luxury items - as the Ministry of Trade refused to classify deliveries to Intourist hotels and their Berezka stores as counting towards' manufacturers export quotas.¹³⁵ Four years later, Nikitin complained to the Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin, things had not improved at all - and the Soviet Union was losing as much as 25 million foreign currency rubles *per annum* in funds that foreigners reconverted from rubles to their currencies, after they failed to spend them on Soviet products- more than twice the sum the Soviet Union made from souvenir sales.¹³⁶

Even more strikingly, even when the bureaucratic mechanisms of the Soviet state assigned top priority for production for foreigners, their mode of operations could prove to be counter-productive. Amber was, according to Krupin's 1968 estimates, the top deficit item in Berezka stores, with as much of 90% of demand for it going unmet.¹³⁷ According to an investigation into the matter by the State Control Committee, these

¹³⁴ "Prikaz po pravleniu VAO Inturist n. 10, 20/4/1964," GARF, f. 9612, op. 4, d. 4, l. 149.

¹³⁵ "Krupin to Ankudinov, 15/1/1968," GARF, f. A-10004, op.1, d. 76, ll. 8-15.

¹³⁶ "Nikitin to Kosygin, 16/11/1972," GARF, f. 961, op. 3, d. 611, ll. 37-39.

¹³⁷ "Krupin to Akudinov," GARF, f. A-10004, op.1, d. 76, l. 9.

deficits were rooted in the vast performance gap between the Soviet Union's two amber processing facilities: *Kar'er* in Kaliningrad, and *Daile* in Klaipėda (Lithuania).¹³⁸ The former was a massive enterprise, operating under the auspices *Rosiuvelirtorg*, the institution that, among other things, ran the *Berezkas*. As such, it was the sole supplier of Intourist's clientele, and a major beneficiary of the 1964 decisions on the development of the souvenir industry, receiving large amounts of West German machinery in the preceding 3 years. The latter belonged to the Lithuanian Union of Artists, sold nothing to foreigners and owned no imported machinery. Despite these advantages, State Control found that *Kar'er* produced low-quality and unfashionable product, and took years to put to its designs to market. Meanwhile, *Daile* produced fashionable products, with its product cycle taking months, not years.

This curious condition, State Control inspectors discovered, came exactly because of the priority status *Kar'er* enjoyed. In order to launch a new product line, it had to receive approval from *Rosiuvelirtorg*. *Rosiuvelirtorg*, in turn, required the State Planning Committee to set production quotas and hard currency prices for each new product line- a process that could require up to two years, meaning that *Kar'er* product was out of fashion by the time it hit stores. At the same time, *Daile*, due to its marginal institutional affiliation, could set its own prices and immediately market its products through local Lithuanian stores. Thus, the products that were sold in Intourist hotels and *Berezkas* were

¹³⁸ The information in this paragraph is gleaned from a State Control investigation of the amber trade: GARF, f. 9527, op. 1, d. 1298.

below global standards, while *Daile's* superior product reached almost no foreign customers. While no Intourist official would ever put it this way, no less than *Twister*, the story of *Daile* and *Kar'er* served to illustrate the radical disjuncture between Soviet institutional arrangements, and the rules of the global market in which Intourist operated.

Managing Intourist

So far, this chapter has focused on the ways in which Intourist navigated the complex and often dysfunctional Soviet economic coordination mechanisms. However, like any large organization, it was not a unitary body acting as a transmission belt to the wishes of its principals, but a complex bureaucracy in which a variety of agents acted to promote their interests which sometimes did and sometimes did not coincide with the interests of the organization itself (as defined by its principals.) These organizational dynamics, moreover, played out in a large, diffuse organization that was shaped both by the unique institutional context of the Soviet system and the emerging global context of a service economy anchored by ever increasing information flows. In the following pages, I will examine at some length two institutional dynamics to which these realities gave rise: tensions between Intourist's principals and their agents, and the informal practices that the latter turned to in order to both accomplish their tasks and promote their material interests.

From 1964, when Intourist underwent its first major postwar reorganization, to the *perestroika* years, when it underwent first an attempt at commercial reform and then a rapid implosion, Intourist took many institutional forms, but its basic organizational principles remained the same.¹³⁹ It was divided into a central, Moscow-based and functionally organized *apparat*, and geographically organized sub-units. At the top of its pyramid stood its First Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and its board (*kollegiia*), consisting of the heads of various central departments and divisions.

Given the rapidly evolving size and complexity of Intourist's operations, its structure was in constant flux, and accounting for its many permutations is both impractical and unnecessary. Crudely speaking, however, one could functionally divide it into three component parts: propagandistic, economic and logistical. Intourist's propaganda work lies outside the scope of this chapter. Economic sub-units included the Commercial Division, the body that designed and marketed tour packages, the Financial [*valiutnoe-finansovoe*] Division in charge of formulating plans and price policies, and smaller sub-units charged with accounting and oversight. Finally, Intourist's logistical section included a variety of bodies in charge of overseeing the organization's sprawling possessions, managing logistics and supplies, and ensuring the smooth flow of information.

¹³⁹ For a sketch of Intourist's institutional structure in 1964, see: "Struktura VAO Inturist na 1/1/1964 god," GARF, g. 9612, op. 4, d. 3, ll. 3-5. For the same in 1987, at the end of Intourist's evolution and shortly before the beginning of its devolution, see "Prikaz 2- DSP, 21/01/87," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1941, ll. 8-9.

Outside the central *apparat*, Intourist's organizational structure was defined by institutional duality. As mentioned above, Intourist facilities were subject to an awkward system of dual subordination. Financially and organizationally, its facilities were under the direct control of the central *apparat*. At the same time, the republican Administrations were in charge of both overseeing their daily activities and facilitating their relationships with republican organizations, without which the work of local managers became difficult, if not impossible.

The expansive mechanism described above functioned in a similar manner to that of all other Soviet economic institutions. Intourist's main plan indicators, namely the desired number of tourists per year, profit goals, and hard currency objectives, were set by the State Planning Committee, but could be negotiated down or ratcheted up in a dynamic manner.¹⁴⁰ Intourist profits were returned to central and republican authorities. Where necessary, the state provided Intourist with subsidies. Within the organization, the central *apparat* set plans and allocated resources for localities – but these were also subject to negotiation. Such negotiations were, however, only one aspect of a series of endemic conflicts that pitted republican administrations against the center, peripheral organizations against the central *apparat*, and, indeed, different central *apparat* divisions against each other.

¹⁴⁰ Such alterations occurred, for example, after major international shocks, for instance of the 1973 October War and the ensuing oil boycott. See, for example, “O merakh po obespecheniiu vypolneniia valiutnogo plana 1974 g. kommercheskim upravleniem, 15/1/1974,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 830, ll. 8-10.

Quite understandably, the awkward conditions of the republican Administration were cause for sharp arguments between them and the central *apparat*. This was especially the case for the Russian Foreign Tourism Administration, which forcefully argued that given the fact that the vast majority of tourist traffic in the Soviet Union was in Russian cities, it should have a much stronger voice in Intourist's affairs.¹⁴¹ Shawn Salmon argues that such arguments were part of a process in which Intourist was gradually shaking off its pan-Soviet identity and focusing its business on selling Russia to the world.¹⁴² However, the underlying theme of the debate between Russian and all-Union Intourist officials was administrative. The Russian Administration (as well as many other republican Administrations) was interested in asserting more control over Intourist facilities for two reasons. First, as described above, in the absence of any assets with which to manage and barter, republican Administrations had little standing vis-à-vis both the center and other republican bodies and thus could not fulfill their role as advocates for the development of foreign tourism in their republics. The second cause of conflict was money. The Administrations were republican institutions, and as such, they chafed under the rules of a system that pumped back 90% or more of the proceeds of what should have been their domains into the all-Union budget. Instead, they argued, the lion's share of Intourist's proceeds should be the property of the republican Administrations, so that the republican authorities could directly benefit from an industry

¹⁴¹ "Krupin to Nikitin, 28/6/1967," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 41, ll. 161-164. "Krupin to A.M Shkolnikov [Vice-Chairman, RSFSR Council of Ministers], n/d, April 1969," GARF f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 85, ll. 97-101.

¹⁴² "Land of Future," 268.

that after all “sold” their histories and cultures. While this issue did play a crucial role in Intourist’s eventual breakup along republican lines, it was rooted less in nationalist aspirations than in a very Soviet struggle over administrative resources.¹⁴³

Similar tensions characterized inter-departmental relations inside the central *apparat*. Here, problems revolved less around policy-related issues than the politics of plan fulfillment. The plans for Intourist's commercial division, for example, set maximum numbers of tourists it could commit to receiving – numbers that took account of Intourist’s chronic resource shortages, but not the foreign currency goals set by the state. As exceeding plans was deemed less damaging than failing to hit planned targets, the sub-units of the division tended to sign contracts to receive more tourists than the quotas they were allotted.¹⁴⁴ Since hotel rooms, restaurant spots, airline quotas and other resources were also rationed and, as we have seen, mobilizing outside resources was an often impossible task, this practice helped to stretch Intourist's already more than limited resources beyond the breaking point.

In an even more glaring example, competition between the Soviet Tourism Division, charged with sending Soviet tourists abroad, and the People's Democracies Department of the Commercial Division, in charge of receiving East European tourists, directly undermined Intourist's financial goals. Tourism to Eastern Europe was handled on the basis of a barter-based system of clearing agreements that presumed roughly

¹⁴³ See the conclusion to this dissertation.

¹⁴⁴ “Stenogramma zasedaniia... 27/1/1974,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 837, l. 70.

equivalent incoming and outgoing bilateral tourist flows. In other words, if the number of, say, Soviet tourists in Poland exceeded the number of Polish tourists in the Soviet Union, Intourist had to compensate its Polish counterparty. In negotiating with the Polish side, however, the two Intourist sub units failed to coordinate their activities, the former pushing to maximize the number of tourists it wished to send abroad, and the other minimizing the number of tourists it was willing to receive, thus both causing economic damages and endangering relations with Intourist's Polish partners.¹⁴⁵

While conflicts at the center could and did affect Intourist's bottom line, much of its everyday existence was defined by friction between its central *apparat* and agents on the periphery. On some level, such tensions were an inevitable result of the gap between Moscow, Leningrad and the rest of the Soviet Union. For instance, when a Council of Ministers official referred to the non-Moscow facilities of Intourist's network as the 'provinces' in a 1960 meeting of Intourist's cadres from the localities, his words caused a wave of indignation in the crowd.¹⁴⁶

Such psychological factors however were not the main driver of the problematic relationships between center and periphery. Rather, they were the result of the profound tension between the centralized nature of Intourist, the far-flung nature of its network,

¹⁴⁵ "Protokol n. 12 zasedaniia kollegii Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri SM SSSR, 17/6/1977," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1106, 120-123.

¹⁴⁶ "Protokol vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia rukovodiashchikh rabotnikov VAO Inturista, 17/1/1961," GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 286, l. 144

and the constraints that technology and the incentive structure of the Soviet system put on the center's ability to both control and provide aid and resources for the periphery.

The conflicts and complaints this reality created were myriad. Hotel managers in Moscow, one witty Intourist official complained, practiced *spikhotekhnika* (the art and science of shoving problems on someone else), directing tourists to address the central *apparat* with their problems and difficulties.¹⁴⁷ The Commercial Division, the periphery complained, did not have proper information about conditions on the ground, and sold tourists promises the local departments could not fulfill.¹⁴⁸ The Commercial Department complained that hotel managers preferred to host tourists sponsored by other organizations (for example, businessmen working with industrial ministries) at the expense of tourist groups sent by the Commercial Division, as the former paid higher prices for rooms. Hotel managers complained that they had few incentives to sell theater tickets and guided tours for hard currency, as such income was assigned to the Commercial Department's hard currency quota.¹⁴⁹ The central *apparat* berated localities for distorting their reports, hiding damning facts, and failing to provide the center with accurate information about tourist movements, while the localities retorted that they were swamped with paperwork and complex instructions (a point that Intourist management

¹⁴⁷ "Protokol no. 10 Pravlenia VAO Inturist, 21/5/1965," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 49, l. 148.

¹⁴⁸ "Protokol Soveshchania... 19-21/3/1968," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 255, l. 189

¹⁴⁹ "Spravka ob ispolzovanii nomernogo fonda gostinits inturista v gorode Moskve, n/d, 1978," GARF f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1211, l. 11-12, "Protokol soveshchania... 19-21/3/1968," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 255, l. 33.

not only conceded, but often bemoaned).¹⁵⁰ According to the localities, food, equipment and machinery shortages in Intourist facilities were due to faulty work of the central logistical departments.¹⁵¹ According to central logistical departments, they were the result of the localities' proclivity to hoarding, incompetence, and collusion with local authorities to make Intourist, not the latter, bear the brunt of supplying local facilities with deficit items.¹⁵²

Intourist's leadership was anything but oblivious to the frictions described above. The policy response it devised to the problems that plagued its bureaucratic mechanisms reflected the tension between the centralization embedded in Intourist's structure and the center's lack of sufficient administrative capacity to control its far-flung network. Intourist, for example, was an enthusiastic participant in the Kosygin reforms (1965-1969), which thought to delegate some decision-making authority to individual enterprises (in this case, hotels), and introduce "material incentives" (i.e profits) as a measure of managerial success.¹⁵³ This reform, however, failed to impact Intourist operations, due to resistance from both localities and the central apparat. Hotel managers were concerned that the news system would make it harder for them to obtain resources

¹⁵⁰ For several examples among many, see, "Prikaz po Pravleniu VAO Inturist, N. 65-B, 18/10/1965", "Otchet o sostoianii i merakh po dalneishemu sovershestvovaniu bukhgalterskogo ucheta, otchetnosti, i kontrolno-revizionnoi raboty v sisteme glavinturista," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1007, ll. 134-143.

¹⁵¹ "Spravka o khode vypolnenia utverzhdennym prikazom ot 30 maia 1971 g. n. 116 meropriatiem po obespecheniiu zamechanii i predlozhenii, vyskazannykh na vsesoiuznom soveshchanii rukovoditelei otdelenii, agenstv i predpriatii Inturista," GARF f. 9612, op. 3, d. 513, ll. 157-164.

¹⁵² See, for example, "Prikaz nachalnika Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri SM RSFSR n. 17, 17/4/1970," GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 110, ll. 42-44, "Otchet o komandirovke na predpriaiia Gokominturista SSSR raspolozhennye v Uzbekskoi SSSR, n/d, 1985," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1754, ll. 175-189.

¹⁵³ Salmon, "Land of Future," 212-217.

from Intourist's logistical departments,¹⁵⁴ while the central apparat was concerned, as we had seen, that "material incentives" would lead hotel managers to prioritize obtaining guests via other organizations over fulfilling the directives of Intourist's commercial departments.

After the Kosygin reforms failed to make a mark on Intourist, attempts at reform focused on centralization as path to better resource management. In the 1970s, Intourist started reorganizing its local departments, which until then exerted little control over Intourist hotels and restaurants, into more cohesive bodies, entitled hotel trusts [*ob'edineniia*]. The goal of this reform was twofold. First, the trusts were to take over many of the organizational and logistical functions of individual hotel managers, thus, in theory at least, obtaining savings by reducing manpower and reducing resource hoarding. Second, the trust manager was to become an administrative link between the Central *apparatus* and local managers, and thus allow the former to better control the latter.¹⁵⁵ Another attempt at centralizing reform was taken in the early 1980s. During this period an experiment that allowed the Ukrainian and Armenian republican Administrations more control over Intourist facilities within their borders was rolled back.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, the central *apparatus* attempted to remake the republican Administrations into subordinate institutions, taking them out of the control of republican-level governments. This attack

¹⁵⁴ "Spravka o voprosakh perevoda otdelenii i agenstv na khoziaistvennyi raschet, 17/3/1976," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1005, ll. 231-238.

¹⁵⁵ I.A. Riabova, "Sozdanie proizvodstvennykh obedinenii - vazhnoe napravlenie razvitiia khoziaistvennogo rascheta sisteme Glavinturista," *Problemy inostrannogo turizma v SSSR*, 4 (1983), 71-85.

¹⁵⁶ "Protokol n. 31/83 zasedania komissii po sovershenstvovaniuu stuktury Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu n turizmu pri SM SSSR, 21/4/1983," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1579, ll. 172-174.

was however rapidly rebuffed.¹⁵⁷ This defeat as well as the entire pattern of resistance to control from above described in this section was a reminder of the extent to which realities on the ground gave local actors far more power than the formal structures of authority allowed them. Neither centrifugal nor centripetal forces could do much to change a status quo with which neither side was particularly satisfied.

A look from Below

So far, we have examined the history of Intourist from the perspectives of its clients and top management. This is a story of deficits of material goods, of institutional power, of even basic competence, in which local cadres appear as impediments to better business practices at best, and as a gaggle of inept, perhaps malevolent, incompetents at worst. Viewed from a local perspective, the story looks markedly different, in a way that highlights the extent to which the Soviet Union was indeed the workers' state - but in a very different sense than that which its founders intended.

To better understand how the Intourist system operated from the ground up, we must start by looking at its linchpins: the managers of Intourist hotels, restaurants and local departments. How did the balance sheets of their assets and liabilities look? At first

¹⁵⁷ "O preobrazovanii Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov RSFSR v Goskomitet RSFSR po inostrannomu turizmu, 05/07/1983," GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 658, ll. 24-29.

glance, their position was not particularly envious. Local managers were to supply services at a level higher than any other Soviet institution, while locked out of the local supply chains and administrative networks. However, they were also in control of what was, for most Soviet people, the stuff of which consumer dreams were made: material items fit for consumption by foreigners. Armed with these assets, as well as with whatever administrative resources they could muster, Intourist's managers engaged in a complex system of informal exchanges that aimed to both promote their organizational goals, and their personal interests.

The most immediate goal of Intourist's local managers was rather straightforward: obtaining scarce material resources. One obvious method of doing so involved informal channels. Like many other economic functionaries, Intourist leaders widely used the services of *tolkachi*, black market and informal barter experts, to obtain food for their restaurants and scarce items for their hotels, paying them in both money and material objects they received from the state (for example, black caviar and other specialty items).¹⁵⁸ Others exchanged favors with local institutions, by, for instance, writing off as unuseable out-of-the-box imported supplies and selling them for symbolic prices to other institutions.¹⁵⁹ Imported equipment and high quality foodstuffs was a key to this sort of barter trade, and local managers did indeed flood the central logistical apparatus with

¹⁵⁸ "Prikaz no. 78-B po pravelniiu VAO 'Inturist', 5/7/1957." GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 386, ll. 157-158; "Prikaz Nachalnika Glavnogo Upravlenia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR, 31, 12/2/1971," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 514, ll. 67-68.

¹⁵⁹ "Prikaz po Glavnomu Upravleniiu po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR n. 184, 7/7/1972," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 620, l. 3.

request for imported materials even when, central officials complained, Soviet materiel was available.¹⁶⁰ In one such case, the Intourist hotel in Dushanbe requested the center to provide it with \$200,000 of imported products for its hard currency bar, even though it already had half a million dollars' worth of such items on hand. These facts, an auditor dryly noted, were especially surprising as the hard currency bar of the Dushanbe Intourist hotel was closed for business.¹⁶¹ From the point of view of the center such practices were incompetence at best, and corruption at worst. From the point of view of local managers, however, they were necessary preconditions for navigating the deficit system - and if they provided opportunities to skim off the top, so much the better.

Another crucial arena in which Intourist managers had to exercise their creativity was in the retention of their labor force. In this respect, Intourist had several serious disadvantages. First and foremost, as its cadres department complained repeatedly, the wages it could offer were lower than those in equivalent organizations.¹⁶² With few exceptions, it could also rarely offer its employees housing, childcare, and other welfare provisions that many other bigger and more powerful institutions could provide. In these circumstances, informal methods came to the fore. One common method to retain workers, the vast majority of whom were women straining under “dual burden” of both

¹⁶⁰ “Spravka ob ispolzovanii importnogo oborudovaniia i materialov na predpriatiakh Glavinturista i o fel'etone v gazete Izvestia, 'Dzhin iz banki,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 10007, ll. 10-13.

¹⁶¹ “Ekonomicheskii obzor khoziastvenno-finansovoi deiatelnosti predpriatii Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR za 1976 god,” GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 1027, ll. 9-10.

¹⁶² See, for example, “Otchet o rabote s kadrami v VAO Inturist za 1963 god,” GARF, f.9612, op.2, d. 315, l.4; “Spravka o sostoianii raboty s kadrami i merakh ee ulucheniiia, n/d, 1970,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 427, l.71.

working and caring for their families, was providing them with deficit food items pilfered from the warehouses of Intourist restaurants, or using the writing-off method described above to provide bonuses for employees. Thus during several months in 1983, in Moscow alone, nearly one million's rubles worth of consumer goods, and 20 tons of delicatessen, were provided to employees for kopecks on the (dollar equivalent) ruble. During the same time period, the Moscow hotel trust paid its employees a sum total of 90,000 rubles in illegal bonuses every day.¹⁶³

So far, the practices described here were, even if strictly speaking illegal, aimed at promoting Intourist's organizational aims. However, Intourist managers were no angels. With paychecks that, in line with the egalitarian ideology of the Soviet state, were sometimes lower than those of waiters who worked in their restaurants, and yet controlling extremely valuable resources, Intourist managers were constantly tempted to supplement their salaries. Quite often, the illegal practices they engaged in derived from the informal practices they employed in Intourist's service. For example, the manager of the famous Hotel Intourist in Moscow, desperate to obtain proper uniforms for his staff, negotiated directly a deal with a West-German textile firm in violation of Intourist protocols that limited such deals to the proper authorities in the central *apparat*. Was the fact that he also obtained a number of high-quality suits for himself in the deal an act of corruption, or a simple bonus for a job well-done?¹⁶⁴ In a similar manner, a State Control

¹⁶³ "Protokol zasedania kollegii Goskomiteta po inostrannomu turizmu, 17/10/1983, "GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1634, ll. 98-90.

¹⁶⁴ "Spravka o faktakh zloupotreblenii v gostinitse Inturist, 08/07/1971" Tsentr khraneniia dokumentov posle 1917 goda, [TsKhD posle 1917], f. 734, op. 1, d. 388, ll. 7-8.

investigation in the early 1970s found that the manager of an Intourist hotel in Sochi hosted hundreds of Soviet citizens on his premises. Many of these guests were Georgian black marketeers, who presumably paid for the privilege of ostentatiously staying in a hotel for foreigners.¹⁶⁵ However, many others were referred to the hotel either by local bodies that held (or could take away) resources that the hotel needed (a woodworking factory, the Sochi concrete works, a military recruiting office, a municipal bus park), or other organizations that provided deficit items to the hotel (the Russian republican trade Rossbakaleia provided the hotel with 1.3 tons of black pepper, for instance). Such transactions were, technically speaking, illegal, but nevertheless crucial for managerial success in the late Soviet economy.¹⁶⁶ Other misdeeds, however, were less ambiguous. In Moscow's car park, for example, the wives of senior Intourist officials used luxury vehicles for their own purposes while their husbands could purchase barely used vehicles at deep discounts.¹⁶⁷

The work-lives of Intourist employees were also defined by the same interplay between low wages and a wide field of opportunities to enhance them by illegal means. Intourist's archives groan with tales of the myriad ways in which employees benefitted from easy access to its store of material goods. Restaurant workers, for example, diluted

¹⁶⁵ On the Georgian black markets, and the ways in which Georgians were used by Soviet officialdom as scapegoats for the corruption of the late Soviet era, see Erick R. Scott, *Familiar Strangers: The Georgian Diaspora and the Evolution of Soviet Empire* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 155-194.

¹⁶⁶ “Spravka o ser' eznykh nedostatkakh v provedenii soveshchani i ispolzovanii svobodnogo nomernogo fonda dlia razmeshhcheniia sovetskikh grazhdan v sviazi s fel' etonami v gazetakh Pravda i Komsomolskaia Pravda,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1007, ll. 115-117.

¹⁶⁷ See investigation files at GARF, f. 9527, op. 1, d. 5978.

patrons' drinks, replaced expensive drinks with cheaper ones, served portions smaller than the norms, or simply took off with stolen deficit food items.¹⁶⁸ In Leningrad in the early 1960s, one bohemian taxi driver writes in his memoirs, high-class Intourist cars were used as private, illegal, taxis so often that the wealthy guests of the *Evropeiskaia* hotel who paid in advance for a chauffeured car had to use his decrepit cab as a replacement vehicle.¹⁶⁹ Warehouses were a gold mine where plates, cups, silverware, bed sheets and many other items were ripe for the taking. Such practices were often covered up by accountants and facility managers, who unfailingly covered up for the graft.¹⁷⁰ Whether this widespread phenomenon was the result of collusion, criminal conspiracy, attempts to maintain the good name of one's enterprise, or indeed a welfare ethic that viewed access to pilfered goods as part of the benefits packages attendant on working in Intourist, is impossible to determine. It can be said with near certainty that, like the rest of the Soviet economy, work life in Intourist was based on what James Millar terms the "little deal": an implicit arrangement in which workers and the Soviet state traded low wages for job security, and graft as a safe proposition to supplement one's income.¹⁷¹ The implications of this arrangement are profound: while the global tourism industry is

¹⁶⁸ Examples of such complaint were so common that it is practical to cite here (from about 60 revisions I have transcribed in my files, none fails to have at least some variation of these misdeeds in its bill of particulars).

¹⁶⁹ Leonid S'htakelberg, "Pasyunki pozdnoi imperii", *Zvezda*, 1996(5), 21.

¹⁷⁰ In one revision in a hotel in Baku, for instance, it was discovered that over 1 million rubles worth of plates registered as "broken" by the local accountant in a few months in 1971 alone. "Prikaz Nachalnika Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR, 115, 31/5/1971, GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 514, ll. 225-227.

¹⁷¹ James R. Millar, "The Little Deal: Brezhnev's Contribution to Acquisitive Socialism," *Slavic Review* 44, no. 4(1985), 694-706.

renowned for its exploitative work practices, in Intourist, workers, not management, held the upper hand in labor relations - while the balance of payments of the Soviet state, let alone the wants and needs of foreign clients, were often an afterthought.

Foreigners were nevertheless the linchpin of another systematic perk of working for Intourist: hard currency payoffs. Waiters, for example, could get hard currency tips, and barmen allowed sex workers and black marketeers entrance to their bars for a hard currency fee.¹⁷² As we shall see in Chapter Three, such extracurricular activities were crucial for the survival of the complex world that “a-social elements” wove around foreigners. For our purposes, it suffices to know that according to oral history interviews conducted by Crimean historian Alexei Popov, such business opportunities constituted up to 70% of the income of an Intourist employee.¹⁷³

These operations could, of course, only exist with the connivance on Intourist senior cadres. Even before the Andropov-era assault on corruption exposed the widespread nature of such schemes, the head of Leningrad's powerful hotel trust, Sergei Sorokin, was arrested for extorting over 90,000 rubles from Intourist staff in bribes.¹⁷⁴ Memoir literature suggests that this was probably a vast under-estimation of the fortune he amassed.¹⁷⁵ This arrest did not deter other culprits- and under Andropov, large

¹⁷² “Doklad na zasedanii Soveta po inostrannomu turizmu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 837, l. 91.
“Stenogramma zasedaniia, 2/12/1985,” GARF, f. A-385, op. 13, d. 6116, l. 57

¹⁷³ Popov, “Marafon,” 288-289.

¹⁷⁴ “Protokol no. 1... 27/1/1974,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 837, l. 44.

¹⁷⁵ Leonid S'htakelberg, “Pasyunki pozdnoi imperii” Valery Panov and George Pfeiffer, *To Dance* (London: W.H. Allen, 1978), 365-366.

numbers of Intourist workers and their superiors were arrested, imprisoned, or removed for bribery and coverup of foreign currency speculation.¹⁷⁶

Intourist and Global Economic Networks

Bribery, corruption, theft, graft, barter: albeit usually denominated in rubles, not dollars, these activities were the inevitable (and, at times, salutary) effects of the social arrangements of the Little Deal and all were rooted in the peculiar rules of the Soviet political economy. Yet, another corruption case from the early 1980s was profoundly different, in a way that highlights the slow transformation of Intourist's business practices and the states of minds of its senior employees in the twilight of the Soviet era. The case involved one E.V. Phillipov, the manager of Intourist-Reisen, Intourist's wholly owned West-Berlin subsidiary. Phillipov concocted a complex scheme in which he obtained a 2.5 million DM credit line from a West German Soviet-owned bank, which he used to purchase consumer goods he smuggled to the GDR, thus obtaining money to pay back

¹⁷⁶ "Prikaz 10-DSP, 6/12/1984," GARF f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1690, ll. 41-42; "Postanovlenie Goskomiteta SSSR po inostrannomu turizmu, n. 39/13, 24/6/1986," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1856, ll. 162-163. "Postanovlenie kollegii Goskominturista, n. 13/3, 21/2/1986," *ibid*, ll. 44-45

the loans he took. In parallel, he founded a West German firm which directly competed with Intourist-Reisen.¹⁷⁷

Fillipov's innovative shift from Soviet-style graft to Western-style credit manipulation reflects an important underlying reality of Intourist's history in the late socialist era. So far in this chapter, the image we drew is that of a relatively static institution, struggling in 1985 against the same set of systemic constraints it fought in 1955. However, Intourist's everyday operations took place in the context of a global economic revolution: the explosion of the international travel and leisure industry, which, between 1960 and 1970 alone, grew tenfold (from 25 million international tourists' trips taken in 1960 to 250 million in 1970).¹⁷⁸ These incoming hordes of tourists had to be fed, housed and moved around, tasks that required significant capital investment and technological innovation. In direct competition with competitors at the cutting edge of the global travel revolution. More than any Soviet institution besides the defense sector, Intourist therefore felt the pressures of competitive modernization. To conclude this chapter, I will survey two crucial elements of Intourist's modernization program: hotel construction and information technology development, demonstrating how the stable, yet inefficient equilibrium Intourist developed with the rest of the Soviet economy was insufficient to mobilize the resources required to keep up with the rest of the world.

¹⁷⁷ "Prikaz no.2-DSP, 31/3/1983," GARF f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1641, ll. 4-9, "Postanovlenie kollegii Gosudarstvennogo komiteta SSSR po inostrannomu turizmu n. 3/2, 6/9/1983," GARF f. 9612, op.3 d. 1639, ll. 79-82.

¹⁷⁸ Becker, *Overbooked*, 17.

As discussed above, the single most pressing issue on the agenda of Intourist officials as they strove to build a viable foreign tourism industry was the quantity and quality of the hotels they owned. On that front, the conditions they faced when tourism to the Soviet Union was renewed in the 1950s were grim. Not only was the number of hotels and rooms inadequate for new needs, Intourist inventory bore the scars of war and chronic under-investment. As a result of these difficulties, even in the late 1960s, the time tourists could spend in Moscow and Leningrad was limited to 3 nights, foreigners were sent to sub-par hotels, and, in a twist straight out of the pages of *Twister*, it was not uncommon for guests to sleep in hotel hallways.¹⁷⁹

Intourist's 1964/5 reform also included an ambitious construction program aimed to address these difficulties. If in the early 1960s, Intourist possessed around 30 hotels and other tourist facilities, the hotel construction program authorized in 1965 called for the construction of 59 hotels, 50 motels and 9 camping sites by 1968, bringing the total size of Intourist's network to about 150 facilities and 52,000 rooms.¹⁸⁰ Ten years later, however, only 34 facilities with 18,000 rooms were completed.¹⁸¹ While in themselves, these numbers represented significant improvement, they not only fell short of the 1965 planned targets, but failed to address the endemic room shortages which plagued Intourist to the end of the Soviet era (in the 1980s, Intourist still limited tourists to 3 day-long stays

¹⁷⁹ "Protokol no. 10 zasedaniia Pravleniia VAO Inturist, 21/9/1965," GARF f. 9612, op.3, d. 49, l. 149.

¹⁸⁰ "Ankudinov to Sovmin SSSR 18/12/1964," GARF, f. 9612, op. 4, d. 3, ll. 37-38.

¹⁸¹ "Stenogramma zasedaniia Soveta... 27/1/1974," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 837, ll. 70-71.

in Moscow- and housed thousands of them on-board improvised river-boat hotels).¹⁸² Worse still, while original plans called for hotels to be built by Soviet organizations and thus incur all expenses in rubles and profits in foreign currency, starting in the 1970s, construction of Intourist hotels was increasingly monopolized by foreign contractors – making them far less beneficial to the Soviet balance of payments than originally planned.

To understand the the gaps between the promises and the realities of the Intourist construction program, we must turn, as always, to the coordination mechanisms of the Soviet economy. As always, local authorities had little incentive to part with their assets (in this case, real estate) to favor Intourist. Haggling over hotel locations put the construction program off track even in the first months after its launch.¹⁸³ Six year later, construction was still meeting serious difficulties as “the choice of locations for hotels is not done on a scientific basis and does not take the interests of foreign tourism into consideration as a result of... localist tendencies [*mestnicheskikh nastroyenii*].”¹⁸⁴

A similar problem haunted relations between Intourist and its contractors. The crucial fact in this regard was that unlike more powerful Soviet organizations, Intourist had no independent construction capacity.¹⁸⁵ Instead, construction projects were assigned

¹⁸² “Moscow Boats for Visitors,” *New York Times* 7/2/1989.

¹⁸³ “Krupin to Ankudinov, 2/2/1965,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 4, d. 3, ll 29-30.

¹⁸⁴ “Prikaz Nachalnika Glavnogo Upravleniia... n. 49, 8/5/1970,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 427, l. 100.

¹⁸⁵ In the mid-1970s, both Intourist and the Tourism Council of the Central Trade Unions, the body in charge of the bulk of the Soviet domestic tourism industry, appealed to central authorities with a request to establish an all-Union tourism construction authority, but such a body was never organized (“Stenogramma zasedaniia Soveta... 28/1/1975,” GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 931, l. 25.

administratively to a hodge-podge of organizations, usually the construction trusts of large cities, and for smaller locations, the construction units of branch ministries. One such contractor, for example, was the Ministry of Medium Machine Building, the institution in charge of the Soviet nuclear industry.¹⁸⁶ These organizations were often unwilling or unable to fulfill their assignments. Almost uniformly, they lobbied to reduce their construction plans sharply, even after years of construction delays. If plans were not reduced, contractors refused to supply the work-force and machinery that Intourist construction sites required. Employing such tactics, Intourist contractors fulfilled only 30-50 percent of their initial plan targets in 1970, a fairly typical year in that regard.¹⁸⁷

As was the case with its interactions with other institutional partners, Intourist had little recourse but to turn to higher authorities. Here again, the record was mixed. Even when Intourist managed to obtain governmental instructions for contractors to focus on Intourist projects, the latter could find ways to resist such impositions. In Sochi, for example, the local construction agency argued that it could not fulfill its assignments due to a deficit of construction machinery.¹⁸⁸ Other contractors complained they could not make progress as Intourist failed to provide them with the construction materials.¹⁸⁹ If all

¹⁸⁶ “Ob itogakh vypolneniia plana stroitelstva obektov dlia priema inostrannykh turistov za 1968 god,” GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 86, l. 9.

¹⁸⁷ “Prikaz Nachalnika... n. 49, 8/5/1970,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 427, l. 97

¹⁸⁸ “O khode stroitelstva gostinits dlia priema inostrannykh turistov v gg. Sochi i Bratske, 12/5/1969,” GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 86, ll. 44-47.

¹⁸⁹ “Spravka o khode vypolneniia plana kapital’nogo stroitelstva i vvoda gostnitits v eksplutatsiiu v 1973 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 727, l. 70.

else failed, they could just ignore previous promises at will, knowing Intourist had no clout over them.¹⁹⁰

Other construction problems were the results of planning and architectural difficulties. While hotel planning was a topic often discussed by Soviet architects,¹⁹¹ the scale of Intourist's program and their lack of institutional knowledge of global standards of hotel construction overwhelmed their efforts. Looking to save costs, many architects used hotels for Soviet citizens as their base model. As such hotels were deemed unfit for Intourist's client base, planning had to be redone at higher standards, causing significant delays and cost overruns.¹⁹² Other architects erred in the opposite direction, designing luxurious facilities that had to be readjusted to reduce costs.¹⁹³ When construction began, it was more often than not delayed by discovering that plans called for materials Soviet industry did not produce or that Soviet equipment was unable to work with imported materials.¹⁹⁴ All this meant that, by the time hotels were launched, they were often already outdated and in need of serious restructuring. By 1975, Intourist estimated, financial damages caused by delays of hotel construction stood at 100 million foreign

¹⁹⁰ "Stenogramma zasedaniia Soveta..., 28/1/1975," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 931, ll. 16-20.

¹⁹¹ Salmon, "Land of Future," 156-172

¹⁹² "О проведенной VAO Inturist rabote ob uluchshcheniiu obsluzhivania in. turistov (Febvral 1970 g.)," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 427, ll. 6-7.

¹⁹³ "Poruchenie Prezidiuma Soveta Ministrov SSSR 10/2/1971 n. 10, o merakh po snizheniiu smetnoi stoimosti obektov Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR." GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 511, ll. 8-9.

¹⁹⁴ See for some examples among many, "Spravka o khode vypolnenia postanovleniia Soveta Ministrov SSSR, ot 15/4/1964 307-120 'O merakh po obespecheniiu razvitiia inostrannogo turizma v SSSR', 23/11/1964," GARF, f. 9612, op. 4, d. 3, ll. 86-88, "Spravka o merakh po ulucheniu obespechenia..." GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 832, ll. 145-146, "Spravka o stroitelstve gostinichnogo kompleksa na 2740 mest v g. Ialte," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 830, l. 62.

exchange rubles (in 1964, as described above, Intourist's yearly proceeds were about 8 million foreign exchange rubles), with more damages accruing into the 1980s.¹⁹⁵

In an earlier era, this systemic failure might have been construed as a result of sabotage, with dire consequences for both Intourist and its contractors. In a more civilized age of Soviet power, the policy response was altogether different. While I was not able to locate any document testifying to a conscious decision to turn away from the Soviet construction industry, foreign contractors became a growing presence on the Soviet scene. Between 1969 and 1972, Finnish construction crews working under the terms of Russo-Finnish foreign trade clearance agreement constructed Tallinn's *Viru* hotel.¹⁹⁶ In the early 1970s, foreign firms were hired to quickly complete construction of long delayed facilities. By the mid-1970s, French, Swedish, Yugoslav and Finnish firms held 400 million foreign exchange rubles' worth of contracts for the construction of new hotels in Moscow, Leningrad, Sochi and Yalta.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ "Zasedanie Soveta," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 931, l. 98.

¹⁹⁶ "Nikitin to Sovmin SSSR, 29/10/1970," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 426, 30-31.

¹⁹⁷ Spravka po proektu plan kapitalnogo stroitelsva Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1005, l. 35.



Figure 1.2 Hotel Viru, Tallinn

Source: thetallinncollector.com

While foreign contractors were by no means exempt from the difficulties of mobilizing labor, materiel, and inter-institutional cooperation that so plagued Soviet contractors,¹⁹⁸ by and large, their superior experience and technological skill sufficed to create a major jump forward in Soviet hotel inventory.¹⁹⁹ However, the prevalence of foreign contractors created an ideological conundrum: the growing market in Soviet hotel construction created foreign interest in even more involvement in the Soviet hotel construction. By the late 1970s, major hotel chains were fielding offers to fund, construct and jointly manage Intourist hotels if these could be run under their corporate brands and

¹⁹⁸ Florence Pitts, "Hotel Cosmos: How the Biggest Soviet Hotel was Built," *Freedom at Issue*, 58 (1980)18-25. I would like to thank Professor James Heinzen for bringing this source to my attention.

¹⁹⁹ See, for example, "O sostoianii bazy priema inostrannykh turistov v Respublike [RSFSR], 1/6/1983," GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 660, ll. 44-50.

joint-Soviet American management. Up until the *perestroika* years, Intourist forcefully rejected such offers, brokering instead deals that limited foreign participation in Intourist hotels to the construction phase. Credits were agreed upon “only on conditions extremely favorable to us” - making sure that construction was funded by foreign credits, and that foreigners neither managed nor owned stakes in Intourist hotels.²⁰⁰ This nod to the dreams of economic independence embedded into Intourist's foundation could not however elide two crucial facts: Intourist's straddling of the Western service economy and the Soviet economic system was an inherently unstable proposition, and continued modernization required increasingly leaning on the capitalist world. Nowhere was this dilemma felt more acutely than in the unfolding of another major Intourist initiative, its entrance into the information age.

While many many of the difficulties with which Intourist's management struggled were products of the Soviet political economy, they also reflect dilemmas faced by all major modern bureaucratic institutions: how could any large organization gather, handle and disseminate the massive amounts of information required to fulfill organizational tasks and maintain control over the operations of its agents?²⁰¹ Like all Soviet bureaucracies, Intourist was intimately familiar with problems caused by faulty accounting practices, abundant paperwork, and the tendency of lower-level bureaucrats to

200 Nikitin to Novikov, 26/8/1975, GARF, f. 9612, op. 3. d. 922, l. 19. Nikitin to Arkhipov, 26/12/1976, GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1004, l. 165-166.

²⁰¹ J.K. Galbraith, *The New Industrial State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007) [originally published in 1967] is the classical work posing that the Soviet Union faced the same dilemmas as other bureaucratic organizations.

avoid disclosure to their superiors. How did it handle the challenges of the information age?

While the technological and organizational problems involved in handling the myriad pieces of information required to efficiently (and profitably) move travelers around the world were shared by all major participants in the emerging mass travel industry,²⁰² in Intourist's case, they were exacerbated by the unique challenges posed by its institutional structure. This was especially the case for two of most pressing informational challenges Intourist's logistical experts faced: processing information regarding tourist traffic, and managing its hotel room inventory.

The basic document that defined the movement of a given tourist (or, more often, a tour group) during their Soviet tour was called the notification [*izveshchenie*]. A notification was created when a sub-unit of the Commercial Division received a request [*zaiavka*] from a foreign tour operator and contained all pertinent information about the package. The notification was then circulated to various logistical departments that handled reservations for room, board and transportation. If the reservation was approved, the notification was sent to the localities that were slated to receive a given tour group. If and when itinerary changed, the localities had to inform both the Commercial Division

²⁰² Pauline J. Sheldon, *Tourism Information Technology* (New York: CAB International, 1997, 1-15, James L. McKenney, *Business Evolution through Information Technology*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 97-140,

and other localities on the itinerary. For each change, an amended version of the notification had to be reissued.²⁰³

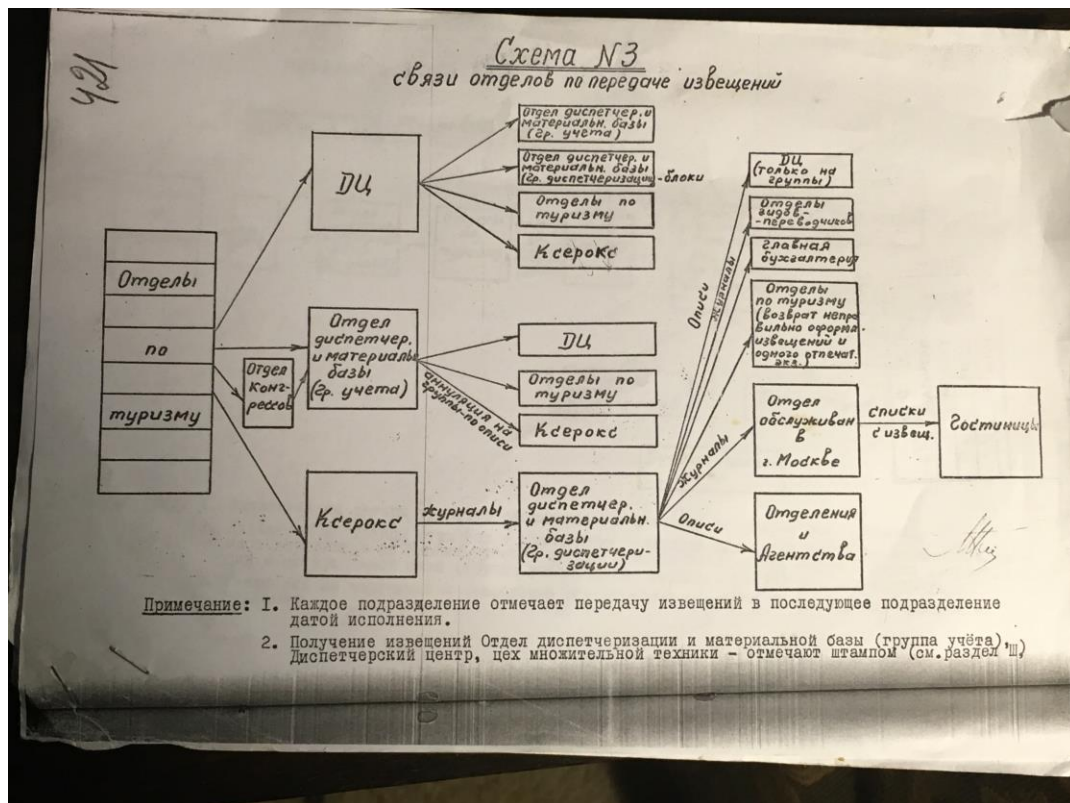


Figure 1.3: Intourist Information Scheme, c.1975.

Source: GARF, f. 9612

²⁰³ “Instruktsiia o poriadke infomratsii ob obsluzhivanii i dvizhenii inostrannykh turistov v Sovetskom Soiuze. 10/4/1972,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 619, ll. 189-196; “Instruktsia po oformleniiu i porkhozhdeniiu izbeshchenii o zaezde inostrnykh turistov v Sovetskii Soiuze,” *ibid*, ll. 403-421

The complex bureaucratic process described above was suited to Intourist's days as a boutique enterprise. By the 1960s, however, the massive increase in tourism to the USSR overwhelmed the Intourist's information processing mechanisms. Some of the problems in this regard were organizational. The dispatch group of the Service Division, the body in charge of handling the planning and regulation of tourist flows, was staffed by transient labor who struggled with the complexities of their assignments.²⁰⁴ Handling the notifications taxed the modest capacities of local Intourist offices, especially since they often had to rely on the not-so-reliable Soviet postal service to conduct their business.²⁰⁵ More importantly, Intourist experienced a serious technology lag. Telephones and fax machines were sorely lacking, as were copying machines (access to which was limited anyway due to security considerations).²⁰⁶ Due to the shortage of typewriters, into the 1970s many notifications were still handwritten.²⁰⁷ As a result of these conditions, one official estimated that in 1965 about 75% of all notifications arriving to and from Moscow, the hub of the Intourist system, arrived with errors and significant delays.²⁰⁸ This informational breakdown stranded tourists in airports and hotel lobbies,

²⁰⁴ "Tezisy o merakh ob ulucheniui obssluzhivaniia inostrannykh turistov v g.Moskve, n/d, 1967," GARF, op. 3, d. 210, l. 226.

²⁰⁵ "Ob obespechenii zadaniu po priemu turistov v 1976 godu gostinichnoi bazoi I merakh po ee ratsionalnomu ispolzovaniui," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1005, l. 112; "Spravka o sostoianii," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 491, l. 117.

²⁰⁶ "Doklad o rabote Lenotdelenia VAO Intourist na kollegii Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu Turizmu pri SM SSSR. (n/d, 1970)," GARF, op. 3, d. 1005, l. 139.

²⁰⁷ "Spravka o sostoianii i merakh po ulucheniui informatsii o dvizhenii turistov i ispolzovaniui materialnoi bazy," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 427, l. 11-119

²⁰⁸ "Protokol no. 10, 21/9/1965," f. 9612, op. 3, d 49, l. 149.

befuddled Intourist employees charged with handling arriving and departing tourists, and often drove senior Intourist officials to a state of despair.²⁰⁹

The structure of Intourist's hotel inventory further exacerbated its logistical problem. As discussed above, a significant share of its hotel quotas were obtained from often recalcitrant partners. The latter assigned Intourist a room quota based on an estimate of demand Intourist had to submit 40 days before the start of the calendar month in which rooms were required (for instance, orders for September had to be filed on July 20th). These estimates were based on preliminary orders submitted by Intourist's foreign partners, who, being aware of Soviet hotel room shortages, often inflated their demands. In these circumstances, avoiding a paradoxical condition in which many of the rooms assigned to Intourist stood empty while tourists were turned away due to room deficits, was only possible if rooms could rapidly be reassigned to respond to new reservations.²¹⁰

However, even if the local city authorities who owned the hotel rooms in question cooperated in this task (which they preferred not to, as they could simply commandeer vacant rooms for their purposes), the technological capacity necessary for this turnaround was simply not available for Intourist's officials. Large Western corporations used business machines for such relatively straightforward information processing tasks for decades, and computers were beginning to transform the science of inventory

209

²¹⁰ For a lively report on the vagaries of living under Intourist's problematic information regime, see: "Otdel kongressov, materialy k kollegii po voprosu obsluzhivaniia," 17/2/1970, GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 427, ll. 19-30.

management starting in the late 1950s.²¹¹ However, in Moscow in 1967 the Intourist team in charge of managing the city's room quota was still using abacuses as its main computational device.²¹²

Distressed by this logjam, Intourist's management embarked on a major modernization drive. Unlike the hotel construction program, while developing a Soviet software was briefly considered,²¹³ Intourist quickly decided on a foreign solution. In 1973, it signed an 11 million dollar deal with IBM for a mainframe based reservation-management system.²¹⁴ Why this significant foreign currency outlay? First, Intourist officials and their academic advisers found that Soviet industry could not compete with the superior performance of IBM's products.²¹⁵ Equally importantly, they reasoned, Intourist could enjoy the privileges of backwardness. In a 1972 memorandum describing the history of IPARS [International Passenger Airline Reservation System], a proprietary reservation management system that IBM developed for American Airlines and was refitting for tourism industry uses, one Intourist official noted that the system took 11 years and vast amounts of money to develop, but was now on sale for a relatively manageable sum. By purchasing IPARS as an off-the shelf package, he surmised, Intourist could in essence outsource technology development costs, leapfrog from the pen

²¹¹ On business machines, see JoAnne Yates, "Business Use of Information Technology in the Industrial Age, in Alfred E. Chandler, *A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Shaped the United States from the Colonial Era to the present Day* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 2003), 107-136.

²¹² "Tezisy," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 210, l. 217.

²¹³ "Kratkie tezisy doklada o rabote Glavnogo vychislitel'nogo tsentra," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 830, l. 166

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 164.

²¹⁵ "Spravka o khode rabot po ASU Intourist i nauchnoi organizatsii truda v glavinturiste." GARF, 9612, op. 3, d. 616, ll. 221-224.

and ink era to the digital age in one fell swoop - and do so on the cheap.²¹⁶ Finally, proponents of the deal argued, since Soviet industry could produce IBM-compatible peripheral equipment, hard currency spending on the project would be limited to the initial purchase.²¹⁷ The IBM deal was conceived, in other words, as a one-off transaction, not as long term technological relationship.

Unfortunately, the Intourist computerization project revealed the perils and unforeseen consequences of relying on Western technology. While original plans called for finishing the project in 1976, the American government took almost 2 years to decide whether to provide IBM with an export license for its equipment and software. In November 1975 the US Department of Commerce denied the export license, on the grounds that the hardware sold to Intourist could be repurposed by the Soviets for military uses. After a series of complex negotiations, IBM was finally authorized to sell Intourist a less powerful version of its hardware in 1976.²¹⁸ This delay forced a major reworking of the project: the launch of the reservation and inventory management modules was delayed until 1979, and the launch of other sub-systems, for example a billing system for Intourist's foreign partners, was punted into the mid-1980s.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 616, ll. 221-229.

²¹⁷ "Doklad o khode vypolnenia reshenia kollegii o rabote glavnogo vychislitel'nogo tsentra, 16/11/1976" GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 10007, l. 161

²¹⁸ "Doklad o khode vypolnenia reshenia kollegii o rabote glavnogo vychislitel'nogo tsentra, 16/11/1976" GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 10007, l. 16.

²¹⁹ "Nikitin to I.T Novikov, 20/7/1977," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1104, l. 28.

Beyond this setback, the computerization project ran into the difficulties inherent in the implementation of all large-scale projects in the Soviet Union. Intourist's newly established Main Computational Center [*GVTs*], was beset by a series of difficulties. The Moscow city authorities refused to provide it with a proper facility to house its computer room, while Intourist's own cadres department failed to pressure universities to put Intourist on the list of enterprises to which computer science graduates were sent for mandatory work assignment (*raspredelenie*).²²⁰ Intourist's office buildings proved difficult to network, while the long-distance network hardware linking southern resort cities to the Intourist's mainframe required more bandwidth than Soviet telecommunications authorities could provide. Even more frustratingly, Soviet industry failed to provide enough peripheral equipment, forcing continued imports of IBM terminals, printers, storage devices, and communication equipment.²²¹ Furthermore, as Intourist's informational needs kept growing while the launch date of the IBM system was being pushed back, *GVTs* was forced to launch a massive program of business technology purchases (accounting machines, printers, copying machines, typewriters and other similar devices).²²² Such purchases and the efforts *GVTs* took in installing and training staff in the new technology could alleviate some of the most pressing problems Intourist's back-office employees faced but could not resolve the structural crisis of

220 "Kratkie tezisy..." GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 830, ll. 168-169, "O rabote avtomatizirovannoi sistemy. ASU Intourist i perspektivakh ee razvitiia v 1981-1985 godu (n.d, 1981)," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1512, ll. 83-84.

221 "Spravka o proverke raboty Glavnogo Vychislitel'nogo Tsentra Glavnogo Upravleniia, 5/4/1974," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 831, ll. 170-174.

222 "O rabote," f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1512, ll. 85.

Intourist's informational infrastructure. Such unforeseen expenditures, furthermore, further encumbered Intourist's hard currency balance of payments.

Unfortunately, after 1980, Intourist's archival holdings are much thinner than for the preceding three decades, and therefore reveal relatively little about the subsequent history of the computerization project. A centralized reservation system was indeed launched in the early 1980s. In 1983, however, the system was not yet connected even to the Moscow hotel trust, let alone the periphery, and therefore could not be used for real-time inventory management and control of tourist traffic, the purposes for which it was designed.²²³ Only in 1988 could Intourist finally retire paper-based notifications. Even then, the new digital system did not extend to all cities in its network.²²⁴ The first integrated database of all Intourist hotels, tours, and itineraries was launched, on an experimental basis, in 1989,²²⁵ at a time when its new list of information technology purchases already included personal computers, the device that was rapidly displacing the kind of centralized, mainframe-based systems Intourist spent nearly two decades developing.²²⁶ At that point, however, computer technology was already far from the most important item on Intourist's agenda, as both it and the socialist system that shaped its unique political economy, were rapidly dissolving.

²²³ "Protokol n. 10 zasedaniia kollegii Goskomiteta po inostrannomu turizmu.." 27/12/1983, GARF, f.9612, op. 3, d. 1634, ll. 154-156.

²²⁴ "Prikaz no. 285, 06/10/1988," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 2012, ll. 32-40.

²²⁵ "Postanovlenie kollegiii Gosudarstennogo komiteta SSSR po inostrannomu turizmu, n. 10/14/1989," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 2108, ll. 36-37.

²²⁶ "Postanovlenie kollegiii Gosudarstennogo komiteta SSSR po inostrannomu turizmu, n. 31/7/1989," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 2108, l. 9.

Conclusion

Like the Soviet system itself, Intourist entered the 1980s in a state of seeming stability that obscured serious transformations that were slowly, almost imperceptibly, eroding its foundations. Like the rest of the Soviet economy, Intourist was an underperforming institution, but not by a degree that indicated that it could not preserve its business model for the foreseeable future. The number of tourists it received grew steadily. More and more hotels were constructed every year. If supplying them with proper services, decent hotel rooms, souvenirs, and, indeed, food and drink was a difficult proposition, things were probably not much worse than they were in 1955 or 1965 - not a given the growth in the numbers of foreigners the Soviet Union received. Intourist's financial conditions was murky, but not murkier than before; on paper at least, it seems to have kept turning a profit for the Soviet state. Bureaucratic reshuffling, modernization efforts, anti-corruption drives came and went, leaving Intourist and its staff seemingly unchanged, year after year, decade after decade.

And yet, step by step, almost imperceptibly, a new reality was taking shape behind this facade of stability. Built by foreign contractors, stocked with foreign furniture and décor, networked by foreign computers, Intourist hotels in the twilight of the Soviet era showed the vast limitations of Intourist business model: participation in global markets, without fostering dependence on the capitalist system. From *Mister Twister's*

fantasy of the market yielding to the superior morals of the socialist system, to the “money for factories” dreams of party officials, the function of Intourist seemed so simple: to sell Soviet-made luxury for hard currency, currency that would allow the Soviet Union to construct an economy unconstrained by dependence on capitalists. However, manufacturing mass-market luxury for the “golden hordes” to which Intourist catered proved impossible under the constraints of the Soviet economy, with its bureaucratic social coordination system, problematic manufacturing base, and lagging information technology system. To meet the demands of both foreign tourists and the standards its managers set for themselves, Intourist officials were forced to retreat from a purely transactional view of engagement with the outside world, under which even Soviet organizations operating in the international trade sector considered the “purpose of trade [...] to use imports to help meet internal goals...[and] the role of exports merely to cover the resulting deficits in the balance of payments,”²²⁷ and came to accept growing dependence on global chains of finance, supply and technology. The story of Intourist under late socialism was therefore a tale of an almost imperceptible Soviet surrender to the forces of international capital, or for the poetically inclined, of Mister Twister’s revenge.

²²⁷ Högselius, *Red Gas*, 37.

Chapter 2: Truth? Which Truth? Contesting the Tourist Gaze in the Soviet Union

In 1960, Eugene Lyons, a former “intellectual pilgrim,” and now a known figure on the anti-Communist Right, was invited to provide testimony to the Senate’s Subcommittee on Internal Security on a topic near and dear to his heart: the gullibility of American visitors to the Soviet Union.²²⁸ The report attending his testimony, appropriately entitled “Beware! Tourists Reporting from Russia,” concluded that the new cohort of post-Stalin travellers were nearly as open to Soviet seductions as their 1930s predecessors.²²⁹ This new generation of “Columbuses” travelling to the “Soviet Atlantis” he argued, were nothing but “innocent transmission belts for Soviet propaganda.”²³⁰

The reasons for the susceptibility of travelers to Soviet propaganda were twofold. First, the visitors’ conceit that they could comprehend a complex social system through a short, state- arranged visit was nothing but folly.²³¹ More importantly, naiveté and, often,

²²⁸ The Chair of the Judicial Committee, to which the Subcommittee on Security belonged, was Mississippi’s James Eastland, one of the Senate’s most rabid anti-Communists and an opponent of the Eisenhower administration’s drive to establish cultural exchanges with the USSR. On Eastland and his Committee see Larry Ceplair, *Anti-Communism in 20th Century America: a Critical History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011), 105-106.

²²⁹ *Beware! Tourists Reporting on Russia*. (Washington, DC: GPO, 1960).

²³⁰ *Ibid*, 6.

²³¹ *Ibid*, 2-3. Here, Lyons’ argument prefigures Anna Krylova’s seminal article about the tendency of Western students of the Soviet system to comprehend the Soviet Union more through the mirror of their notion of liberal society and less through empirical observation of Soviet social reality. Anna Krylova, “The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies,” *Kritika* 1, no.1 (2000), 119-146.

“soft spots” for the Soviet project made them prone to accepting the lies, omissions, and the Potemkin vistas offered to them by the Soviet regime at face value. Given the vast literature about the Soviet Union available in the West, seeing the Soviet Union firsthand obscured rather than revealed, the true nature of the system, Lyons concluded.

Lyons’ fears about Western susceptibility to Soviet Potemkinism were profoundly misplaced. Even a cursory examination of their reports from beyond the Iron Curtain reveals that even if many of them were friendly to Soviet people, very few, if any, mainstream Western travelers in the postwar era returned overall impressed with Soviet system or its achievements. Yet, nagging doubts about the truth of what one could see there and the power of Soviet propaganda to warp it were a permanent feature of Cold War discourses about travel to the Soviet Union. In the late 1950s, for instance, a somewhat mysterious non-profit operated a tourist information center in New York, providing prospective travelers to the Soviet Union with briefings and literature so that “they won’t become easy marks for Soviet propaganda.”²³² More than 10 years later, the *New York Times* was still offering its readers tips on “getting to know Russia by avoiding the guided tour.”²³³

Such efforts, many critics of Soviet power believed, were woefully insufficient to withstand the allure of Soviet propaganda. The dissident Andrei Sakharov argued that

²³² “Tourists Briefed on Soviet Visits,” *The New York Times* 8/2/1959. The GAI also issued a travel guide to the Soviet Union (Dean B. Mahn and Richard H. Marshall, *Soviet Russia: A Guidebook for Tourists* (Washington DC: GAI, 1963). A FOIA request filed to the State Department and the CIA in regards to possible government funding of this institution was filed by me in February 2015, and has not yet received a response.

²³³ *The New York Times*, 5/21/1972.

“foreign tourists who come here will go around the country in comfortable buses, prevented by simple measures from making contact with regular Soviet people.”²³⁴ While giving some credence to Western diplomats and journalists, Sakharov’s fellow dissident Solzhenitsyn found that the impressions of short-term visitors were of no significance in deciphering the Soviet Union, as “due to the skillful efforts of Intourist” their impressions were “altogether superficial.”²³⁵ The myth of the Soviet propaganda machine’s successful befuddlement of “fellow travelers” even survived the Cold War. During the Presidential campaign of 1992, for example, Bill Clinton’s exchange student trip to the Soviet Union in 1970 briefly became a campaign issue, with several Republican Congressmen alluding that he might have been recruited as a Soviet agent of influence,²³⁶ with similar accusations popping during the 2013 New York mayoral election, and the 2016 presidential race.²³⁷

Such exaggerated views of the allure of the Soviet Union aside, concerns about travelers’ access to unvarnished Soviet reality contain a hidden assumption worth unpacking. The notion that Russian, and later Soviet authorities, shamelessly manipulated travelers’ perceptions of Russian reality was a staple of travel writing on Muscovy/Russia

²³⁴ Interview with the *Observer Review*, 8/6/1975, read into the Congressional Record by Rep. Donald Fraser (121 *Congressional Record*, 22899).

²³⁵ “Misconceptions about Russia are a Threat to America” *Foreign Affairs* 58, no. (1980), 799. On dissidents’ perceptions of Westerners see: Barbara Walker, “Moscow Human Rights Defenders Look West: Attitudes toward U.S. Journalists in the 1960s and 1970s,” *Kritika* 9, no.4 (2008), 905-927.

²³⁶ “Clinton Toured Moscow at War’s Peak,” *Washington Times*, 10/5/1992, read into Congressional Record by Rep. Duncan Hunter (138 *Cong. Rec.* E 3201).

²³⁷ “Bill DeBlasio visited Communist USSR in College,” *New York Post*, 11/3/2013, accessed online at: <http://nypost.com/2013/11/03/de-blasio-visited-communist-ussr-in-college/> on 3/1/2016. “Bernie Sanders’ Soviet Honeymoon,” *National Review Online*, 6/24/2015, accessed online 3/1/2016.

since the early modern period.²³⁸ However, the burgeoning literature on travel and tourist studies takes as more or less given that all forms of travel, foreign and domestic, are an essentially constructed enterprise. Thus, sociologists John Uhry and Jonas Larsen use the French theory-inspired term “tourist gaze” to describe the social interaction of visitors and hosts that creates the act of observing foreign locations. The tourist gaze, they write, is “constructed in relationship to its opposite, to non-tourist forms of social experience and consciousness,” and consists of observing outside reality “through frames and styles, circulating images of this and other places,” that condition the tourist to see their surroundings as “interesting, good or beautiful.”²³⁹ Simply put, tourists observe little that is not culturally encoded beforehand as the kind of thing tourists should observe. From this perspective, what made /Soviet perspectives unique is not that Russian authorities sought to manipulate foreign perceptions and block travellers’ access to unvarnished truths about the Soviet Union. Rather, if in Uhry and Rasmussen’s formulation, the tourist gaze is an essentially collaborative enterprise, Soviet authorities and their visitors were often in disagreement about what was “interesting, good and beautiful” about Soviet reality.

In this chapter, I reconstruct Soviet efforts to win this battle of perceptions, construct an image of Soviet reality its propagandists could “sell” to foreign audiences,

²³⁸ Marshall Poe, *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom: Russia in the Accounts of Sixteenth Century English Voyagers* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).

²³⁹ John Urri and Jonas Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0* (London: Sage, 2011), 1. See also the essays gathered in David Pirard and Michael A. Di Giovane, *Tourism and the Power of Otherness: Seductions of Difference* (Bristol, Toronto and Buffalo: Channel View Publications, 2014.)

and find ways to block counter-narrative imported by foreign travellers to disrupt Soviet images. To do so, I explore the world of Soviet “warriors on the ideological front:” propagandists, tour guides and other employees of Intourist, Sputnik and other organizations charged with propagandizing foreign visitors.²⁴⁰ Building on recent works of scholars like Michael David-Fox, Kristine Roth-Ey and Anne Applebaum, I argue that Soviet propaganda in the Cold War era was not an ossified relic, but rather an expression of deep ideological commitment to a vision of the Soviet Union as viable alternative to Western modernity.²⁴¹

Before proceeding, we should address an important objection: despite Lyons’ concerns over their persuasive powers, foreigners’ Soviet handlers often appear in Western accounts of the late Soviet period either as somewhat ridiculous conveyors of Soviet propaganda, authoritarian robots, or voices of the Soviet “person on the street” forced to convey lines they don’t believe in.²⁴² Should their voices and narratives be taken seriously? My answer is a resounding yes. Even if we accept that by the 1970s, few if any Soviet ideological workers took the Marxist-Leninist claims they espoused literally, there are still reasons to consider carefully the narratives they offered to foreigners. First, their foreign encounters were part and parcel of the cultural Cold War, a

²⁴⁰ For uses of this term to describe Intourist guides, see “Stenogramma...” GARF f. 9612, op. 2, d. 286, l. 192; “Otchet ob ekskursionnom obsluzhivannii inostrannykh turistov v SSSR v 1963 godu” GARF, f. 9612, op.1, d. 557, l. 87. See also Igor Orlov “Boitsy ideologicheskogo fronta: podgotovka gidov-perevodchikov v SSSR,” in Irina Glushchenko, Vitalii Kernnyi (ed.), *Vremia vpered! Kulturnaia politika v SSSR* (Moscow: VShE, 2013), 81-95.

²⁴¹ David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment*, Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, Applebaum, “Empire of Friendship.”

²⁴² For an example see: Colin Thiburon, *Among the Russians*, (London: Heinemann, 1983), 14-17, Polonsky and Taylor, *From an Original Idea*, esp. ch. 12.

context in which Soviet patriotism in the face of ideological aggression was still a powerful stimulus. Second, while the narratives offered to foreigners may not have seemed particularly convincing, they still conveyed a set of values that exerted power on the Soviet imagination: multi-nationalism, war memory and pursuit of peace, universal welfare and infatuation with high culture.²⁴³

Finally, on the most basic level, the elaboration of stories fit for foreign consumption was an activity to which the Soviet Union devoted significant attention. Soviet tour guides, for example, were trained and professionalized to a degree rarely achieved by their Western counterparts, where this profession is usually the domain of transient labor.²⁴⁴ This implies that the stories they told, the images they conveyed, the efforts they made to convince visitors who could be convinced and to silence those who could not - that all of this mattered for the conduct of the cultural Cold War and for the maintenance of the stability of the Soviet discursive universe. The gap between the bumbling and burdensome image of the Soviet official handler in Western accounts and the massive Soviet efforts at the construction of a coherent narrative of Soviet modernity invites several key questions. What did Soviet authorities try to achieve in constructing the images they offered to foreign consumers? What arguments did they offer regarding

²⁴³ Aleksei Yurchak *Everything was forever*.

²⁴⁴ Orlov, "Boitsy." An interesting exception to this trend is Israel and the Palestinian territories, where tourism, both domestic and foreign, is a subject of political contention (see, for example, Glenn Bowman, "The Politics of Tour Guiding: Israeli and Palestinian Tour Guides in Israel and the Occupied Territories," in: David Harrison (ed.), *Tourism and the Less Developed Countries* (London: Belhaven Press. 1992), 121-134.

the superiority or at least the sustainability of the Soviet way of life? How did patriotism and cynicism interact in the professional identities of Soviet propagandists for foreigners? How did they handle challenges to the narratives they offered? In short, what do the stories the Soviet Union told about itself tell us about the nature of “real existing socialism”?

On the Ideological Front

Aleksei Legasov, a representative of the International Department of the Central Committee, was the keynote speaker at a January 1961 meeting of the leading cadres of Intourist. The Communist Party, he reminded the audience, viewed the employees of the Soviet tourism industry as fighters on a crucial sector of the “ideological front.” Foreign tourism was an important “channel of our influence on... international public opinion [*obshchestvennost'*].” The effects of travel to the Soviet Union on visiting foreigners could help “refute vicious propaganda unleashed by foreign countries.” A crucial indication of Soviet success in this field was the fact that “the ruling circles of capitalist countries including the USA are making efforts to neutralize impressions [created by] tourist travel to the Soviet Union. They are brainwashing people [*obrabatyvaiut liudei*] ...the State Department is creating work groups on tourism, gives tourists

assignments, creates briefing documents [*pamiatki*] for tourists”- all in order to counteract Soviet and promote Western propaganda.²⁴⁵

With its combination of optimism and (well-grounded) suspicion, Legasov’s address was a fitting expression of the state of mind of Soviet propaganda officials in the late 1950s. As a number of scholars demonstrate, Soviet officials in the late Stalin and early Khrushchev eras were painfully aware of the failings of the Soviet foreign propaganda apparatus. In the form it took under late Stalinism, Soviet propaganda aimed at the West was dry, boring, didactic, and ignorant of postwar conditions in the West.²⁴⁶ Whereas during the prewar years Soviet propagandists could rely on the impact of the Great Depression and the rise of fascism to find friendly audiences, during the postwar boom, they could appeal only to the thin sliver of Western public opinion that was ideologically sympathetic to the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the old, text-based methods of Soviet propaganda proved no match for the appeals of American popular and consumer culture, spreading with the help of new communications technology, innovative advertisement techniques – and massive state backing.²⁴⁷ In this context, the

²⁴⁵ “Stenogramma vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia rukovodiashchikh rabotnikov VAO Inturista, 17/1/1961” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 286, l. 192

²⁴⁶ Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, ch. 1; Rosa Magnusdottir, “Mission Impossible: Selling Soviet Socialism to Americans, 1955-1968,” in Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried (ed.), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Bergahn Books, 2010), 51-72; V.O Pechatnov, “Strel’ba kholostymi: sovetskaia propaganda na zapad v nachale Kholodnoi Voiny, 1945-1947,” in I.V Gaiduk et al (eds.) *Stalin i Kholodnaia Voina* (Moscow: Insitut vseobshchei istorii RAN, 1998), 114-129.

²⁴⁷ On the appeals of American culture and Cold war propaganda, among a vast literature, see Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*, Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America’s Advance through 20th Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2005), Penny M. Von Eshchen, *Satchmo Blows up the World : Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), Nicholas Cohn,

opening of the Soviet borders to mass foreign travel seemed like a golden opportunity to show, not tell, the “truth about the Soviet Union” to increasingly skeptical foreigners.

The potential of Soviet travel to improve foreign perceptions of Soviet reality seemed so powerful to Soviet officials that they (not without reason) both publicly and privately charged that Western governments were waging a concerted campaign to forestall travel to the USSR. A 1958 Intourist report on conditions in international tourist organizations noted with pride that Americans were planning a major push to negate what the latter perceived as “the great advances made by the socialist bloc” in advancing tourism to the Eastern block.²⁴⁸ In West Germany, Intourist chief Ankudinov angrily reported in late 1960, “the press, instructed [*po ukazke*] of the ruling circles of the FRG, conducts a campaign against travel to the Soviet Union,” by terrifying them with accounts of KGB surveillance. This campaign he alleged, brought only 14,000 West German tourists to the Soviet Union, instead of the 20,000 Intourist planned to receive.²⁴⁹

Beyond such statements, which more than anything else mirrored Soviet attitudes to media management to a different cultural context, Soviet tourism officials had a somewhat solid case regarding Western approaches to Eastern Block travel. For instance, Soviet media relished reports on State Department refusals to issue foreign passports to

The Cold War and the United States Information Agency, 1945-1989 (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

²⁴⁸ “O razvitiu inostrannogo turizma v SSSR (predvaritelnyi otchet za 10 mesiatsov 1958 g.),” GARF F. 9612, op. 2, d. 247, ll. 83-85.

²⁴⁹ “Doklad Predsedatelia Pravlenia. VAO Inturist , V.N Ankudinova ‘Ob itogakh turistkogo sezona za 1960 god’ na soveshchanii VGK SM SSR po kul’turnym sviaziam s zarubezhnymi stranami,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 273, l. 62. In fact, as I show in Chapter 3, the real culprit was a hysterical Soviet campaign against espionage, conducted after the U-2 shootdown in summer of 1960.

suspected Communist sympathizers, arguing that this refusal showed “who really is constructing an Iron Curtain.”²⁵⁰ In West Germany, state employees still had to sign affidavits acknowledging travel to “Communist dominated countries” as late as the mid-1980s.²⁵¹ In Italy, Soviet officials and their Italian Communist partners complained, authorities aimed to sabotage travel to socialist countries by denying Communist-affiliated tour firms foreign currency quotas and dragging their feet on issuing passports for would-be proletarian tourists.²⁵² In dictatorial Latin American countries, returning travelers from the Soviet Union could expect harassment, arrests, and torture.²⁵³

And still, flattered as they might have been by alleged attempts to stop travel to the Soviet Union, Soviet officials knew Western attempts to use travel for their own purposes represented a far greater threat. Many foreign tourists, Soviet officials fretted, were either innocents captured by the coordinated Cold War campaign to darken Soviet reality or were “open or hidden enemies of Communism.”²⁵⁴ Foreign governments, media tycoons, travel book publishers, and “ideological centers of anti-Soviet propaganda” all colluded to turn tourists into willing or unwilling vectors of ideological infection. Thus, a 1963 Intourist report complained that “...the American propaganda machinery aims to use

²⁵⁰ A. Vishnevskii, “Gde zhe zheleznyi zhanav?” *Pravda* 7/12/1956.

²⁵¹ I’d like to thank Professor Benjamin Nathans for bringing this fact into my attention. See also, “Reise Bindet,” *Spiegel* 43 (1976), accessed online at: <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-41125167.html> on 8/15/2016.

²⁵² “Zapis’ besedy nachalnika inostrannogo otdela pravlenia VAO Inturist t. Shibaeva K.I s direktorom italianskoi firmy Italturist g-nom Petruichi, 16/10/1960,” GARF f. 9612, op.1, d. 425, ll. 31-36.

²⁵³ “Zapis besedy nachalnika otdela po turizmu so stranami Ameriki, Angliei i Britanskimi stranami, t. Chesnokova G.A s direktorom brazilskoj turfirmy ‘Livrarai’ Vansovichem A.N, 1/11/1966,” GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 133, ll. 56-57.

²⁵⁴ “Stenogramma...” GARF f.9612, op.2, d. 286, ll.20-21.

foreign tourism [*kanaly inostrannogo turizma*] to spread bourgeois ideology and alien mores [*chuzdykh nam nravov*]...to achieve these aims, they recommend that tourists create as many contacts as possible with Soviet people, to study their psychology, their attitudes towards the foreign and domestic policies of the CPSU.”²⁵⁵ Acting under this malign influence, a significant minority of tourists from the West was “gathering sensitive information, engaging in currency speculation, distributing anti-Soviet literature... and participating in other hostile activities.”²⁵⁶

Despite the hyperbolic nature of these complaints, they were undoubtedly grounded in fact, as we’ve seen above and will still amply demonstrate. Here therefore was the cultural Cold War in all its complexity. Soviet officials, skilled in the art of organizing tourist groups, foreign and domestic, to see what they wanted them to see,²⁵⁷ could not but imagine their foes acting in a similar manner, while the latter - motivated by a similar mixture of fears and ambitions, obliged – and thus confirmed Soviet fears.

Thus travel to the Soviet Union became a battleground on which Soviet propagandists had to deploy both offensive and defensive strategies. On the one hand, Soviet officials aimed to “propagate truthful information about the life of the Soviet people,”²⁵⁸ in order to “penetrate the web of lies and disinformation about the Soviet

²⁵⁵ “Otchet ob ekskursionnom obsluzhivanii... v 1963 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d.552, l. 82.

²⁵⁶ “Prilozhenie k prikazu Pravleniia VAO Inturist no. 5, 20/4/1965,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 299, ll. 37-38.

²⁵⁷ Gorsuch, *All This is Your World*, ch. 4.

²⁵⁸ “Ob itogakh raboty Inturista v 1956 godu i zadachakh kollektiva na 1957 god,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 237, l. 68.

Union woven by the owners of Big Media [*bolshoi pressy*]”,²⁵⁹ and thus confirmed at least some of Lyons’ fears. On the other hand, they had to find ways to minimize harm caused by visiting “enemies” and their impact on both locals and their less ideologically committed travel-mates. While neither side would have thought about this in these terms, what was at stake were competing ways to gaze at Soviet reality: will foreign visitors perceive the benefits of the Soviet way of life, or will they serve as witnesses, validators, and, worst of all, disseminators, of “bourgeois ideology” and its claims of Soviet oppression and backwardness?

The Truth about the Soviet Union

In 1960, Intourist released a short pamphlet aiming to provide its guides with an itinerary for showcasing “the capital of the world’s first socialist state of the toilers” [*stolitsa pervogo v mire sotsialisticheskogo gosudarstva trudiashchikhsia*] to its foreign guests.²⁶⁰ Starting on Sverdlov Square (today, *Theater Square*), the city tour looped through Moscow’s historic center, then veered off beyond the Garden Ring to showcase new construction along Lenin prospect, passed by the architectural marvel of the Moscow University skyscraper, and then returned downtown to conclude at Red Square. Along the

²⁵⁹ “Tezisy doklada na mezhdromstvennom soveshchaniu po ulucheniuiu koordinatsii raboty v oblasti inostrannogo turizma” GARF, f.9612, op.2, d. 286, l. 26.

²⁶⁰ *Opisanie ekskursii po Moskve na temy ‘Moskva- stolitsa SSSR’, ‘Massovoe zhilishchnoe stroitelstvo v Moskve’* (Moscow: N/A), 1960.

route, guests were to absorb vistas of the past, present, and future of the socialist metropolis.

At the first point of the tour, the Bolshoi Theatre, guides provided detailed explanations of the flourishing of theatre culture in the Soviet Union, pointing out especially that the Soviet Union was home of the world's first children's theatre, still unrivalled in any capitalist country. Observing the Palace of Unions, visitors were reminded of the love the Soviet people bore for Lenin. Standing on Manezh Square and enjoying the view it provided of the Moscow University's skyscraper, they were told both of the great patrimony of imperial-era Russian science it represented, and of the great efforts Soviet power took to overcome illiteracy. On Gor'kii Street, they were shown the granite facades of new buildings made of materials the Germans had planned to use for a monument to their conquest of Moscow, while pointing out how much wider this boulevard was compared to its tsarist predecessor. In front of the Moscow Soviet building, guides provided information on housing construction and Moscow's emerging transport, heating, electricity and gas networks.²⁶¹

The mingling of past, present, and future did not subside when the tour moved away from historical Moscow. On the recently finished the Garden Ring road weaving around the historical heart of Moscow, tourists were told about the ongoing construction of the Moscow Ring Road, encircling the outlying parts of the town constructed in Soviet times (perhaps in an attempt to dispel the impression made by the frequent traffic jams).

²⁶¹ Ibid, 20-21.

During the ride down to the Academy of Sciences, visitors were told both about rapid scientific progress in the Soviet era and reminded that the road on which they were travelling had been used by Polish and French invaders as they beat hasty retreats from Moscow. The views of Moscow's new South-West District visible along the Lenin *Prospekt* provided an opportunity to discuss both the massive scope and the welfarist nature of Khrushchev's housing program: its self-contained *mikro-raiony*, featuring "buildings equipped with stores, cinemas, clubs, restaurants," parks and green zones, and gleaming new kindergartens and experimental boarding schools "for the education of children who will live under Communism."²⁶²

The tour reached its climax at Red Square. There, visitors were told about the Square as the launching point of "popular rebellions against the boyars and tsars," as well as about the heroic feats of Russia's princes, nobles and tsars: Dimitry Donskoi's victory over the Tatars, Minin and Pozharskii's expulsion of the Poles from Moscow, and Kutuzov's triumph over Napoleon. Following this encomium to tsarist heroes (and subtle reminder that the Cold War was not the first clash between Russia/USSR and the West), they were treated to a list of revolutionary heroes interred in the Kremlin wall. After a brief introduction to the mausoleum, still housing both Stalin and Lenin, guides were to recall the famous November 7th 1941 parade that demonstrated Soviet willingness to fight to the bitter end, and the Victory Parade of June 24, 1945. Then, visitors were requested to look above, at the building of All-Union Council of Ministers, and to the other side of

²⁶² Ibid 32-33.

the Square, where GUM, the USSR's flagship department store, worked to fulfill Muscovites' consumer needs. Connecting past, present and future, the everyday and the heroic, the nationalist and the socialist, tours concluded with a paean to Moscow, a city that was "living its ninth century, but is eternally young, growing, developing, renewing itself. Moscow is a city with a glorious past, grandiose present and even more magnificent future."²⁶³

The Moscow city tour, the first socialist society's love song to itself at a moment when its dreams seemed, for some at least, within reach,²⁶⁴ encompassed an important transition in the way visions of socialist modernity were transmitted to outsiders. Michael David-Fox demonstrates that during the interwar period, sightseeing programs for foreigners focused heavily on exceptional objects: ultra-modern factories, model farms, schools and social welfare institutions that served as harbingers of the socialist future.²⁶⁵ In the immediate postwar years, perhaps due to the general turn of Soviet culture to the celebration of the Russian past, programs for the few visitor groups that entered the Soviet Union balanced such showcases with a heavy diet of museums and classical culture.²⁶⁶

While the structured, stage-managed programs balancing showcases and classical culture never disappeared, and were now the main fair offered to myriad "friendship"

²⁶³ Ibid, 52.

²⁶⁴ On optimism in the Soviet 1960s, see Aleksandr Genis, Petr Vail, *60-e: mir Sovetskogo cheloveka* (Moscow: Corpus, 2013); Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, ch. 4.

²⁶⁵ David-Fox, *Showcasing*, ch. 3.

²⁶⁶ For examples, see VOKS itineraries for visits of European "progressive" delegations in 1948 (GARF f. 5283, op. 8, d. 331, ll. 1-20.)

delegations from Eastern Europe,²⁶⁷ the sharp post-Stalin increase in the numbers of foreigners entering the Soviet Union required a significant change of tactics. First, given the rapid rise in the numbers of visitors the USSR received, the capacities of the showcases (*ob'ekty pokaza*) were exceeded, while the interest of the average visitor in the achievements of, say, collective farmers waned (if it had, indeed, ever existed in the first place). Second, given that travellers to the Soviet Union from the United States and, to lesser extent, Western Europe, tended to be well-educated and often viewed trips there as political endeavors, visitors could be quite skeptical of the official Soviet line.²⁶⁸ Propagandists at the Moscow House of Friendship, for instance, were bombarded with questions ranging from social insurance to the finer points of Marxist theory, revealing very high level of preparation among their “clients”.²⁶⁹ While this sort of familiarity with the Soviet Union was surely an exception rather than general rule, complaints about skeptical or even hostile tourists were ubiquitous among Soviet “warriors on the ideological front” (see below).

²⁶⁷ Applebaum, “Friendship of the Peoples,” Zbigniew Wojnowski, “An Unlikely Bulwark of Sovietness: Cross-Border Travel and Soviet Patriotism in Western Ukraine, 1956–1985,” *Nationalities Papers* 43, no. 1(2015), 82-101, are recent examples of work on Soviet uses of foreign travel to facilitate “friendship” with Eastern European peoples.

²⁶⁸ For a profile of American visitors to the USSR, see: Peter Grothe, *Attitude Change of American Tourists in the Soviet Union* (Washington DC: US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1969), esp. 158-163.

²⁶⁹ On the House of Friendship, see Eleonory Gilburd, “The Revival of Soviet Internationalism in the mid-to-late 1950s,” in idem and Denis Kozlov (ed.) *The Thaw: Soviet Society and Culture during the 1950s and 1960s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 362-363. For questions from the 1970/1971 seasons, see various documents, GARF, f. 9576, d. 79, ll. 1-12. Well-informed foreign interest in Soviet life, and Soviet interest in questions asked by foreigners, lasted all the way into the 1980s. See, for instance “Perechen voprosov, postupivshikh v pervom polugodii s.g sotudnikam organov KGB USSR pri chtenii letksii o povyshenii politicheskoi bditelnosti sovetskikh liudei.” 30/8/1982), DGA SBU f.16, op. 7, spr. 35, ark. 86, f.16, spr. 228-236.

The rhetorical responses Soviet propagandists fashioned in response to these challenges were conditioned by the profound ideological transformation that the Soviet system underwent in the late 1950s. On the most basic level, the narrative offered to foreign visitors was evidence of a profound temporal shift. Visages of socialism were no longer limited to future visions. Rather, socialism was a living, breathing reality. Itineraries were now structured not so much to demonstrate abstract Soviet achievements or heroic labor but rather social objects of everyday life (*kul'turno-bytovye obekty*): housing projects, schools, clubs, kindergartens, hospitals, and clinics.²⁷⁰ Tour guides were instructed to put special emphasis on such objects even when taking tourists on tours of factories and collective farms. Welfare, not production, was the new calling card of Soviet socialism.

Recitation of statistics, the Soviet Union's favorite form of self-measurement, was another tactic that brought home socialism's record of achievement. In what they termed the "comparative method" [*sravnitelnyi metod*] statistical information about the USSR was presented not in isolation but in contrast with data on contemporary capitalist powers and tsarist Russia. The former comparison was usually presented in terms of welfare: the Soviet Union, visitors were told, produced more engineers, doctors, kindergartens, and university students than the United States, while providing social benefits (free schooling and healthcare, universal employment and retirement benefits) that West Europeans and

²⁷⁰ See, for example, "Otchet ob ekskursionnom obsluzhivannii..." GARF, f. 9612, op.1, d. 552, l. 8; "O marshrutakh puteshestviia inostrannykh turistov po SSSR na 1963 god," *ibid.*, ll. 204-212.

Americans could only dream of.²⁷¹ Comparisons with tsarist Russia were made in terms of productivity: the former “backward annex of the global capitalist economy” now shot to a position of global leadership in the production of tractors, electricity, machinery, coal and steel.²⁷² The superiority of the socialist system, these figures aimed to demonstrate, was not a matter of theory or prediction; rather, it was embedded in its capacity to combine productivity, fairness and welfare in the here and now.

Soviet propagandists took a similar attitude towards discussion of national issues. Here again, the past and present, rather than future, were used to defuse questions about Soviet colonialism, Russification, suppression of national movements, the “Jewish Question” and other thorny problems that might be raised by inquisitive visitors. For instance, when planning itineraries to Uzbekistan, a showcase of the multiethnic nature of Soviet modernity,²⁷³ modernization and benevolence were the key items on Intourist’s agenda. Itineraries emphasized the miraculous development of a backward corner of a backward empire into an industrial, cultural, and educational powerhouse. Here again, socialism was described not as a future promise, but as concrete reality: one (Slavic) Intourist official proposed to use indigenous, female, university-educated Intourist guides with “their unveiled beautiful faces... smiling eyes [and] self-confident manner,” as

²⁷¹ See, for example, “Materialy is opyta infromatsionnoi rabote s inostrannymi turistami, Biuleten n.14.1971,” GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 520, ll. 73-77.

²⁷² “Materialy is opyta infromatsionnoi raboty s inostrannymi turistami, biuleten n.17, 1971,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 520, ll. 152-159.

²⁷³ Paul Stronski, *Tashkent: Forging a Soviet City, 1930-1966* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010), ch. 9.

living proof of Soviet achievements in modernizing Central Asia and refutation of the slanderous notion that the Soviet Union was a colonial power there.²⁷⁴

Similar themes on the national question were played out on the politically fraught terrain of the Soviet Union's western borderlands.²⁷⁵ As in the center, statistics and the "comparative method" were the main weapon of Soviet propagandists. Tourists visiting L'viv, for example, were fed figures comparing the meagre educational levels, urbanization rates, and industrial production indices of the backward, agriculturally oriented province of "szlachta-dominated [*panskaia*]" Poland to the industrial development figures of the modern day L'viv *oblast'*.²⁷⁶ In the Baltic republics, visitors were given litanies on the numbers of books, plays, newspapers and periodicals in Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian designed to prove that claims of russification were nothing but slander. Above all, Soviet propagandists argued, Soviet-style modernization and the preservation of national cultures were not antithetical, but served to reinforce each other. Thus, Intourist itineraries for Tallinn emphasized that the reconstruction and upkeep of the Old City, the main tourist attraction in the republic, was part and parcel of the Soviet concern for the preservation of Estonian culture. Veering off from the Old City to Mustamäe, Tallinn's first mass housing district, the same itinerary emphasized that the new housing program was motivated by the same ethics of welfare and care that

²⁷⁴ "Iz opyta raboty s turistami iz GDR v g. Tashkente, [n/d, 1969], GARF f. 9612, op. 3, d. 339, l. 131.

²⁷⁵ On the politics of the Western Borderlands, see Amir Weiner, "De Ja Vu all over again."

²⁷⁶ "Biuleten n. 19 v pomoshch gidu perevodchiku, 1972" GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 625, l. 66-71.

motivated Soviet preservation efforts in the Old City.²⁷⁷ Over and over again, socialist modernity was represented not as a future promise, but as a mature, dividend-bearing model of social organization.

If socialist modernity was the main ingredient in the self-image Soviet propagandists drew for their guests, the peaceful nature of Soviet society was a powerful secondary motif. As Finnish historian Pia Koivunen describes, desire to counter Western images of the Soviet Union as a militaristic, aggressive state was a key motivation in the Soviet decision to open itself to foreign travel in the 1950s.²⁷⁸ Throughout the post-Stalin period, disseminating messages about the “peace-loving foreign policy” of the Soviet state and contrasting it with images of Western brutality remained a key goal of Soviet itinerary planners. For instance, images of the Vietnam War were so common in Soviet propaganda aimed at foreigners that they drew complaints from Intourist’s American business partners concerned that they were creating discomfort among their clients.²⁷⁹

In this context, the Second World War grew ever more prominent in Soviet representations to foreign visitors. War memorials, Tombs of the Unknown Soldier and narratives about Soviet sacrifice, heroism and commitment to peace became central ingredients of visitors’ itineraries. As was the case with propaganda aimed at the Soviet public (in which, as Nina Tumarkin demonstrates, the War took an ever more central

²⁷⁷ “Spravka Otdeleniia VAO Inturist o propagande materialov XXXVI s’zda KPSS, 28/04/1982,” ERAF, af. 1, av.46, s.309, ll. 14-18.

²⁷⁸ Koivunen, “Propagating a Peaceful Image.”

²⁷⁹ “Zapis peregovorov s prezidentom firmy 'Daily Trevel Servis ' G-nom L. Bek, 25/10/1966,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3 d. 133, l. 30.

position as the promises of the Khrushchev era faded),²⁸⁰ the growing obsession with the war served both to express Soviet self-perceptions and explain away Soviet flaws. Damages caused by the war were, for example, an easy retort to Western boasts about material superiority (and, at times, could serve as rebuke to foreigners complaining about trifles like tourist amenities). Even more important, such narratives reminded visitors that the Soviet Union was a hero-martyr nation, and this heroic martyrdom served to reiterate the extent to which the pursuit of peace was at the very heart of its identity. After all, as one training document for guides preparing for the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Soviet Union put it, “if we say that the Soviet people carried the entire burden of the war on its shoulders,” how could visitors fail to understand that “the Soviet people wants peace and is unified behind the Soviet government”?²⁸¹

Image and Reality

In short, in theory at least, the “interesting, good or beautiful” things Soviet propagandists expected their charges to gaze at featured moderate consumerism bound by reasonable limits, housing for all, modern cities, emancipated women, friendly faces, and peace-loving foreign policy: all the benefits of contemporary capitalism, but none of its flaws.

²⁸⁰ Nina Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War 2 in Russia* (New York Basic Book, 1994).

²⁸¹ “Biulleten n. 19,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 625, l. 11a.

Like all imagery presented to tourists, the particular vision of reality had essential elements of truth (the Soviet leadership did indeed seek to avoid nuclear war at nearly all costs, and welfare socialism was indeed at the center of the post-Stalin Soviet social contract).²⁸² Yet, bridging the gap between what Soviet propagandists thought foreigners should see, and their guests' actual perceptions of their surroundings (perceptions that were moreover mediated by preconceived images of the Soviet Union) required herculean labor.

From the point of view of the constructivist literature on travel, the gap between Soviet reality and narratives Soviet propagandists offered to their visitors was in itself nothing unusual. And yet, one cannot avoid the conclusion that the Soviet case possessed some unique features. First, as discussed above, images of the Soviet Union held by hosts and visitors were instruments of ideological war, designed to be incommensurate with each other. On the most basic level, whereas in many other cases when foreigners visit a poorer location, exoticism, backwardness, and poverty serve as essential components of the “othering” effect of foreign travel offered for tourist consumption,²⁸³ Soviet propagandists aimed to represent the Soviet Union as a society that beat back backwardness, and where the most exotic locations were transformed by modernity into “normal” spaces.

²⁸² On the centrality of peace to the Soviet leadership, see Zubok, *Failed Empire*, 192-226. On welfare, Mark B. Smith, *Property of Communists: The Urban Housing Program from Stalin to Khrushchev* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010).

²⁸³ This argument was made, originally and most famously in Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Penguin, 1995, esp. pp. 166-201).

No less importantly, constructivist views of the tourist experience, developed to their logical conclusion, imply that there was nothing especially peculiar about Soviet practices of ideologically arranged hospitality. Travelers, especially travelers taking part in modern, mass, commercialized forms of foreign travel to relatively poor locations, never experience foreign life as it is, but rather exist in carefully constructed bubbles of privilege that both protect them from most of the material effects of relative (or absolute) impoverishment, and produce attractive slices of foreign, exotic life for their enjoyment. In the Soviet case, due to a combination of high-flying ideological statements by hosts, visitors' skepticism, and, above all, the Soviet economy's failure to produce bubbles of privilege rising to the level of upper-middle class Western existence (or, sometimes, even middle class East European existence) , made generating the totalizing effects of tourism an especially hard assignment. What made the Soviet organization of hospitality unique was not that it wrapped foreign visitors in a web of deceit, but that it failed to produce a coherent enough image of Soviet reality to support its rhetorical claims.

As described in Chapter One, the most fundamental problem Soviet propagandists faced when attempting to arrange a satisfying imagery of the Soviet experience was the failure of Intourist and attendant industries to provide for a tourist experience meeting the standards Soviet authorities set for themselves. And indeed, Intourist archives groan with internal complaints about shoddy construction, bad maintenance, insufficient food, faulty

bathrooms, and an immeasurable host of other problems of the Soviet hospitality industry.²⁸⁴

And if these were the opinions of Intourist officials, foreigners often had a field day reporting with barely hidden glee the many ways in which they were let down by Intourist. One rather typical description of an Intourist hotel in the Georgian Republic, for instance, found it: “a distorted reflection of Intourist description: shabby bathroom, broken window, doors that didn’t close, and dirty interior.”²⁸⁵ The comic travel writer Irene Campen devoted much of her account of travelling by car throughout the Soviet Union (memorably entitled *Are You Carrying Gold or Living Relatives?*) to sketches of various Intourist officials who, trapped in the informational chaos described to Chapter One, struggled to comprehend where she came from and where was she going next.²⁸⁶ Poor Soviet restrooms, and especially the endemic lack of toilet paper therein, served for one libertarian writer as a vivid reminder of the evils of price controls.²⁸⁷ Stan Rose, a Kansas-City columnist, opened his *Memo from Russia* in a similar key, remembering “stinking public toilets that befoul the air from Moscow to the faraway Pacific.”²⁸⁸ Soviet

²⁸⁴ Besides examples from Intourist archives cited in chapter 1, see TsMAM, f. 496, op.1, d. 382 (Hotel Ukraina in Moscow, 1959); RGASPI, f. 5-M, op. 1, d. 7 (Komsomol tourist camps, 1961), GARF, f. 9520, op.1, d. 2176, ll. 13-20, on German tourists in Central Council hotels in the mid-1970s.

²⁸⁵ Karen Gilden, *Camping with Communists: The Adventures of an American Family in Moscow* (Sisters, OR: Artha Press, 2013), 34.

²⁸⁶ Irene Kampen, *Are You Carrying any Gold or Living Relatives* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1970).

²⁸⁷ Edward H. Crane, “Fear and Loathing in the Soviet Union,” in: David Boaz (ed.) *Toward Liberty: the Idea that is Changing the World: 25 years of Public Policy from the Cato Institute* (Washington DC: Cato Institute, 2002), 166.

²⁸⁸ Stan Rose, *Memo from Russia* (Kansas City, KS: Lowell Press, 1986), 1. For other examples of conservative/libertarian Soviet travelogues see Edwar C. Diedrich, “The Rose Colored World of Intourist,”

restaurants with their long wait times, kitchens that lacked most items listed on the menu and featured haughty staffs, were “designed to teach you that, just because you have the greenbacks, it doesn’t mean you call all the shots” wrote Max Polonsky and Russell Taylor, the authors of a satirical travel guide to the Soviet Union.²⁸⁹ And of course, Intourist’s flaws were but a metaphor for the faults of the USSR itself. As one British reporter put it: “when I started a three-year stint as... Moscow correspondent, I stayed at the grim Intourist hotel on Gorky Street. It incorporated the worst aspects of Soviet society: incompetence, surveillance, bad standards, incivility and suspicion.”²⁹⁰

Soviet officials fully grasped the metonymic link such accounts established between the Soviet hospitality industry and the Soviet system. As I.G. Bolshakov, a functionary from the State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, explained to a group of Intourist officials: “the political effect of tourism depends, above all, on material factors... How will the tourist be received? How will he be fed? How will he be served [*budet obsluzhivatsia*]?” Here, he continued, lay Soviet weakness: if a “tourist receives a bad room... Has to wait hours for his meal... Has to stand in line to receive this or that piece of paper [*tu ili inuiu spravku*]... He will leave the country in a bad mood.” And since such rooms, delays, and lines were indeed what awaited visitors,

National Review, 6/13/1967, P.J O’Rourke, “Ship of Fools,” in idem, *Republican Party Reptile: Essays and Outrages* (New York: Atlantic Monthly, 1987), 43-71.

²⁸⁹ Polonsky and Taylor, *From an Original Idea*, 106.

²⁹⁰ Richard Beeston, “Frightful Food and Bugs in Every Room,” *The Times*, 11/10/2010. Accessed online at: <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/business/industries/leisure/article2822338.ece> on 4/14/2016. For more memories of the Intourist on Gorky Street, demolished in 2008 to universal acclaim, see Salmon, “Land of Future,” vii.

“foreigners say that the Soviet Union supposedly launched Sputnik into space [*govoriat chto mol zapustil v kosmos sputnik*], but they can’t organize good service. Hostile foreigners are gloating [*zloradstvuiut*].”²⁹¹

Bolshakov’s channeling of Western tourists’ complaints captures the near obsessive zeal with which Soviet officials treated foreigners’ perceptions of the USSR. The files of Moscow’s Hotel Administration, a body that played host to the majority of visitors to the Soviet capital in the 1950s and 1960s, contains numerous translated newspaper clippings of highly uncomplimentary Western travel writing about the Soviet Union.²⁹² The Central Committee’s Propaganda Department commissioned a translation of an American sociological study about the impact of travel to the Soviet Union on American opinions,²⁹³ while Sputnik briefly considered disguising sociology students as guides in order to better understand, and influence, how its guest perceived their environments.²⁹⁴ Most strikingly perhaps, tourism officials were almost gleeful to recount negative comments from foreigners, as these often reinforced their own perceptions of organizational weakness. For instance, one trip report cited, with no negative comment, a West German tourist complaining that “you don’t know how to squeeze money out of us

²⁹¹ “Stenogramma...” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 286, l. 141.

²⁹² “Spravka o zamechaniakh i predlozheniakh inostrannykh turistov, posetivshikh SSSR v 1959 godu, po materialam angliiskoi provintsialnoi i stolichnoi pressy, a takzhe nekotorykh gazet FRG, Shveitsarii, I drugikh stran,” TsKhD Moscow, f. 496, op. 1, ll. 1-6.

²⁹³ A.M. Rumiantsev, “Ob otnoshenii amerikanskikh turistov k SSSR do i posle poezdki v nashu stranu, 24/9/1968,” RGANI f. 5, op. 60, d. 43, ll. 60-71.

²⁹⁴ “Postanovka zadach dlia prikladnykh sotsiologicheskikh issledovaniy ideologicheskoi raboty Sputnika, (N/D, 1969),” RGASPI, f. 5-M, op.2, d. 146, ll. 1-11.

[*kaki iz nas den'gi vykolachivat*],²⁹⁵ and another took to heart a comment from a Yugoslav tourist that “you don’t care whether we spend money here or not.”²⁹⁶

No doubt, Soviet officials could credit some private complaints to the problematic mentality of Western tourists (“these gentlemen,” one incensed official observed “are abusing our patience” [*zlouboterbliaut polozheniem*]),²⁹⁷ while public complaints could be seen as attempts at slander. For instance, articles in the Western press doubting the capacity of the Soviet tourist industry to accommodate tourist influx were deemed by Soviet officialdom to be part of a campaign to sabotage the 1980 Olympics, orchestrated by Western “imperialists.”²⁹⁸ And yet, the zeal with which such comments were collected, indicates something more fundamental was afoot than cataloguing slander. Soviet propagandists knew exactly what foreigners should observe and what they ought to ignore as surface phenomena obfuscating deeper truths. However, they also knew that for foreigners not trained in in Soviet art of separating the observed aspects of reality from its deeper ideological meaning,²⁹⁹ it was immediate sensual perceptions that

²⁹⁵ “Spravka o rabote s gruppoi turistov iz FRG, 10v-295, 10/7/1973.” GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 2008, l. 33.

²⁹⁶ “Spravka ob otritsatelnykh nastroeniakh nekotorykh sotsialisticheskikh turistov v sviazi s tem chto oni iakoby v SSSR obsluzhivaiutsia khuzhe chem turisty iz kapitalisticheskikh stran, 29/10/1975” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 922, l. 36.

²⁹⁷ “Protokol no. 8 soveshchania u predsedatelja pravlenia VAO inturist, 7/6/1956,” GARF. 9612, op. 1, d. 369, l. 146.

²⁹⁸ “Informatsionnaia zapiska APN v TsK KPSS ‘Osnovnye tezisy vrazhdebnoi propagandy v sviazi s Olimpiadoi-8- i predlozheniia po kontr-propagande, 13/9/1978’,” cited in Tomilina et al (ed.), *Piat Kolets*, 189-191.

²⁹⁹ On the Soviet mode of foreign travel, see Ann Gorsuch, *All this is Your World*, ch. 3, 4 and Applebaum, “Empire of Friendship,” ch. 5.

counted. Therefore, to organize a proper presentation of the truth about the USSR, Soviet officials had to learn to perceive the Soviet Union from a foreign perspective.

Unfortunately for the efforts of Soviet propagandists, there was no bridging the gap between narratives of socialist modernity and sensory perceptions of foreigners. The power of Soviet narratives could not, for example, overcome the shock that olfactory exposure to Soviet reality could produce. Soviet restrooms were such an endemic and embarrassing problem that on the eve of the Moscow Olympics they were personally denounced by no lesser authority than than Aleksey Kosygin, the Chairman of the Soviet of Ministers.³⁰⁰ In another high-level meeting involving olfactory matters, in 1970, the Foreign Relations Committee of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet debated the problem of unpleasant smells emanating from dishes in restaurants serving foreign tourists, noting that the problem was that foreigners could not tolerate smells Soviet people learned to live with.³⁰¹ Unceasing complaints from Intourist regarding Soviet the terrible quality (or absence) of microphones on tourist buses it was provided by Soviet industry meant that things were not much better when it got to hearing.³⁰²

³⁰⁰ "Stenogramma zasedaniia komissii inostrannykh del Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR, 30/5/1980," GARF, f. A-385 [Supreme Soviet RSFSR], op. 13, d. 4925, l. 254.

³⁰¹ The problem was caused by the fact that in the absence of dishwashers, dishes were washed by hand at temperatures insufficient to dissolve accumulated fats; no solutions were proposed. "Stenogramma zasedaniia Komissii po inostrannym delam Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR, 29/6/1970," GARF f. A-385, op. 13, d. 2570, ll. 39-40.

³⁰² See, among many other complaints, "Protokol soveshchaniia zaveduiushchikh otdelenei i agenstv VAO Inturist Ukrainy, Moldavii i RSFSR (punktov raspolozhennykh k iugu ot Moskvy) v gorode Kieve, 19-22/4/1962," GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 515, l. 167. "Doklad kommercheskogo upravleniia na zasedanii kollegii Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR, 12.12.1971, o khode akvizitsii inostrannykh turistov v SSSR na 1971 g.," GARF, op. 3, d. 512, l. 18.



Figure 2.1: Intourist Tour Bus (Scaled Model)

Source: <http://sprzedajemy.pl/>

Manufacturing appealing visual snapshots of Soviet reality also proved largely beyond the grasp of Soviet tourism organizers. At times, they struggled with making tourists see Soviet reality in the most literal sense of the word. In 1967, one French group complained that winter travel in Intourist's buses was equivalent to a trip to a dark frozen cavern. Another group christened such buses "hearses," as they were cold, dark, and allowed one to see little of the outside world through their frozen, besmirched windows.³⁰³

While these were extreme cases, such occurrences represented real and persistent problems: the resource constraints and coordination efforts that so hampered efforts to

³⁰³ "Spravka komissii po proverke raboty otdela gidov-perevodchikov sotsialisticheskikh stran, 3/3/1972," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 616, l. 271, "Prikaz po pravleniiu VAO Inturist n. 22-B, 12/3/1970," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 430, l. 41.

feed and house tourists also hindered the production of visual paraphernalia of the tourist trade: albums, postcards, posters, brochures, souvenirs, maps and guidebooks. Intourist official spent decades complaining about deficits of high quality paper necessary to produce everything from coffee-table books to humble suitcase labels,³⁰⁴ while staff uniforms even in such key locations as the Sheremet'ev and Vnukovo's airports were made of "bad fabric and fraying after less than one year of use" – and therefore gave the wrong impression to foreign visitors.³⁰⁵

As their title implies, showcase objects - factories, top collective farms, and increasingly, schools and kindergartens, were key components in the scenery Soviet propagandists wished to arrange. However, here too their capacity to organize a coherent image was impaired. The managers of such objects generally disliked this duty. Exasperated by demands on his time and resources, one such manager declared that he was "sick" of Intourist demands [*vy nam nadoeli*].³⁰⁶ Security concerns also posed difficulties. In 1963, one Komsomol official complained that due to secrecy rules, Sputnik could only take visitors to obsolete factories.³⁰⁷ The state of these factories, even

³⁰⁴ On complaints about deficits of albums and reference works, see among many others, "Otchet ob ekskursionnom obsluzhivanii..." GARF f. 9612, op. 1, d. 552, l. 89. "Krupin to Sovmin RSFR, 25/03/1983," GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 657, l. 88. On suitcase labels: "Protokol zasedaniia Pravleniia VAO Intourist, 21/2/1957," GARF f. 9612, op. 2, d. 237, l. 74.

³⁰⁵ "Spravka o rabote agenstv VAO Inturist v aeroportakh Vnukovo i Sheremet'ev v 1963 g." GARF. f. 9612, op. 1, d. 597, l. 232.

³⁰⁶ "Protokol no. 10 soveshchaniia u predsedatelia pravleniia VAO Inturist tov. Ankudinova, 13/9/1956" GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 369, l. 52.

³⁰⁷ "Stenogramma vsesoiuznogo soveshchania seminara predsedatelei biuro molodezhnogo turizma i direktorov molodezhnykh lagerei Sputnik, 15/2/1973," RGASPI, f. 5-M, op.2, delo 63a, l.72.

sympathetic visitors could not help but point out, undermined Soviet claims about its industrial achievements.³⁰⁸

Similar problems of priority and coordination plagued attempts to provide visitors with showcases in one field where the Soviet Union did excel: high culture.³⁰⁹ Here, Soviet tourism organizers were stumped by two problems. First, the Soviet Ministry of Culture often failed to provide them with sufficient quota of tickets to address foreign demand, arguing that Soviet citizens deserved a priority over foreigners. In the summer months, moreover, the height of the tourist season, the most prestigious troupes and performers were often abroad, as the Ministry of Culture preferred foreign tours (for which it was paid in foreign money) to local shows (from which Intourist benefitted).³¹⁰

These difficulties were all rooted in one fundamental reality: the institutional power of Soviet tourism organizers was nowhere sufficient enough to arrange an idealized image of Soviet life for their clients. This conundrum expressed itself most powerfully in their inability to control the physical spaces in which foreigners moved. Outside the historical hearts of Moscow and Leningrad and other select locations (such as the Golden Ring towns of Vladimir and Suzdal', where major reconstruction was carried

³⁰⁸ "Otchet o prebyvanii v Sovetskom Soiuzе delegatsii rabochei molodezhi Danii," RGASPI, f. 3-M, op. 4, d.8, ll. 135-140.

³⁰⁹ The classical account of the cultural wars during the Cold War is David Caute, *The Dancer Defects* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2003).

³¹⁰ For the argument between the Ministry of Culture and Intourist on this issue, see "Stenogramma zasedaniia soveta pri Glavnom Upravlenii po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR po voprosu "O zadachakh po razvitiu materialno-tekhicheskoi bazy inostrannogo turizma v SSSR," 28/1/1975," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d.931, ll. 80-83.

out in the 1960s), the aesthetic qualities of Soviet life failed to fit the standards they set for foreign consumption.

The former problem was, by and large, a product of some of the basic features of the Soviet economic model: rapid industrial development that left little room for historical preservation. As Shawn Salmon demonstrates, tourism officials, preservationists and Russian nationalists successfully lobbied the Soviet government to fund Vladimir and Suzdal's reconstruction in part by arguing that these historical towns would draw significant numbers of foreign visitors, who would then spend dollars there.³¹¹ This was, however, a rare success. Documents from the *perestroika* era indicate that little was done for preservationists and tourist officials thereafter. For instance, Intourist, activists and local officials argued that despite its commercial potential, the Old City of Novgorod failed to attract foreign tourists, as it was in a state of near ruin due to frequent floods of liquid industrial wastes.³¹²

Similar conditions obtained in other historical sites. For example, on the eve of the Moscow Olympics, the State Control Commission found that the Borodino battlefield, a possible draw for foreign Tolstoy buffs,³¹³ was in a state of total disrepair. Battlefield museums, chapels and nearby historical monasteries were all in a neglected

³¹¹ Salmon, "Land of Future", 268-276.

³¹² See correspondence between Intourist, city authorities, the RSFSR Sovmin, VOOPiK, and local activists at GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 783, ll. 15-40.

³¹³ During his visit to the USSR at the late 1950s, Senator Richard Russel, Head of the Senate Armed Services Committee and an obsessive Tolstoy reader, evaded his Intourist guide in order to visit Borodino (Curtis Peebles, *Twilight Warriors: Covert Air Operations against the USSR* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 172.

state, and funds for their restoration were scarce. Even worse, neighboring factories and collective farms used the battlefield as dumping grounds for their waste and refused to take measures necessary to reverse the damage they caused. As result of these findings, Borodino was removed from the list of “Olympic” objects.

While balancing industrial development and historical preservation was hardly a uniquely Soviet challenge, Soviet tourism organizers faced another dilemma: the glaring contradiction between Soviet claims of alternative modernity and the evidence provided by Soviet human and physical landscapes. Intourist officials were, for example, stymied by the prevalence of begging: both cripples on cathedral squares and “chewing gum knights,” children pleading foreigners for gum and other souvenirs, served as embodied counter-arguments for claims about the superiority of the Soviet way of life.³¹⁴

Rural landscapes posed an even harsher challenge to Soviet claims of alternative modernity. All across the Soviet Union, model collective farms located at some distance from cities had to be removed from showcase object lists, as “by the time they get to these *kolkhozy*, tourists will see 20 lying in ruins [*v razvalinakh*].³¹⁵ An inspection of the Moscow-Vladimir-Suzdal highway in 1970, six years after they became a key ingredient of tourist itineraries, revealed “old, decrepit, boarded up houses... old barracks... a club

³¹⁴ On cathedral beggars, see “Organizatsiia i provedenie ekskursii dlia turistov puteshestuiuschikh po avtomarshrutam [n/d, 1963],” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 558, l. 124. On chewing gum knights and other problematic social elements that gathered around foreigners, see Chapter Four of this dissertation.

³¹⁵ “Protokol no. 15 zasedaniia u predsedatelia Pravleniia VAO Inturiss t. Ankundinova, 23/11/1956,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, 1, d. 369, l.8.

with a broken door, missing windows... decrepit sheds and silos” scattered along the tourist route.³¹⁶

Even entry points to the Soviet Union could not be reshaped to fit forms Soviet tourism organizers considered appropriate. Another pre-Olympic investigation by State Control, this time of the Soviet-Finnish border town of Vyborg, an important hub on the Helsinki-Leningrad tourist route, found that tourist facilities in the town had “dirty walls and ceilings, peeling paint on walls and ceilings...water and sewage networks requiring urgent repairs.”³¹⁷ This finding was especially interesting, as tourist organizers were complaining about conditions in Vyborg since the late 1960s, focusing on the embarrassment caused to the Soviet Union by the condition of its old town.³¹⁸ Looking at Soviet reality from the perspective of imagined Western tourists, Soviet propagandists could not but find the views on offer rather disappointing.

Golden Links of the Chain of Friendship: Soviet Tour Guides

³¹⁶ “Spravka o sostoianii vnov’ otkryvaemogo avtomarshruta Moskva-Vladimir-Suzdal dlia tranzitnogo sledovaniia inostrannykh turistov,” GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 76, l. 86.

³¹⁷ “Spravka o rezul’tatakh proverki organizatsii obsluzhivaniia inostrannykh turistov na predpriatiakh obshchestvennogo pitania Leningradskoi oblasti, 3/9/1970,” GARF, f. A-420, op. 5, d. 721, ll. 20-26.

³¹⁸ “Krupin and Shibalov [Ispolkom, Leningradskaia oblast’] to Sovmin RSFSR, 17/1/1969,” GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 85, ll. 86-89.

The reality described above had clear implications: in the Soviet case, seeing did not mean believing. Since Soviet propagandists could not surround their charges with coherent images of their vision of Soviet modernity, they had to train them in the art of Soviet observation. This entailed filtering out the unessential elements of Soviet reality to get at its underlying truths, and stopping visitors from innocently (or maliciously) mistaking chaffs for wheat. For that reason, as was the case with Soviet travelers both home and abroad, tour guides (*gidy-perevodchiki*) took a key role in elaborating ideologically appropriate perceptions.

Here too, Soviet tourism organizers faced substantial difficulties, succinctly captured by French *chansonnier* Gilbert Bécaud. In his 1960s hit *Nathalie*, Bécaud sketches a fantasy of romance between the first-person narrator and his tour guide, the eponymous Nathalie. The first stanza of the song is set on Red Square, where Nathalie “spoke in somber phrases//of the October Revolution,” while the narrator daydreams that “after Lenin’s tomb, we will go to Café Pushkin //to drink hot chocolate.” After the visit to the Mausoleum, Nathalie takes him to a party at a student dorm room. Later they are left alone, and “there was no longer any question of somber phrases// or of the October Revolution.” At the end of his visit the narrator is left to dream that “one day in Paris// I will be her guide.”³¹⁹

³¹⁹ I am grateful to Professor Benjamin Nathans for bringing this source to my attention, and helping me to vastly to improve my translation.



Figure 2.2: Gilbert Bécaud and “Nathalie”

Source: youtube.com

The duality of Bécaud’s Nathalie as both symbol of the distance the Cold War created between East and West and the means by which it could be overcome, agreed in some ways with the vision of Soviet propagandists of the role Intourist guides should play. In others, it realized some of their deepest fears. On the one hand, as one official put it, citing Kant’s paean to the translator, Intourist guides were “a golden link in the chain of friendship.”³²⁰ a smiling (and, visitors observed over and over again, physically attractive)³²¹ bridge between the Soviet Union and its guests. On the other, the same

³²⁰ “Stenogramma...”GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 286, l. 143. This quote was apparently so memorable that it was used by another Intourist official 11 years later (“Stenogramma XIII otchetno-vybornoï profsoïuznoi konferentsii Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR, 17/11/1971,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 614, l. 8)

³²¹ See, for instance, John Gunther, *Meet Soviet Russia. Book One: Land, People, Sights* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 95. Eric Grant, *Peregrinations: A Man’s Journey. A Biography* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2003), 117. Richard Timothy Conroy, *Our Man in Vienna: a Memoir* (New York, Thomas Dunn Book, 2000), 93-94. Robert F. Ober, *Tchaikovsky 19: A Diplomatic Life Beyond the Iron Curtain* (New York: Xlibris, 2008), 213.

official continued, the very qualities that made the guides good ambassadors (youth, higher education, gender), also were a glaring weakness: “they must wage an ideological struggle in person [*odin na odin*] with bourgeois ideology... They are [usually] young recent graduates... lacking life experience and knowledge of capitalist reality... They require much educational and political work [*nuzhdaiutsia bolshoi politiko-vospitatelnoi raboty*].”³²² Here was a double bind: tour guides had to be friendly and open enough to serve as efficient propagandists, and yet were expected to maintain enough distance to avoid propagandization by bearers of “bourgeois ideology.” In a world riven by fierce ideological struggle, Soviet tour guides played twin parts: both as subjects charged with propagating Soviet self-portraits and as objects over whose minds and bodies both ideologies struggled.

Who were these “golden links”? With the important exception of guides who worked in the Intourist system since before the war,³²³ in the early years of mass foreign travel, they were recent, overwhelmingly female, graduates of pedagogical, literature and foreign language faculties. Intourist officials sometimes demanded tour guide classes to be included in university language curricula, and the inclusion of Intourist in the list of institutions receiving graduate quotas (*raspredelenie*). In reality, Intourist had to compete for graduates with other, often more prestigious, institutions.³²⁴ Sputnik, the other major

³²² “Stenogramma...17/1/1960.” GARF, f. 9612, op.2, d. 286, l. 143-144.

³²³ Khripun points out that these older employees were more likely to be ideologically orthodox than their younger colleagues (“Inostrantsy v Leningrade,” 70-71).

³²⁴ See, for example, “Otchet o rabote s kadrami VAO Inturist za 1962 god,” GARF, f. 9612, op.2, d. 302, ll. 9-11.

employer of tour guides, employed university students recommended for service by their faculties and Communist Youth League cells. Until the 1970s, the seasonal nature of foreign tourism necessitated that a significant proportion of Intourist's guides were temporarily hired (and undertrained) students and recent graduates.³²⁵ However, throughout our period, Intourist's management, for reasons having to do with both the lackluster professional performance and putative political unreliability of temporary cadres, strove to make employment as tour guide into a professional career (for example, in Moscow, it provided winter employment by establishing a Translation Bureau which marketed its services to other institutions.)³²⁶ While statistics are sketchy, the near-disappearance of complaints about temporary guides indicates that by the mid-1970s, Intourist maintained a stable corps of career tour guides.

Given the key role of these “warriors on the ideological front” played in the cultural Cold War, Soviet tour guides faced an intensive training regimen. Starting in 1965, this included three months of initial training, followed by a period of supervision, and, in theory at least, continuous professional development.³²⁷ This ongoing training included, among other things, weekly meetings in which tourists' questions, the international situation, difficult encounters with hostile tourists, and ways to “rebuff” [*davat' otpor*] bourgeois ideology were discussed. Guides were expected to engage in

³²⁵ “Protokol no. 10...13/9/1956,” GARF, f. 9612, op.1, d. 369, ll. 53-54. “Otchet po rabote s kadrami...,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 315, ll. 2-4.

³²⁶ “Perechen' meropriatii uluchenia khozraschetnogo biuro perevodchikov, 28/3/1963,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 552, ll. 153-156.

³²⁷ Orlov, “Boitsy,” 92-93.

country studies [*stranovedenie*], read and discuss foreign language publications, and attend political education sessions and lectures by experts and propagandists. In the off-season, they were supposed to produce a major essay [*referat*] either outlining a city tour or summarizing information on a topic of pertinence to the “ideological struggle,” and before the start of the season, to conduct a supervised model run of their tour.³²⁸

The contents of the guides’ training were an expression of the priority Soviet tourism organizers put on ideological warfare. While Intourist training courses devoted time to language, presentation skills, history, and culture,³²⁹ post-employment training was relentlessly focused on political issues. During the training season in 1958, for example, guides had to learn about the development of the Soviet chemical industry, events in the Middle East, and Soviet-Chinese relations.³³⁰ A 1962 list of recommended literature for Intourist guides included a plethora of Marxist classics, interpretations of the Party platform, works on economics, welfare, foreign affairs and *stranovedenie*, but little on culture, art, or history.³³¹

To think that all or even most guides took this ideological training literally would strain belief. First, given the ubiquitous breakdowns of the Soviet service industry, much of their actual work-time was devoted to various ‘organizational’ issues. The seasonal

³²⁸ See, among many examples, “Soobshchenie Pravleniiu VAO Inturist, 2/3/1962,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 515, ll. 72-75.

³²⁹ Orlov, “Boitsy,” 92.

³³⁰ “Otchet o rabote s kadrami v gostinitse Astoria Lenotdelenia VAO Inturist za 1958 god,” GARF f. 9612, op. 2, d. 417, l. 80.

³³¹ V. Sergeev, *Metodicheskie rekomendatsii po podboru literatury dlia gidov-perevodchikov VAO Inturist* (Moscow: VAO Inturist, 1962).

nature of the industry (intensive work in the summer, which earned guides extensive time off in the winter), meant that guides had little time to hone their ideological skills when they needed them most.³³² Others had no time for such affairs, as they were doing “business” – finding ways to benefit from access to foreigners and their material goods. In 1959, one senior guide was caught defrauding Intourist by inflating the number of tourists in the groups he led, and pocketing the funds and products meant for feeding the phantom tourists.³³³

More importantly, tour guides and (sometimes) itinerary planners employed a full range of techniques that followed the forms, but hollowed out the content, of “ideological struggle.” For instance, despite admonitions to focus their efforts on displays of the Soviet way of life, many guides instead preferred to showcase churches, palaces and other venerable objects [*starina*].³³⁴ Other guides took a “formal” approach to their work, reciting dry facts and figures and newspaper extracts instead of integrating new materials in their texts, which meant visitors had to listen to the same text over and over again in different cities.³³⁵ As was usually the case in the Soviet system, middle management colluded with subordinates, allowing them to rewrite their *referaty* instead

³³² “Protokol No. 1 zasedaniia Pravleniia VAO Inturist, 10/1/1964,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 596, l. 222.

³³³ “Spravka po rezul'tatam proverki knizhek-podtverzhenii uslug po obsluzhivaniu grupp i spets-poezdov s nemetskimi turistami, vypissanykh perevodchikom t. Bulychevym s apreliia po noiabr' 1960 g.” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 442, ll. 18-24

³³⁴ “Protokol no. 13 zasedania pravlenia VAO Inturist, 25/10/1960,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 442, l. 26. “Otchet ob ekskursionnom obsluzhivanii inostrannykh turistov v SSSR v 1962 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 517, l. 1. 37.

³³⁵ See, for example, “Reshenie Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR ob informatsionno-propagandistkoi rabote otdela gidov-perevodchikov Anglii i Ameriki sredi inostrannykh turistov v 1973 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 727, ll. 184-185.

of producing original work, and cared little about the quality of model tours.³³⁶ Whether these realities represented a subtle rebellion against official phraseology, or an example of late Soviet attitudes towards work, the odds are that much of what guides were taught during their training was confined to their classrooms.

Finally, Intourist guides, a young professional group that enjoyed privileged access to foreigners, were not exempt from the general trend of Soviet urbanites' fascination with the West. Tour guides, one official complained as early as 1956: "dress in foreign styles, wear outwardly [*svrekhlestvennye*] hairstyles and hang all sorts of weird decorations that even savages wouldn't put on themselves."³³⁷ Despite bans and admonitions, guides exchanged addresses and phone numbers with their charges, and maintained connections with "their" tourists when they left the country.³³⁸ As visitors noticed with relish,³³⁹ and Soviet officials with anger,³⁴⁰ guides were no less infatuated with Western consumer goods that the most enthusiastic black marketeers. They therefore regularly asked for and received gifts: cosmetics, clothing, and other consumer

³³⁶ "Operativnyi otchet o rabote marshrutno-metodicheskogo otdela Pravleniia VAO Inturist za 1962 god," GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 517, l. 53.

³³⁷ "Doklad na obshchem sobranii Pravleniia VAO Inturist, 25/10/56," GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 369, l. 82.

³³⁸ "Prikaz po Pravleniiu VAO Inturist no. 18, 19/12/1961," GARF f. 9612, op. 2, d. 287, l. 85, "Protokol n.9 partiinogo sobranniiia Leningradskogo otdeleniia VAO Inturist, 28/7/1971," TsGAiPD SPB, f. 2064, op. 2, d. 13, ll. 30-31. Salmon, "Land of Future," 206-207.

³³⁹ Idem, "Marketing Socialism," 186.

³⁴⁰ See among many others, "Otchet o rabote s kadrami VAO Inturist v 1961 godu," GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 292, l. 8; "Otchet o rabote s kadrami v Leningradskom otdelenii VAO Inturist v 1971 godu," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 548, ll. 16-18; "Protokol no. 14 partsobranniiia Leningradskogo otdela VAO Intourist, 5/6/1961," TsGAiPD SPB, f. 2064, op. 2, d. 4, l. 24.

goods (and, sometimes, small sums of money) from their charges.³⁴¹ In light of these predilections, Intourist regulations barred guides and other employees from “starting personal correspondence with foreigners, exchanging gifts... Inviting them home, fulfilling personal requests... purchasing gifts and other items for them, exchanging money... and introducing them to third persons.”³⁴² It seems reasonable to take this inventory as a good approximation of actual practices among Intourist guides.³⁴³

Worse still from the point of view of tourism organizers, Beaud’s Nathalie was not a pure fantasy. As one Georgian Intourist official complained, mixing ideological fervor with traditional paternalism, some guides were prone to inappropriate behavior with their charges, instead of “behaving like a proper Soviet person and a modest, virtuous girl.”³⁴⁴ In other words, whether tempted by the material objects foreigners could offer, the excitement of a new experience, or a bona fide search for love, guides, charged with policing the border between socialism and capitalism, were sometimes seduced by the latter, in the most literal sense of the word. Sometimes, such liaisons led to “treason”- marriage and subsequent emigration. While this problem was discussed in Intourist circles from the late 1950s on,³⁴⁵ perhaps the most telling episode of this sort occurred in the early 1970s, in Leningrad, where three guides who had all recently

³⁴¹ Elizabeth Warren, *Travel Memories* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorsHouse, 2013), 45-46. Mumin Shakurov, “S prikhodom Rossii biznesa ne stalo,” *Radio Svoboda*, 15/4/2015. Accessed online, at: <http://www.svoboda.org/content/article/26812394.html> on 4/4/2016.

³⁴² “Osnovnye pravila,” GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 1212, l. 147.

³⁴³ For an amusing look at the struggle between Intourist, KGB and tour guides over gifts, letters, and personal favors involving foreigners, see Shakurov, “S prikhodom Rossii.”

³⁴⁴ “Stenogramma...” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 286, l. 99.

³⁴⁵ Salmon, “Land of Future,” 207-210.

married West European tourists were revealed to have made a pact to get hired by Intourist for exactly this purpose.³⁴⁶ Such acts revealed a basic contradiction between the words guides were delivering and Soviet reality as foreigners perceived it. If Soviet modernity was indeed superior to the Western way of life, how could this eagerness to leave it behind be explained? If, as a KGB general invited to give a talk to Intourist brass about vigilance [*bditel'nost'*] complained, a 25-year-old Intourist guide married a 57-year-old obese American,³⁴⁷ how could one explain this but by reference to love of money and material things, and how could such materialism be squared with the different sort of Marxist-Leninist materialism featuring in the lectures Intourist guides were delivering?

Such questions indicated how thin the line was between the personal and political in such close proximity to foreigners. Some ideological problems skirted the line between the political and the material: guides who took books from foreigners or borrowed and never returned Western reading materials from Intourist reference libraries might have been reading them themselves, or unofficially circulating them among friends on the book black market.³⁴⁸ Others expressed personal opinions that were, in the context of “ideological struggle,” very political indeed: one male guide, possibly in a better position

³⁴⁶ “Protokol n. 4 otkrytogo partsobraniia partiinoi organizatsii Leningradskogo otdeleniia VAO Inturist, 18/4/1972,” TsGAIPD, f. 2062, op. 2, d. 14, l. 44-45.

³⁴⁷ “Stenogramma...” GARF, f. 9612, op.2, d. 286, ll. 163-164. (Salmon cites this peroration in “Land of Future, 211, while misidentifying the General an Intourist employee.

³⁴⁸ “Prikaz po Pravleniiu VAO Inturist 72-B 3/7/1963,” GARF, f. 9612, op.1, d. 552, ll. 194-199.

to defend his amorous adventures than his female colleagues, boldly argued that no one had the right to ban him from loving whomever he wanted.³⁴⁹

Especially in the Khrushchev era, with its political zig-zaging and growing engagement with the West, grumblings of dissent among guides went further than this. In one extreme case, Boris Shragin, an art historian moonlighting as tour guide and not hiding his unorthodox opinions from foreigners, found the questions about when “had his eyes opened” regarding the official party line bizarre, as he never had a shred of faith in it.³⁵⁰ Others took more ambiguous positions, but voiced them openly to their superiors. In Leningrad, younger guides expressed doubts regarding the usefulness and necessity of the “ideological work” they were required to perform.³⁵¹ At a 1963 conference organized by Sputnik, rank and file guides issued a series of challenges to a functionary of the Komsomol Central Committee giving a keynote address, asking about contradictory Soviet policy regarding Stalin’s memory, the Sino-Soviet split, and other thorny issues. One guide went so far as to ask whether, given that Stalin, Mao and Enver Hoxha had all been denounced as dictators, foreigners might conclude that there was something about socialism that inevitably led to dictatorship.³⁵²

³⁴⁹ Cited in Salmon, “Land of Future,” 209.

³⁵⁰ Recounted in Ben Nathans, “When did Your Eyes Open,” *London Review of Books* 32, no.9 (2010). Accessed online at: https://www.history.upenn.edu/sites/www.history.upenn.edu/files/nathans_when-did-your-eyes-open.pdf on 1/12/2014.

³⁵¹ Cited in Khripun, “Inostrantsy v Leningrade,” 72.

³⁵² “Stenogramma soveshchaniia direktorov otdelenii I lagerei BMMT Soutnik po voprosma agitatsionnoi raboty s molodymi inostrannymi turistami, 3/3/1965,” RGASPI, f. 5-M, op. 1, d. 314, l. 51.

These realities lead to an inevitable question. Were Soviet tour-guides, to cite Anna Krylova's celebrated term, concealed "liberal subjects" forced to play in an ugly comedy? Post-Soviet memoirs and interviews indicate that some guides conceived of themselves in these terms, at least retrospectively.³⁵³ Management complaints about the failure of Intourist guides to police their "treasonous" colleagues indicate that their commitment to discipline by the *kollektiv* was lacking.³⁵⁴ Most important, fear and self-interest helped keep guides on the straight and narrow. On the former side of the ledger lay the complicated relationship many guides had with the KGB (see Chapter 4). On the latter lay the simple fact that satisfactory performance allowed one access to foreigners, their material goods, and above all: the prospect of foreign travel as escorts to Soviet tourists going abroad.³⁵⁵ As former Intourist guide Marina Kenderovskaia recalls, when she, a recent graduate of a linguistics faculty, was sent to work in Intourist, "all my teachers were shaking their heads and telling me how sad it all was, while I was thinking that the world was opening up to me... and that extraordinary travels awaited."³⁵⁶ Such opportunities were surely worth the costs of ideological struggle.

³⁵³See: Lyudmila Noble, *Just Touching the Memory* (New York: X-Libris, 2013); Russel L. Volkema, Elena Turner, *A Russian Intourist Guide Visits the USA* (New York: Vintage, 1996); Shakurov, "S prikhodom Rossii," Alfred Borcover, "Inside Intourist: a former Guide's View of the Stifling bureaucracy," *Chicago Tribune* 6/21/1987.

³⁵⁴ "Partsobranie," TSGAIPD SPB, f. 2062, op.2, d. 14, l. 45.

³⁵⁵ On the social significance and prestige of foreign travel in the late Soviet period, see Donald J. Raleigh, "On the Other Side of the Wall, Things Are Even Better. Travel and the Opening of the Soviet Union: The Oral Evidence," *Ab Imperio* 4 (2012), 373-399.

³⁵⁶ Marina Kenderovskaia, "Moia zhizn' v inturiste," posted by LiveJournal user bloha_v_svitere, at: <http://bloha-v-svitere.livejournal.com/451381.html> (accessed online, 4/15/2016).

Yet, some indications exist that conformism and dual consciousness are not the only terms that apply to the experience of Soviet guides. Kenderovskaia's memoirs clearly indicate that she was motivated not only by material factors, but also genuine affection for her charges, pride in Russian and Soviet history, and plain old professionalism.³⁵⁷ Archival evidence points to genuine outrage and shock at any expressions of disrespect for the Soviet sacrifice in the War (or failure by German visitors to properly reflect on it).³⁵⁸ The behavior of "chewing gum knights" and black marketeers who swarmed foreigners evoked shame and frustration for some tour guides.³⁵⁹ In one of the few extant contemporary texts by an Intourist guide, a 1969 open letter to *Literaturnaia Gazeta* by Intourist guide Viktoriia Vershkova-Sdobnova, the author declared that her life goal was "to meet new people, from all corners of the world... I would like them to be inspired [*voskhishtialis*] by my Motherland, the heroism of our people, to believe in our future... [I would like] to show them the best in our lives, in our people."³⁶⁰ The protagonist of Kira Mikhailovskaia's 1964 novel, *The Intourist Translator* [*Perevodchitsa iz Inturista*], a young Leningrad guide, expresses strikingly similar emotions.³⁶¹

³⁵⁷ Her memoirs, only recently uploaded online, are gathered at: <http://kraeved1147.ru/category/%D0%BC%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B2%D0%B0/nasha-rabota/> (accessed online, 4/21/2016).

³⁵⁸ Khripun, "Inostrantsy," 147. "Otchet o rabote s gruppami 10v-176, 10v-23, iz FRG po marshrutu Leningrad – Moskva, 20/3/- 6/4/1974," GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 2008, ll. 10-11.

³⁵⁹ "Protokol n.5 zakrytogo partiinogo sobraniia partorganizatsii Lenotdeleniia VAO Inturist, 26/5/1966," TSGAIPD SPB, f. 2064, op. 2, d. 8, l. 16-17.

³⁶⁰ "Ja rabotaiu gidom," *Literaturnia Gazeta*, 6/8/1969.

³⁶¹ *Perevodchitsa iz Inturista* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisate), 1964.

Finally, it was not impossible, and perhaps even probable, that tour guides could combine dislike for official rhetoric with a sense of Soviet patriotism and honest desire to defend their country from foreign aspersions.³⁶² For instance, an anonymous poem from the 1970s, a supposed March 8 tribute from the men of Intourist to its female guides, entitled *The Ballad of the Intourist Soldier* [*Ballada o soldatke iz Inturista*], contains the following lines:

The war is over - but you are still in the thick of battle
 For the hearts and minds of mankind
 For future generations
 And the triumph of our ideals.

No guns are pointed at you now
 But still - the enemy is nearby
 And when duty calls you become
 A soldier guarding our Intourist frontiers.

You know all about the Five Year Plan
 And all about that temple too
 You're smart and witty
 But can sock the face that annoys you.³⁶³

What was the meaning of these pugnacious couplets? Did they indicate pride in the patriotic work Intourist guides conducted, or perhaps corporate pride, or annoyance at visitors eager to torment Intourist guides with ideological disputations? Was it perhaps an elaborate late Soviet joke? Some combination of both? Ultimately, the answer is unknown and probably unknowable. As Aleksei Yurchak memorably argued, a simple

³⁶² On the contradictory and at times performative nature of Soviet patriotism, see Weiner “De ja Vu,” Wojnowski, “Bulwark”, idem, “Staging Patriotism: Popular Reactions to *Solidarność* in Soviet Ukraine, 1980-1981,” *Slavic Review* 71, no.4 (2012), 824-848.

³⁶³ “Ballada o soldatke iz inturista,” posted online by LiveJournal user bloha_v_svitere, on 3/23/2016. Accessed online, at <http://bloha-v-svitere.livejournal.com/461191.html>, on 4/20/2016. I thank Professor Kevin Platt for his help with the translation

distinction between truth and lies is insufficient to crack the cultural code of the late Soviet period. Rather, Soviet life, and especially the life of Soviet ideological institutions, was a series of performative acts, in which the enactment of rituals and speech acts established one's standing as a Soviet citizen, and enabled the pursuit of both public and private projects. In this sense, it did not matter whether guides believed in what they said or not. Rather, in order to maintain their positions and the benefits, psychic and material, they conferred, they had to enact a role - that of a vigilant "warrior on the ideological front" manning the increasingly porous borders between the capitalist and socialist worlds. And to enact that role in the face of interlocutors who, inhabited the cultural trope of truth-tellers behind the Iron Curtain, guides had to perform the scripts written for them to the best of their ability. Let us now see how this performance unfolded.

Demonstrating the Soviet Way of Life

In theory, it was all very simple. Foreign visitors, brought to the Soviet Union by their curiosity about the socialist way of life, are organized in a group. These groups are led by a guide who, armed with her itinerary, extensive knowledge and ideological vigilance, explains the ways in which socialism forms the scenes that unfold around them. Well-intentioned questions are given extensive answers, and ill-intentioned ones are resolutely challenged. Along the way, tourists meet Soviet people and encounter demonstrations of

friendship (if the visitors are socialists) or polite disagreements (if they are capitalists). At the end of the visit, socialist guests bring home the spirit of friendship, while capitalist visitors, although perhaps not converted to Marxism-Leninism, relinquish the stereotypes they held about the Soviet state and society, and accept Soviet civilization as an equivalent, if not superior, model to their own.

The problem with this story was that very little in it unfolded as planned. A very large proportion of Intourist clients came to the Soviet Union individually, and were escorted by guides only if they wanted (and were willing to pay for) the services provided.³⁶⁴ Even for group tourists, the authority of the collective did not mean what it meant in usual Soviet practice. Not only were hierarchical relations between ideological authority and the collective non-existent, but as one visitor recalls: “when a tourist bus opened its doors, [tourists] disappeared in all directions and...it was a very unpleasant task for the Intourist guide to pull out all the fleas back into the flea box.”³⁶⁵

In short, nothing but the tour guide’s capacity to impose discipline, and the fear of being a stranger in a land where preciously few spoke foreign languages, stopped foreigners from either scattering to the winds or challenging the authority of their guides. What happened to visitors who left their transient collectives, and the impact their adventures had on Soviet society, will be discussed in subsequent chapters. What follows

³⁶⁴ In 1970, only 46% of Intourist clients from capitalist countries were members of groups –a marked improvement over previous years. “Doklad Kommercheskogo upravleniia na zasedanii kollegii Glavnogo Upravleniia po inostrannomu turizmu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR ‘O khode akvizitsii inostrannykh turistov v SSSR na 1971 g’, 12/12/1970,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 512, l. 3.

³⁶⁵ Robert Van Voren, *On Dissidents and Madness: From the Soviet Union of Leonid Brezhnev to the “Soviet Union” of Vladimir Putin* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V), 13.

below addresses to a more limited question: how, given the circumstances of their work, did Soviet tour guides go about maintaining control and message discipline? How did they establish authority when Soviet narratives were delivered to audiences not bound to Soviet-style discursive discipline?

As far as many visitors were concerned, the clash between tourists and guides was indeed a power struggle between a totalitarian state, represented by Intourist guides, and voices of the free world: themselves. Travelers and journalists gleefully reported on the authoritarianism and dishonesty exhibited by Intourist guides. A journalist from the *Miami Herald* recalled, for instance, that “when we reached Leningrad, we were told that there would be no dinner. The Intourist guide, with no apology, remarked, “It will do you good.”³⁶⁶ Ronald Hingley, author of the 1977 *Russian Mind*, found Intourist guides among the Soviet Union’s best practitioners of *vranyo* – the uniquely Russian (according to Hingley) practice of telling lies and then becoming convinced by one’s own fabrications.³⁶⁷ Similarly, based on his total distrust of anything he was told by his Intourist minders, the science fiction writer Robert Heinlein surmised that the Soviets were so adept in the art of lying that they were misleading the West to think Moscow had 5 million people, when its real population was about 700,000.³⁶⁸ Such tales made an

³⁶⁶ “In Russia, Sign Up or Sign Off,” *Miami Herald*, 7/7/1982.

³⁶⁷ Ronald Hingley, *The Russian Mind* (New York: Scribner, 1977), 85-86, 91.

³⁶⁸ Robert Heinlein, “Inside Intourist,” in idem, *Expanded Universe* (New York: Ace Books, 1982), 342-358.

obvious implication: if the Soviet Union was could not treat foreigners with dignity, how much worse did Soviet people have it?

Furthermore, unlike Soviet people, foreign “liberal subjects” could challenge Soviet power on the public square - and did so with relish. Their most common tool was to “disrupt the guide’s work... [by] asking provocative questions, and sometimes giving commentaries distorting Soviet reality.”³⁶⁹ Thus, Irving Levine, the author of one of the first wide-circulation travel guides to the Soviet Union, found in the course of a trip to Zagorsk that many a Western visitor was “more enthusiastic about having bested his guide in an ideological argument than about the sights of that old monastery settlement.”³⁷⁰ Over twenty years later, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter gleefully described how he forced his Intourist guide to bend himself into a pretzel, trying to answer why the Soviet Union did not allow the distribution of Western newspapers.³⁷¹ Such challenges could grow heated indeed: one erstwhile traveler recalls that when he became enraged with the whitewashed version of the history of the swimming pool that had taken the place of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior presented by his guide, he “grabbed the microphone from her and explained it myself.”³⁷²

How did Soviet tourist organizers respond to this challenge? In the mid-1950s, they couched the problem in crudely Marxist terms, as Soviet officials tried to impute a

³⁶⁹ “Otchet ob ekskursionnom...,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 552, ll. 86-88.

³⁷⁰ Irving R. Levine, *Travel Guide to Russia* (New York: Doubleday, 1960), 49.

³⁷¹ Charles Preston, “My Paper Chase in Moscow,” *Wall Street Journal*, 8/13/1985.

³⁷² Arthur Waldron, “Red Scarcity,” *New Criterion* 32, no.2 (2013), 19.

connection between the class backgrounds of foreign visitors and their opinions of the Soviet Union.³⁷³ However, this analysis was quickly abandoned. Instead, foreign visitors were conceptually divided into three groups. First, there was a minority of visitors who were “genuinely curious,” knowledgeable about, and perhaps sympathetic towards the Soviet system. Open opponents of the Soviet system constituted another group of visitors. Finally, the vast majority of visitors were “philistines” [*obyvateli*,] who, while often curious and well-intentioned, were also profoundly ignorant of Soviet reality. Their ignorance was exploited by the Western media which, as Soviet officials viewed it, pounded into them [*vbili v golovy*] that the Soviet Union was both a police state and “utterly devoid of any comfort.”³⁷⁴ This assumption of ignorance implied an important silver lining: darkness, as any Soviet propagandist knew, could always be penetrated by light. Therefore, what Soviet tour guides required was a strategy to isolate and discredit hostile visitors so that they could enlighten their ignorant peers.

In line with their collectivist conception of foreign travel, Soviet tourism organizers saw the key to their problems in the existence of alternative, anti-Soviet sources of authority providing “distorted” images of the Soviet Union and strategies to distribute them to both hostile and unwitting travelers. As we have seen above, the ultimate culprits in this regard, as far as Soviet propagandists were concerned, were Western media, governments and “ideological centers” working in unison to slander the

³⁷³ See, for example, “Protokol no. 6 zasedaniia Pravleniia VAO Inturist, 2/3/1962,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 515, ll. 34-36.

³⁷⁴ “Stenogramma...” GARF, f. 9612, op.2, d. 286, l.258.

USSR. Therefore, Soviet officials attempted to identify and neutralize such local agents of influence. For instance, all socialist tourist groups and many ‘capitalist’ ones were escorted by a representative of the Intourist or Sputnik foreign partner firm that organized the group in question. Many of the partner firms from the West, especially firms working with various NGOs, were suspected of sending group leaders who worked to subvert the authority of the Soviet guides.³⁷⁵ Western embassies were another alternative source of authority. They, Soviet officials believed, briefed tourists and delegation members, gave them literature to spread among Soviet people and recommended visits to places outside tourist itineraries: “pawn shops, beer bars, train stations, saunas.”³⁷⁶

Finally, in some groups, charismatic or well-educated tourists threatened to seize the initiative from their tour guides. In one Italian group in 1963, for example, a Jesuit professor of philosophy (Luciano Josephi) who was also an expert on “Marx, Engels... harpooning whales and Italian cuisine” and a “brilliant story-teller” became the unofficial leader of the group. From the position of authority he gained, he quietly scored points against the tour guide (*tikhoi sapoi... zabival goly v nashi vorota*) by asking uncomfortable questions, and pointing out disconcerting sights that tourists had no business gazing at (for example, elderly women doing heavy manual labor).³⁷⁷

³⁷⁵ “Protokol no. 6 Zasedaniia Pravleniia VAO Inturist, 29/6/1960,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 440, ll. 90-93; “Otchet o provedennoi Pravleniem VAO Inturist rabote... 1962,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 517, l. 1; “Reshenie... ob informatsionno-propaganistkoi rabote... provedennoi v 1973 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 727, l. 193.

³⁷⁶ “Informatsiia Glavinturista o merakh po usileniu propagandy po kanalu inostrannogo i sovetskogo turizma materialov i reshenii XXV s’ezda KPSS [n/d, 1976],” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1014, l. 188.

³⁷⁷ “Spravka iz opyta bor’by gidov-perevodchiov otdela stran Evropy i vostoka s popytkami ispolzovat turizm v Sovetskii Soiuz s tseliami antikommunizma, [N/D 1963],” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3 d. 557, ll. 144-145.

What could tour guides do in the face of such challenges to their authority? Some, seeking to report that their ideological struggle was a success, sought accommodation with their charges (or simply quietly ignored their extra-curricular activities). Polish tourists, for example, cut informal deals with their tour guides to get some free time in exchange for dutifully attending trips to the Mausoleum and the Museum of the Revolution.³⁷⁸ In another case, Israeli tourists in Moldova who feigned illness in order to avoid planned trips and meet their local relatives instead, brokered a deal with their guide, under which the guide agreed to release two tourists from planned excursions every day, in exchange for disciplined participation by others.³⁷⁹

Especially during the ideologically active Khrushchev era, at least some tour guides attempted more aggressive action against hostile visitors. Foreigners who took pictures of old and decrepit buildings and other unseemly sights that confirmed, to Soviet minds, their intent to embarrass their hosts, were shamed by their guides, and sometimes faced vigilantism by the Soviet public.³⁸⁰ Problematic tourists could expect to have their bags carefully searched when they exited the Soviet Union - searches that sometimes yielded lists of provocative questions, proving to Soviet authorities that subversive activities by foreign visitors were organized and directed from above.³⁸¹ In one case, a

³⁷⁸ "Stenogramma...15/2/1972," RGASPI, f. 5-M, op.1, d. 64a, l.6.

³⁷⁹ "Iz moego opyta s turistami iz Izrailia (pervodchitsa L. Demartseva), n/d, 1963," GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 558, l. 170.

³⁸⁰ "Spravka o rabote Kishinevskogo Otdelenia VAO 'Inturist's turistami- emigrantami s byvshei Bessarabii," *ibid.*, l. 155. "Otchet ov ekskursionnom obsluzhivannii inostrannykh turistov v SSSR v 1962 godu," GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 517, l. 35.

³⁸¹ "Spravka of prebyvanii v SSSR grupp Italiyskikh turistov, 21/5/1964," RGANI, f. 5, op. 55, d. 121, ll. 35-36, 44-45.

customs officer entered the tour bus of a group of Italian tourists waiting to clear the border at Brest, and read to the group unflattering entries about his fellow travelers made by one troublemaker who just had his papers impounded as anti-Soviet propaganda.³⁸² Such divide-and-conquer tactics aimed to isolate and, if possible, humiliate ideologically hostile visitors. Tour guides were encouraged to ferret out and utilize political divisions, especially in groups from Italy and France, where at least some members or sympathizers of local Communist parties could be expected to take the Soviet side in political debates.³⁸³ West German tourists who “slandered” Soviet reality were pointed out to the rest of the group as ingrates who did not appreciate the extent to which the Soviet Union’s difficulties were products of the war.³⁸⁴ As indication of the success of such strategies, an Intourist document cited the example of a story published in the *Daily Pennsylvanian* by a “University of Philadelphia” student who denounced the behavior of members of his group who were expelled from the Soviet Union for throwing literature they received from their embassy (the journal *Amerika*) from the windows of their tour bus.³⁸⁵

When all else failed, Intourist guides were forced to engage in debates in which, it was hoped, their erudition and training would win the day. This is how things went in the

³⁸² Ibid, l. 44. As the Intourist guide that reported the incident wrote with some glee “the tourists’ response was similar to the silent scene in Gogol’s *Revizor*.”

³⁸³ “Biulleten, no. 19,” GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 625, ll. 56a-67.

³⁸⁴ Ibid, l. 37.

³⁸⁵ “Doklad Predsedatelia Pravleniia VAO Inturist , V.N Ankudinova ‘Ob itogakh turistkogo sezona za 1960 god’ na soveshchanii VGK SM SSR po kulturnym sviaziam s zarubezhnymi stranami,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 273, l. 75-76.

case of the aforementioned Jesuit, Josephi. When the latter made the mistake of trying to explain that the Bolsheviks rejected the concept of the family by citing Marxist classics, his guide seized the initiative, noting that Marx and Engels discussed bourgeois families only, and convincingly arguing that the Soviet family was fully intact. When the priest cited article 142 of the Soviet Constitution, banning religious instruction of minors, the next day the guide, T. F. Maniukova, having consulted experts, retorted that Article 143 penalized attacks on religious buildings and ceremonies. As a result of such clever retorts, claims a report praising Maniukova, the Jesuit's control over the group was broken.³⁸⁶

Maniukova's alleged victory over Josephi hints at perhaps the most important asset Soviet propagandists possessed as they waged ideological struggle with hostile visitors. As long as their charges stayed with their groups, the Soviet side controlled their time and itineraries. Intourist guides, as mentioned above, were trained to drown opponents with facts and figures, in a way that could generate respectful silence. One hostile observer conceded the efficacy of this tactic: "during the bus ride from the airport to the hotel where the guide would sum up an enormous amount of facts... whether intended or not, this information overload caused the visitors to soon stop listening and to accept the greatness of the Soviet system without any discussion."³⁸⁷ The Soviet side also controlled access to people and institutions visitors wanted to meet and examine. For

³⁸⁶ "Spravka," GARF f. 9612, op. 1, d. 557, ll. 145-146.

³⁸⁷ Van Voren, *Madness*, 13.

professionals who visited the Soviet Union in the 1950s and 1960s in order to learn about Soviet schools, hospitals, and scientific institutions, Intourist's aid was instrumental,³⁸⁸ and the members of the Soviet intelligentsia for whom exchanging knowledge with foreigners was a boon, must surely have appreciated the opportunity Intourist provided and structured their words and behavior appropriately. Soviet officials could also appeal to visitors' egos: one 1961 delegation of Italian artists, ambivalent about the Soviet Union due to the campaign against formal art launched by the regime, had its mood lifted when cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin suddenly dropped in to visit the delegation.³⁸⁹

Finally, one must keep in mind that, as long as foreign contact with Soviet people was mediated by Soviet institutions, even in this post-Stalinist era, it was a highly choreographed affair. As Jeff Hardy demonstrates, in the 1950s, foreign visitors to Soviet prisons could still be convinced they served as laboratories for the "new man."³⁹⁰ Muslim clerics from Pakistan and Syria were impressed by the respect accorded to Islam in Soviet society after a series of trips in the 1950s in which Soviet authorities pulled all the stops

³⁸⁸ "Spravka o poseshchenii inostrannymi turistami iz kap. stran nauchnykh i meditsinskikh uchrezhdenii, nauchno-issledovatelnykh institutov i promyshlennykh predpriatii, organizovannykh pomimo VAO Inturist v 1959 godu," GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 268, ll. 142-157. Such visits did not always live positive impression. For instance, the sociologist Herschel Alt entitled one of the chapters of his book on his visit to the Soviet Union (*Russia's Children: the First Report on Child Welfare in the Soviet Union* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1959)) "Our Struggle with Intourist." In line with the extreme sensitivity of Soviet tourist officials to criticism, the 1959 report on these visits cited in this footnote was concluded with a short summary of his complaints.

³⁸⁹ "Otchet o prebyvanii v Sov. Soiuzhe gruppy Italiiskikh turistov, 12/1965," RGASPI-M, f. 5, op. 1, d. 355, l. 4.

³⁹⁰ Hardy, "Gulag Tourism"

to make them feel welcome.³⁹¹ Even, or perhaps especially, debates and round tables could easily be stage-managed: a Komsomol document from the early 1960s demonstrates the staging instructions of debates between Soviet and Western youth groups. Komsomol authorities were charged with selecting Soviet participants, devising the list of topics to be discussed, assigning roles to different Soviet participants and anticipating possible questions the foreigners might raise.³⁹² In such conditions, the Soviets could be sure that a victory, or at least, conditions sufficient to report victory, could be achieved in every battle in the war on “bourgeois ideology.”

Conclusion

The patterns of “ideological struggle” described above lasted all the way down to the *perestroika* years. As Taylor and Polonsky archly observe, disputations between Soviet propagandists and Western “Defenders of Freedom” became, by the 1980s, a well-choreographed ritual that kept both sides satisfied.³⁹³ As mentioned above, in the run-up

³⁹¹ “Informatsia o prebyvanii v SSSR delegatsii musulmanskikh dukhovnykh deiatelei Siriiskogo Raiona Ob’edinenenoi Arabskoi Respubliki v iule i avguste 1958 goda,” GARF, f. 6991, op. 4, d. 93, ll. 109-128.

³⁹² ““Stenogramma soveshchania-seminara po voprosam agitatsionno-propagandisticheskoi raboty s molodymi inostrannymi turistami, 2/2/1965,” RGASPI, f. 5-M, op. 1, d. 313, ll. 7-11.

³⁹³ According to them: “The Soviet activist, primed for a good clean kill, is most happy when faced with a Western ‘Defender of Freedom’, whose sole purpose in coming to the USSR, is to harangue every available Soviet about the evils of Marxism-Leninism (Afghanistan, Stalin, etc.)... The Soviet becomes animated as he recognizes in his assailant the same qualities that have brought *him* to where he is today- obduracy, wilful ignorance and slavish sycophancy... The *agent provocateur* sent by a hostile imperialist government to upset the fragile edifice of Proletarian Internationalism is met with the tried and tested method of

to the Moscow Olympics, Soviet authorities put massive efforts into cleaning up Soviet cities, reconstructing churches and monuments, stocking their shops with food, and protecting them from the approaches by problematic social elements, efforts that were reported in the West as another proof of Soviet duplicity - “Potemkin Olympics,” as the New York Times editorial board described it.³⁹⁴ The early 1980s saw Billy Graham’s Soviet visit, where the venerable evangelist, formerly a fierce anti-Communist, attested to the freedom of religion in the Soviet Union (and, for good measure, the excellent food situation there.)³⁹⁵ The American twelve-year-old Samantha Smith, who wrote a personal letter to Yuri Andropov and received a personal invitation to visit the Soviet Union and spend some time in the *Artek* summer camp, became a media sensation on both sides of the Cold War divide.³⁹⁶ In the increasingly heated atmosphere of the Second Cold War, such peace tourism became a sufficiently common activity among left-wing Westerners that the conservative satirist P.J. O’Rourke could publish a travelogue

attrition warfare - and is worn down by an extremely tedious tit-for-tat debate.” *From an Original Idea*, 154-155.

³⁹⁴ “The Potemkin Olympics,” *New York Times*, 7/17/1980. See also Kevin Klose, *Closed Society*, 286-289. Needless to say, such Olympic facelift was hardly a Soviet phenomenon. As the AP recently reported, 8 years later, preparations for the Seoul Olympics included enslavement and even murders of what the Soviet Union would have termed “socially undesirable elements.” (“Korea Covered up Mass Abuse, Killings of ‘Vagrants’,” *Associated Press*, 4/19/2016. Accessed online at: <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/c22de3a565fe4e85a0508bbbd72c3c1b/ap-s-korea-covered-mass-abuse-killings-vagrants> on 4/20/2016.

³⁹⁵ Nagorski, *Reluctant Farewell*, 196-202. John D. Van Vyver and John Witte Jr. (ed.) *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective* (Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1996), 176-182. On Western reception of Billy Graham’s visit, see Emily Baran, “Human Rights, Soviet Believers, and Billy Graham: America’s Pastor in Moscow, 1982,” unpublished paper, Annual Meeting of the Association of Slavic, Eurasian and East European Studies, 11/20/2015.

³⁹⁶ For accounts of her trip, see Smith’s memorial website: <http://www.samanthasmith.info/> (accessed online, 4/5/2016). Also see “O Samante, shokoladkakh, bantikakh i bditel’nykh spetsssluzhbakh: Samanta Smit v Arteke – kak eto bylo na samom dele (vospominaniia ee vozhatoi,” accessed online at: <http://artekovetc.ru/samsmitvoj.html> on 4/5/2016.

skewering participants of a “peace cruise” on the Volga and their fellow-travelling naiveté.³⁹⁷ In the meanwhile, Intourist and other tourist organizations kept devoting significant resources to propaganda work. In 1983, for instance, over 1,000 propagandists provided lectures and roundtable discussions for over 443,000 tourists, in addition to the daily labors of Soviet tour guides.³⁹⁸ The latter, in the meanwhile, kept honing their craft: As late as 1987, guides were expected to read and digest a highly professionalized review of recent Western historiography on the October Revolution.³⁹⁹

And yet, the tenor of “ideological struggle” shifted, in subtle and important ways. As Shawn Salmon points out, antiquities once denounced by zealous planners, now became officially enshrined as a key tourist draws.⁴⁰⁰ Careful reports about the mood, ideological divisions, responses and questions asked by individual tour groups compiled by Intourist and Sputnik guides in the 1950s and 1960s nearly disappear from Intourist and Sputnik archives in the 1970s and 1980s, while propaganda work took less and less space on the agendas of Intourist board meetings. As everywhere else in Soviet life, the experimentation and urgency that characterized the 1960s was replaced by routine, sober economic considerations, and a whiff of imperial nostalgia.

Does this shift mean that ideology no longer defined the struggle over the tourist gaze in the Soviet Union? Not at all. Information sheets for Soviet tour guides

³⁹⁷ “Ship of Fools.”

³⁹⁸ “Spravka o merakh po usileniiu lekstionnoi propagandy sredi inostrannykh turistov, poseshchaiushchikh SSSR, 5/9/1984,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1683, ll. 242-246.

³⁹⁹ Z.I Aksianova, *Velikii Oktiabr. Mify i realnost. Metodicheskie razrabotki v pomoshch gidu-perevodchiku* (Novosibirsk: Goskominturist, 1987).

⁴⁰⁰ Salmon, “Land of Future,” 267-284.

(*biulleteni*), arguably more important than ever in this era of rote repetition, still brim with directions on the proper waging of ideological struggle. Still, instructions from the 1970s and 1980s were no longer focused on enlightenment, persuasion or even coercion. Rather, their aim is to deflect all questions and end all discussions. Thus, when asked about human rights violations in the Soviet Union, guides were told to attack American atrocities in Vietnam. When English visitors asked about the Soviet constitution of 1977, they were rather bizarrely told that “England has no constitution, and that...no one asked the English about how their country is governed.”⁴⁰¹ When economic questions were raised, data on inflation, unemployment and racial tensions in the West were cited, and guides “reminded [listeners] that they know better about the material needs of their own people than do freshly arrived guests [*priehzhye gosti*].”⁴⁰² Canadians were told their country was rapidly becoming an American colony.⁴⁰³ Visitors who raised concerns about freedom of travel in the Soviet Union in light of the Helsinki process were told that it was the US that was sabotaging the agreement. If discussion in this vein continued, guides were told to address the other members of the group and indicate that such discussions were themselves proof of American imperialists’ hatred for détente.⁴⁰⁴ Such statements could not, and I would venture to guess, did not, convince anyone to embrace Soviet views. Rather, they were an invitation to remain silent, to let the ritual of

⁴⁰¹ “Informatsionnyi biulleten dlia gidov n. 54 [1979,] GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d.1235, l. 5.

⁴⁰² *Ibid*, l. 9.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid*, l. 58.

⁴⁰⁴ “Informatsionnyi biuletten dlia gidov, n. 59 [1978], GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1358, l. 78.

hospitality take over, to accept the Soviet order of things as long as one was inside Soviet borders, and to let guides be guides and guests be guests.

On some level, this switch from debate in the 1960s to expectations of silence in the 1970s was an element of the general shift of Soviet socio-political life to silent conformism during the Brezhnev period. However, I would argue, more was at stake here than ideological apathy. The officially sanctioned image of the Soviet Union as a superior alternative to capitalist modernity was, for reasons outlined above, unpersuasive to foreigners. Manipulating physical surroundings to adjust Soviet realities to fit Western demands proved beyond the capacity of Soviet propagandists. Changing Soviet narratives to account for this failure was an impossibility as long as official ideology remained sacrosanct. In these circumstances, the defiance thrown back at skeptical foreigners by Soviet tour guides served as evidence of the solidity of this ideology, a reminder that the Soviet model of modernity was there to stay, protected not only by guns and tanks and nuclear weapons, but also by the willingness of Soviet people to repeat its strictures, no matter how hollow they seemed. In this sense, the most important “truth about the Soviet Union” was that, as far as the Soviet Union was concerned, the self-images it generated were immutable, irrefutable, and not up for discussion.

Chapter 3: Speculators, Frivolous Girls and Other A-Social Elements

On September 15, 1960, several months after the Soviet shoot-down of Gary Powers' U-2 spy airplane triggered an international crisis and renewed concerns over imperialist aggression and espionage,⁴⁰⁵ the readers of the *Komsomolskaia Pravda* were treated to an article with a familiar headline: "Vigilance is our Weapon."⁴⁰⁶ The author, V.A. Liakin, a *raikom* deputy from Leningrad, made a simple point. Given that the old exploiting classes had been eliminated in the USSR, imperialist powers could no longer rely on class-hostile elements to do their dirty work. Since "natural" opponents of Soviet power had ceased to exist, imperialists had to invent them - and did so by cultivating "speculators in goods purchased from tourists, frivolous girls [*devochki legkogo povedeniia*] and other parasitic elements among morally unstable Soviet youth. These

⁴⁰⁵ On the U-2 crisis, see William Taubman, *Khrushchev: the Man and his Era* (New York, W.W Norton, 2004), 442-480; Timothy Naftali and Aleksandr Fursenko *Khrushchev's Cold War: the Inside Story of an American Adversary* (New York: W.W Norton, 2007), 263-291.

⁴⁰⁶ "Bditelnost' nashe oruzhie," *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 9/15/1960.

corruptible elements were the only potential source of espionage, subversion or opposition to Soviet power. Westernization was a source of ideological infection, and the proper prophylactic, Liakin concluded, was reporting wavering youths to the proper authorities before harm came to the Soviet body politic.

While this op-ed was a product of an exceptionally heated moment, Liakin's clarion call reflects the basic dilemma Soviet authorities faced in the era of mass travel. Shaped by a long-standing culture of suspicion stretching back to the revolutionary era, if not indeed to Muscovite times,⁴⁰⁷ institutions in charge of political hygiene in the Soviet Union - party and Komsomol organizations, official media, and coercive agencies - were designed to create both mental and physical hindrances to unsupervised contacts between Soviet people and foreigners.⁴⁰⁸ And yet, after Stalin, they operated in a context in which Soviet borders became increasingly porous to ever-increasing numbers of visitors who sought to create connections, fleeting or permanent, licit or illicit, with Soviet people, who in their turn, proved stubbornly vulnerable to the attractions of foreignness. These connections created a proliferation of contact zones between Soviet people and foreigners, "spaces of freedom"⁴⁰⁹ in which the usual rules of Soviet life seemed suspended. And yet, these spaces, which I term the demimonde, were a product of late

⁴⁰⁷ On the long history of Soviet culture of vigilance, see: Gábor Rittersporn, *Anguish, Anger and Folkways in Soviet Russia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014), ch. 1, 2. Peter Whitewood, *The Red Army and the Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Soviet Military* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press), 2015.

⁴⁰⁸ Andrea Chandler, *Institutions of Isolation: Border Controls in the Soviet Union and the Successor States 1917-1993* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).

⁴⁰⁹ Joseph C. Troncale, Sergei Kovalsky et al (ed.), *The Space of Freedom: Apartment Exhibits in Leningrad, 1964-1986* (Richmond, VA: University of Richmond Press, 2006).

Soviet society: its deficit-based economy, its combination of public consensus and private free-for-alls, its fascination with the West, and above all, its growing capacity for self-organization outside state control.⁴¹⁰ The clash between Soviet institutions and demimonde residents provides insight into the ways in which Stalin-era mental and institutional attitudes kept shaping the late socialist Soviet policy, as well as the growing difficulty the Soviet state faced in realizing its claims of absolute sovereignty over its citizens.⁴¹¹ In this chapter, I first sketch out the operations of the demimonde and then proceed to show how the Soviet authorities sought to constrain it, by means of both coercion and “political public relations”⁴¹²- the use of the vast Soviet official media empire to mark participants in the demimonde as pariahs.

Portrait of a Demimonde

As the Soviet dissident Andrei Amal’rik writes, for many Soviet people

Even for ones buying and selling jeans, [meetings with foreigners] were a means of escape - a nearly metaphysical exit - from the world in which we

⁴¹⁰ On this issue, see: Stephen V. Bittner, “A Negentropic Society? Wartime and Postwar Soviet History,” *Kritika* 14, no. 3(2014), 599-619.

⁴¹¹ For the Soviet absolutist (if not to say total) view of citizenship and sovereignty, see Yanni Kotsonnis, *States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship and the Early Soviet Republic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), ch. 10.

⁴¹² Anke Fiedler and Michael Meyen, “The Steering of the Press in the Socialist States of Eastern Europe: the German Democratic Republic (GDR) as a Case Study,” *Cold War History* 15, no. 4 (2015), 449-470.

existed; they wanted to convince [us] that the Soviet world is a closed sphere...but by making tiny holes in it we could breathe another air.⁴¹³

Foreigners, in this telling, had a semi-sacral status, as emissaries of a different world, reorganizing the space around them so that it became, in an important sense, ex-territorial and immune to pressures of Soviet life and its demands for conformity.

This sense of breaking barriers, of the ex-territorial nature of encounters between Soviets and foreigners, is a common trope in both Soviet and Western memoirs of these first encounters. To cite a famous example, accounts of Moscow's iconic 1957 Youth Festival are rife with ecstatic, sometimes sappy, emotional recollections of first contacts.⁴¹⁴ Art historian Mikhail German responded in a similar fashion when witnessing the first Scandinavian ships entering the Leningrad port shortly after Stalin's death:

Quiet, aggressively shy, crowds gathered on the shore, [gazing at] incredibly clean sailors... clean-shaven, like actors in foreign movies, and strangely elegant in wonderfully tailored uniforms...What shone was not so much their intellect, but their civilized stature [*tsivilizovannost*]: they all spoke German easily...We could touch and feel this "abroad" [*zagranitsu*]... A small crowd formed around each sailor. He was pressured by a silent, persistent and obsequious crowd. The Swedes were embarrassed, could not understand why they were so exotic [*dikovinka*] and carefully answered ladies' questions on whether they were married or if they wished to exchange addresses. I barely spoke, or to be more accurate, pronounced some foreign words, but thoroughly enjoyed myself: "I am speaking to a foreigner." "Do you speak English" [*sic*] I shyly inquired of one...sailor who sat at the bench near the Winter Palace next to me. That was the first time I ever spoke a foreign language to a foreigner.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹³ Andrei Amal'rik, *Zapiski dissidenta* (Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1982), 18-19.

⁴¹⁴ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 105-120, provides many examples. See also chapter 5 of this dissertation.

⁴¹⁵ Mikhail Geman, *Slozhnoe proshedshee/ passé composé* (St. Petersburg: Iskusstvo SPB, 234-235).

The appeal, whether practical or metaphysical, of encounters with foreigners so aptly described by German remained in effect long after the initial excitement of the mid-1950s passed. Wherever foreigners appeared in significant numbers, Soviet people spontaneously reorganized space around them. In Moscow, the “pleshka,” the Gor’kii street segment between Pushkin Square and Intourist’s *Natsional* hotel, was a commercial hub, where black marketeers bought foreign goods, currency speculators eager to help tourists to exchange their currency at comfortable black-market rather than confiscatory official ones operated,⁴¹⁶ and prostitutes plied their trade, with few interruptions from the authorities.⁴¹⁷ Along the Nevskii Prospekt in Leningrad, “hundreds of...*fartsovshchiki*, currency speculators, thieves and burglars were circling” foreigners. The nearby Gostinnyi Dvor metro station exit became an open market where “items of desire were shot... into the closets of Soviet people.”⁴¹⁸ In cities lacking such iconic spaces, tourists, especially from Eastern Europe, were not above turning hotel squares into improvised markets [*barakholki*].⁴¹⁹ Even the Soviet *sanctum sanctorum*, the Lenin Mausoleum, saw

⁴¹⁶ On the economics of exchange markets under socialist economies, see: Jan Vanous, “Private Foreign Exchange Markets in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe,” unpublished paper accessed online at: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/private-foreign-exchange-markets-eastern-europe-and-the-ussr-1980>, originally published in 1980. Accessed on 4/10/2016.

⁴¹⁷ Iurii Aizenshpis, *Zazhigaiushchii zvezdy: zapiski i sovety pionera shou biznesa* (Moscow: Algoritm, 2005), 96-97.

⁴¹⁸ For quotes see Sheilla Fitzpatrick, *A Spy in the Archives: a Memoir of Cold War Russia* (London and New York: I.B Tauris, 2013), 54; Evgenii Vyshnenkov, “Peterburg na iznanku,” *Fontanka.ru*, 12/25/2012, accessed online at <http://www.fontanka.ru/2012/05/25/114/>. For a portrait of life on the Nevskii Prospekt, see idem, *Krysha. Ustnaia istoriia reketa* (Moscow: Ast), 2011, 29-35

⁴¹⁹ “Otchet ob obsuzhivaniu inostrannykh turistov v sezone 1963 goda Kishinevskim otdeleniem VAO Intourist,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 558, ll. 45-47.

similar scenes, as teenagers hungry for foreign goods, gum and currency swarmed the Mausoleum's foreign visitors.⁴²⁰



Figure 3.1: Black Marketeers on Nevskii Prospekt, Early 1980s

Source: online812.ru

Hotels hosting foreigners were, of course, spaces prearranged for such encounters. The American journalist George Feifer describes how the vast restaurant of Hotel Rossiia became a stage of impromptu demonstrations of friendship of the peoples, as visiting Americans and provincial officials on *komandirovka* reassured each other regarding their countries' love of peace and progress.⁴²¹ Intourist restaurants and other culinary venues refined enough to be available to foreigners also inevitably drew members of both formal

⁴²⁰ “Spravka o nekotorykh faktakh skupki inostannoï valiuty i veshchei sovetskimi grazhdaninami u inostrannykh turistov,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 268, ll. 173-175; Yuri Brokhin, *Hustling on Gorky Street* (New York: Dial Press, 1975), 14-15; Brokhin was a participant-observer in the life of the Soviet demimonde: in 1983, after his emigration to America, he was murdered by unknown assailants in New York, in a mafia-style execution. (Daniel Bursten, “Death of a Hustler,” *New York Magazine*, 16 (1983), 26-29).

⁴²¹ George Feifer, *Russia Close up* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1973), 101-149.

and informal Soviet elites. In such locations, foreigners, writers and artists, black market speculators and prostitutes, army officers on leave and various officials danced, listened to jazz and rowdy Soviet orchestras, and enjoyed the best material comforts the Soviet Union could offer.⁴²² In hotel lobbies, commerce flourished as foreigners were besieged by black marketeers and “chewing gum knights.”⁴²³

Similar encounters occurred in less exalted locations. In resorts on the Black Sea shores, Soviet women were berated for spending their time chasing foreigners instead of following doctor’s orders.⁴²⁴ Foreign sailors’ clubs in Soviet ports (*interkluby*) established by the Soviet authorities to propagandize these working-class visitors, inevitably drew the attentions of black market traders and sex workers.⁴²⁵ The Leningrad-Vyborg highway, on which large numbers of Finnish tourists seeking escape from strict Finnish anti-alcohol laws travelled,⁴²⁶ attracted “highway men” [*trassoviki*], who fashioned a series of impromptu rest-stops where tourists exchanged currency, clothes, and consumer items for rubles, vodka, and sex.⁴²⁷

⁴²² For snapshots of life inside restaurants catering to foreigners, see: Leonid Shtakelberg, “Pasyunki pozdnoi imperii,” 35-43; “A Shock for the Aragvi,” *The Times*, 7/7/1959.

⁴²³ Brokhin, *Hustling*, 16-17; “Prezrennye rytsari zhvachki,” *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 1/1/1959.

⁴²⁴ “Kak zhe oni ustali?” *Komsomolskaia pravda*, 18/9/1969.

⁴²⁵ “Protokol n. 4 zasedaniia Komissii po inostrannym delam Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR, 6/7/1981,” GARF, f. A-385, op. 13, ll. 7-11.

⁴²⁶ On the so-called “vodka trail” phenomenon, see Auvo Kostianen: “The Vodka Trail: Finnish Travelers’ Motivation to Visit the Former Soviet Union,” in: Janne Ahtola and Timo Toivonen (ed.) *Travel Patterns: Past and Present* (Savonlinna, Finland: University of Joensuu, 1999), 33-48.

⁴²⁷ Leonid Milosh, “Fartsovshchiki,” *Smena* 1457 (February, 1988), accessed online at: http://smena-online.ru/stories/fartsovshchiki_on_4/30/2015; D. Vasiliev, *Fartsovshchiki: kak delalis’ sostoianiia* (St. Petersburg: Vektor; Nevskii prospect, 2007), 170-172; “Stenogrammma zasedaniia Komissii po inostrannym delam Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR, 23/6/1983,” GARF, f. A-385, op. 13, d. 4931, ll. 24-25.

Others forms of exchange took less commercialized forms. The kitchens and studios of prominent dissidents, underground artists, and academics were places of pilgrimage for politically conscious visitors (a point to which we shall return at length in Chapter Four). For connoisseurs of more exotic fares, fashionable “salons” promised meetings with Soviet “Catholics, fascists, homosexuals, poets, artists, and surrealists.”⁴²⁸ Prominent residences, like the “mansion” of American reporter Edmund Stevens and his Soviet wife Nina or the Peredelkino *dacha* of journalist, guide book author, and alleged KGB agent Viktor Louis were locations where Soviet elites and foreign diplomats, journalists, and other dignitaries networked, exchanged gossip and, one presumes, cheerfully spied on each other.⁴²⁹ A step below on the social scale, Western and Soviet students argued about art and science and literature, exchanged gifts, souvenirs and rock records, drank, and formed friendships and romantic relationships.⁴³⁰ Further below, the aforementioned Polonsky and Taylor recommended participation in a drunken evening in a “disreputable Soviet flat” as key point in familiarizing oneself with Soviet life.⁴³¹

⁴²⁸ Satter, *Age of Delirium*, 337.

⁴²⁹ On the Stevenses, see John McPhee, *The Ransom of Russian Art* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994), 27-28, Bassow, *Correspondents*, 318-322. On Louis, see Klose, *Closed Society*; 272-277. “Viktor Louis: Obituary,” *The Times*, 07/20/1992. In his memoirs, dictated to KGB officer *cum* biographer V. Kevorkov, Louis denies all connections to secret services, rather unconvincingly. (V. Kevorkov, *Viktor Lui: chelovek s legendoi* (Moscow: Sem’ dnei, 2010).

⁴³⁰ For a touching example of relationships between rebel youth and American exchange students, see exchange of letters between Lauren J. Leighton, E.F Slavinsky, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, and the American Immigration and Nationalization Service, National Conference for Soviet Jewry Records, The Soviet Jewry Movement Archives [NCSJ-TSJM], Box 12, folder 1. The proclivity of American exchange students for sexual and other illicit liaisons with Soviet citizens was cause for some concern for American authorities. See David Engerman, *Know Your Enemy: The Rise and Fall of America’s Soviet Experts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 240-245.

⁴³¹ Taylor and Polonsky, *From an Original Idea*, 162-168.

Such transnational interactions produced a subtle shift in Soviet life, creating new niches in which the usual rules and hierarchies applied loosely, or were reversed. In Georgia in the late 1950s, for instance, the local KGB complained that one of the most marginal of Soviet communities, local Molokan “sectarians,” were rapidly gaining social prestige as they were receiving gifts and money from visiting North American co-religionists.⁴³² Closer to the center, contacts with foreign visitors and the circulation of texts, information and artifacts that these contacts allowed, were crucial for the flourishing of marginal communities, ranging from Leningrad’s rock underground to Moscow’s esoteric mystics.⁴³³

Most famously in this regard, contacts between Soviet underground artists and Western aficionados profoundly transformed the Soviet art world by creating a commercial space outside the control of official creative unions - the so called *dip-art* scene.⁴³⁴ According to artist and collector Anatolii Brusilovskii, the origins of this form of commercial exchange date to the Moscow Youth Festival of 1957 during which foreigners for the first time made appearances in the underground studios of non-

⁴³² “B. Katsitadze (Georgian KGB) to Central Committee, Georgian Communist Party, 31/8/1959,” Sak’art’velos sinagan sak’met’a saministros akk’ivi (II) (Archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia: Party Archive), f. 14, op. 34, d. 438, ll. 50-51.

⁴³³ On the contribution of one American “rock girl” to the Leningrad rock scene, see Dennis Boyannov, “Joanna Stingray, a California Girl in the U.S.S.R.,” *Moscow Times*, /14/2016, accessed online at: http://www.themoscowtimes.com/arts_n_ideas/article/joanna-stingray-a-california-girl-in-the-ussr/562009.html on 3/20/2016. On esoteric communities, see: A. Rovner, “Gurdzhievskoe dvizhenie v Rossii v 1960-kh-1970-kh. Vospominaniia i refleksii uchastnika,” accessed at: <http://ariom.ru/forum/p357562.html>, on 2/28/2015.

⁴³⁴ On the world of *dip-art* see Valentin Vorob’ev, *Levaki* (Moscow: NLO, 2012), Anatolii Brusilovskii, *Studiia* (St. Petersburg: Letnii Sad, 2001), John McPhee, *The Ransom of Russian Art*.

conformist artists.⁴³⁵ In the aftermath of the Festival, and the subsequent Khrushchevian attack on modernist art, this scene expanded, to include foreigners resident in the Soviet Union, Soviet collectors (like the aforementioned Stevens), foreign collectors visiting under the guise of tourists and exchange students, and, most importantly (as the term *dip-art* indicates), diplomats. The latter not only used their diplomatic immunity and connections to resident foreigners and elite Muscovites to scout out and discover new artists, but also took advantage of their access to diplomatic pouches to overcome draconian Soviet regulations regarding art exports. Thus, the world of *dip-art* united foreigners, Soviet social elites and socially marginal artists, connecting them to a world market that appreciated modern art than it did socialist realism. For foreigners, the world of *dip-art* offered the thrill of finding “an avenue into real Soviet life,”⁴³⁶ of aiding “dissenting artists,” and, not least, of acquiring original art at very low prices.⁴³⁷ For underground artists, contacts with foreigners a possibility of international fame, a measure of defense in the face of official assaults, and, of course, unparalleled access to foreign currency and Western goods.

No less important, however, access to foreigners and the art market they created represented reversal of fortunes. For artists living on the margins of Soviet life, periodically attacked by the authorities and lacking access to the security, privilege, and material perks that official favor and membership in creative unions offered, access to

⁴³⁵ Brusilovski, *Levaki*, 7-10. On the artistic impact of the Festival and the international contacts it allowed for artists, see the memoirs of the jazz musician Aleksei Kozlov. *Kozel na sakse* (Moscow: Vagrius), ch. 5.

⁴³⁶ John McPhee, *Ransom of Russian Art*, 48.

⁴³⁷ Vorob'ev, *Levaki*, 37-38.

and purchase of their works by foreigners represented an inversion of the regular Soviet order of things. As Brusilovskii puts it vis-à-vis the painter Vasilii Stepnikov: “here was a provincial [*chelovek iz naroda*]... unrecognized by anyone, branded as mentally ill... He was flattered by people from far away America buying his pictures... What he could not receive in the sinking sands [*zybkoi triasine*] of Soviet life: respect, recognition, social life, became a wonderful dream for him.”⁴³⁸ To borrow a Bakhtinian term, the demimonde created small corners of topsy-turvy reality, in which these outcasts were on top.

Sex workers “specializing” in foreigners constituted another community in which material privilege was combined with deep marginality. This form of commerce also first became visible in the 1957 Moscow Youth Festival. As Kristen Roth-Ey demonstrates, despite the considerable efforts Soviet authorities took to “cleanse” Moscow from unwanted social elements, “loose girls on the loose,” Soviet girls who had sex with foreigners, sometimes in exchange for gifts or souvenirs, became one of the most visible aspects of Festival life.⁴³⁹ A scant few years later, this field became “professionalized” enough that the aforementioned journalist George Pfeiffer could conduct an interview with a well-educated, English-speaking, full-time, hard-currency prostitute, “a tall, blue-eyed blonde [who]...never wears a single crummy Soviet stitch.”⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁸ Brusilovskii, *Studiia*, 53-54.

⁴³⁹ Roth-Ey, “Loose Girls,” 82-86.

⁴⁴⁰ Feifer, *Russia Close Up*, 182.

Like most instances of sex tourism, sex work involving foreigners in the Soviet Union involved not only “professionals” like Feifer’s interlocutor, but also various relationships rooted in the privileged economic position of foreigners.⁴⁴¹ For instance, access on the part of students from the developing world to material goods made them attractive to many of their Soviet female peers, while, as we had already seen, sex between Intourist guides and their charges was a standing concern of Intourist and Sputnik officials.

Yet, in the cultural imagination of the late Soviet period it was hard currency prostitution that represented the most ubiquitous form of sexual encounters between Soviets and foreigners. As mentioned above, prostitutes were drawn to all major concentrations of foreigners, ranging from and sailors’ clubs to Intourist’s top hotels. The bars and restaurants of the latter became the abode of the so-called “Intourist girls,” later known as *interdevochki*, after the eponymous *perestroika*-era novel and film by Vladimir Kunin. By the 1980s, “Intourist girls” were perhaps the most visible symbol of the luxurious possibilities contact with foreigners offered. As late Soviet society saw it, with either admiration or moral outrage, by dint of their access to foreigners vaulted to the top of the Soviet material hierarchy, consuming clothes, cosmetics and foods other Soviet

⁴⁴¹ For an overview of the literature on the topic of sex tourism, see Chris Ryan and C. Michael Hall, *Sex Tourism: Marginal People and Liminality* (London: Routledge, 2001). Also see Amalia L. Cabezas, *Economies of Desire: Sex and Tourism in Cuba and the Dominican Republic* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 2009.

citizens could only dream of, and earning significant fortunes,⁴⁴² which moreover were denominated in dollars, not rubles.

Yet behind this exotic façade lurked the usual realities of the sex trade, overlaid with the peculiar arrangements of the late Soviet period. To operate, “Intourist girls” had to pay exorbitant bribes to Intourist staff for access to foreigners,⁴⁴³ provide bribes and sexual services for militia officers, and maintain a *modus vivendi* with the KGB (see Chapter Four).⁴⁴⁴ Furthermore, perestroika-era studies of Soviet sex workers show that “Intourist girls” fit the global profile of sex work: they were predominantly young migrants from the provinces to Moscow and Leningrad, products of broken homes and abusive parents, and suffered extremely high levels of alcoholism, mental illness and venereal disease.⁴⁴⁵ Unsurprisingly, they were also defenseless in the face of violent attacks by their clients.⁴⁴⁶

Sex work was but a small element the vast commercial community that sprouted around foreigners. As with sex work, the generic term *fartsovka*, after the irrepressible

⁴⁴² In 1987, the newspaper *Trud* reported the arrests of two foreign currency prostitutes involved in currency speculation with half million rubles in state bonds. (“Po kakoi tsene liubov?” *Trud*, 7/31/1987).

⁴⁴³ According to the Soviet legal scholar V.V Diukov, the nightly payoff prostitutes paid to Intourist staff stood at 500 rubles. (“Grimasy rynka svobodnoi liubvi” in Iu. M. Khochenkov (ed.), *Prostitutsiia i prestupnost’* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaiia literatura, 1991), 155. Another expert found that between these expenses, and the need to invest in clothing, makeup and contraceptives, foreign currency prostitutes were often heavily indebted to other black market participants. (A. Ia. Vilks, “Mify i realnost’”, *ibid*, 62.)

⁴⁴⁴ See interviews with hard currency prostitutes, Anna Iakovleva, *Khroniki pikirueshchego erosa* (Moscow: Izdatelskie resheniia, 2014), accessed online at: <http://www.litmir.info/bd/?b=224281> on 5/5/2015) and Andrei Karaulov, *Vokrug Kremliia-2* (Moscow: Slovo, 1993), 178-183. Besides works cited above, for impressionistic details on the often brutal world of foreign currency prostitution see Mark Popovskii, *Tretii lishnii: on, ona i sovetskii rezhim* (London: Overseas Exchange Publishing, 1985), 305-344

⁴⁴⁵ A.Ia Vilks, “Mify i realnost’,” N.A Averina, “Piatdesiat’ sem’ iunykh ‘ledi’ iz obsluzhi interservisa.”

⁴⁴⁶ Karaulov, *Vokrug Kremliia-2* (Moscow: Slovo, 1993), 181-182.

black marketeers (*fartsovshchiki*)⁴⁴⁷ who badgered generations of foreign visitors to exchange clothes and dollars for rubles and Soviet souvenirs, covers a myriad of practices.⁴⁴⁸ The stereotypical *fartsovshchik* was a young, urban, bohemian, male, and motivated by curiosity no less than material concerns – a stereotype largely generated by the *fartsovshchiki* themselves.⁴⁴⁹ To cite a typical example, one practitioner, the pseudonymous Sergei Panov, proudly began his account of life on the black market with the following boast:

My *kommunalka* neighbors call me scum (*podonok*). But if I am scum, I am an intellectual scum. I am curious about the history of mankind, from the troglodites to group sex. I visit museums and exhibits every day, combining aesthetics with business. Black business, of course.⁴⁵⁰

This view of a *fartsovshchik* as bohemian capitalist living in conflict with Soviet philistines obscures the complex nature of black market exchanges involving foreigners. Not all participants in the market were either young or motivated by “aesthetic” concerns. The British travel writer Collin Thubron recalls, for example, seeing elderly women

⁴⁴⁷ The origins of this term are obscure, deriving from either English (*for sale*) or Yiddish (*forets-* an Odessa-originated term for wily market operators).

⁴⁴⁸ Despite the vast amount of literary and memoiristic literatures on this phenomenon, the English language scholarly literature on the *fartsovshchiki* is surprisingly scant. For Russian language treatments, see P. Romanov, M. Suvorova, “Chistaia fartsa: sotsialnyi opyt vzaimodeistvia sovetskogo gosudarstva i spekuliantov,” in I. Olimpieva and O. Pachenko (ed.) *Neformalnaia ekonomika v postovetskom prostrantsve* (St. Petersburg: TSNI, 2003), 148-164. P. Romanov, E. Iarskaia-Smirnova, “Fartsa: Podpol’e Sovetskogo obshchestva potrebleniia.” *Neprikosnovennyi zapas* 5(2005), 62-68, N. B. Lebina, *Povsednevnost epokhi kosmosa i kukuruzy: destrukttsiia bolshogo stilia. Leningrad 1950-e- 1960-e gody* (St. Petersburg: Pobeda, 2015), 420-430. Also see Larisa Zakharova, *S’habiller à la soviétique. La mode et le Dégel en URSS* (Paris: CNRS editions), 2012), 220-232, Salmon, “Land of Future,” 202-205. Finally, Zhuk, *Rock and Roll* is a brilliant study of the cultural impact of *fartsa* where it could not physically exist the closed city of Dnepropetrovsk.

⁴⁴⁹ On social backgrounds of the *fartsovshchiki*, see Romanov and Suvorova, “Chistaia fartsa.”

⁴⁵⁰ Sergei Panov, *Fartsovshchiki* (Moscow: Flegon Press, 1971), 33.

picking through the garbage of an Intourist motel where he was staying, in search of foreign items to resell.⁴⁵¹ On the other hand, the most prominent black market traders cared more for accumulation than adventure. Thus, unlike his flamboyant colleagues, the eponymous protagonist of Maksim Veller's "The Legend of the Founding Father of Fartsovka, Fima Bliashits," is a quiet, reticent character who "ate little, almost never drank, spoke quietly and politely, and bought himself a used *Moskvich* for necessary transportation."⁴⁵²

More importantly, after the "heroic" period of the late 1950s, when fartsovshchiki were usually drawn from the Soviet "golden youth" who alone had the courage and language skills to approach foreigners, *fartsa* became fully integrated into late Soviet social networks.⁴⁵³ At the bottom of the pyramid, fartsovshchiki were recruited among "chewing gum knights" – who were often "normal" Soviet children who partook in the universal craze for Western consumer goods.⁴⁵⁴ At the top, *fartsovka* increasingly became a component of late Soviet criminal structures. Even though it was a victimless crime, its illegal nature brought practitioners into contact with "violent entrepreneurs," who by the 1980s were "taxing" *fartsovshchiki* for access to prime spots – and thus setting up the foundations for the vast criminal empires of the late Soviet and

⁴⁵¹ Tiburon, *Among the Russians*, 17.

⁴⁵² Maksim Veller, "Legenda o rodonachalnike fartsovki, Fime Bliashitse," in idem, *Legendy* (St. Petersburg: Parol, 2003), 9-35. For more on the conflict between tame businessmen and unruly romantics among the *fartsovshchiki* see Sergei Dovlatov, "Krepovye Finnskie noski," in idem, *Chemodan* (Tenafly, NJ: Ermitazh, 1986).

⁴⁵³ Bellfrage, *A Room in Moscow*.

⁴⁵⁴ Anya Von Bremzen, *Mastering the Art of Soviet Cooking* (New York: Crown, 2013), 16.

early post-Soviet periods.⁴⁵⁵ *Fartsovka* became a hierarchical affair, where street level traders (“*bombily*”)⁴⁵⁶ were subject to the upper echelon of market participants, the so-called “merchants” (*kuptsy*).⁴⁵⁷ The merchants bankrolled street-level traders, gathered their hard currency proceeds and traded in icons, jewelry, gold, (and, at times, even rare industrial materials).⁴⁵⁸

To ply these trades, “merchants” had to forge both domestic and foreign connections. For instance, gold and foreign currency speculators were often connected to Soviet underground millionaires, who both supplied them with products for sale (say, raw gold stolen from state enterprises), and provided a market for the foreign currency and other valuables gathered from street operations.⁴⁵⁹ Others obtained goods for sale by launching expeditions to the Soviet countryside to gather ancient icons (which could be obtained for a pittance or even received as gifts from naïve and generous villagers).

⁴⁵⁵ On the violent transformation of *fartsovka* see Vyshenkov, *Krysha, passim* and “Chem zhivet ‘reket’”, *Pravda*, 5/3/1989. On violent entrepreneurs, see Vadim Volkov, *Violent Entrepreneurs: The use ofin the Making of Russian Capitalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002)

⁴⁵⁶ Aleksandr Ukhov, “Bombilla” *Lebed’*, 03/17/2002, accessed online at <http://lebed.com/2002/art2865.htm>, on 5/1/2015.

⁴⁵⁷ For details of the structure of the black market see, Brokhin, *Hustling*, ch. 1, Vasil’ev, *Kak delalis sostoianiia*, 127-141, and especially Iurii Aizenshpits, *Zazhigaiushchii zvezdy: vospominaniia pionera shou-biznesa* (Moscow-Algorithm, 2005), esp. 96-117. Aizenshpits, one of the Soviet Union’s first rock producers, also doubled as major actor on the foreign currency market- and earned three prison terms for his efforts. From the other side of the curtain, see S. Fedoseev, “Koroli i kapusta,” in Vasilii Stavitskii (ed.) *Lubianka: obespechenie ekonomicheskoi bezopasnosti gosudarstva* (Moscow: Kuchkovo pole, 2004), 146-157. The author served as the chief of the KGB department in charge of battling foreign currency speculation.

⁴⁵⁸ Aizenspis, *Zvezdy*, 109. According to him, he smuggled abroad cinnabar, a mercury ore used in the shipbuilding industry.

⁴⁵⁹ Iurii Feofanov, “Firma terpit krakh,” in idem, *Firma terpit krakh* (Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1969), 140-147. “Dno,” *Trud*, 1/16/1962.

These were then resold to visiting foreigners or diplomats, connecting decrepit churches in Siberian *kolkhozes* to the growing international market in Russian religious art.⁴⁶⁰

Like all forms of informal economic activity in the Soviet Union, the foreign-oriented black market was deeply dependent on cooperation with members of formal institutions. As we've seen, the most crucial actors in this regard were Intourist staff who sold access to foreigners or directly competed with black marketeers for tourist dollars.⁴⁶¹ In the mid-1950s, employees of commission stores became a major node in illicit trade networks, selling gold received from foreigners to Soviet speculators, and helping foreigners buy rubles on the black market.⁴⁶² Later on, smuggling and illicit trade networks relied on the aid of *Berezka* clerks, jewelry and art assessors, and other Soviet officials.⁴⁶³ Customs officers were especially open to graft, an issue that caused significant heartburn to KGB and MVD officials, given their concerns regarding the political and security implication of slackened vigilance at the border (see Chapter 4).⁴⁶⁴ Another important contribution was made by various Soviet employers who provided

⁴⁶⁰ Krizhevskii, "Svet v podvale," Konstantinov, *Banditskii Peterburg*, 298

⁴⁶¹ On the competition between black market traders and hotel staff for the tourist market, see Panov, *Fartovshchiki*, 36-37.

⁴⁶² "Dudorov [Minister of Internal Affairs] to TsK KPSS, 3/9/1957," GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 491, l. 268. This problem was so acute that the Soviet authorities banned commission stores from receiving items from foreigners: "Postanovlenie Soveta Ministrov SSSR ot 7 iulia 1956 goda, n. 83-842S. "O merakh po bor'be s spekuliatseyei inostrannymi tovarami v SSSR i sovetsoi valiutoi za granitsej," GARF, f. 5446, op. 106, d. 1070, l. 92.

⁴⁶³ For examples of sweeping cases involving foreigners and Soviet officials, see: V. Titov, "Tarakany," *Sovetskaia Kul'tura*, 12/14/1977; V. Kassis and L. Kolosov, "Sekret zolotoi shkatulki," *Izvestiia*, 4/24/1982; V. Konovalov and M. Serdiukov, "Chuzhoi Mirazh," *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 1/11/1982.

⁴⁶⁴ V.E. Kevorkov, *General Boiarov* (Moscow: Sovershenno sekretno, 2003). 113, Iu. Andropov, "O rabote organov KGB po presecheniiu gosudarstvennykh prestuplenii v pervom polugodii 1980 goda, 02/08/1980," in: A.A. Makarov et al (ed.) *Vlast' i dissident: iz dokumentov KGB i TsK KPSS* (Moscow: MKhG,) 2006, 229-230.

black marketeers and prostitutes with fictive employment, thus allowing them to live in large cities and protecting them from charges of parasitism – all for a fee. Hard currency prostitutes, for instance, were often registered as working in the service sector, “employed” as cleaners, store clerks, hairdressers and so on⁴⁶⁵ - making it difficult to employ “the principle of socialist morality: he who does not work shall not eat” or use laws against parasitism to deal with the demimonde.⁴⁶⁶

If collaboration from Soviet officials was necessary in order for *fartsovka* to survive, collaborative foreigners were required to make it thrive. Tourists were, of course, the most common market for street level deals. Polish tourists were especially prone to black market activities, which, by the end of the Soviet period, reached gargantuan proportions.⁴⁶⁷ Western tourists were also tempted by the easy ruble. In 1967, the American embassy in Moscow complained that hundreds of American tourists and exchange students systematically engaged in smuggling, resale of items purchased in *Berezka* stores and illegal currency operations.⁴⁶⁸ Five years later, the *New York Times*

⁴⁶⁵ Popovskii, *Tretii lishnii*, 279; Vishnevskii, *Krysha*, 5; “Dama s podachkoi,” *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 10/9/1986. Senior black marketeers had even better arrangements. An investigation of Ian Rokotov, the “king” of the Moscow black currency market in the late 1950s (see below) revealed, for instance, that two of his associates held positions as engineers in a prestigious construction bureau and as ballerina at the *Bolshoi* (“Demichev to Tsk KPSS,” RGANI, f. 5, op.30, d. 373, l. 34), while Aizeshpis recalls how he obtained a position in a research institute, with the understanding he would come to work late and leave early in exchange of providing his “collective” with consumer items and other perks (*Zvezdy*, 80-85).

⁴⁶⁶ “Ustupite shtany.”

⁴⁶⁷ In the only statistical estimate of this trade I was able to locate, the yearly turnover of illicit trade by Polish tourists was estimated in 500 million rubles. (“O protivopravnoi deiatelnosti turistov iz PNR, 11/1/1989.” GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 802, l. 97. On Polish involvement in black market activity in the USSR, see also Wojnowski, “Bukwark of Sovietness,” Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*.

⁴⁶⁸ “Telegram from the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the State Department, 1/11/1967,” *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968. Volume XIV: the Soviet Union* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 2001), 445-447.

reported on an American couple who funded their honeymoon trip to the Soviet Union by bringing a suitcase of jeans, selling them for rubles at inflated prices, then exchanging the rubles for dollars with other tourists at black market rates, and smuggling the proceeds through Soviet borders in their underwear.⁴⁶⁹

Frequent border crossers were less famous but more profitable participants in transnational black market networks. Members of diasporic communities (most often Armenians and East-European Jews) could easily connect to Soviet underground trade networks and reap impressive profits.⁴⁷⁰ In 1958, for example, the head of the Warsaw pharmacy trust was apprehended in Odessa with 45,000 rubles, over 500 dollars, and 845 tsarist era coins. Further investigation showed that he sold 38 gold watches to a local black market dealer, who was in turn arrested with a suitcase packed with gold.⁴⁷¹ By the 1970s, the growing integration of socialist and Western economies opened space for much more ambitious operations. In a case so brazen that it was used by KGB vice-Chairman Semen Tsvigun to highlight the dangers of contraband to the Soviet state, two diaspora Armenian students brought 35 kilograms of gold for sale on Soviet black markets, and smuggled 17 kilograms of platinum abroad over the course of their studies.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁹ ‘R.V.D’, “Your Old Jeans can bring \$30—and Jail,” *New York Times*, 5/21/1972

⁴⁷⁰ On Armenian contraband networks, see V.M Koldaev, “Istoriia i sovremennye metody bor’by s kontrabandoi v SSSR,” Dissertation for Kandidat Nauk Degree, Leningrad State University, 1972, 110-111, 163-165. On the “Jewish” aspects of contraband and black market, see below.

⁴⁷¹ “Dudorov to TsK KPSS,” GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 490, l. 161. Fedoseev, “Koroli i kapusta,” 146-147.

⁴⁷² Semen Tsvigun, *Tainyi front: o podryvnoi aktivnosti imperializma protiv SSSR i bditelnosti sovetskikh liudei* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1973, 318- 319. Tsvigun does not provide a date for this affair, but the early 1970s were a historic peak for gold prices, which reached as high as \$2,000 per ounce in 2015 prices.

Such activities were not contained to foreigners with pre-existing Soviet ties. Third World students were not only avid importers of consumer items for sale or barter on the streets and on campuses, but employed in a variety of trading schemes. Iurii Aizenshpis, a pioneer rock producer who also doubled as a prominent currency speculator, recalls how he used foreign students as straw buyers at foreign currency shops, selling the items they acquired to underground Soviet millionaires.⁴⁷³ Icon traders employed the same students as mules to deliver to clients in Western Europe, with the proceeds plowed bulk purchases warm winter clothing that was resold in Siberian retail black markets.⁴⁷⁴

As connections between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world thickened, more and more opportunities for profit opened up for professional border-crossers. In the era of détente, American ships brought not only grain, but contraband items stocked by sailors seeking to make a quick dollar.⁴⁷⁵ Making use of this business opportunity between 1974 and 1976, a group of black market traders in the Ukrainian port city of Izmail bought 8,700 female handkerchiefs valued at over 170,000 rubles from foreign

Taking this as baseline, the gold the two students smuggled into the Soviet Union was worth about 2.5 million dollars - and probably more as according to Tsvigun, the two smuggled medallions and ancient coins and not raw product. (Historical data from: <http://www.macrotrends.net/1333/historical-gold-prices-100-year-chart>, accessed on 5/1/2015).

⁴⁷³ Aizenshpis, *Zvezdy*, 105-106.

⁴⁷⁴ Aleksei Krizhevskii, "Svet v podvale," *Russkaia zhizn'*, 8 (2007), accessed online at: http://www.intelros.ru/readroom/rulife/170807/1035-aleksejj_krizhevskijj_svet_v_podvale.html, on 5/1/2015.

⁴⁷⁵ David K. Shipler, "Black Sea Port in Soviet [*sic*] Adapts to U.S Seaman," *New York Times* 10/16/1976.

sailors.⁴⁷⁶ “Karl” a West German businessman who often visited the Soviet Union. “Karl” provided funding for a group of Soviet art aficionados, who used the funds to buy art works from Leningrad residents, which were then smuggled out by tourist bus drivers on the Leningrad-Helsinki highway, who hid them in specially equipped chambers in their buses.⁴⁷⁷ In the same vein, one Belgian diplomat formed a business partnership with a Soviet illicit icon trader, and was apprehended in August 1982 trying to smuggle a store of icons valued at 120,000 rubles out of the USSR⁴⁷⁸ while numerous African diplomats were apprehended smuggling icons, art and jewelry from, and consumer items into, Soviet borders.⁴⁷⁹ Encompassing myriad of operations, from street trade to major import-export operations, the demimonde helped the “little deal” go global.

The social milieu, commercial interactions, and transnational networks that constituted the demimonde all had one common feature: they violated either written or unwritten Soviet laws, norms, or regulations. The sex-workers, criminals, marginals and outcasts who resided in the demimonde not only belied the “truth about the Soviet Union” that Soviet authorities labored to construct but also to the norms that defined normal existence within the Soviet system. The contradiction between the demimonde and Khrushchev’s attempted re-launch of the socialist project on the basis of social

⁴⁷⁶ “Ukrainian KGB to Central Committee of Ukrainian CP, “Informatsionnoe soobshchenie, 11-13/1/1985,” [IS] DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 7, spr. 24, ark. 2-3.

⁴⁷⁷ M. Iu Miliushkin, “Iz zhizni kontrabandistov,” in K.E Gusev (ed.) *Sledstvie prodolzhaetsia. Khroniki politicheskikh prestuplenii. Kniga vtoraiia* (St. Petersburg: Spetsialnaia literature), 293-300.

⁴⁷⁸ “IS, 27-29/8/1982,” GDA SBU, f. 16, op. 7, spr. 70, ark. 68. Konstantinov, *Banditski Peterburg*, 264-266.

⁴⁷⁹ “12 negriyat: [sic] posly Afrikanskikh stran rabotali kur’erami u russkikh kontrabandistov,” *Versiaa*, August 2003, accessed online at: <http://www.agentura.ru/dossier/russia/people/latysheva/12negriyat/> on 4/15/2015. “IS, 11-13/1/1985,” GDA SBU, f. 16, op. 10, spr. 9, ark. 27.

mobilization was so clear as to be nearly comical.⁴⁸⁰ The contrast between the demimonde and the rest of Soviet society became much more blurry after 1965, but if, as Aleksei Yurchak convincingly argues, performance of rituals of belonging was a precondition for “normal” existence in late Soviet society, denizens of the demimonde still stood out, caring not one wit about these rituals (and not much about normality either).⁴⁸¹

Thus, the demimonde represented a profound challenge to Soviet authorities, a challenge that was made even more acute by fears regarding the inherent link between social and political deviance articulated by Liakin. One policy response to the problem, erecting a massive surveillance system to police interactions between Soviet people and foreigners, is the topic of the next chapter. However, I argue, policy-making towards the demimonde cannot be reduced to secret policing. Rather, it was a dynamic process that reflected the changing face of Soviet society and the rise and fall of official attempts at social mobilization. The history of the confrontation between Soviet authorities and the demimonde was a mirror for the ebb and flow of official attempts to rejuvenate Soviet society – and the obdurate resistance of Soviet society to any such attempts at rejuvenation.

⁴⁸⁰ On social control, mobilization and repression in the Khrushchev era, see Dobson, *Khrushchev's Cold Summer*; Roberty Hornsby, *Protest, Reform and Repression in Khrushchev's Russia* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Brian LaPierre, *Hooligans in Khrushchev's Soviet Union: Defining, Policing, and Producing Deviance during the Thaw* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 2014). The argument for the Khrushchev era as an attempt at total social control is made most forcefully by Oleg Kharkhordin (*The Collective and Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999, esp. ch. 7).

⁴⁸¹ Yurchak, *Everything was forever*.

Vigilance is Our Weapon! 1957-1965

The 1950s, the period in which the demimonde emerged in its late Soviet form, was a time of both unprecedented opening up to the world and a series of crises that highlighted the dangers global exposure created for the Soviet party state. As a number of scholars have demonstrated, despite the liberal myths surrounding the “Thaw,” the late 1950s were an age of moral panic about crime, social anomie, dissolute youth, and a rising tide of westernization.⁴⁸² The combination of the political shock of de-Stalinization and the echo of the 1956 events in Hungary triggered anxieties regarding the loyalties of educated youth and denizens of the USSR’s western borderlands.⁴⁸³ Economically, the demands of the rush towards Communism under Khrushchev demanded massive technology imports, with expected proceeds from foreign tourism on Soviet soil slated, as we saw in chapter 1, to help pay for the construction of new factories.⁴⁸⁴ Finally, despite Khrushchev’s drive for “peaceful coexistence,” his era saw some of the tensest international crises of the Cold War as well a series of espionage scandals. This

⁴⁸² Dobson, *Cold Summer*; Hornby, *Protest and Reform*; La-Pierre, *Hooliganism*; Roth-Ey “Loose Girls,” Sheilla Fitzpatrick, “Social Parasites: How Tramps, Idle Youth and Busy Entrepreneurs Impeded the Soviet March to Communism,” *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 47, no. 1/2 (2006), 377-408.

⁴⁸³ Hornby, *Protest and Reform*, Amir Weiner, “The Empires Pay a Visit: Gulag Returnees, East European Rebellions, and Soviet Frontier Politics,” *Journal of Modern History* 78, no.22 (2006), 333-376.

⁴⁸⁴ Salmon, “Marketing Socialism.” On the international economic context of the Khrushchev years, see Sanchez-Sibony, *Red Globalization*, esp. ch. 3.

constellation of crises made the increasing numbers of foreigners in the USSR and the social ecology that was rapidly coalescing around them an important challenge for Khrushchev's attempt to revitalize socialism and forge a peaceful coexistence from a position of strength with the "imperialists." The disruption of this ecology thus became an essential ingredient of Khrushchev's drive to eradicate the emerging contradictions of rapidly-maturing socialism.

On the most basic level, from the point of view of Soviet authorities, the demimonde was but one of the unintended consequences of "expanding cultural, economic, and other connections with capitalist countries," which carried the risk of "the spread of bourgeois ideology," among educated, urban youth most likely to be exposed to foreign bacilli.⁴⁸⁵ In line with the spirit of the time, campaigns against this danger involved not Stalin-era purges, but attempts to mobilize the Soviet public against the "westernizers" by manipulating populist economic and cultural grievances.⁴⁸⁶ The most visible aspect of this strategy was using the violent enforcement arm of Khrushchev's battle for social discipline - Komsomol patrols (*druzhinny*) to police areas frequented by foreigners and the Soviet "golden youth." The early *fartsovshchiki*, likely to be university students of somewhat privileged background, thus became a favorite

⁴⁸⁵ Draft resolution of the Moscow Gorkom "Meropriataiia po usileniu kommunisticheskogo vospitaniia trudiashchikhsia Moskvy i borby s burzhuznym vlianiem, [undated, 1962]," GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 299, ll. 97-99. See also "Spravka o prodelannoi rabote po pismu TsK KPSS o povyshenii revoliutsionnoi bditelnosti, Moskovskii raion, Leningrad [n/d, 1960]," TsGAIPD f. 24, op. 113, d. 152, ll. 97-98.

⁴⁸⁶ For Khrushchev's campaign against westernization, see Julianne Fuerst, *Stalin's Last Generation: Soviet Postwar Youth and the Emergence of Mature Socialism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 235-249.

target of the *druzhinny* - usually manned by working class youth who had no love for their more privileged peers.⁴⁸⁷

In theory, these guardians of socialist morality were supposed to cooperate with Intourist staff in keeping unwanted elements from hotels and restaurants, detain black marketeers and loose women, and escort them to militia stations.⁴⁸⁸ In practice, however, they often resorted to street justice: beatings and confiscation of western clothing and other items.⁴⁸⁹ If a black marketeer did arrive to a militia station, he could plausibly expect a “comrade trial” resulting in expulsion from the Komsomol and, if he was unlucky, exile or imprisonment for “parasitism.” These “comrade trials” often reprised Stalin-era displays. In one 1963 trial, the “comrades” constituted 1,200 “young Muscovites, gathered in the Luzhniki stadium,” who sentenced 3 *fartsovshchiki* to “exile from Moscow and hard physical labor.”⁴⁹⁰ Even when such trials were less elaborate affairs, they received massive media coverage that named names, provided the biographies of their subjects, highlighted their privileged backgrounds, disdain for work, and subservient attitudes to foreigners.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁷ On the *druzhiny* see, Lapierre, *Hooliganism*, 148-157. On their treatment of “westernizers”, see Vasil’ev, *Sostoianiia*, 62-64.

⁴⁸⁸ “Ankudinov to senior Intourist Staff, 22/5/1962” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 299, ll. 56-58.

⁴⁸⁹ Tikhonenko, “Tarzan.”

⁴⁹⁰ “Doloi tuneiadtsev iz Moskvvy!” *Pravda*, 5/31/1963.

⁴⁹¹ See, for example, “Sovremennye Mitrofany,” *Komsomolskaia Pravda* 3/2/1957; “Rytsari zhvachki,” *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 1/17/1959; “Biznesmeny,” *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 10/19/1960; “Frenk Soldatkin: mestnyi inostranets” *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 8/3/1960; Atel’e Mistera Toda,” *Vechernyi Leningrad*, 7/3/1962; “Krushenie nihilista,” *Komsomolskaia Pravda* 6/21/1962.

Educated youths who went beyond simple commercial exchanges with foreigners could expect even worse. Between 1957 and 1965, a number of young educated urbanites were put on trial for associating with and receiving gifts and information from foreigners.⁴⁹² The most famous of these cases involved the “literary parasite” Joseph Brodsky: in both the infamous 1963 *Leningradskaia Pravda* broadside that launched the attack on him and in his trial, meetings with foreigners were mentioned as evidence of his alienation from Soviet life.⁴⁹³ In a similar manner, when Sally Belfrage, a “progressive” American who for a few months worked as translator in a Moscow publishing house composed a memoir of her life among Moscow’s “golden youth” that Soviet authorities considered slanderous,⁴⁹⁴ the wrath of the authorities was turned towards members of her circle. Various “friends of Miss Sally” were expelled from the Komsomol and universities, suffered imprisonment in psychiatric hospitals and violent media assaults.⁴⁹⁵ Two especially unfortunate friends (Rybkin and Repnikov) were put on a publicized trial for espionage, with coverage focusing not as much on their alleged blackmail into espionage by foreigners who plied them with gifts but on their pampered upbringings (the *Komsomolskaia Pravda* coverage of the trial began with a vignette describing how Repnikov threw a shoe at his grandmother for failing to get him breakfast in bed – at 11

⁴⁹² See, for example, “Postanovlenie po delu Fomicheva K.M, Fomichevoi K.A, Izhboldina V.S, 17/6/1959,” GARF, f. 8131, op. 31, d. 8482, l. 1-3; “Postanovlenie st. sledovatel’ia spets. otdela KGB pri SM GSSR [Georgian SSR] kapitana Chitashvili, 23/12/1964,” GARF, f. 8131, op. 31, d. 98411, ll. 1-5.

⁴⁹³ “Okololiteraturnyi truten’,” *Leningradskaia Pravda*, 29/11/1963 (Reprinted in Etkind, *Protsess*, 15-22. On his court case, see Dobson, *Cold Summer*, 231n.

⁴⁹⁴ Belfrage, *Room in Moscow*.

⁴⁹⁵ “Postanovlenie po sledstvennomu delu, Barenbaum Iosif Berkovich, 15/10/1959” GARF, f. 8131, op.31, d. 87418, ll. 2-6. “U damochki Selli nashelsia drug,” *Izvestiia*, 12/26/1960.

AM).⁴⁹⁶ Whatever the truth in these accusations,⁴⁹⁷ rhetorically, they filled a number of important functions. First, for the urbanites who associated with foreigners, such exposes were a shot across the bow. For the rest of the Soviet public, they conveyed a message about citizenship and social hierarchy. If, seemingly, the residents of the demimonde enjoyed a privileged existence, this was not cause for envy, as the Soviet state stood ready to restore justice swiftly and ruthlessly. By tying their material existence to commerce with and handouts from foreigners, residents of the demimonde broke the Soviet social compact - just rewards for honest labor - and took themselves outside the circle of protection offered by the “all people’s state.”

As is often the case, such boundary policing was especially ferocious when it involved female bodies. The late 1950s and early 1960s were, indeed, a period of violent assaults, rhetorical and physical, against Soviet women engaged in sexual liaisons with foreigners. As Roth Ey demonstrates, even during the halcyon days of the Moscow Youth Festival rumors that “loose girls” were assaulted by vigilantes, had their hair cut, and were exiled outside Moscow were in wide circulation. Even in a moment of maximum affection for the outside world, elemental discomfort with the idea of Soviet women besmirching national honor by cavorting with materially privileged foreigners was

⁴⁹⁶ Prodavshye dushi,” *Komsomolskaia Pravda* 8/30-9/1, 1959.

⁴⁹⁷ As human rights activist Aleksandr Esenin-Vol’pin, who was associated with Repnikov and Rybkin points out, the two “spies” had their charges reduced from espionage to anti-Soviet propaganda in short order. (“Pamiatka dlia neozhidaiushchikh doprosa: beseda s Aleksandrom Eseninym Vol’pinym,” *Neprikosnovennyi zapas*, 1(2002), accessed online at: <http://magazines.russ.ru/nz/2002/21/dopr.html> (4/1/2015).

exhibited by both authorities and rank-and-file Soviets.⁴⁹⁸ Subsequent years indeed saw action from below aimed to police “transnational” sexual encounters. Soviet girls who slept with exchange students could expect violent reactions from their fellow students and the general public.⁴⁹⁹ *Druzhinniki* joined in the effort, roughing up women who dated Western visitors,⁵⁰⁰ and in some less reputable Soviet hotels, waging pitched battles against tourists who opposed this treatment of their dates.⁵⁰¹

The fact that Soviet women were seduced by the temptations of foreigners and their goods was so detrimental to the self-perception of the Khrushchev era Soviet state, that in the mid-1960s, its official media broke the total taboo on the topic of prostitution in socialist society. Here too, names were named. For instance, Svetlana Trofimova, a 19-year-old who worked the hard currency bar of Hotel Metropol, became the subject of an intermittent three-month long attack in *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, which traced her moral dissolution, contempt for her parents and child, and intention to commit treason to both her family and her nation by marrying a foreigner. Tellingly, the first article in the series was entitled “Offal” [*Nechist’*] a term that captured well the purity politics that were hiding not far below the surface of the campaign against sexual relations with foreigners.

⁴⁹⁸ Roth-Ey, “Loose Girls on the Loose.”

⁴⁹⁹ Hessler, “Death of African Student.”

⁵⁰⁰ “Student Back from Russia; Reports on Soviet People,” *Yale Daily News*, 3/2/1966.

⁵⁰¹ “Spravka o rabote narodnoi druzhiny po okhrane obshchestvennogo poriadka v gostinitse Turist za 1959 god.” TsKhD posle 1917 g., f. 496, op.1, d. 496, l. 5. “Spravka o prieme i obsluzhivanii gostinitsami Mosgorispolkoma inostrannykh grazhdan v 1961 godu,” TsKhD posle 1917 g. f. 496, op. 1, d. 441, l. 28.

The undercurrents of purity and taboo that lay just below the surface of official discourses on the *demimonde* were understood (and promoted) as such by at least some Soviet ideologues. Thus, when Valerii Skurlatov, an early organizer of the Komsomol patrols and a member of the incipient “Russian Party” of *apparat* nationalists, was asked by the ideological department of the Moscow Komsomol to prepare a document on struggle with bourgeois ideology, one of the ten points of the “Moral Code” [*ustav nrava*] he penned called for “corporal punishments, branding and sterilization of women giving themselves over to foreigners.”⁵⁰² While Skurlatov’s text was quickly suppressed for its outlandish content, the shrill tone of the *Komsomolskaia Pravda* articles about Trofimova indicates that his positions had at least some support among other members of the nationalist wing of the *Komsomol* leadership.⁵⁰³

If loose girls and rag merchants harmed the reputation of the Soviet state and broke the boundaries of proper Soviet citizenship, the currency speculators who besieged foreigners materially harmed the Soviet treasury. Given the failure of the Soviet tourism industry to meet policy makers’ expectations discussed in chapter 1, the extraction of extra cash by means of confiscatory official exchange rates was a powerful means for the Soviet state supplement its foreign currency holdings.⁵⁰⁴ However, the gap between these

⁵⁰² On Skurlatov, see Nikolai Mitrokhin, *Russkaia partiia: dvizhenie Russkikh natsionalistov v SSSR, 1953-1985* (Moscow: NLO, 2003), 288-294. For his text, see:

<http://www.anticomproamat.org/skurlatov/ustav.html> (accessed 3/20/2015). For Skurlatov’s post-Soviet reflections on his document, see “Dnevnik: perechityvaia ustav nrava), at: <http://skurlatov.livejournal.com/148680.html> (accessed 3/15/1015).

⁵⁰³ Mitrokhin, *Russkaia partiia*, ch. 5.

⁵⁰⁴ Salmon, “Marketing Socialism.” For a theoretical view of the problem of informal currency markets in state socialist economies, see Jan Vanous, “Private Foreign Currency Markets.”

rates and what foreign money could fetch on the Soviet black market created arbitrage opportunities for generations of entrepreneurs, who successfully siphoned millions of dollars that the Soviet state felt rightfully belonged to it.⁵⁰⁵ Due to concerns with this monetary drain as well as the reputational damages caused by this activity,⁵⁰⁶ foreign currency speculators became the most prominent targets of the drive against the demimonde.

Ian Rokotov (1927-1961), also known as *Kosoi* (cross-eyes), was Moscow's most prominent currency speculator in the late 1950s. Born to an intellectual Jewish family, Rokotov, then an MGU student, was imprisoned under article 58-10 (counter-revolutionary activity) in 1945 and rehabilitated in 1954.⁵⁰⁷ He began foreign currency operations in 1957. By 1961, he headed a network of 450 street-level dealers,⁵⁰⁸ owned a significant fortune (including a suitcase laden with gold he kept in storage in various Moscow train stations), and was one of Moscow's top playboys.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁵ After Soviet authorities allowed the dollar to be exchanged at near-realistic rates in the late 1980s, proceeds from hotel exchange points grew tenfold. ("Dereviannye' rubli tozhe den'gi," *Izvestiia*, 6/8/1991.)

⁵⁰⁶ According to Fedoseev, complaints by foreign visitors regarding their harassment on the streets of Moscow, and a clash in West Berlin in which Khrushchev was told by a local that Moscow had the world's biggest black market triggered the clampdown on currency speculators. Fedoseev, "Koroli i kapusta," 146, 153.

⁵⁰⁷ I.M Feltshinskii, "Ian Rokotov," *Volia: zhurnal uznikov totalitarnykh system* 1(1993), 54-56.

⁵⁰⁸ "P. Demichev [Chairman of Moscow Gorkom] to Central Committee, after June 15, 1961," RGANI, f. 5 op. 30, d. 373, l. 35. According to Demichev, most foreign participants in this network were "from the Arab East countries," in all likelihood diplomats, military officers and exchange students. I would like to extend my gratitude to Samuel Casper for providing me with this file.

⁵⁰⁹ While the Rokotov affair received enormous attention in Soviet times and is still well remembered today (in 2014, A New York-based film producer established a line of premium jeans under the brand name Rokotov&Faibishenko), the affair received scant attention in academic literature. The only comprehensive narrative of the affair may be found in G.V Kostyrchenko, *Tainaia politika Khrushcheva: vlast', intillegentsia i evreiskii vopros* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 2012), 424-433. This account borrows heavily from Fedoseev's "Koroli i kapusta." The archival evidence about the affair is scant: the

Inevitably, Rokotov's rise contained the seeds of his fall. In 1959/60, responsibility for investigating hard currency speculation was transferred from the MVD, where Rokotov reputedly had excellent (and well-paid) contacts, to the KGB.⁵¹⁰ In parallel, the new RSFSR legal code set to go into operation on January 1st, 1961, raised penalties for large-scale currency speculation from 3 to 8 years imprisonment.⁵¹¹ In June 1960, following a massive surveillance operation, Rokotov was arrested while getting his suitcase from storage. Several days later his junior partner Vladislav Faibishenko [Fainberg] and other members of their network were apprehended.

At this point, the Rokotov affair evolved into a massive show trial. Soviet newspapers published numerous exposes exploring Rokotov's earnings, extensive social networks, lifestyle, and criminal connections.⁵¹² In March 1961, the Supreme Soviet further raised penalties for large-scale currency violations to 15 years.⁵¹³ In an unprecedented step in response to Khrushchev's rage at the criminal system's alleged leniency, this decree was applied retroactively to Rokotov and Faibishenko. This, however, did not satisfy the First Secretary. In a meeting of the Presidium on June 17th,

relevant KGB files are closed to researchers, the files of the Soviet *prokuratura* hold no trail of the court case against Rokotov and Faibishenko, and the files of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR, which handled the appeals in the case, are also not available. Demichev's letter cited above is the only archival source I was able to locate shedding light on the affair. See also Blokhin, *Hustling on Gorky Street*, ch. 1 and Konstantin Simis, *USSR: The Corrupt Society* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 199-210.

⁵¹⁰ Fedoseev, "Koroli i kapusta," 146.

⁵¹¹ On the evolution of the Soviet laws on currency speculation, see S.K. Osipov, "Otvetsvennost' za narushenie valiutnogo zakonodatelstva," *Pravo i ekonomika* 5(1999), accessed online via: <http://www.lawmix.ru/comm/7568/> on 4/2/2015.

⁵¹² See for example, "Sterliatniki," *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 5/19/1961; "Pered otvetom," *Pravda* 07/05/1963; "Firma terpit krakh," *Izvestiia*, 5/18/1961; "Rak dushi," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 6/10/1961, "Konets chernoi birzhi," *Pravda*, 07/15/1961.

⁵¹³ Kostyrchenko, *Politika*, 430.

he browbeat Chief Procurator Rudenko for “liberalism,” and demanded the death penalty for both men. Tellingly, Khrushchev phrased his demand as a populist appeal, citing a working-class friend from the Donbass who allegedly demanded rough justice for the “scoundrel” for whom “the grave cries,” thus pitting the Soviet state and Soviet workers against corruption and its elite enablers.⁵¹⁴ In response to this pressure, on July 1st, the Supreme Soviet released another decree, stipulating the death penalty for currency speculation. In a violation of legal norms unseen even under Stalin, Rokotov and Faibishenko were retried, with their second trial broadcast on Soviet TV,⁵¹⁵ condemned to death based on retroactive application of the July 1st decree, and executed on July 28th.



Figure 3.2: Ian Rokotov

Source: aif.ru

⁵¹⁴ A.A Fursenko, et al (ed.), *Prezidium TsK KPSS, 1954-1964. Tom 1: Chernovye protokolnye zapisi zasedanii* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2003), 525-529.

⁵¹⁵ Charles A. Schwartz, “Economic Crime in the U. S. S. R.: A Comparison of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev Eras,” *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 30, No. 2(1981), 293.

The Rokotov affair was the opening shot in a wave of nearly 1,000 trials of currency speculators over the next four years.⁵¹⁶ As was the case with Rokotov, these trials were widely publicized, with coverage focused on the unearned privileges the defendants enjoyed. Given that, like Rokotov and Faibishenko, about 50% of the defendants in these trials were Jewish and many others bore Caucasian or Central Asian last names,⁵¹⁷ the messages that this press coverage conveyed were surely well understood by Soviet readers. Thus, it was not hard to read messages about the loose Soviet identity and dubious loyalty of foreign currency speculators encoded in a 1962 *Trud* story about one Basia Khaimovna Reznitsky, a Vilnius speculator, her partners (Kaminer, Ebenstein, Rabinovich, and Zismanovich), and their trade partners: foreign tourists and Catholic priests connected to North American émigré groups and the Vatican.⁵¹⁸ By playing on stereotypes about the commercial prowess, parasitic tendencies, and possible disloyalty of certain ethnic groups, such stories subtly emphasized the double foreignness of contact zones between foreigners and Soviet people: they were not only a space where Soviet and foreign met, but also dominated by Soviet people who were not quite Soviet people.

The link between the economic corruption and dangers to Soviet national security implied in these messages was reinforced by an-all-out campaign against espionage

⁵¹⁶ Kostyrchenko, *Tainaia politika*, 433.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid*, 434.

⁵¹⁸ “Na dne,” *Trud*, 1/16/1962.

launched by the Soviet authorities in the 1960s. As we shall demonstrate in Chapter Four, Soviet authorities did have ample reasons to suspect that “imperialist” powers were using travel to the Soviet Union for their purposes. However, in the late 1950s, probably due to Soviet interest in cultivating international connections and dispelling “slander” about the Soviet surveillance state, the issue was kept relatively quiet. For instance, according to testimony from a CIA case officer, American tourists asked to gather intelligence on Soviet industrial installations felt that “as long as they did not openly violate regulations, the KGB treated them with benign indifference.”⁵¹⁹

Even when travelers strayed from the bounds of legality and yet remained discreet, the Soviet authorities kept things quiet. Thus, while Rybkin and Repnikov’s ties to Belfrage and her volume triggered a campaign against their “espionage” activities, a number of similar court cases did not evoke much in way of public response, perhaps because Soviet authorities were concerned the meagre details of the cases would make them seem like Stalinist witch hunts.⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁹ Kurtis Peebles, *Twilight Warriors: Covert Air Operations against the USSR* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 139.

⁵²⁰ See, respectively, the *prokuratura* files of the brothers Izhboldin, who exchanged literature and gifts with American tourists they befriended in 1957, who allegedly requested them to contact a “friend” who asked them to provide him with secret information (GARF, f. 8131, op. 31, d. 84821) and S.N Grib, who established connections and correspondence with Marc Kursal, a Colonel in French military intelligence who visited the Soviet Union in 1958. (GARF, f. 8131, op. 31, d. 89526). Whether these cases constituted espionage by any but the very loose standards of the KGB is an open question. In a similar case, the Russian-French repatriate Nikita Krivoshein was imprisoned for “revealing state secrets”- discussing preparations for the Moscow Youth Festival with a French diplomat (according to the authorities) or, (according to Krivoshein), for smuggling out a response article to the Hungarian Revolution published at *Le Monde*. For official documents of the trial see GARF, f. 8131, op. 31, d. 97391, 97392; for Krivoshein’s version, “Nikita Krivoshein: dvazhdy frantsuz Sovetskogo Soiuza,” *Pravmir.ru*, 11/12/2014, accessed online at: <http://www.pravmir.ru/nikita-krivoshein-zaklyuchenie-primirilo-menya-so-stranoy/> on (4/5/2016).

This period of discrete silence ended in 1960 when the Powers shutdown both highlighted Soviet sensitivity to American espionage efforts and offered an opportunity for Soviet authorities to remind people of the dangers of foreign subversion during an era of sagging commitment to Cold War battles.⁵²¹ On June 2, a month after the U-2 incident, the Central Committee issued a resolution calling for “heightened revolutionary vigilance.”⁵²² In it, it roundly criticized Soviet institutions for endangering state security by letting foreigners access their facilities and staff without concern for proper protocol, among other breaches of secrecy.

This resolution, followed in short order by a frenzy of discussions of secrecy and carelessness all across the Soviet Union,⁵²³ triggered a noisy national campaign for vigilance (of which Liakin’s op-ed was undoubtedly a key component). Readers of the Soviet press were treated to innumerable stories describing in great detail the machinations of “tourist-spies” and their henchmen.⁵²⁴ KGB officers, eager to rehabilitate the name of Soviet security services, fanned out to Soviet institutions, providing briefings

⁵²¹ On the difficulties Soviet authorities faced when they tried to arouse popular patriotism in the Khrushchev era, see: Andrei Kozovoi, “Dissonant Voices: Soviet Youth Mobilization and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 16, no.3 (2014), 29-61.

⁵²² “Postanovlenie TsK KPSS o povyshenii revoliutsionnoi bditelnosti, s vypiskoi iz protokola n. 284 zasedaniia Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 2/6/1960,” RGANI, f. 3, op. 22, d.103, ll. 79-91.

⁵²³ See, for example, accounts of secrecy meetings from Leningrad at TsGAIPD, f. 24, op. 113, d. 152. The far flung effects of this resolution were experienced even where very few foreigners stepped. In 1962, a *Komsomolskaia Pravda* journalist found that in the Tadjik border area of Badakhshan, local authorities organized a 1,000 strong “young friends of the borderguards’ unit” [*otriad iunnykh družei pogranichnikov*]. These “friends” were trained to track “border violators” and exercised with local military and militia units. Iaroslav Golovanov, *Zametki vashogo sovremennika. Tom 1:1953-1970* (Moscow: Dobroe Slovo, 2001), 157.

⁵²⁴ In addition to stories referred above, see: Y. Pinchukov, “Bditelnost’,” *Znamia* 10(1960) N. Mironov, “Gosudarstvennaia bezopasnost, delo vsenarodnoe,” 127-138, *Kommunist* 11(1960), 39-48, “Vo imia pravdy i spravedlivosti,” *Nedelia* 9/1/1962, “Kogda nad name reiut chuzhie flagi,” *Pravda* 8/6/1964, and many more.

on security, vigilance, and ideological struggle for both the intelligentsia and the general public⁵²⁵ while professional propagandists, armed with an array of pamphlets with titles like *Vigilance is our Weapon, No Entrance for Spies*, and *Spies under Guise of Tourists* and aimed to remind Soviet people that the enemy was near.⁵²⁶ The latter volume, for instance, explained to its readers how:

These types couldn't care less about science, technology, culture, or the Moscow subway. They are mysteriously pulled to the outskirts of Soviet towns to gather tendentious information... try very hard to "get lost" near some defense installation and, confusing it for some monument, snap a quick photo. These are the types that are trying to hand out anti-Soviet literature. A real enemy stands in front of you, but try and recognize it! He kindly smiles, cheerfully laughs, pretends to be a decent fellow. But his hand is inexorably drawn to the camera button.⁵²⁷

Writers and filmmakers were also recruited to the vigilance campaign. Rapidly proliferating spy novels (often co-authored by KGB officers)⁵²⁸ were laden with plots involving Western spies disguised as tourists and marginal elements as their henchmen.⁵²⁹ The Soviet movie industry was not far behind. For instance, the 1965 film

⁵²⁵ Filip Bobkov, (Moscow: Beteran MP), 1995, 102-105. On KGB efforts to rehabilitate its image, see Julie Fedor, *Russia and the Cult of State Security: the Chekist Tradition from Lenin to Putin* (London: Routledge, 2011), 30-117.

⁵²⁶ B.A Viktorov, *Shpiony pod maskoi turistov* (Moscow: Voennizdat, 1963); V.V Marukhin, *Bditelnost' nashe oruzhie* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1963); E.F Bezrodnyi, *Shpionam net dorogi* (Kiev: Gospolizdat USSR), 1962.

⁵²⁷ Viktorov, *Shpiony pod maskoi*, 6.

⁵²⁸ For instance, one of the co-authors of the most popular Soviet spy thriller of the 1960s, *Oshibka rezidenta* was Oleg Griбанov, the recently removed head of Soviet counter-intelligence, writing under the pseudonym Oleg Shmel'ev. O. Shmel'ev and V.Vostoktov, *Oshibka rezidenta* (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1996).

⁵²⁹ In *Oshibka Rezidenta* for instance, the titular resident is a Russian émigré, now an "imperialist" spy, employs the services of former Nazi collaborators and black market dealers as agents. For other examples of novels employing similar plots see, L. Samoilov, B. Skorbin, *Tainstvennyi passazhir* (Moscow: Voennizdat, 1954); V. Mikhailov, *Bumerang ne vozvrashchiaetsia* (Moscow: ASPOL, 1998)[orig. published, 1958]; Iosif Freilikhman, *Shchupal'tsa spruta* (Kishinev: Kartia Moldovianske, 1960); O. Sidelnikov, *Nokaut* (Tashkent: Goslit UzSSR, 1960).

Dark Business [*Chernii Biznes*] grafts a spy story onto a ripped-from-headlines plot about an underground textile production ring run by Jewish black marketeers, covering the adventures of an American *femme fatale* spy sent (for reasons that are not made totally clear) under the guise of tourist to help the culprits smuggle their profits abroad.⁵³⁰

Perhaps the clearest juxtaposition of the demimonde, material privilege, subversion and espionage was presented in a May 1963 feuilleton by Melor Sturua, a top international reporter for *Izvestiia*.⁵³¹ The protagonist “Oleg Penkovskii” (not to be confused, Sturua adds, with Pen’kovskii, “the notorious traitor and spy” [Пенковский/Пеньковский]),⁵³² was a Moscow loafer who made his living roaming hotels, restaurants and other “foreign” spaces, exchanging anti-Soviet stories and jokes for Western trinkets. Penkovskii, Sturua concluded “was not a spy but SCUM, dirty scum that is sometimes formed on the surface of clean pools...such people are needed by foreign scum-gatherers, first because they are becoming rarer, and second because it is not so hard to push a soft sign into their last name” (i.e. turn Penkovskii into Pen’kovskii).

In case this warning was not clear enough or readers were confused, Sturua’s feuilleton was accompanied by an appendix by Lev Kassis, a KGB officer who doubled

⁵³⁰ *Chernyi biznes*, dir. Vasilli Zhuravlev, (Moscow: Mosfilm, 1965). For details on the court case from which the plot of the movie was ripped, see N.F Chistiakov, *Po zakonu i sovesti* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1979), ch. 9. On the movie, see Theodor Shabad, “Soviet Film Depicts Soviet Police as Humane,” *New York Times*, 6/17/1965.

⁵³¹ “Dun’ki prosiatsia v Evropu, ili kogo gospoda v Evropu zovut,” *Izvestiia* 25/5/1963. On Sturua see Fainberg, “Notes from Rotten West,” esp. 45-48.

⁵³² I.e. Oleg Penk’ovskii, a GRU Colonel who offered his services to the American and British secret services in 1961, and was captured in 1963, alongside an English businessman who was his contact person. Pen’kovskii is universally considered the most important Western spy of the Cold War era. See chapter 4 of this dissertation for details.

as an *Izvestiia* international reporter.⁵³³ “Penkovskii,” Kassis reveals, was Boris Umanskii, a Gulag returnee and freelance journalist who parleyed his job into an informal position of tour guide for visiting Americans. From this perch he helped them stage anti-Soviet provocations in swanky Moscow cafes in exchange for gifts and invitations to diplomatic receptions.⁵³⁴ For good measure, Kassis mentioned two other “Penkovskiis”: the future prominent human rights activist Aleksandr Ginzburg,⁵³⁵ an associate of Umanskii, who was allegedly begging a Western embassy to loan him movies devoted to abstract painters so that he could screen them to his “buddies” [*druzhki*], and Liakhina, a graduate of the English language faculty of a teacher’s institute, who instead of working or caring for her family, spent her time “serving” [*prisluzhivat*] foreigners, as “all she cares about are French perfumes and American lipstick.”

The lesson such narratives offered was simple: the distance between unsanctioned exchange and outright treason was no more than one step, and it was the responsibility of the Soviet *kollektiv*, embodied most prominently in the KGB, to police such the former in order to prevent the latter. Thus, to borrow Amir Weiner’s term, residents of the demimonde were symbolically excised from the Soviet body politic. As defectors from the last great Soviet mobilization drive, they stood with imperialism and

⁵³³ On Kassis, see Anatolii Druzenko et al, *S zhurnalistikoi pokoncheno, zabud’te!* (Moscow: Izvestiia, 1991). Accessed online version at <http://www.agentura.ru/library/izvestiaend/39.htm> on 2/20/2015.

⁵³⁴ The cafe in question was Aelita, Moscow’s hottest jazz spot, frequented by both foreigners and Soviet bohemians. See Mikhail Kull, “Stupeni voskhozhdeniia.”

⁵³⁵ Alexander Ilyich Ginzburg (1936-2012), then a young returnee from a 2 year sentence received over attempts to publish a “formalist” literary almanac, and later an important member of the Soviet human rights movement.

against the Soviet people and its party – and the very definition of Soviet patriotism was to recognize that beyond the glitter of material goods, *fartsovshchiki* and ethnically suspect black marketeers and prostitutes and dissolute youth and emerging dissidents were, morally speaking, foreign.⁵³⁶

Lenient Times: c. 1965- c. 1980.

And yet, a scant few years later, as the Soviet Union became ensconced in the “little deal” era, calls to excise merchants and harlots from the Soviet temple became increasingly incongruent with the real existing USSR. The shift from Khrushchev-era mobilization to Brezhnev-era accommodation did not fail to transform relations between the Soviet state, Soviet society, and the demimonde, allowing the latter to enter into a golden age of sorts.

At the most basic level, as the Rokotov case demonstrated, the only way to eradicate the demimonde was to both publicly acknowledge the problem and employ Stalin-style draconian methods of social discipline. Such forthrightness and ruthlessness were thoroughly foreign to the Brezhnevite state. For instance, the official presumption that prostitution was eradicated meant that the Soviet legal code did not in fact contain

⁵³⁶ On symbolic excision as a Soviet practice of power, see Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), ch. 4.

penalties for prostitution, pimping, or solicitation – thus letting “Intourist girls” largely off the hook, as long as they arranged for fictive employment and paid appropriate bribes.⁵³⁷ Either due to the reputational damage the antisemitic undertones of Khrushchev’s campaign caused to the Soviet state abroad, or since, as Sovietologist Charles A. Schwartz speculated, the Stalinist echoes of the Rokotov show trial had a negative impact on Soviet public opinion, both the prevalence of and public attention devoted to trials of foreign currency speculators and other “economic criminals” plunged after 1965.⁵³⁸ The penalties large-scale currency speculators could be expected to receive were reduced from death to 8-12 years.⁵³⁹ While this surely was no walk in the park, the combination of the vast riches the black market offered, and the relatively lenient conditions (and early releases) their profits could buy made participation in the black markets worthwhile for the “merchants.”⁵⁴⁰

The same calculus applied to street level operators. The key here was that as historian Larissa Zakharova writes: “*fartsovka* was not mentioned in the legal code:” Soviet legislation did not forbid purchasing (as opposed to selling for profit) consumer items from foreigners.⁵⁴¹ This legal issue was only settled in 1970, with a Supreme Soviet decree that defined small-scale currency violations and purchase of consumer

⁵³⁷ See many articles gathered in Khochenkov, *Prostitutsiia i prestupnost’*.

⁵³⁸ Schwartz, “Economic Crime,” 294.

⁵³⁹ This was the case for example with the speculators highlighted in Tsvigun, *Tainyi front*. None of the trials highlighted by him was covered in *Pravda*, *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, or *Izvestiia*, nor captured by the *Current Digest of Soviet Press*.

⁵⁴⁰ Aizenshpits, *Zvezdy*.

⁵⁴¹ Zakharova, *Mode du Degel*, 228.

items from foreigners as administrative offenses. As such, first violation was punishable by fines of 10-30 rubles and confiscation of illegally obtained currency or items. A second violation within one year entailed a fine of fifty rubles. Only a third violation of currency laws (but not a third instance of *fartsovka*) carried a prison term - of up to one year.⁵⁴² In 1977 penalties were further loosened.⁵⁴³ Needless to say, Soviet authorities had other means to penalize black market operators: penalties for parasitism, public shaming, transfer to junior delinquent schools for minors⁵⁴⁴ and expulsion from universities for students. However, the (relative) liberality of post-1970 legislation meant that, given one could make hundreds of rubles on a single deal, the potential benefits of *fartsovka* far outweighed the risks.

Resource constraints further dampened the war against the demimonde. In Leningrad in 1969, local militia complained that while the city received 300,000 foreigners, the department in charge of policing interactions between foreigners and Soviet society in Leningrad and its environs had only 50 officers, charged with a dizzying variety of duties (security in international events, maintaining order and preventing *fartsovka* in Intourist locations and on the Leningrad-Vyborg highway, investigating

⁵⁴² “Ob otvetsvennosti za skupku prodazhu i obmen v nebol’shikh razmerakh valiuty i skupku veshchei u inostrantsev. Ukaz Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR, 25/3/1970,” in: V.I Vasil’ev et al (ed.) *Sbornik zakonov i ukazov Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR, 1968-1970* (Moscow: Gosudastvennoe izdatelstvo iuridicheskoi literatury, 1971).

⁵⁴³ For a short review of the history of currency violations law, see: S.K Osipov, “Otvetsvennost za narushenie valliutnogo zakonodatelstva,” *Pravo i ekonomika* 5 (1999), accessed online at: <http://www.lawmix.ru/comm/7568/> on 5/4/2015.

⁵⁴⁴ As Vasil’ev points out, for these non-violent offenders, this was a nightmarish prospect. (*Sostoianiiia*, 139-141). For a fictionalized account of the encounter between a *fartsovshchiki* teenager and his rough cellmates, see the slightly fictionalized novella *Difficult Search* by Soviet criminologist Mark Lanskoii (*Dve posvesti. Trudnyi Poisk. Glukhoe delo* (Leningrad, Sovetskii pisatel’, 1969).

crime both against foreigners and black market dealers).⁵⁴⁵ Fifteen years later, a Leningrad official bemoaned that while black market traders operated hundreds of automobiles on the Leningrad-Vyborg highway, the militia had only 2 squad cars operating in the area.⁵⁴⁶

Worse still, as we had seen, the very high profit margins offered by the demimonde made on-the-ground officials resolutely ambiguous about constraining it. Most telling in this regard was the behavior of militia officers. Even in the Khrushchev era, some friendly visitors wondered why Soviet militiamen let black market operators openly work the Red Square: “if we could easily recognize their faces, why couldn’t the militia, since they come back to the same places over and over again?”⁵⁴⁷ The answer here was simple: militia officers were systematically bribed by *fartsovshchiki* and their bosses to turn their eyes away from their activities, which were, after all, victimless crimes.⁵⁴⁸ Furthermore, high-ranking militia figures sometimes circulated in demimonde circles. The writer Georgii Vainer tells how when fellow scribe Iulian Semenov got into a scruff with “some *fartsovshchiki* and hooligans” in a prestigious Moscow restaurant and got arrested, he and his brother Arkadii, the head of the investigative department of the

⁵⁴⁵ “Spravka o proverke raboty otdela spets. sluzhb UVD Lengorispolkoma po vypolneniiu postanovleniia TsK KPSS i Soveta Ministrov SSSR ot 19/11/1968 g. ‘O sreznykh nedostatkakh v deiatel’nosti militsii i po ee dalneishemu ukrepleniui’ i postanovleniia biuro Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta KPSS ot 13/1/1969 ‘O povyshenii otvetsevennosti partiinykh organizatsii za povedeniei sovetskikh grazhdan pri obshchenii s inostrantsami’,” TSGAipD SPB f. 24, op. 140, d. 85, ll. 47-51, 55.

⁵⁴⁶ “Stenogramma zasedaniia Komissii po inostrannym delam Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR, 23/6/1983,” GARF, f. A-381, op. 13, d. 4931, ll. 24-25.

⁵⁴⁷ “Spravka o nekotorykh faktakh skupki...” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 268, l. 173.

⁵⁴⁸ On bribery, see Vasil’ev, *Sostoianiiia*, 132-134. On militia disregard for the pursuit of black marketeers, see, Vyshenkov, *Krysha*, 31, 39, 57.

Moscow militia, “discovered” both sides to the row were among their circle of friends.⁵⁴⁹ Needless to say, charges were dropped as a favor, a favor that was no doubt repaid.

Even, or especially, the *druzhiny* were not immune to the seductions of the demimonde. As Joseph Brodsky recalls: “whenever these patrols frisked black marketeers, plenty stuck to their hands - money and icons.”⁵⁵⁰ The ethical distance between skimming off the top to playing both sides was short: Ilia Lerner, the *druzhina* chieftain who instigated the assault on Brodsky in 1963, was few years later imprisoned for extorting *fartsovshchiki* in exchange for protection.⁵⁵¹ Soon, it became common knowledge among black market operators that “they beat you only if you don’t give them some dough [*bablo*].⁵⁵² In some cases things went even further: Mikhail Dakhia, the kingpin of the Leningrad foreign currency speculation market in the 1980s, began his career as a *druzhinnik*.⁵⁵³

Statistical data, to the extent they exist, seem to bear out the impression that struggle against the *demimonde* slackened in the Brezhnev era. While the number of foreigners visiting the Soviet Union kept growing, the number of people detained for commercial relations with foreigners declined from 2,283 in 1963 to 1,960 in 1968. More important than the raw numbers were statistics on the treatment meted out to the

⁵⁴⁹ “Kak bratia Vainery spasli Iuliana Semenova ot tiurny,” *Aleph*, 08/09/2008, accessed online at: <http://www.alefmagazine.com/news697.html>, 3/13/2015.

⁵⁵⁰ Solomon Volkov, *Conversations with Joseph Brodsky: A Poet’s Journey throughout the 20th Century* (New York: Free Press, 1998), 60.

⁵⁵¹ Etkind, *Protsess*, 47.

⁵⁵² Vyshenkov, *Krysha*, 272.

⁵⁵³ Milosh, “Fartsovshchiki.”

detainees. In 1968, only 102 people were subject to fines and 5 were charged with criminal offenses. Over 1,100 detainees were subjects of *profilaktika*, and the rest, apparently, were released without consequences.⁵⁵⁴ In Ukraine, a republic with no shortage of commercially minded tourists, only 6 foreigners and 68 locals were detained (and not all were tried) for contraband activities between 1970 and 1973.⁵⁵⁵ National figures show similar trends: between 1959 and 1962, 582 people were either arrested or underwent *profilaktika* for foreign currency speculation. That number declined to 382 between 1970 and 1974.⁵⁵⁶ In short, beyond the most brazen (or unlucky) of operators, the rest enjoyed a near total freedom of action.

This relaxation of attitudes was undoubtedly a silent acknowledgment of the role *fartsovka* played in supplying educated urbanites with the Western-produced goods they craved and a general Brezhnev-era bias against rocking boats.⁵⁵⁷ However, I argue, the growing official tolerance of the demimonde was rooted in something deeper: the radical incongruity between the language of excision employed during Khrushchev's

⁵⁵⁴ For 1963, see: "V. Shumilov [KGB, Leningradskaia *oblast'*] to G.I Kozlov, [Leningrad Obkom], 27/7/1963," TsGAiPD SPB, f. 8422, op. d. 191. (Published by K.A Boldovskii as "Nezdorovye i antisovetskie proiavleniia: Spravka KGB pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR po Leningradskoi oblasti, 27/7/1964," *Noveishaia istoriia Rossii*, 1(2012). For 1968, "Spravka o proverke," TSGAipD SPB f. 24, op. 140, d. 85, ll. 47-51.

⁵⁵⁵ "KGB USSR to V.V Shcherbitskii [Central Committee, Ukrainian Communist Party]. Dokladnaia zapiska ob operativnoi obstanovke v Respublike po linii ideologicheskoi diversii protivnika, 29/8/1972"), GDA SBU f. 16, op. 3, spr. 11, ark. 145.

⁵⁵⁶ "Andropov to TsK KPSS. Svedeniia o chisle lits privilechennykh k ugolovnoi otvetsvennosti i podvergnutykh profilaktike organami KGB za 1959-1974 gody, 29/10/1975," cited in, A.A Makarov et al (ed.) *Vlast' i dissidenty*, 62.

⁵⁵⁷ Chernysheva, *Consumer Culture* and Zhuck, *Rock and Roll in Rocket City* both make versions of this argument.

assault on the demimonde and the post-Stalin relationship between Soviet state and society.

On the most basic level, perhaps because they were well aware of how central fear of spies and saboteurs was to Stalinist discourse, Soviet officials and propagandists were genuinely concerned about the possibility that the campaign for vigilance would devolve into spy-mania [*shpionomaniia*]. For this reason, calls for vigilance were generously leavened with warnings against paranoia and xenophobia. For instance, during the 1961 22nd Party Congress, KGB chief Shelepin called on Soviet people not to succumb to spymania in their pursuit of vigilance, as “spymania spreads mistrust and paranoia [*podozritelnost'*] among our people.”⁵⁵⁸ As human rights activist Aleksandr Esenin-Vol'pin points out, this rhetorical restraint had practical consequences: after the 1950s, acts that were previously classified as treason - exchanging information and literature with foreigners - were under Brezhnev prosecuted, if at all, as anti-Soviet agitation, a far lesser charge.⁵⁵⁹

Official hedging on the limits of vigilance opened a space for liberal resistance against its extreme manifestations. Here, the travails of Vsevolod Kochetov's 1969 novel *What Do You Want? (Chego zhe ty khochesh?)* were a case in point.⁵⁶⁰ Kochetov, a “fanatical Stalinist,” editor of the literary journal *Oktiabr*⁵⁶¹ and key figure in the

⁵⁵⁸ *Pravda*, 10/28/1961.

⁵⁵⁹ “Beseda.”

⁵⁶⁰ Vladislav Kochetov, *Chego zhe ty khochech* (London: Flegon Press, 1970) [orig. published in *Oktiabr*, no. 3, 4, 5 (1969)].

⁵⁶¹ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 198.

conservative faction in Soviet intellectual life,⁵⁶² intended his novel as an all-out assault on Westernizing Soviet elites. His plot follows the misadventures of a tourist group, consisting of a Nazi war criminal, a former white émigré, an American photographer, and a sexually loose American journalist, sent by a shadowy Western cabal with a mission to corrupt Soviet culture.⁵⁶³ To do so, the “tourists” meet, greet, and seduce *fartsovshchiki*, liberal intellectuals, the useless, hyper-sexualized children of Soviet bureaucrats and working class youth attracted to shallow material benefits, only to have their plans foiled by a Soviet writer (who bears a remarkable resemblance to Kochetov) and his ally, a metallurgical engineer who has no time for nonsense and intellectual waffling.

With its conflation of foreigners, black marketeers, espionage, sex, and espionage, Kochetov’s volume reads like a barely fictionalized elaboration of Liakin’s article. And yet, whether because his novel was published too late, or because he went too far by openly calling to reinstitute late-Stalinist isolationism, Kochetov’s novel withered under savage liberal attacks. The novel was published by a provincial press, with a small (by Soviet standards) print run of 65,000.⁵⁶⁴ In a review published in

⁵⁶² On Kochetov, see Mitrokhin, *Russkaia partiia*, 156-160, Yitzhak M. Brudny, *Reinventing Russia: Russian Nationalism and the Soviet State, 1953-1991* (Cambridge, MA: HUP, 1998), 31-33, 54-56.

⁵⁶³ The American journalist in question was based on the American reporter Patricia Blake, who, while reporting on the intellectual environment in Moscow in the late 1960s, interviewed Kochetov, and was “wearied by the hatred in the man, and by the pity I somehow felt for him.” (“New Voices in Russian Writing,” *Encounter* 20, no.4 (1963), 37). Kochetov, in his turn, responded to Blake with an enraged diatribe, in which he called her a “female reptile,” and vividly described the “nocturnal adventures of this middle-aged woman with Moscow lads.” (“Dirty Trade,” *Current Digest of Soviet Press* [CDSP], 18, no. 14(1966). In his novel, a stand in-for Kochetov has a second encounter with the stand-in for Blake, an encounter that culminates, with, as Fitzpatrick delicately puts it: “a smack on the bottom” delivered by Kochetov to his tormentor. (Fitzpatrick, *Spy*, 239.)

⁵⁶⁴ On Khochetov’s reception, see Evgenii Popov, “Vladislav Kochetov kak predtechia kontseptulizma,” *Oktiabr*, 8(2004) accessed online at: <http://magazines.russ.ru/october/2004/8/popov7.html> on 5/10/2015;

Literaturnaia Gazeta, the critic A. Andreev pointed at Kochetov's ideological weak spot: by focusing so heavily on negative elements, he made it look as though Soviet youth was fully Westernized - something that by definition could not be true.⁵⁶⁵ During the 1971 Congress of the Writers' Union, the poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko, one of Kochetov's targets, played on the same topic, denouncing "a certain writer who attempted to slander Soviet youth as a gathering of spiritual currency speculators."⁵⁶⁶ At a time when social mobilization was out of fashion, Kochetov's honest embrace of the language of excision broke the rules of the game and thus left him defenseless against attacks from the left.

The gap between vigilance talk and the realities of the Brezhnev period left it open to the most withering of the rhetorical tools of late Soviet liberalism: satire and mockery. Kochetov's heavy-handed Stalinism was a natural target. And indeed, two parodies of his novel by Zinovii Paperno and Sergei Smirnov entitled, respectively, *What does he Want?* [*Chego zhe on khochet*] and *What is he Laughing About?* [*Chego zhe on khokhochet*], both enjoying wide *samizdat* circulation.⁵⁶⁷ Other satirical takes on vigilance talk appeared under an official imprimatur. Efim Gamburg's 1967 animated film *Spy Games* brilliantly lampoons familiar clichés about Western attempts to steal

Mikhail Zolotonosov, "Sud'bonosnyi roman i ego avtor," *Delo*, 6/13/2006, accessed online at: <http://www.idelo.ru/421/17.html>, on 5/10/2015; K.B Sokolov, *Khudozhestvennaia kul'tura i vlast' v poststalinskoi Rossii: soiuz I bor'ba, 1953-1985 gg.* (St. Petersburg: Nestor-istoriia, 2007), 302-304. Sokolov points out that with all its many literary flaws, Kochetov's novel was a prophetic work, in that it correctly predicted the impac of Western consumer culture on Soviet ideology.

⁵⁶⁵ "O romane Vladislava Kochetova 'Chego zhe ty khochesh,'" *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 02/11/1970.

⁵⁶⁶ *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 7/7/1971.

⁵⁶⁷ For segments of both parodies, see Popov, "Kochetov." See also Zinovii Papernyi, "Istoriia odnoi parodii," accessed online at: <http://antology.igrunov.ru/authors/paperny/one-parody.html> (accessed on 5/11/2015).

Soviet secrets.⁵⁶⁸ Taking things one step further, the joint Italian-Soviet comedy *The Incredible Adventures of Italians in Russia* [*Neveroiatnye prikliucheniia Italiantssev v Rossii*] took a familiar plot - a search for treasure buried by a White émigré that draws dubious foreigners to the Soviet Union - and turned it into a wild slapstick affair, ending with a suspiciously “capitalist” denouement: the Soviet state gives the Italians 25% of the treasure as finders’ fee, while the KGB agent who surveilled the group marries one of the treasure seekers.⁵⁶⁹ The message of such works was clear: like everything else in late Soviet culture, vigilance talk was not to be taken too seriously.

If calls for vigilance became leavened with some skeptical dissonance, denunciations of the commercial demimonde increasingly became a rarity. As mentioned above, the campaign against economic crime faltered shortly after Khrushchev’s ouster. Foreign currency prostitution also disappeared from the Soviet press, to the extent that *perestroika-era* publicists held as truism it was total taboo since the 1920s.⁵⁷⁰ Similarly, unless they involved the politically fraught topic of Jewish emigration (see Chapter 5), major trials of currency speculators were not covered in major Soviet newspapers.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁶⁸ *Shpionskie strasti*, dir. Efim Gamburg, (Moscow: SoiuzMultfilm, 1967).

⁵⁶⁹ *Neveroiatnye prikliucheniia Italiantssev v Rossii* (dir. Eldar Riazanov and Franco Prospero, Moscow: Mosfilm and Milan: Dino de Laurentis Cinematografica, 1974).

⁵⁷⁰ Igor Kon’, *Klubnichka na berezke: seksualnaia kul’tura v Rossii* (Moscow: OGI, 1997). Accessed online at <http://sexology.narod.ru/chapt612b.html> (accessed 3/10/2015).

⁵⁷¹ This and other information about the Soviet press in this paragraph is based on searches in the Eastview Individual Russian Titles Database (covering *Pravda*, *Izvestiia*, *Literaturnaia gazeta*, and *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*). On the low profile of major corruption investigations in the 1970s, see the recollections of OBKhSS colonel Lev Akopov (“Glukhoe delo,” *Versia*, 3/22/2010, accessed online at: <https://versia.ru/yeksklyuzivnye-podrobnosti-samogo-zasekrechennogo-yekonomicheskogo-prestupleniya-yepoxi-zastoya>, accessed online on 5/16/2015). Akopov recalls a massive, multi-republic investigation into underground textile factories that led to 55 trials and 4 executions. The affair received extremely scant coverage for “obvious reasons:” concern about international reactions to a trial of mostly Jewish

The last point was part of a larger trend: while the Soviet press was generally silent on the commercial demimonde, it still vigorously promoted vigilance against foreign ideological subversion. The official press continued to issue warnings about “vigilance and carelessness”⁵⁷² while propagandists still warned their audiences about “visitors from another world” rummaging after Soviet secrets.⁵⁷³ Even Khrushchev-era arguments about links between *fartsovka* and espionage did not altogether fade. For instance, *The Secret Front*, a collection of cautionary tales about foreign subversion penned by Semen Tsvigun, the literary-ambitious Chairman of the KGB prominently featured the demimonde as fertile ground for spies and saboteurs.⁵⁷⁴ On a less exalted level, Soviet teachers attempted to deter “chewing gum knights” by spreading tales of foreigners distributing syphilis-infected chewing gum - tales that brought back xenophobic myths going back at the very least to the 19th century.⁵⁷⁵

Furthermore, on relatively rare occasions, the Soviet public still called to participate actively in rituals of symbolic excision. While a relatively small number of people underwent *profilaktika* for commercial relations with foreigners, for the unlucky few, it was a harrowing experience.⁵⁷⁶ In Donetsk in 1975, for example, several students

defendants, and embarrassment due the support the textile network received from Soviet officials all across the country.

⁵⁷² See, for example, Gen. A. Malygin, “Bez kompromissov v ideologicheskoi bor’be,” *Molodoi Kommunist*, 1(1969), 49-62; “O bditelnosti i bezalabernosti,” *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 12/3/1970,

⁵⁷³ G. Sokolov and I. Timofeev, *Vizitery iz chuzhogo mira* (Simferopol: Tavriia, 1974), N.F Chistiakov and V.E Smol’nikov, *Taina ne tolko v seifakh* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1968).

⁵⁷⁴ Tsvigun, *Tainyi front*.

⁵⁷⁵ Von Bremzen, *Art of Soviet Cooking*, 16; Klose, *Closed Society*, 289.

⁵⁷⁶ On *profilaktika* as method of rule see Mark Harrison, *One Day we will Live without Fear: Everyday Lives under the Soviet Police State* (Palo Alto, CA: Hoover Institute Press, 2016), ch. 5.

caught speculating in items bought from foreigners faced a series of public meetings in front of over 1,500 *komsomol* members in which their sins were roundly denounced. These meetings were widely publicized in the local and regional press.⁵⁷⁷ In the Lithuanian port city of Klaipeda, groups of *fartsovshchiki* and girls dating foreign sailors could expect not only “private” forms of pressure (“conversations” with KGB officers, threats of loss of employment, possible charges of parasitism, expulsion from universities), but public humiliation. Most strikingly, victims of *profilaktika* had their photos set up in a “they shame our city” photo-array in the city square - a public shaming that relied for its efficacy on general public acceptance of official denunciations of the *demimonde*.⁵⁷⁸

Devastating as such attacks could be for their victims, statistically speaking, they were surely exceptions to the general official trend of tolerance for the *demimonde*. However, they served as reminder that the language of excision did not disappear from the official toolkit – and *demimonde* residents faced the risk of the wrath of the Soviet state falling on their heads at any moment. However, generally speaking, the focus of Soviet assaults on the *demimonde* shifted from the Khrushchev era wide-ranging charges, to selective targeting of Soviet citizens whose associations with foreigners were deemed especially dangerous. In other words, the connections Khrushchev-era campaigns made between youth, education, disloyalty and material privilege were no longer pointing at

⁵⁷⁷ “IS, 11/9/1972,” GDA SBU, f. 16, op. 3, spr. 11, ark. 252.

⁵⁷⁸ “Raport o provedenii profilaktik v otnoshenii gruppy lits iz chisla sviazei inostrannykh moriakov,” *Lietuvos Ypatingas Archivas* [YPA], f. K-41, ap. 1, b. 697, ll. 15-20.

ill-defined (and largely a-political) “golden youth” or (even more a-political) black markeers but at a specific, identifiable group that, Soviet authorities argued, actively cut it itself off from Soviet society: *otshchepentsy* - dissenters and human rights activists.⁵⁷⁹ For instance, the historian N.N Iakovlev, charged by the KGB with writing an authoritative history of American subversion against the Soviet Union,⁵⁸⁰ employed such themes when denouncing dissidents as “dropouts [*nedouchki*], idlers [*lobotriasy*], with over-developed ambitions and pretensions.”⁵⁸¹ Motivated by “vainglory” and hedonism, they became easy marks for “all sorts of scum with diplomatic passports [or] simply tourist visas.”⁵⁸²

And indeed, while unlucky *fartsovshchiki* were publicly humiliated in their towns, ritualized humiliations of dissenters were national affairs, broadcast on television and covered in central newspapers. For instance, the confessions of Peter Yakir and Viktor Krasin, human rights activists who broke under interrogation, dictated by the KGB and undoubably reflecting official perceptions of their activities, included tales of

⁵⁷⁹ On the complicated relations between dissidents and their most crucial ally, Western journalists, see Barbara Walker, “Soviet Human Rights Activists” and Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: a Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). On Soviet views of dissident connections to the West see Walter Parchomenko, *Soviet Images of Dissidents and Non-Conformists* (New York: Praeger, 1986) and chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

⁵⁸⁰ N.N Iakovlev, *TsRU protiv SSSR* (Moscow: Pravda, 1983). According to his memoiristic appendix to a post Soviet edition of one of his works, Iakovlev, who spent some time in prison in 1952/3, used his connections with Soviet Minister of Defense Ustinov make contact with Andropov and Bobkov, the head of the 5th, Ideological, Department of the KGB. In 1980, he was given access to the KGB’s library and other “closed” sources to write a definitive history of the CIA, published in more than 20 million copies. (N.N Iakovlev, “Prilozhenie,” in idem, *1 avgust 1914* (Moscow: Moskviatianin, 1993), 286-315. See also Sokolov, *Kultura i vlast’*, 344-346.

⁵⁸¹ Iakovlev, *TsRU*, 176.

⁵⁸² *Ibid*, 177.

receiving money from the anti-Soviet émigré organization NTS, payments by Western journalists for “slandorous materials” and receiving “handouts” from foreigners.⁵⁸³ The dissenting priest Dmitrii Dudko made similar confessions, stating on Soviet TV that he was led astray by Western journalists, diplomats, and other foreign malefactors who plied him with gifts and media attention.⁵⁸⁴ On the republican level, the *Literaturnaia Gazeta* and the Georgian *Zaria Vostoka* both described how the Georgian nationalist Zviad Gamsakhurdia “grew up in great privilege” and despite everything Soviet power did for him was recruited by American diplomats and “*anti-sovetchiki* who abuse their status as guests” to betray his country in exchange for gifts and publicity abroad.⁵⁸⁵

To what extent was vigilance talk accepted by the public, and to what extent was it deemed parody-worthy prattle? The limited available evidence suggests that, outside rarefied intellectual circles, denunciations of the demimonde – even in its commercial guise - had real and lasting effect. A scintillating hint in this regard is offered by a *svodka* of questions asked by the public in KGB-sponsored talks about vigilance prepared for the Ukrainian Politburo in 1981, featuring numerous examples of “Soviet toilers” inquiring why the state didn’t tamp down on *fartsovshchiki*, foreign spies, subversive tourists, diplomats and journalists, and the dissidents who served as their henchmen.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸³ “Sud v Moskve,” *Izvestiia*, 8/29/1973.

⁵⁸⁴ Oliver Bullough, *The Last Man in Russia: the Struggle to Save a Dying Nation* (New York: Basic, 2013), ch. 9, 10.

⁵⁸⁵ “Ten’ v pustyne,” *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 5/24/1978. See also “Who Profits by this?” CDSP, 5/18/1978 (original published in *Zaria Vostoka* 3/23/1978).

⁵⁸⁶ “Perechen’ voprosov,” DGA SBU f. 16, op. 7, spr. 35, ark. 208-225.

Other evidence points in the same direction. Both contemporary and post-Soviet accounts emphasize the extent to which *fartsovshchiki* were despised by other Soviet people, including their clients.⁵⁸⁷ More strikingly, warnings against espionage seem to have taken effect among the Soviet public. Esenin-Vol'pin remembered the early 1960s as a period of “hysteria... and spymania.”⁵⁸⁸ Similarly, Soviet dissidents and informal artists remember with some pride being spied on and viewed with suspicion by their communal apartment neighbors for their dubious Western connections and visitors.⁵⁸⁹

Furthermore, at least some Soviet people were willing to take vigilance talk as a call for action. For instance, tourists taking suspicious pictures could expect vigilant reactions. In one such case from Smolensk in 1963, a pair of young American tourists taking pictures of garbage piles left after construction were “apprehended by our Soviet citizens, who forced them to expose their films,” to help avoid embarrassment to the Soviet state.⁵⁹⁰ Even in nationalist-minded Lithuania, locals took similar actions against nosy foreigners.⁵⁹¹ Finally, no matter how often they were lampooned by the intellectual classes, vigilance was certainly taken seriously by some young men, including very

⁵⁸⁷ Yurkchak, *Everything was Forever*, 201-202. Aizenshpits, *Zazhigaiushchii Zvezdy*, 87, Panov, *Fartsovshchiiki*.

⁵⁸⁸ “Beseda.”

⁵⁸⁹ Marchenko, *Nezhelannoe puteshestvie*, 8-9; Sergei Dovlatov, *Nashi*, (accessed online at <http://www.sergeydovlatov.ru/index.php?cnt=8&sub=4&part=10>, on 5/15/2015).

⁵⁹⁰ “Organizatsiia i provedenie ekskursii dlia turistov puteshestvuiuschikh po avtomarshrutam, [Smolensk],” GARF, f. 9612, op. 1, d. 558, l. 123.

⁵⁹¹ “Spravka o nekotorykh faktakh proiavleniia grazhdanami Lit. SSR politcheskoi bditel'nosti.” YLA, f. k-1, ap. 10, b. 300, l. 173.

famous ones, who, influenced by Soviet spy thrillers, chose fighting “dangers coming from abroad” as their calling.⁵⁹²

In short, official attitudes to the demimonde underwent a significant shift under Brezhnev. On the one hand, the Soviet state learned to live with all but the most ideological interactions between Soviet people and foreigners. On the other hand, the master narrative that doomed demimonde residents to symbolic excision from Soviet society remained intact. Dissidents now absorbed the entire brunt of association of foreignness, corruption, privilege, and treason. In the early 1980s, as international conditions deteriorated and the Soviet state once again attempted to use reinvigorate socialism by enhancing social discipline, the demimonde again recast as ideological problem.

The Andropov Interlude, or the Last Soviet Campaign, Late 1970s - 1986

Soviet historiography, usually well-attuned to periodization, has yet to either delineate or provide a convenient title for the years between the slow disintegration of Brezhnev’s rule and the moment when *perestroika* ceased being a mobilizing slogan and became a revolutionary force. For some scholars, Aleksei Yurchak most prominently, the years

⁵⁹² Masha Gessen, *The Man without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2013), 52. See also: Sergei Gorlenko, *Zapiski opera. Ot KGB do FSB* (Moscow: Tradistsia, 2013), 22.

between 1980 and 1986 saw nothing new in particular, as nothing new could exist, by definition, in the “eternal state.”⁵⁹³ For others, period was the quiet before the storm with a series of crises gathering as Soviet society awaited the Brezhnev gerontocrats to exit the scene.⁵⁹⁴ And yet, as the following pages make clear, enough evidence exists to see this time frame as a period in its own right, defined by a last desperate drive for social discipline and coercive reform. I term this period “the Andropov interlude,” after the man whose agenda shaped Soviet policy from the late 1970s until 1986/7.⁵⁹⁵

As in the Khrushchev era, this period was defined by an intermingling of international and domestic crises: a series of Cold War crises that exacerbated fears about foreign subversion, coupled with growing concern regarding the impact of corruption and moral degeneration on economic performance and the future of the socialist project. Subsequently the Andropov interlude was was a period of coercive reform, focused on social discipline, moral exhortation, and attempts at ideological revival.⁵⁹⁶ As the problem of unsanctioned contacts between foreigners and Soviet people was closely

⁵⁹³ Yurchak, *Everything was Forever*, ch. 1

⁵⁹⁴ See Zubok, *Failed Empire*, ch. 8, 9. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, ch. 5.

⁵⁹⁵ Still the best summary of Andropov’s contribution to Soviet history is Dmitrii Volkogonov, *Sem’ vozhdiei* (Moscow: Eksmo, 2011), ch. 5. Fedor, *State Security*, 139-160, has references to the many Russian authors who view Andropov as a key figure in the run-up to *perestroika*.

⁵⁹⁶ On Andropov-era campaigns, see Duhamel; *Corruption*, Sokolov, *Kul’tura i vlast’*, 383-458; Zhuk, *Rock And Roll*, ch. 14; Robert English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), ch. 5. The best known Andropov-style campaign took place under Gorbachev (Andropov’s protégé): his drive for sobriety in 1986/7. On this campaign, see Stephen White, *Russia Goes Dry: Alcohol, State and Society* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1997) and Mark L. Schrad, *Vodka Politics: Alcohol, Autocracy and the Secret History of the Russian State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), ch. 17, 18.

related to both fears of ideological subversion and moral degeneration, Andropov's coercive reform efforts included a renewed assault on the *demimonde*.

One indication of official loss of patience with the *demimonde* came immediately after the highpoint of Soviet diplomatic achievement, the signing of the Helsinki Accords. According to an intelligence estimate prepared by the CIA in 1977, while initial Soviet intentions were to apply "carrot and stick methods" to dissidents who attempted to leverage the Accords for their purposes, their success in riling global public opinion moved the Soviet authorities to decisive action. In short order, the Soviets shot a broadside at dissenters and their Western allies by arresting and deporting the *Washington Post* reporter Robert Toth. Even more alarming, his contact Anatolii Shcharanskii, one of the top links between Moscow dissidents and the West, was arrested and indicted on treason charges. Both incidents, the CIA concluded, were violations of recent Soviet practice, which stipulated leaving reporters in peace, and charging their sources only with anti-Soviet agitation.⁵⁹⁷

Whether the details of this assessment are accurate or not, it constituted an accurate prediction regarding future Soviet actions. Dismantling the connection between Westerners and Soviet dissenters became a key Soviet tactic in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Most famously, if in 1976, at the height of *détente*, Soviet authorities used Sakharov's freedom to engage with Western reporters in order to publicly refute Western

⁵⁹⁷ "Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Vice President Mondale, 7/19/1977," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980. Volume VI: the Soviet Union* (Washington DC: GAO, 2013).

“slander” regarding the Soviet human rights record,⁵⁹⁸ by 1979 his meetings with foreign journalists, diplomats, and “intelligence officers seeking political information,” were privately cited by Andropov and Prosecutor General Rudenko as both reason and legal pretext for his exile to the closed city of Gor’kii.⁵⁹⁹

These measures were part of a conscious strategy of turning the screws on interactions between Soviet people and foreigners. In a famous example of this trend, in the run-up to the 1980 Olympics, Moscow was not only purged of undesireables, but saw its school year shortened and its youth “exiled” to pioneer camps and other summer facilities to avoid ideological contamination - a far cry from the optimism of 1957.⁶⁰⁰ In another indication of the intensifying struggle against contamination from abroad, Andropov’s short-lived KGB successor Vitalii Fedorchuk penned a memorandum complaining about the liberal approach of Soviet film-makers to representations of social (and sexual) contacts between foreigners and Soviet citizens (citing, among others, the happy ending of *Unusual Adventures*), and the growing numbers of prominent Soviet citizens marrying foreigners.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁸ “Vypiska iz protokola P201/P44,” in *Vlast’ i dissidenty*, 87

⁵⁹⁹ “Zapiska n. 2484-A Predsedatelia KGB Iu.V Andropova i gen. prokuratora SSSR R.A Rudenko v TsK KPSS, “O merakh presecheniia vrazhdebnoi deiatelnosti Sakharova A.D, 26/12/1979,” in idem, 220-221.

⁶⁰⁰ “Vypiska iz protokola n. 168 Sekretariata TsK “O vvedenie vremennykh ogranicheniinia v’ezda v Moskvu v period Olimpiady-80 i napravlenii grazhdan Moskvu v stroitelnye otriady sportivnyem pionerskie lageria i drugie mesta otdykha letom 1980 goda, 23/7/1980,” posted online at the Bukovsky Archive, <http://www.bukovsky-archives.net/pdfs/sovter75/ct168b79.pdf>, accessed online on 5/22/2015.

⁶⁰¹ “O brakakh sovetskikh deiatelei kul’tury s grazhdanami kapitalisticheskikh stran, 22/11/1982,” cited in Evgeniia Al’bats, *Mina zamedlennogo deistvia: politicheskii portret KGB* (Moscow: Ruslit, 1992), 157-159.

Perhaps in response to this liberal trend, the late 1970s and early 1980s saw a resurgence of vigilance talk. In 1979, the KGB established its own literary and cinematic prizes, an apogee of its post-Stalin public relations efforts.⁶⁰² These awards were just the tip of an immense iceberg. In 1984, in Ukraine alone, the Republican KGB helped party propagandists prepare 3,000 talks about vigilance and sponsored over 10,000 talks and lectures on the same topic by KGB veterans and reserve officers. The KGB also organized about 150 “authors’ groups” that “released 1 fictional and 11 documentary films, published 55 books and 24 pamphlets, prepared 1,209 radio segments and composed 3,739 newspaper articles [devoted to] exposing the machinations of foreign intelligence services, centers of ideological subversion, foreign Zionist, nationalist, clerical, and other anti-Soviet organizations, of hostile and anti-social elements.”⁶⁰³

If this was rather familiar fare, under Andropov, these broadsides at corrupt dissidents and their foreign benefactors were accompanied by something new- a systematic assault on corruption and informal economic activity.⁶⁰⁴ For this campaign, the demimonde was a natural target. Intourist, criss-crossed as it was with networks of corruption, was under assault of such intensity that one Intourist official complained that an average Intourist barman could expect to work no more than 2 or 3 years before going

⁶⁰² Fedor, *State Security*, 152.

⁶⁰³ “Dokladnaia zapiska KGB USSR [Ukrainian KGB] po podgotovke proizvedenii literatury i iskusstva posviashchennykh deiatenosti organov bezopasnosti i povysheniiu politicheskoi bditelnosit trudiashchikhsia, 14/1/985,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 10, spr. 9, ark. 33-38.

⁶⁰⁴ Duhamel, *Corruption*.

to prison.⁶⁰⁵ These legal attacks were accompanied by media coverage that, for the first time, acknowledged the systemic nature of the demimonde problem. In one letter by a whistleblower, a barman recently fired from a Sochi resort, published in *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, the author described how his bosses demanded “tribute” (*dan*’) which they then disbursed to the rest of the hotel *kollektiv*, and to local *militia* organizations.⁶⁰⁶ *Pravda* in its turn ran an expose on “young specialists” who refused their *raspredelenie* and found instead employment at an Intourist motel in Northern Ossetia, with the clear insinuation that they did so to gain access to the imported goods and foreign currency so easily obtainable at Intourist facilities.⁶⁰⁷

This assault on the commercial world surrounding foreign visitors was not limited to Intourist. Starting in the late 1970s, authorities moved to re-energize the struggle against *fartsovka*.⁶⁰⁸ According to figures collated by Catriona Kelly, in Leningrad, detentions of Soviet citizens festering foreigners skyrocketed from 1,500 to above 3,400 between 1977 and 1978.⁶⁰⁹ Around 1980, Intourist hotels were ordered to launch security departments, charged with disciplining Intourist labor force and

605 “Stenogramma zasedaniia... 2/12/1985,” GARF, f. A-385, op. 13, d. 6116, l. 57.

606 “Pochemu ia ushel s Zhemchuzhiny,” *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 10/30/1983.

607 “Okhota k peremene mest,” *Pravda*, 11/3/1983. Shortly after the publication of this article, seven staff members of the motel were arrested and the senior brass of the North Ossetian Intourist department fired. “O nedostatkakh v organizatsii raboty otdelnykh predpriatii Goskominturista, 3/12/1983,” GARF f. A-10004, op.1, d.667, ll. 129-131).

608 “Spravka ob organizatsii deiatel’nosti dobrovolnykh druzhin i punktov okhrany obshchestvennogo poriadka v respublike, 24/4/1984,” ERAF, arf. 1, arv. 302, s. 419, ll. 1-5.

609 Cited in Catriona Kelly, *St. Petersburg: Shadows of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 188, 388n.

coordinating actions against “a-social elements” with the militia and *druzhiny*.⁶¹⁰ Most tellingy, Soviet authorities seriously discussed a reinstatement of the Khrushchevian practice of instating quotas of “parasites” to be exiled from major cities- a move that was understood by them as the only effective measure against *fartsovka*.⁶¹¹

Indicating the lasting impact of Andropov’s coercive reform agenda, assaults on the demimonde only intensified early in Gorbachev’s reign. The years 1985-1987 saw the issuance of a major Central Committee resolution on the reorganization of the fight against prostitution and speculation,⁶¹² the formation of militia units designated to police Intourist hotels,⁶¹³ and even, in Riga, the first Soviet vice squad.⁶¹⁴ In Moscow in 1986, the Gor’kii Street *pleshka* was declared an “Komsomol Influence Zone” and was flooded by militia and Komsomol patrols.⁶¹⁵ Following a major publication in *Sovetskaia Estonia* on the prevalence of prostitution and speculation involving Finnish tourists there, over 800 *druzhinniki* and significant number of militia officers were sent to patrol tourist areas of

⁶¹⁰ “Postanovlenie 58/22 DSP Kollegii Gosudartvennogo Komiteta po inostrannomu turizmu ob uslenie borby s anti-obshchestvennymi proiavleniami v mestakh prozhivaniia inostrannykh turistov, 3/7/1984”, GARF f. 9612, op.3, d. 1984, ll. 158-160.

⁶¹¹ “Protokol n.4,” A-385, op. 13, d. 4927, l. 25.

⁶¹² The TsK issued a resolution in this regard entitled “O serezhnykh nedostatatkakh v organizatsii bor’by s prostitutsiei i narusheniami pravil o valiutnykh operatsiakh,” on March 3, 1987. I was not able to locate this resolution in the archives, but see the reaction of the Estonian party to the resolution, “Postanovlenie Biuro TsK Kompartii Estonii, 14/4/1987, Protokol n. 29,” ERAF, arf. 1, arv. 4, s. 7263, ll. 1-2.

⁶¹³ “Ob usileniu borby s protivopravnymi priavleniami v otnosheniii inostrannykh turistov, 8/8/1986,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1748, ll. 49-50.

⁶¹⁴ “Militsia nravov delaet pervye shagi v Rige,” *Literaturnaia gazeta* 16/3/1988 (reporting on the formation of the vice squad six months beforehand).

⁶¹⁵ “Zona vlianiia,” *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 11/1/1986.

Talinn.⁶¹⁶ Thus, in theory at least, the early *perestroika* years saw the worst clampdown on the demimonde since the Khrushchev period.

Yet, as is so often the case in late Soviet society, this activity faced obdurate resistance from both Soviet society and Soviet institutions. Intourist hotel managers had little enthusiasm for policing, and often shortchanged or diverted the employees of security departments to other tasks,⁶¹⁷ and the MVD did not care about the assignment much either.⁶¹⁸ In Tallinn in 1986, only 16,500 Finnish marks, 100 DMs, and 3 US dollars were confiscated from black market participants – surely less than a drop in the ocean of black market activity surrounding Finnish tourists.⁶¹⁹ Even black marketeers so clumsy or unlucky to be captured had little to worry about, since, as Estonian party and KGB officials complained, universities and places of employment did not particularly care about the “moral profiles” of their students and staff and sometimes openly refused to participate in profilactic measures.⁶²⁰ Most strikingly, in February 1985, the All-Union Council of Ministers, alarmed at the high percentage of empty rooms at recently built Intourist hotels, instructed Intourist to start selling packages to Soviet citizens, in rubles, but at “prices equivalent to those paid by foreign tourists.”⁶²¹ This resolution not only

⁶¹⁶ “O stat’e,” ERAF, arf. 1, arv. 4, s. 7040, ll. 4-5.

⁶¹⁷ See, for example, “Postanovlenie Kollegii Gosudarstvennogo Komiteta SSSR po inostrannomu turizmu, n. 15/5 DSP 15/3/1985,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1748, ll. 57-58.

⁶¹⁸ “Postanovlenie kollegii Gosudarstvennogo Komiteta SSSR po inostrannomu turizmu, n. 14/10 DSP, 21/4/1987,” GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 1933, l. 45.

⁶¹⁹ “Zapiska o dopolnitelnykh merakh,” ERAF, arf. 1, arv. 4, s. 7263, l. 6.

⁶²⁰ “O stat’e ‘Fartsa ne znaet vykhodnykh,’ gazety Sovetskaia Estoniia obuplikovannoi 10-12 iulia, 1986 goda,” ERAF arf. 1, arv. 4, s. 7040, ll. 5-6.

⁶²¹ “V. Pavlov [Goskominturist SSSR], to Komissia Prezidiuma Soveta Ministrov SSSR po vneshneekonomicheskim vorposam, 28/1/1986,” GARF F. A-10004, op.1, d. 745, l. 30.

provided exactly the same idlers and parasites Andropov's campaigns were aimed at legitimate access to the top of the Soviet pyramid of consumption (who else, after all, had the available income to purchase an Intourist tour?), but also allowed *fartsovshchiki* and "Intourist girl" a perfectly legal method to purchase access to foreigners in rubles, in order to make profits off them in dollars - thus making perfect mockery of this last Soviet mobilization drive.

If such quiet subversion of official strictures was in itself nothing new, renewed media attention to the demimonde created new and unintended consequences. As was the case in the Khrushchev era, authorities sought to publicize the misdeeds of black marketeers, in order to both warn others and mobilize the public against their misbegotten lifestyles. The practice of public show trials of major currency speculators was therefore revived, with the 1986 trial of the aforementioned Mikhail Dakhia broadcast on Leningrad TV.⁶²² In Estonia, *profilaktika* measures now included TV coverage of the public shaming of street operators.⁶²³ In the realm of fiction, narratives about the link between demimonde and espionage triumphantly returned to Soviet screens: the highest grossing Soviet film in 1986, *Dual Trap*, was seemingly a standard thriller, detailing the struggle between the Latvian KGB, a Western businessman sent by

⁶²² Leonid Milosh, "Fartsovshchiki," *Smena* 3 (1988). On Dakhia, also see the somewhat sensationalist documentary *Opasnyi Leningrad- Podpolnyi korol'* (broadcast on *Channel 5*, 10/5//2010).

⁶²³ "Zapiska o dopolnitel'nykh merakh po vypolneniiu postanovlenii Biuro TsK KP Estonii ot 5/8/1986, 12/1 i 14/4/1987 po bor'be s antisotsialnymi proiavleniami vokrug inostrannogo turizma po linii Goskominturista SSSR v gorode Tallinne, 30/6/1987," ERAF, arf. 1, arv. 4, s. 7040, l. 27

shadowy forces to subvert Soviet youth, and a gang of *fartsovshchiki* that do his bidding.⁶²⁴

While much of the resurgent coverage of the demimonde was resolutely orthodox in tone, in the context of the late Soviet culture, the messages it broadcast to the public were complex, contradictory, and sometimes subversive. For instance, even though Dakhia conducted criminal operations on a scale far surpassing Rokotov's, he received only a six-year sentence—a clear indication of the distance the Soviet justice system had traveled since the 1960s.⁶²⁵

Even more importantly, coverage of busted demimonde networks in the Soviet press no longer depicted the culprits as foreign elements, but rather emphasized the extent to which they were product of “native” social forces. For example, a 1984 multi-part *Komsomolskaia Pravda* expose on an Arab student running a vast commercial network in Rostov, made it very clear how his network depended on local officials, who protected him in exchange for bribes and regular gifts of jeans for their children.⁶²⁶ Other pieces denouncing *fartsovka* focused on the demand side of the problem: the insatiable demand for Western consumer goods from law-abiding Soviet urbanites.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁴ *Dvoinoi kapkan/Dubultslazds* dir. Alois Brenčs' (Riga: Rīzhskā kinostudija, 1986). For films employing similar tropes, see: *Barmen iz 'Zolotogo Iakoria'*, dir. Viktor Zhivolub, (Moscow: Kinostudiia imeni Gorkogo, 1986), *Konets operatsii rezident*, dir. Veniamin Dorman (Moscow: Kinostudiia im. Gorkogo, 1986.)

⁶²⁵ Leonid Milosh, “Fartsovshchiki,” *Smena* 3 (1988), and also see the somewhat sensationalist documentary *Opasnyi Leningrad—Podpolnyi korol'* (broadcast on Channel 5, 10/5//2010).

⁶²⁶ “Importnyi Mirazh,” 1/11/1984, ““Mirazh Rasseilsia,” *ibid*, 2/11/1984, “Po sledam nashikh vystuplenii: kogda rasseilsia mirazh,” *ibid*, 8/29/1984,

⁶²⁷ Milosh, “Fartsovshchiki”; “Fartsa ne znaet vykhodnykh,” *Sovetskaia Estoniia*, 7/10-7/12/1986.

And here was the heart of the issue: unlike in the Khrushchev era, even the briefest glimpse at the demimonde could not fail to reveal the extent to which it became embedded in Soviet urban life. As a result, coverage of the demimonde often exhibited not so much denunciation as elucidation of desire. Thus, in the successful 1985 romantic comedy *The Most Charming and Attractive One* [*Samaia obaietlnaia i privlekatelnaia*], a matter-of-fact visit to the well stocked apartment of a *fartsovshchik* is a key moment in the transformation of Nadia, the protagonist, from a reticent engineer a glamorous beauty. Even more strikingly, despite its traditional plot, much of the imagery of *Dual Trap* celebrated material excess associated with the demimonde. The first “Soviet” scene in the movie is set in a bar/cabaret catering to foreigners, and features near-naked dancers gyrating to jazz music. In a key scene, the *fartsovshchik* ring leader, known as Banan, effortlessly bedazzles “normal” Soviet girls with his money and endless stock of Western consumer products. Even the KGB officers who vanquish Banan seem for a moment transfixed with the images in the pornographic journals he distributes. Commissioned as warning against the dangers of the demimonde, *Dual Trap* visually celebrated its temptation. This ambiguity gave rise to a thorny question: were black marketeers renegades excised from Soviet life, or were “normative” Soviet people excised from the good life the black marketeers enjoyed?



Figure 3.3: Scene from Dual Trap: “Banan” seduces visitors to his apartment



Figure 3.4: Scene from Dual Trap: Investigator Peeking at Pornographic Journal

Source: Alois Brancs (dir.) Double Trap.

Conclusion: The Demimonde Becomes the World, 1986-1989

If such dangerous questions were but a subtext in 1985/6, by 1986/7, the twin forces of *glasnost* and commercialization made them absolutely central to media coverage of a hitherto unspoken aspect of the demimonde: hard currency prostitution.⁶²⁸ According to an interview with Evgenii Dodolev, the author of the first high-profile piece on the issue published in the Soviet media⁶²⁹ his article was commissioned by the KGB, and was meant to signal to Intourist and local authorities to finally tackle the problem.⁶³⁰ Indeed, Dodolev's publication was followed by a massive media campaign aimed to propagandize a Central Committee resolution that acknowledged the problem for the first time since the 1920s.⁶³¹ Inevitably, such coverage elicited responses couched in violent, excisionary, language: one letter to the editor proposed to burn prostitutes alive,

⁶²⁸ For two contemporary treatments of this phenomenon, see Ia.P Diachenko, "Interdevochki v zerkale pressy," in *Prostitutsiia*, 71-99; Elizabeth Waters, "Restructuring the Woman Question: Perestroika and Prostitution," *Feminist Review* 33(1989), 3-19. Much of this coverage here relies on their summary of contemporary Soviet press.

⁶²⁹ "Belyi tanets," *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, 11/19, 11/21, 1986. In fact, *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* published a similar article in October 1986 ("Dama s podachkoi," *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, 10/9/1986). This piece however lacked the panache, witty writing style and inch space of the Dodolev expose and passed largely unnoted.

⁶³⁰ "Dvadsat' let spustia," *Novyi vzgliad*, 6/16/2007, accessed online at: <http://www.newlookmedia.ru/?p=2743> on 6/1/2015.

⁶³¹ Waters, "Woman Question," 4.

while a group of teenagers from Brest boasted that they founded a group devoted to the violent eradication of prostitutes and *fartsovshchiki*.⁶³²

And yet, the vast majority of publicity associated with hard currency prostitution veered far from the initial design of the campaign. By far the most prominent example of this trend is Kunin's *Interdevochka*. Like Dodolev's piece, *Interdevochka* was commissioned by Soviet authorities for propagandistic purposes.⁶³³ Nevertheless, both the novel and the movie it inspired present the protagonist, Tatiana, and her fellow *interdevochki* as largely positive characters, fighting to navigate a reality rife with poverty, meaningless ideological speech, and misogyny. At the same time, *Interdevochka* not only celebrated the material comforts obtained by Tatiana and her friends, but did what very few Soviet movies did before: sell sex, in vivid color, to an audience that, as ticket and book sales indicated, was starved for it.⁶³⁴

This rejection of official views of the demimonde in favor of both moralism and unabashed commercialized sexuality rapidly became the dominant themes in the coverage of hard currency prostitution. Reforming academics and journalists pointed out that hard currency prostitution was a social problem, and that the decades-long policy of pretending it did not exist caused great harm to sex workers by blocking all attempts to

⁶³² "V Zerkale pressy," 74. "Chitatel prodolzhaet diskussiu," *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 8/16/1987.

⁶³³ According to Israeli-Russian journalist Shelley Schreiman, Vladimir Kunin's composition of *Interdevochka* was enabled by the MVD, which embedded him with a unit charged with policing hard currency prostitutes. ("Istoriia sozdaniia interdevochki," accessed online at: <http://www.proza.ru/2011/02/04/1813> on 6/1/2015).

⁶³⁴ *Interdevochka* (dir. Petr Todorovskii, Moscow: Mosfilm, 1989).

tackle the issue or protect them from abuse and disease.⁶³⁵ The playwright Alexander Galin used the Olympic deportation of undesirables from Moscow as background to *Stars in the Night Sky*, a play set in a barrack in a mental hospital to which deportees were sent, using the setting to discuss the plight of marginal social groups.⁶³⁶

With their mixture of empathy, moral horror, and paternalism, such treatments of the prostitution problem were, in their own way, no less moralizing than the official line. As such, they were soon overshadowed by coverage of an altogether different tenor. Increasingly released from both censorship restrictions and state subsidies, Soviet media found hard currency prostitution an irresistible topic. Significantly, while such narratives did not of course, lack for sex, their nearly obsessive focus lay elsewhere: the mad profits and luxuriant lifestyles of the *interdevochki*.⁶³⁷

Khau du iu du, a documentary film about the hard currency scene in Moscow, was perhaps the most powerful indication of the extent to which the campaign against the demimonde became an advertisement for it. Initially conceived as a Komsomol educational vehicle, it turned instead into a commercially-minded celebration of the demimonde, showcasing luxurious fixtures of Intourist hotels, meals consumed in Intourist restaurants, apartments stocked with Western consumer goods where demimonde participants resided. Above all, *Khau du iu du* emphasized the mental

⁶³⁵ This is the general line in the articles gathered in *Prostitutsiia*.

⁶³⁶ Alexander Galin, "Stars in the Morning Sky," in Michael Glenny (ed.), *Stars in the Morning Sky: New Soviet Plays* (London: Nick Hern Books, 1989).

⁶³⁷ See, in great detail, survey in "V zerkale pressy."

satisfaction offered by the demimonde and denied to Soviet toilers (“Don’t I have the right to be happy?” one *interdevochka* inquires of the camera in a key scene). The only voice expressing moral indignation belonged to a doorman at the *Metropol* hotel, who, the movie made clear, was accepting bribes from prostitutes for access to “his” hotel- a highly effective visual representation of the failure of Soviet efforts to excise the demimonde, and the moral failure of the language of excision.⁶³⁸ It was in this atmosphere that a poll taken among Riga teenagers found hard currency prostitution, alongside black market trading and waiting in Intourist bars, the most desired professions.⁶³⁹ Released from the discursive and coercive limits that kept access to foreigners and their wealth to those daring to leave normative Soviet existence behind, the demimonde rapidly colonized the Soviet (soon to become post-Soviet) imagination.⁶⁴⁰ As Liakin and Kochetov prophesied, speculators, parasites, and girls of easy behavior did indeed help lay the foundation for the defeat of the socialist project

⁶³⁸ *Khau du iu du*, dir. S. Baranov (Moscow: RTsDSF, 1988). For a review see “Khau du iu du,” *Pravda*, 9/27/1988.

⁶³⁹ Kon’ *Klubnichka na berezke*. A year or two later, an American anthropologist found that “because of the often positive image given to young female prostitutes through the association of prostitution with... access to foreign goods and high lifestyle, those who sleep with men for money are often regarded more highly than those...[who] have different sexual partners or a series of short term sexual relationships,” Hillary Pickington, *Russia's Youth and Its Culture: A Nation's Constructors and Constructed* (London: Routledge, 1994), 207.

⁶⁴⁰ On post-Soviet fascination with sex, wealth and violence, see Eliot Bernstein, *Overkill: Sex, Violence, and Russian Popular Culture after 1991* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).

Chapter 4: Vigilance is Our Weapon! The KGB, Foreigners, and the Limits of Surveillance

Sometime in August 1972, the Jewish-American lawyer Samuel Dash was in Kharkiv, fighting to keep his pants on. Dash, a law professor at Georgetown who recently issued a widely circulating public rebuttal to the British account of the Belfast Bogside Massacre, was a man on a mission. As he recounted in an oral history interview in 2003, he was asked by an “emissary from the Israeli government” to “do an errand on behalf of Israel and the Refuseniks:” to go to the Soviet Union as a tourist, make contact with Jewish emigration activists, and draw public attention to the plight of Soviet Jewry upon return home. To fulfill his assignment, Dash carried around a little notebook with the names and numbers of the activists he was to meet. After a series of unsuccessful attempts to extract the notebook from Dash’s hotel rooms, the KGB devised a plan: his Intourist guide pushed him to visit the Kharkiv subway construction site, where, over his protests, the site manager forced him to strip and put on protective gear for a tour of the tunnels. This

gave KGB operatives time to ruffle through his pants in search of the notebook - a plan that was foiled because Dash prudently stuffed it into his underwear.⁶⁴¹

If Dash's account reads like a farce, it was also, from the point of view of the officials who authorized this sartorial heist, a deadly serious representation of the dilemmas created by growing foreign presence inside the USSR. As we've seen in the preceding chapter, the official Soviet view of contacts between Soviet citizens and foreigners was imbued with what sociologist Andreas Graeber terms state paranoia. This "highly indexical suspicion which radiated from the center of the party state to its periphery,"⁶⁴² made the Soviet official mind presume that even seemingly a-political contacts with the outside world undermined the Soviet state and were therefore systematically employed as weapons by its imperialist foes. What made things worse was that while the Soviet state and especially its security services had a rich tradition of generating paranoid attitudes about foreign subversion of the Soviet collective out of mere phantoms,⁶⁴³ the Dash incident indicates that, in the post-Stalin period, the Soviet obsession with foreign subversion had a solid foundation in fact. From the moment more-or-less obstacle-free travel to the USSR became a reality in the mid-1950s, a variety of

⁶⁴¹ This version of the story is based on "Professor Samuel Dash," *Oral History Project of the District of Columbia District Court Historical Society* (Washington DC: The District of Columbia District Court Historical Society, 2003), accessed online at: http://dcchs.org/SamuelDash/samueldash_complete.pdf, accessed 5/15/2005. An earlier version of the story is contained in a report by Dash to the National Conference on Soviet Jewry: Samuel Dash, 'Operation Contact' in the Soviet Union, 9/2/1972," National Conference for Soviet Jewry Records, The Soviet Jewry Movement Archives [NCSJ-TSJM], Box 38, Folder 9.

⁶⁴² Andreas Graeber, "Monolithic Intentionality, Belonging and the Production of State Paranoia: A View through the Stasi onto the Late GDR," in Andrew Shyrock (ed.) *Off Stage/On Display: Intimacies and Ethnographies in the Age of Public Culture* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press), 2004, 244-277.

⁶⁴³ See, for a recent example, Whitewood, *The Red Army and the Great Terror*.

groups, individuals, governmental and non-governmental institutions in the West did see in the Soviet opening up to the world a real opportunity to promote a variety of agendas harmful to Soviet interests.

This chapter explores how the ideological dangers, operational challenges and security risks created by visiting foreigners were read by Soviet security services through an analytic lense rooted in state paranoia. From this perspective, the threats to social discipline and political unanimity created by encounters between Soviet people and foreigners were seen not as set of disparate problems created by various groups pursuing limited objectives, but as coordinated aspects of an all-out assault on the foundations of the socialist project. Faced with this challenge, the Soviet security service set out to surveil, police, and disrupt unauthorized connections between foreigners and Soviet people – and, as the Dash incident indicates, fell short in this task.

In this chapter and the next, I reconstruct the epistemological structures that underpinned the Soviet view of foreign danger, and how it adapted the classical elements of Soviet policecraft to meet it. Then, I demonstrate a curious and yawning gap between the KGB's threat perceptions, the resources it put into surveillance of foreigners, and the very limited scope to which these threat perceptions translated into aggressive action to deter them from subverting Soviet power. This conundrum leads to the central question posed in this and the following chapter: why this immense gap between perception and action? Why did the Soviet alarm at the subversive effects of foreign travel did did not lead to resolute action to reduce interactions between the Soviet Union and the outside

world, or at least to determined action against subversive travelers like Dash? Before raising and answering these questions however, I sketch out a quick profile of the perceived security threat Soviet authorities faced in the era of (almost) open borders.

Spies, Saboteurs and Subversive Travelers

Harmful as it might have been judged by post-Stalin Soviet authorities, the Soviet self-isolation of the late 1940s and early 1950s posed two intractable problems to Western Cold Warriors. First, at the end of the Second World War, their knowledge of their erstwhile ally was rudimentary and intelligence gathering capacities on Soviet soil negligible.⁶⁴⁴ In subsequent years, Soviet and British attempts to clandestinely infiltrate agents (usually members of various émigré groups) to gather intelligence and foster clandestine resistance networks on the Soviet periphery were easily foiled by Soviet security services.⁶⁴⁵ Second, the complete closure of Soviet physical and cultural spaces

⁶⁴⁴ See, for example, David J. Alvarez, *Spying through a Glass Darkly: American Espionage against the Soviet Union, 1945-1946* (Lawrence, KS: Kansas University Press, 2016) and David Engerman, *Know Your Enemy*, Part 1.

⁶⁴⁵ Peter Grose, *America's Secret War behind the Iron Curtain* (Boston: Houghton Muffin, 2000); Curtis Peebles, *Twilight Warriors: Covert Air Operations against the USSR* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press), 2005, ch. 2; Simo Mikkonen, "Exploiting the Exiles: Soviet Émigrés in U.S. Cold War Strategy," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 14, No. 2 (2012), 98–127; Benjamin Tromley, "The Making of a Myth: The National Labor Alliance, Russian Émigrés, and Cold War Intelligence Activities," *Kritika*, 18, no. 1 (2016), 80-111.

to foreign presence made spreading Western propaganda behind Soviet borders practically impossible.⁶⁴⁶

For state and non-state actors in the West seeking to learn about the Soviet Union in order to change (or, in case the Cold War turned hot, more effectively incinerate) it, the opening of Soviet borders was a golden opportunity to recover lost ground. For instance, when the Soviet Union removed its ban on diplomatic personnel travel outside Moscow, Western military attachés could return to their core mission: using travel under the protection of diplomatic immunity to conduct visual and signals intelligence.⁶⁴⁷ In a more innovative manner, as the CIA's in-house journal *Studies in Intelligence* put it in 1963: “during the past seven or eight years of increased tourist travel to the USSR and official exchanges ... [The CIA] devoted a great deal of time and energy to briefing and debriefing those who may thus have opportunities to make useful observations, seeking to exploit these sources of opportunity with reference to targets of opportunity [*sic*].”⁶⁴⁸

Translated from bureaucratic language, what this meant was that for “spies and saboteurs” the price of admission to Soviet territory suddenly dropped, from life-

⁶⁴⁶ Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*. On late Stalinist isolation, see Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, ch. 1, Fuerst, *Stalin's Last Generation*.

⁶⁴⁷ See the memoirs of the British military attaché to the Soviet Union in the early 1960s, E.S Williams (*Cold War, Hot Seat: A Western Defense Attaché in the Soviet Union* (London: R. Hale, 2000)). Intelligence gathering by diplomats was of course not limited by such trips: throughout the Cold War, the CIA station in Moscow was not short on CIA case officers. See, for recent accounts of their adventures, David Hoffman, *Billion Dollar Spy: a True Story of Cold War Espionage and Betrayal* (New York: Doubleday, 2016) and Martha Denny Peterson, *The Widow Spy: My CIA Journey from the Jungles of Laos to Prison in Moscow* (Wilmington, NC: Red Canary Press, 2012).

⁶⁴⁸ Robert Vandaveer, “Operation Lincoln,” *Studies in Intelligence* 7 (1963), 65. Accessed online via: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000608379.pdf, on 4/16/2015 on 5/1/2016.

threatening parachute drops to purchasing an Intourist package. From 1959 onwards, the CIA ran “Operation Lincoln,” which tasked about sixty visitors a year with identifying possible missile sites by means of “visual, photographic, or conversational observations.” From 1962 onward, this program was converted to gathering information by means of elicitation: making contacts with Soviet scientists and engineers in order to “draw... out... a friendly conversation to the point of revealing something useful.”⁶⁴⁹ The American Air Force ran an even more ambitious program, using engineers, scientists, and members of official delegations to help create a wartime targeting database by observing and photographing strategic sites.⁶⁵⁰ In a similar endeavor, the Pentagon offered a number of young Americans studying in Europe funds to purchase a car and take a trip across the European part of the USSR - in exchange for taking photographs of Soviet military installations.⁶⁵¹ Some “tourist-spies” were so brazen as to openly take pictures of officers entering and exiting the KGB’s headquarters at Lubyanka Square.⁶⁵²

By the mid-1960s, such blatant use of tourism and exchanges for espionage purposes seems to have tapered off, due to both Soviet counter-measures (see below) and technological advances that made direct observation less useful.⁶⁵³ However, travelers still provided the United States with helpful intelligence. For instance, the era of mass travel finally allowed the CIA to put its émigré assets to good use, by employing diaspora

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid, 72.

⁶⁵⁰ Peebles, *Twilight Warriors*), ch. 6.

⁶⁵¹ See the recollection of one of these “spies on wheels”, Marvin McKinnen., who was apprehended in Ukraine and spent several years in Soviet prisons. Stu Borman, “A Chemistry Spy Story,” *Chemical and Engineering News* 91, no.7 (2013), 47-49.

⁶⁵² Semichastnyi, *Bespokoinoe serdtse*, 172.

⁶⁵³ Peebles, *Twilight Warriors*, 158.

Lithuanians and Ukrainians who were visiting relatives to both conduct visual intelligence and gather information on local Soviet officials.⁶⁵⁴ In a less voluntaristic vein, American authorities could and did apply pressure on exchange students and scholars to obtain information about their Soviet experiences.⁶⁵⁵

Using travelers to gather intelligence is of course a tactic of statecraft at least as venerable as, at least, the Book of Joshua. More unusual by historical standards was the uses to which Western actors put foreign travel in their efforts to change Soviet society. Both governments and individuals saw the opening of Soviet borders as golden opportunity to directly deliver Western messages to the Soviet public. Settings for such efforts ranged from iconic locations like the 1959 Sokolniki Exhibit to everyday manifestations of friendship outside the control of Soviet authorities. For instance, as an Intourist document from 1960 complained, members of the Yale and Harvard university choirs, “acting according to instructions they probably received in the US” used their tour of the Soviet Union for propaganda purposes by: “leaving their hotels in the evening hours and singing Russian songs...starting conversations with Soviet people drawn to these improvised concerts... making provocative statements and attacking the Soviet

⁶⁵⁴ For the Baltics, see “Baltic REDSKIN Review, 11/7/1961,” Accessed online at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/1705143/AEBALCONY_0004.pdf. On Ukraine, see “AERODYNAMIC/FI Opportunities in 1961, 9/4/1961,” accessed online at: [http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/1705143/AERODYNAMIC%20%20%20VOL.%2017%20%20\(OPERATIONS\)_0063.pdf](http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/1705143/AERODYNAMIC%20%20%20VOL.%2017%20%20(OPERATIONS)_0063.pdf). These projects lasted at least until the early 1970s (CA/PEG Project Data Sheet, 7/22/1969) accessed online at: [http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/1705143/AERODYNAMIC%20%20%20VOL.%207%20%20\(DEVELOPMENT%20AND%20PLANS\)_0005.pdf](http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/1705143/AERODYNAMIC%20%20%20VOL.%207%20%20(DEVELOPMENT%20AND%20PLANS)_0005.pdf). All accessed on 4/30/2016.

⁶⁵⁵ Graham, *Moscow Stories*, 200-203. See also William B. Edgerton, “Adventures of an Innocent American Professor with the CIA and the KGB,” *Russian History* 24, no.3 (1997), 321-327.

government.”⁶⁵⁶ At times, Soviet fears of clandestine links between unruly travelers and the CIA proved true. Historian Karen Paget recounts, for instance, the tale of two students who, armed with CIA funding, infiltrated the American delegation to the 1957 Moscow Festival in order to “debate democracy in Red Square:” to sow division within the (Communist-dominated) American delegation, and reach out to both other delegations and ordinary Muscovites.⁶⁵⁷

While, as Susan Reid brilliantly demonstrates, such engagement attempts did not always produce the desired effects and could repel Soviet citizens disgusted with American materialism,⁶⁵⁸ subversive travelers achieved a measure of success by operating on a narrower front. Namely, from the 1950s onward, various Western groups employed travel to the Soviet Union to give aid and succor to sundry Soviet dissenters and non-conformists. Worse still from the point of view of Soviet authorities, they found no shortage of Soviet interlocutors who sought out the visitors in order to actualize, enunciate, and publicize their departures from Soviet normative existence. Together, subversive travelers and their interlocutors created a variety of transnational networks that, while immeasurably smaller than the demimonde, posed no greater threat to Soviet claims of ideological unanimity.

Yet again confirming that Soviet fears of the link between subversion, “imperialism” and foreign travel were at least to some extent justified, the links that

⁶⁵⁶ “Spravka o prebyvanii v Sovetskom Soiuzee gruppy turistov universitetov shtata Novaia Anliia (SShA), 7/9/1960,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 268, ll. 182-185.

⁶⁵⁷ Karen M. Paget, *Patriotic Betrayal. The Inside Story of the CIA's Secret Campaign to Enroll American Students in the Crusade against Communism* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2015), 186-195.

⁶⁵⁸ Reid, “Who Will Beat Whom?”

connected Soviet non-conformists to the outside world were, at times, state-sponsored. To cite just one example, a CIA-funded book-smuggling operation enlisted American travelers to distribute hundreds of thousands of copies of Russian language translations of Western literature and *samizdat* publications among Soviet elites.⁶⁵⁹ In the late 1970s, during the Carter administration's human rights push, a number of diplomats at the American Embassy in Moscow had "contact and reporting responsibilities for the Soviet dissident community"- or, in other words, aided them in their core activity of publicizing Soviet human rights abuses.⁶⁶⁰ As Dash's case demonstrates, smaller states such as Israel could also get in on the action (and, as we shall see in chapter 5, did so with gusto).

More important still, as was the case with so much of the cultural Cold War, much of this subversive activity was organized by non-governmental groups, often entangled in various ways with Western governments. The émigré organization NTS (*narodno-trudovoi soiuz*), a frequent collaborator with the CIA in the immediate postwar years and in all probability a recipient of American funds throughout the Cold War,⁶⁶¹ refocused much of its activity on legal travel after the 1950s. It recruited and trained "eagles", Russian emigres, Russian-speaking students, or members of European youth

⁶⁵⁹ Isaac Patch, *Closing the Circle: a Buckalino Journey Around our Time* (Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College Printing Services, 1996, 257. Unfortunately, the files of this operation (known as the Bedford Project) are still classified, and according to Peter Finn and Petra Couvee, may well have been destroyed (*The Zhivago Affair: The Kremlin, the CIA, and the Battle over a Forbidden Book* (London: Vintage, 2014), 264..

⁶⁶⁰ "Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency: Anticipated Soviet Moves in the Shcharansky Case, 1/10/1978," cited in *FRUS*, 1977-1980. *Soviet Union*, 247.

⁶⁶¹ Tromley, "The National Labor Alliance."

right-wing organizations, to serve as its emissaries on Soviet soil.⁶⁶² There, they were to distribute subversive literature and smuggle out *samizdat*, (rarely) engage in public protest, make contact with dissenters, and provide money, gifts, and clandestine technology to would-be resistance groups (missions that could and sometimes did end with disasters for all involved).⁶⁶³ Baltic and Ukrainian nationalist organizations employed similar tactics with a larger measure of success – with continued CIA backing.

A probably numerically more significant transnational network connected evangelical believers in the West to their Soviet brethren. From the 1950s to the 1980s, religious travelers, ranging from tourists armed “with cameras and the Bible,”⁶⁶⁴ to professional “God’s Smugglers,”⁶⁶⁵ driving across the Soviet Union in cars equipped with hidden compartments storing thousands of Holy Books, distributed vast amounts of religious literature among Soviet “sectarians.” This large-scale (yet historiographically

⁶⁶² V. Senderov (ed.), *Ot zarubezhia do Moskvy: Narodno-Trudovoi Soiuz v vospominaniakh i dokumentakh, 1924-2001* (Moscow: Posev, 2014.)

⁶⁶³ For court cases involving contacts between NTS emissaries and clandestine groups in the Soviet Union, see “Obvinitelnoe zakliuchenie po ugovnomu delu n.38 po obvineniiu Evdokimovoi Galiny Nikolaevnoi v sovershenii prestupleniia predusmotrennogo chastiu 1 stat’i 70 UK RSFSR, 25/4/1972,” GARF, f. 8131, op. 36, d. 4966, ll. 13-26 and “Obvinitelnoe zakliucheniia po ugovnomu delu. n.248 po obvineniiu Gureeva Edvarda Vasilevichia, Derunova Mikhaila Vladimirovichia, Nemchinova Sergeia Vasilevichia, Beglianova Aleksandra Andreevichia, Stempokskogo Sergeia Appolinarevichia, vsekh v prestupleniakh predusmotrennykh st. st. 70-oi ch.1 i 72- oi UK RSFSR [n.d- july 1967],” GARF f. 8131, op. 31, d. 99976, ll. 18-69. Perhaps the most famous case involving the “eagles” was the arrest, imprisonment and subsequent exchange of Gerald Brooke, a British Russian language lecturer and NTS emissary, in 1966. Roger Platt, “The Soviet Imprisonment of Gerald Brooke and Subsequent Exchange for the Krogers, 1965–1969,” *Contemporary British History* 29, no.2 (2010), 193-212.

⁶⁶⁴ Gernot Friedrich, *Mit Kamera und Bibel durch die Sowjetunion: ein Thüringer Pfarrer besucht illegal Brüder und Schwestern im Osten* (Berlin: Am Park, 1997).

⁶⁶⁵ “Andrew” [Andrew van der Bijl], *God’s Smuggler* (New York: Hodder and Stoughton), 2002.

obscure)⁶⁶⁶ movement was initiated in the 1950s as the brain child of largely apolitical activists like the Dutchman Andrew van der Bijl (better known as Brother Andrew). By the late 1970s, Bible smuggling became a cottage industry, with dozens of organizations, some closely tied to right-wing circles in the West, vying for tens of millions of dollars in donations to fund their endeavors.⁶⁶⁷ Furthermore, as Brother Andrew freely concedes in his memoirs, significant components of this godly network were funded by various anti-Communist organizations, who, in, turn, could have plausibly been connected to Western governments.⁶⁶⁸

Brother Andrew's contribution to the evangelical cause underlies an important point: that even if the politicized demimonde enjoyed governmental support, it was, in the final account, a product of myriad individual commitments. Thus, many Western journalists residing in Moscow took cultivating, publicizing, and at times materially aiding dissenters as key ingredients of both their professional and ethical duties.⁶⁶⁹

Journalists, students, and scholars made the apartments of dissidents and Soviet intellectuals' places of pilgrimage where they could partake in the practice of resistance-via-kitchen talk.⁶⁷⁰

⁶⁶⁶ For an exception, see Brent Boel, "Bible Smuggling and Human Rights in the Cold War," in: Luc Van Dongen and Stephanie Rouline (ed.), *Transnational Anti-Communism and the Cold War: Agents, Activities and Networks* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 263-275.

⁶⁶⁷ Russel Chandler, "Smuggled Goods: the Good Book," *Los Angeles Times* 3/24/1978.

⁶⁶⁸ *God's Smuggler*, 178.

⁶⁶⁹ Kruse, *Closed Society* is an excellent account of a reporter's sojourn in the Soviet Union, written in this key. Nagorski in his *Reluctant Farewell* narrates his stay in the Soviet Union in a similar key, making a strong distinction between the minority of journalists who maintained this ethical commitment, and the majority of the Moscow contingent that relied on official sources of information. See also Fainberg, "Notes from Rotten West," 181-193, Walker, "Human Rights Defenders."

⁶⁷⁰ See for example, Clarence Brown, "Introduction," in Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Hope against Hope: a Memoir* (New York, Modern Library, 1999), xvii. For similar relationship between foreigners and a much

Such encounters begat perhaps the most substantial contribution of foreigners to Soviet non-conformity: the smuggling of *samizdat* and subversive manuscripts abroad. One of the earliest texts of Soviet dissent, Sergei Yesenin-Volpin's "Why I am not a Communist," was, for instance, smuggled abroad by a member of the aforementioned Yale choir, in its 1959 tour of the Soviet Union.⁶⁷¹ Later on, *samizdat* smuggling took more organized features. As Alexander Solzhenitsyn revealed in the post-Soviet edition of his memoirs, foreigners - journalists, literary scholars, diplomats, and others were an essential ingredient in his network of "invisible" collaborators [*nevidimki*].⁶⁷² One such "invisible," the French-Russian diplomat Anastasia Durrouf, smuggled large segments of Solzhenitsyn's manuscripts abroad, disguising them as gifts she asked French tourists and businessmen returning home to present to her Parisian "friends."⁶⁷³ In Ukraine, "ethnic" foreign students from Czechoslovakia and Canada formed an important channel through which Ukrainian nationalists could smuggle their works abroad.⁶⁷⁴ On an individual level, Dutchman Robert Van Voren describes how, as a teenager, he became so obsessed with Soviet dissidents he reached out to exile dissident Vladimir Bukovsky who "trained"

less famous Moscow dissident, see: Lisa C. Paul, *Swimming in the Daylight: an American Student, a Soviet-Jewish Dissident, and the Gift of Hope* (New York: Skyhorse Publishers), 2011.

⁶⁷¹ Benjamin Nathans, *Alexander Volpin and the Origins of the Soviet Human Rights Movement* (Washington, DC: NCEER, 2006), 13. I thank Professor Nathans for drawing this fact to my attention.

⁶⁷² Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *I bodalsia telenok s dubom. Ocherki literaturnoi zhizni* (Moscow: Soglasie, 1996), 562-579.

⁶⁷³ Anastasia Durrouf, *Rossia: Ochishchenie ognem. Iz dnevnika khristianki, Moskva 1964-1977* (Moscow: Rudomino, 1999), 170-171.

⁶⁷⁴ Taras Muraško and Jerguš Sivoš, "Keď žije jazyk, žije celý národ. Preprava ukrajinskej disidentskej literatúry ukrajincami žijúcimi na Slovensku," *Pamäť národa* 1(2013).

him to become a journalist posted in the Soviet Union- and a publicity agent for human rights defenders.⁶⁷⁵

Of course, such devotion was but a faint reflection of the determination that was required from the Soviet participants of these transnational networks of dissent. Most telling in this regard was the zeal with which individuals outside Soviet capitals pursued opportunities to engage with sympathetic foreigners. Siberian Baptists often undertook long journeys to contact religious emissaries in the Soviet West in order to receive Bibles that were then copied by hand and recirculated in the Far East.⁶⁷⁶ Desperate petitioners from Soviet provinces found ways to deliver their complaints about injustices to Moscow-based journalists.⁶⁷⁷ One Tbilisi engineer spent nearly three years in the 1960s trying to contact foreigners willing to take his letters to Western editors abroad. For this purpose, he repeatedly travelled to various foreign exhibitions in Moscow, sent his friends there with the letters and, when those connections bore no fruit, attempted to convince tourists he met at Tbilisi churches to smuggle them out in exchange for Georgian souvenirs.⁶⁷⁸

Finally, the most dramatic illustration of the subversive potential of foreign presence on Soviet soil was the use that potential “traitors to the motherland” made of it.

⁶⁷⁵ Van Boren, *Dissidents and Madness*, 6-9.

⁶⁷⁶ Lois M. Bass, *Forbidden Faith* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Thousand Oaks Publishing, 2000), 214-215.

⁶⁷⁷ Kruse, *Closed Society*, 53-92, David Souter, *Age of Delirium*, 90-122.

⁶⁷⁸ “Postanovlenie st. sledovatel'ia spets. otdela KGB pri SM GSSR kapitana Chitashvili, 23/12/1964.” GARF, f. 8131, op. 31, d. 98411, ll. 1-5. In a similar case in Yalta, one underground author desperate to get published abroad resorted throwing copies of his writings into an Intourist bus in Yalta “Postanovlenie, 23/12/1963,” GARF, F. 8131, op. 31, d. 96873, l. 6.

Western embassies in Moscow were magnets for non-conformists and, especially, religious activists, who could spend years living as refugees inside them if they were lucky, or be immediately expelled if they were unlucky.⁶⁷⁹ While such desperate ploys were treason only under Soviet standards, other “traitors” targeted travelers with bona fide attempts to instigate espionage. Oleg Pen’kovskii, for example, made his first contact with Western intelligence services by contacting two American exchange students who delivered his message to the American embassy.⁶⁸⁰ Similar attempts, by amateurs wishing to escape the Soviet Union as well as professional intelligence officers wishing to defect, continued throughout the Cold War era.⁶⁸¹ Attempts to seek out foreigners to divulge secrets were apparently so common that, in locations where foreigners congregated, the KGB employed baits (agents dressed as foreigners) to flush out potential traitors.⁶⁸²

⁶⁷⁹ The most famous case involving embassy refugees was involved the so-called Siberian Seven- a group of Soviet Pentecostals who spent five years in the basement of the American embassy (1978-1983). See Kent Richmond Hill, *The Soviet Union on the Brink: an Inside Look at Christianity and Glasnost* (Portland, OR: Multomah Publishers, 1991) 20-40. For an example of an immediate expulsion that brought the expellee, Donetsk miner and activist Alexei Nikitin, to a psychiatric hospital, see Klose, *Closed Society*, 88-91.

⁶⁸⁰ “Interview with Joe Bulik, 1/31/1998,” hosted at the National Security Archive Website, at: <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/coldwar/interviews/episode-21/bulik1.html> (access: 3/1/2015).

⁶⁸¹ P.N Riabchuk, “Dva dela,” in V.S Gusev et al (ed.) *Sledstvie prodolzhaetsia: khroniki politicheskikh prestuplenii. Kniga piataia* (St. Petersburg: Spetsialnaia literatura), 2008, 141-145. Viktor Sheymov, *Tower of Secrets: a Real Life Spy Thriller* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press), 1993, 300-313.

⁶⁸² See the court case of Zinov’ev, V.E, cited in Vladimir Kozlov et al (ed.) *58(10): Nadzornye proizvodstva Prokarutury SSSR po delam o antisovetskii agitatsii I propagandy. Annotirovannyi katalog, 1953-1991*. (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi fond DEMOKRATIIA, 1999), 784. I was not able to gain access to the relevant archival file at GARF, f. 8131, op. 36, d. 8461.

Reading the Foreign Danger

In short, from an official Soviet standpoint, illicit interactions between foreigners and disloyal elements represented a raw body of facts sufficient to classify foreign travel into the USSR as a national security threat. However, in order to craft a policy response to these raw facts, they had to be analyzed and weighed alongside additional factors, ranging from the benefits of international exchanges to Soviet scientific and technological development (as well as Soviet intelligence gathering operations),⁶⁸³ to the reality that the Soviet opening up to the world coincided with a long era of political stability. As all intelligence assessment does, this analysis took place in a specific political, institutional, and epistemic context. Namely, it lay more or less entirely in the hands of the KGB, the organization charged with all aspects of defending the Soviet Union from peacetime dangers: intelligence gathering and assessment, counterintelligence operations, border controls, and political secret policing.⁶⁸⁴

⁶⁸³ On Soviet foreign intelligence-gathering operations after the mid-1950s, see Christopher M. Andrew, *The Sword and the Shield: the Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), and idem, *The World was Going our Way: the KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), Jonathan Haslam, *Near and Distant Neighbors: a New History of Soviet Intelligence* (London: MacMillan, 2015), 143-272.

⁶⁸⁴ For an interesting take from a practitioner on the problems of cultural and institutional evaluation of intelligence, see Rob Johnson, *Analytic Cultures in the US Intelligence Community* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2005). For a recent treatment of similar issues in the context of Soviet Cold War security operations, see Raymond L. Garthoff, *Soviet Leaders and Intelligence: Assessing the American Adversary During the Cold War* (Washington, DC: University of Georgetown Press, 2015) and Ben de Jong, "The KGB View of the West: Conspiracies and Agents of Influence," in Heiner Timmerman (ed.), *The Future a Memory: The Cold War and Intelligence Services* (Berlin: Dr. W. Hopf Verlag, 2013), 77-96.

The KGB, the successor organization to the Stalin-era NKVD, was formed at a moment of crisis of legitimacy for Soviet security services. Faced with the necessity to reformulate *its raison d'être* in the wake of Khrushchev's revelations of Stalin's crimes (and the ensuing drastic cuts of secret police payrolls) the defense of the Soviet state from external enemies became absolutely central to the KGB's mission statement - both as public relations strategy and as a statement of organizational ethos.⁶⁸⁵ Thus, the introduction to its official *History* stipulates that while in the early days of the Soviet Republic the focus of the Cheka was on battling domestic enemies, after the war its main task was "to vigilantly defend the achievements of socialism from the machinations of imperialism, its intelligence and other services."⁶⁸⁶ Vladimir Semichastnyi, the first KGB Chairman appointed after Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin, proudly describes how he reoriented the Soviet security services from Stalinist diversions to their proper focus - "intelligence and counter-intelligence."⁶⁸⁷ In his appearance before the anti-Stalinist 1962 Party Congress, his successor, Alexander Shelepin, emphasized that in the era of the all-people's state, the KGB "concentrates... [its] main efforts on exposing and firmly suppressing the activities of hostile intelligence agencies."⁶⁸⁸ Shelepin's successor, Andropov, repeated the same refrain, reminding his listeners that the KGB's main task

⁶⁸⁵ On the KGB's campaign to rehabilitate itself, see Fedor, *Russia and the Cult of State Security*, 30-58.

⁶⁸⁶ *Istoriia organov*, 3.

⁶⁸⁷ Vladimir Semichastnyi, *Bespokoinoe serdtse* (Moscow: Vagrius, 2002), 164-180.

⁶⁸⁸ "Vystuplenie tov. A.N Sheleпина, predsedatelia Komiteta Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti," *Pravda* 27/10/1962.

was to “closely observe the machinations of imperialist intelligence services” in a parting talk before KGB senior cadres in 1981.⁶⁸⁹

More specifically, the KGB identified two major dangers stemming from foreign “machinations.” First, the KGB was well-informed regarding Western uses of tourism for subversive purposes. Tsvigun, in his *Secret Front*, accurately described the origins and function of Operation Lincoln while warning Soviet scientists that “it would be irrational to presume that every visitor is an intelligence officer... but we might find among them some people who wouldn’t object to grab some secret information.”⁶⁹⁰

While potential espionage activity was described by Tsvigun in a nearly matter-of-factly tone, KGB officers viewed Western efforts to encourage dissent in similar terms to Liakin and Kochetov’s warnings – and many of them still view the link between foreigners, foreign subversion, dissent, and moral dissolution as a key causal mechanism for the Soviet collapse in their post-Soviet recollections. According to Semichasnyi, “as early as during Khrushchev’s ‘Thaw’ American political strategists started shifting the ball to our court [*perenisti igru na nashe pole*], and started building ‘an organized resistance movement’.”⁶⁹¹ N.M Golushko, a long-serving deputy chief of the KGB’s notorious Fifth (ideological) Department, believes that throughout the post-Stalin era, the West engaged in an elaborate psychological warfare campaign, by “assisting dissent and

⁶⁸⁹ From a speech by Andropov to leading KGB cadres in May 1981, quoted in V.I Alidin, *Gosudarstvennaia bezopasnost i vremia* (Moscow: Veteran MP, 1997, 217. V.I Alidin was at the time the chief of Moscow’s KGB.

⁶⁹⁰ Tsvigun, *Tainyi front*, 104.

⁶⁹¹ *Bespokoinoe serdtse*, 244.

treason... subverting morals [and the] spiritual [*npravstennye*] foundations of society, promoting ideological erosion [and] provoking a disruption of the self-defense instincts of [our] country.”⁶⁹² His long-serving commanding officer, General Filip Bobkov, applies the same framework, crediting Western “agents of influence” for the destruction of the Soviet Union in his many post-Soviet publications.⁶⁹³

Bobkov’s long career commenting on such matters provides us with an opportunity to compare such retroactive assessments with contemporary information delivered to both decision-makers and subordinates - a comparison that clearly demonstrates the continuities of the Chekist mind. In a 1960 seminar on combatting ideological diversions, Bobkov warned Lithuanian KGB cadres that Western secret services aimed to “make use the international links of socialist countries with the capitalist world (tourism, scientific and cultural exchanges)” in order to “negatively influence ... student youth and the creative intelligentsia,” and thus “activate certain anti-Soviet elements” and forge them into an opposition movement.⁶⁹⁴ 16 years later, as head of the Fifth Department, Bobkov kept to the same line. Shortly after the Soviet Union signed the Helsinki Accords (which included, *inter alia*, a commitment to increased international exchanges and tourism)⁶⁹⁵ he penned a memo to the Politburo on “negative

⁶⁹² N.M Golushko, *V spetsluzhbakh trekh gosudarstv* (Moscow: Kuchkov pole, 2012), 41.

⁶⁹³ ⁶⁹³ Fedor, “Chekists,” 853-854. Fedor shows that this conspiratorial view of the Soviet collapse is more or less consensus among KGB memoirists.

⁶⁹⁴ “Tezisy doklada ‘Ideologichskaia diversiia imperializma protiv SSSR i deiatelnost organov KGB po bor’be s nei,” LYA, f. k-1, ap. 10, b. 325, ll. 26-27.

⁶⁹⁵ David L. Edgell Sr. and Jason Swanson, *Tourism Policy and Planning: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*. 2nd Edition (London: Routledge, 2013), 218-223.

phenomena among students and educated youth,” crediting such phenomena- ranging from dissent to rising popular religiosity- to the influence of “hostile ideological centers” which made use of travel and exchanges to “propagandize bourgeois philosophical values [and]....ways of life... [to] make contacts with representatives of Soviet youth in order to ideologically convert [*obrabatyvat*] them.”⁶⁹⁶

While, as we see below, the KGB struggled to translate these warnings into coherent action, these were not mere words but expressions of a deeply ingrained and well-operationalized institutional ethos. Daily reports filed by the republican KGB to the Ukrainian Politburo throughout the 1970s and 1980s on domestic life in the republic, recently made available to researchers, are perhaps the best indication of the extent to which this ethos guided practice. These reports invariably started with a careful statistical breakdown of visiting foreigners. Even most a-political incidents involving foreigners (accidents and heart attacks, suicides, and brawls between foreign students and Soviet citizens) were reported to the Central Committee.⁶⁹⁷ Reports on visits of journalists, foreign delegations, and diplomats to Ukraine invariably included lists of questions asked by the visitors. Such lists, no doubt useful in the ideological battles described in Chapter Two, also revealed a barely hidden anxiety that curiosity about any aspect of Soviet life was,

⁶⁹⁶ “Analiticheskaia spravka o kharaktere i prichinakh negativnykh proiavlenii sredi uchiashcheisia molodezhi i studenchestva,” in *Vlast i dissidenty* 135-148. In his post-Soviet memoirs, Bobkov reiterates this stand, arguing that agents of influence recruited by the West were instrumental in bringing about Soviet collapse. (Cited in Fedor, “Chekists,” 853-854.)

⁶⁹⁷ See, for example among many, “IS 24/5/1977,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op.7, ark. 26, spr. 13, “IS, 3/4/1987,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 4, spr. 2, ark. 92, “IS 2/8/1982,” DGA SBU, f. 16,op. 7, spr. 69, ark. 190-191.

ipso-facto, an attempt to obtain information that was better kept hidden.⁶⁹⁸ At times, this institutional paranoia veered into conspiracy theorizing: a report from spring 1972 on the aftermath of a major cholera outbreak reveals that the republican investigative department of the KGB devoted significant resources to tracing the possibility it was caused by deliberate sabotage by Western travelers.⁶⁹⁹

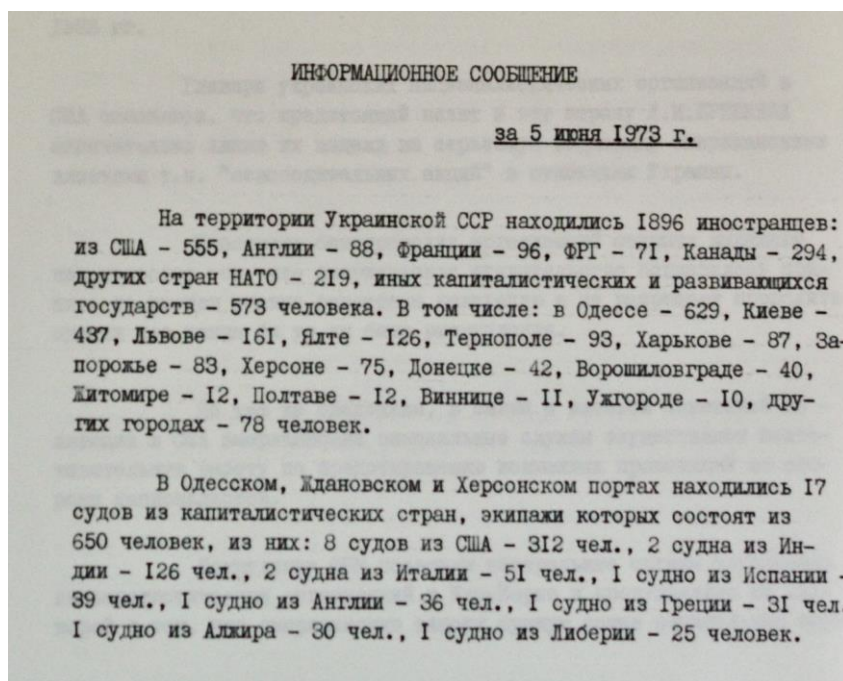


Figure 4.1: Daily KGB Report, Ukraine, 6/5/1972

Source: DGA SBU, F. 16.

Concerns about the link between visiting foreigners and dissent were also operationalized by the Ukrainian KGB. Here, it is again important to emphasize the

⁶⁹⁸ See, for example, "IS 12/2/1972," DGA SBU f. 16, op. 3, spr. 14, spr. 271-272.

⁶⁹⁹ "Informatsionnoe soobshchenie o prodelannoi rabote organov gospezipasnostyi respubliky po obsepecheniiu karantinnykh meropriatii, 24/5/1977," DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 7, spr. 26, ar. 6-8.

distinction between facts regarding Western aid to Ukrainian dissent, of which the KGB had many, and the analytic framework it used to assess the threats these facts represented. Despite much mythologizing by both Soviet sources⁷⁰⁰ and nationalist historiography,⁷⁰¹ recent scholarship heavily emphasizes the extent to which late Soviet non-conformism was a product of domestic factors: tolerance for limited forms of pluralism, the Soviet state's promotion of certain cultural forms of nationalism, relatively low levels of penetration of Soviet identities in the countryside, and even the popularity of Western counter-culture in Ukrainian cities.⁷⁰² Furthermore, as Zbigniew Wojnowski recently demonstrated, even in troublesome Western Ukraine, anti-Soviet activities hardly threatened either political stability or the evolving "Sovietness" of the local population.⁷⁰³

While, as we have seen, concerns about the link between foreign machinations and dissent go back at least to the late 1950s, the Ukrainian KGB's understanding of the problem seems to have been rooted in its reading of the crisis of 1968. As Amir Weiner demonstrated, the events of the Prague Spring deepened endemic fears about

⁷⁰⁰ On growing Soviet obsession with Ukrainian nationalism and its diaspora, see Trevor Erlacher, "Denationalizing Treachery: The Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in Late Soviet Discourse, 1945–85," *Region: Regional Studies of Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia* 2, no. 2 (2013), 289-316.

⁷⁰¹ For a view of Ukrainian nationalism that integrates prewar, wartime, postwar and late Soviet nationalism into a whole cloth, see Volodymyr Viatrovykh, *Istoriia z hryfom "Sekretno:" Ukraïns'ke XX stolittia* (L'viv: Chasopys), 2013. On Viatrovykh and his role in Ukrainian history wars, see Jared McBride, "How Ukraine's New Memory Commissar is Controlling the Nation's Past," *The Nation* 8/13/2015, accessed online at: <http://www.thenation.com/article/how-ukraines-new-memory-commissar-is-controlling-the-nations-past/> on 1/4/2016.

⁷⁰² See William Jay Risch, *The Ukrainian West: Culture and the Fate of Empire in Soviet L'viv* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Iu.Z Danyliuk, O.H Bazhan, *Opozytsiia v Ukraini: druha polovyna 50-kh- 80-ti rr. XX st.* (Kyiv: Ridnyi kraj, 2000); H.V Kasianov, *Nezhodni: ukrains'ka intelihentsiia v rusi oporu 1960-80-kh rokiv* (Kyiv: Lybid, 1995); Baran, *Dissent on Margins*; Zhuk, *Rock and Roll*.

⁷⁰³ Wojnowski, "Bulwark of Sovietness," "Ukrainian Responses."

nationalisms, social stability, and ideological pollution brought by both Western and Eastern visitors to the Soviet West.⁷⁰⁴ Archival evidence shows that the Ukrainian KGB faithfully transmitted information from Czechoslovak security services, which pinned much of the blame on the unrest that led to the Prague Spring on the activities of Western embassies and security services who allegedly planted “emissaries” disguised as tourists and exchange students to help generate political opposition.⁷⁰⁵

Documents from the late 1960s and early 1970s show that such views of the Prague Spring had lasting effects. Instead of a loosely organized constellation of groups and individuals pursuing various agendas, the KGB wove all forms of dissent into a looming opposition movement, funded and organized from abroad. According to this image, diaspora Ukrainian nationalists, controlled by Western intelligence services, used emissaries, visitors on tourist or exchange visas, to help organize and support the dissident movement. Ukrainian nationalists, emboldened by this support, sought contacts with Jewish nationalists (either controlled by the CIA or representatives of the forces that controlled the CIA)⁷⁰⁶ and Moscow dissidents, (witting or unwitting accomplices of CIA-backed Western journalists and diplomats), to create an all-Union oppositional force.⁷⁰⁷ This narrative shaped the security perceptions of the higher party leadership, with Petro Shelest, the Ukrainian party leader, complaining to the all-Union Politburo that his

⁷⁰⁴ Amir Weiner, “Deja Vu.”

⁷⁰⁵ “Tezisy vystupleniia na predstoiashchem soveshchaniu ofitserov gos. Bezopasnosti Vostochno-Slovatskogo kraia,” [N/D, May 1968],” DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 3, spr. 2, ark. 140-141.

⁷⁰⁶ See Chapter Five of this dissertation.

⁷⁰⁷ See for example, speech of Ukrainian KGB chief Fedorchuk to the aforementioned meeting, “Protokol zonal'nogo soveshchaniia,” Delo 28, t. 1, 1971, ark. 121-134.

republic was witnessing “a merger of the NTS with bourgeois nationalists of all shades and colors and with Zionist elements...a forging of active political formations [oppositional to the regime]”, and calling for “re-examination of certain aspects of our policy regarding foreign tourists.”⁷⁰⁸

While there is no evidence that the restrictions on foreign tourism Shelest hinted at ever materialized, the picture of an emerging opposition monolith controlled by foreign “ideological centers” bankrolled by Western secret services, was convincing enough to inspire a massive wave of arrests. Held under the tellingly codenamed “Operation Bloc,” this wave was triggered by the arrest of the Belgian-Ukrainian student Yaroslav Dobosh, a member of an émigré youth organization, who was indeed visiting Ukraine to make contact with local dissidents. His interrogation focused heavily on obtaining information implicating him in facilitating contacts between the émigré community and local dissidents. Soviet arrestees were pressured to recount any and all encounters and exchanges of information they had with diaspora Ukrainians, other foreigners, and Moscow dissidents – and thus provide confirmatin to the threat inflation in which Soviet security services engaged.⁷⁰⁹

While the massive wave of arrests that followed Operation Bloc never repeated itself, similar fears animated Ukrainian KGB reports well into the *perestroika* era. Thus, throughout the late 1970s, the Ukrainian KGB framed the activities of human rights

⁷⁰⁸ As recorded by Shelest in his diary (Petro Shelest, *Da ne sudimy budete. Dnevnikovye zapisi, vospominaniia chlena Politbiuro TsK KPSS*, (Moscow: Edition Q, 1995), 503-504.

⁷⁰⁹ See reports on the interrogations in DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 3, spr 2, DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 3, spr.3.

activists, especially their connections to diplomats, journalists, and “emissaries,” as attempts to revive the organizational structure allegedly dissolved by Operation Bloc.⁷¹⁰ As late as 1987, KGB reports fretted that the Vatican used missionaries disguised as tourists to manipulate Ukrainain Uniates into forming into Solidarność -style protests,⁷¹¹ and, more surprisingly, that the activities of local hippies, punks, and yoga practitioners were enhanced by meetings with visiting members of Western pacifist organizations, recruited by the CIA to dissolve “the ideological vigilance of Soviet youth.”⁷¹² Until the very eve of the dissolution of Soviet power by a combination of grassroots activism and elite rebellion, the agency charged with protecting it looked westward rather than inward in determining the weaknesses it had to guard against.

*A Bug in Every Room: Policing Foreigners*⁷¹³

If foreign presence in the Soviet Union seemed to the KGB the thin edge of a massive wedge threatening the unity of the party and people, it was not without resources it could employ to deter this danger. A massive state-within-a-state, the KGB had hundreds of thousands of employees, significant numbers of uniformed troops in its border guards and

⁷¹⁰ See reports in DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 7, spr. 33, spr. 34, spr. 36, spr. 37.

⁷¹¹ “O podryvnoi deiatelnosti zarubezhnykh ounovskikh tsentrov, 22/6, 1987, DGA SBU f. 16, op. 4, spr.3, ark. 140-142.

⁷¹² “O negativnykh protsessakh sredi chasti sovetsoi molodezhi, 16/4/1987,” SBU f. 16, op. 4, spr. 2, ark. 130-133.

⁷¹³ Richard Beeston Senior, “Frightful Food and Bugs in Every Room,” *The Times*, 10/26/2010.

other militarized units, still unknown numbers of informants and unofficial collaborators, and a complex set of relationships with all institutions interacting with foreigners.⁷¹⁴ It was also a store of institutional knowledge about surveillance and population management techniques that extended back at least to the Bolshevik Revolution.⁷¹⁵ While some of these techniques- say, mass terror - were no longer available in its dealings with the local population, let alone foreigners, the KGB could and did make use of tried and true technologies of power to deal with the challenges of foreign travel. Such methods included mobility controls (*rezhim*), surveillance of both foreigners and Soviet people who had even fleeting contact with them, *profilaktika*, and, at times, “active measures”- violence and provocations, aimed to dissuade or penalize especially difficult “clients”- or turn foreigners into assets.

The most important asset Soviet coercive agencies possessed as they sought to police foreigners was their rich experience of managing Soviet society by creating sub-groups defined by disparate legal and administrative standings. In the strict legal sense, foreigners on Soviet soil “enjoyed all the rights, privileges and obligations of Soviet citizens,” as Soviet jurist M.M Boguslavskii put it.⁷¹⁶ Just like Soviet citizens, foreigners

⁷¹⁴ For estimates on the KGB’s manpower see Evgeniia Albats, *Minna zamedlennogo deistviia: politicheskii portret KGB* (Moscow:Russlit, 1992), 27-43,

⁷¹⁵ On the history of Soviet surveillance, policing and population management, see Peter Holquist, “Information is the Alpha and Omega of our Work: Soviet Surveillance in its Pan-European Context,” *Journal of Modern History* 69, no. 3 (1997), 415-430; Amir Weiner and Aigi Rahhi-Tamm, “Getting to Know You: the Soviet Surveillance System, 1939-1957,” *Kritika* 13, no. 1 (2013), 5-45; David Shearer, *Policing Stalin’s Socialism: Repression and Social Order 1924-1953* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Paul Hagenloh, *Stalin’s Police: Public Order and Mass Repression in the USSR, 1926–1941* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

⁷¹⁶ M.M Boguslavskii, *Pravovoe polozenie inostrantsev v SSSR* (Moscow: IMIMO, 1962), 3.

were eligible for free healthcare, and just like them, they were bound by Article 70 of the RSFSR criminal code, banning anti-Soviet activities and propaganda (a point that Boguslavskii politely omits). Outlandish as such contention would doubtlessly have occurred to Soviet people aware of the vast privileges afforded to foreigners, it contained within it important seeds of truth. As Russian historian T.S Kondrat'eva points out, long after the Soviet state ceased to officially categorize its citizenry according to their class origins,⁷¹⁷ Soviet society still contained multitudes of “regimented people” [*rezhimnye liudi*]. These groups, ranging from prisoners and collective farmers at the bottom to academics and family members of senior Soviet officials at the top, all enjoyed (or suffered) special rights, privileges, restrictions on and barriers to mobility that separated them from the mass of the Soviet urban population.⁷¹⁸ Seen from an angle informed by this administrative practice, the challenge of managing foreigners seems less like an epic clash between a totalitarian state and unruly “liberal subjects,” than a history of the Soviet struggle to create the proper balance of privileges and restrictions to accommodate an especially challenging group of “regimented people.”

What this meant in practice is that foreigners travelling on Soviet soil were hemmed in by a thicket of regulations that strove to control where they went, what they

⁷¹⁷ T.S Kondrat'eva, “Vvedenie,” in idem and A.K Sokolov (ed.), *Rezhimnye liudi v SSSR* (Moscow: ROSSPEN), 2009, 10-22. From a provocative reading on the practice of *regime* making a claim that it was not a uniquely Soviet institution, but rather a product of the modern security state, see Kate Brown, “Gridded Lives: Why Montana and Kazakhstan are Nearly the Same Place,” *The American Historical Review* 106, no.1 (2012), 17-48.

⁷¹⁸ Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Ascribing Class: the Construction of Social Identity in Soviet Russia,” *Journal of Modern History* 65, no. 4 (1993), 745-770.

could and could not do and (at least in theory) with whom they could interact. The most obvious and famous of these restrictions was the practice of closing vast tracts of Soviet soil to foreigners (and, sometimes, Soviet people). As geographer Pavel Postel shows, these closed zones could be divided into three major categories. First, there were vast tracts of Central Asia, the Far East and the Soviet Pacific that housed sensitive military bases, nuclear bases and experiment zones, and similar sensitive locations that were closed to foreign eyes. In the European parts of the Soviet Union, closed zones included cities housing major defense industry factories (most famously, Gork'ii and the "rocket city" of Dnepropetrovsk) and a plethora of closed zones surrounding "post boxes" erected in the vicinity of major cities- most prominently Moscow and Leningrad. Finally, in areas annexed by the Soviet Union in 1939-1945, nearly all space outside large cities was closed to foreigners, due to both political sensitivity and prevalence of military bases. At the end of the Soviet period, about 20% of Soviet territory was still closed to foreigners - a land area roughly equivalent to India in size.⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁹ P.A Polian, "Ogranichenie territorialnoi mobilnosti ot Stalinskoi ery do nashikh dnei," in Kondrat'eva and Sokolov (ed.), *Rezhimnye liudi*, 31-34.

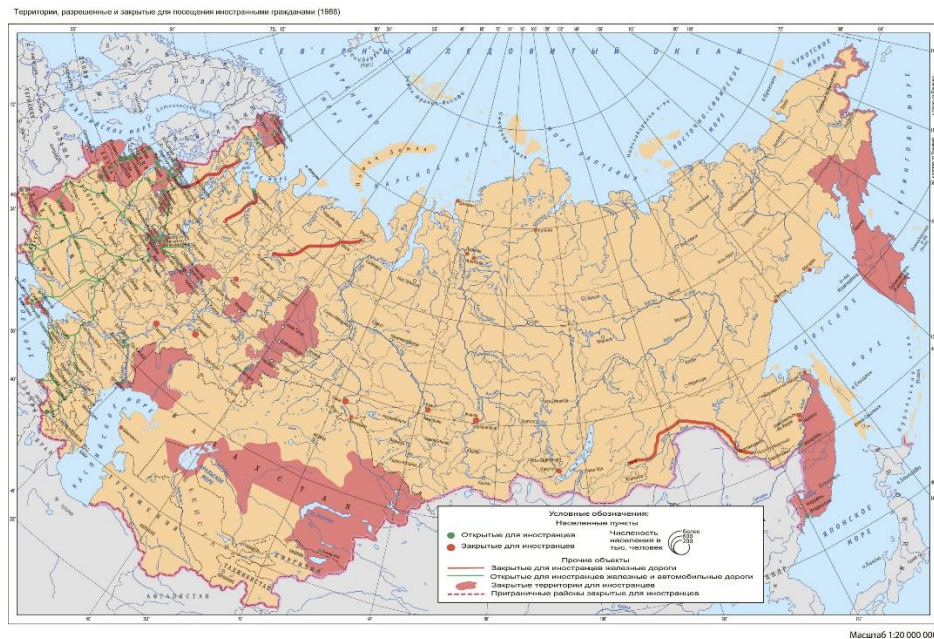


Figure 4.1: Closed Zones c. 1988 (Source: *demoscope.ru*)

The closed zones were but a tip of the iceberg in regards to attempts to regulate foreigners' movements and social interactions across the Soviet territory. Most fundamentally, (again, just like Soviet citizens), even within open zones, foreigners enjoyed freedom of movement only within strictly delineated boundaries. As late as 1959, travelers were still encumbered by Stalin-era regulations stipulating that foreigners could travel between large cities only with a costly Intourist escort,⁷²⁰ and de-facto banned the practice of photography by foreigners (foreigners were not allowed to take

⁷²⁰ On travel regulations, see "Dudorov to TsK KPSS, 1/5/1959," GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 506, l. 16. On photography,

negatives across Soviet borders, while the Soviet Union's only shop able to develop Western-made film was unable to handle Kodak products).⁷²¹

While such strict regulations were gone by the early 1960s, travel into and across the Soviet Union remained a tightly regulated affair. Tourists were allowed only to travel to areas included on their Intourist itineraries. Resident foreigners (journalists, diplomats, and exchange scholars) were forbidden to travel more than 40 kilometers from their place of residence without prior notification and permission from Soviet authorities.⁷²² An Intourist booklet from the 1970s cited by journalist Robert Kaiser reminded Anglophone travelers of the long list of don'ts maintained by Soviet authorities. Among other regulations, travelers were banned from taking pictures from the windows of airplanes, snapping photos of railroad stations and bridges, and importing “pornographic literature and pictures... negatives... records, cinema films, manuscripts ... and other items harmful to the Soviet Union politically and economically” – a fluid enough definition to include anything Soviet authorities disdained.⁷²³

Such formal restrictions probably paled in comparison to the efforts Soviet authorities took to *de-facto* isolate foreigners from Soviet society. As was the case with privileged groups of Soviet citizens, some of this isolation stemmed from the foreigners' place on top of the Soviet hierarchy of consumption. Arrangements like the exclusion of

⁷²¹ “S. Borisov [Vice Minister, Ministry of Foreign Trade] to Sovmin SSSR, 22/8/1957,” GARF f. 9612, op. 2, d. 239, l. 155.

⁷²² Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and Cold War*, 26-27.

⁷²³ Kaiser, *Russia*, 10.

anything but the top Soviet hotels and restaurants from the list of facilities catering to foreigners, separate housing for foreigners resident in large cities, Intourist's service bureaus charged with helping tourists navigate Soviet bureaucracy and deficits (for instance by providing them with theatre tickets and thus obviating the need to stand in lines with Soviet theater goers),⁷²⁴ foreign currency stores, separate facilities for foreigners in airports and train stations were surely intended to make the Soviet experience as pleasant as possible. However, they also served the important secondary purpose of keeping foreigners (in theory at least) in well-controlled spaces.

Other aspects of informal mobility controls Soviet authorities imposed on foreigners were not nearly as benign. Maps, charts, and telephone directories, due to both secrecy considerations (as travelers and Sovietologists surmised)⁷²⁵ and paper deficits and sloppy publishers (as Intourist officials complained)⁷²⁶ disorientated and confused generations of travelers. Other barriers were physical. For instance, apartment buildings housing resident foreigners were surrounded by walls and "defended" by militia block posts, widely assumed to be manned by KGB agents, as were Western embassies.⁷²⁷ Still more importantly, a plethora of regulations and informal norms governed foreigners' access to Soviet people in whom they were interested. Tourists, for instance, were only allowed professional contacts with specific Soviet citizens only by arrangement with

⁷²⁴ On the *biuro obsluzhivaniia*, see Salmon, "Land of Future", 167-168.

⁷²⁵ See, for instance, Raymond Hutchings, *Soviet Secrecy and non-Secrecy* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble, 1988), 24-27.

⁷²⁶ See, for instance, "Otchet or rabote Otdela reklamy i pechati Upravleniia informatsii, 21/3/1971), GARF f. 9612, op.3. d. 512, l. 225.

⁷²⁷ Smith, *The Russians*, 12.

Intourist (which, many of them felt, mostly sought to forestall such meetings).⁷²⁸

Especially after the vigilance campaign of the early 1960s, Soviet scholars and officials who wished to meet foreigners could do so only after receiving security and secrecy briefings (and could land in hot water for unsanctioned meetings).⁷²⁹ On a smaller scale, generations of foreign scholars in the Soviet Union had to battle Soviet archivists and librarians, pressured by the KGB to exhibit proper levels of suspicion of these “spies in the archives.”⁷³⁰

While regulations and mobility controls could slow down the formation of illicit links between foreigners and Soviet people, surveillance could provide an even more valuable asset: the identities of both subversive foreigners and the Soviet people who came into contact with them. And indeed, as a number of scholars have recently demonstrated, the opening of the Soviet Union to the world was (not coincidentally) concomitant to a profound transformation in the Soviet practice of surveillance.⁷³¹ As we have seen in chapter 3, after a short resurgence of surveillance as a social mobilization

⁷²⁸ “Spravka o poseshchenii inostrannymi turistami...v 1959 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 286, ll. 142-151.

⁷²⁹ The tendency of scholars and Soviet officials to conduct unofficial meetings with foreigners was a major theme, of the 1961 “vigilance” resolution of the Central Committee. (TsK KPSS o povyshenii revoliutsionnoi bditelnosti ...2/6/1960,” RGANI, f. 3, op. 22, d.103, ll. 85-88). For the continued drive to eliminate such meetings, see correspondence between the KGB and the Central Committee Science Sector about an unsanctioned meeting between an American scholar and a Professor at the Higher Party School, (RGANI, f. 5, op. 60, d. 45, ll. 44-45 [May 1968]).

⁷³⁰ Fitzpatrick, *Spy in the Archives*, is the indispensable guide for the struggle between archivists and scholars. See also Samuel H. Baron and Kathy A. Frierson, *Adventures in Russian Historical Research: Reminiscences of American Scholars from the Cold War to the Present* (Armonk, NY: M.E Sharpe, 2003). For a glimpse of the pressure put on Soviet archivists from the KGB see “Ob ispolzovanii spetsluzhbbami SShA kanala nauchnogo obmena po linii Ireksa, 29/4/1978,” DGA SPU, f. 16, op. 7, spr. 34, ark. 147-152.

⁷³¹ See Weiner, Aigi Rahhi-Tamm, “Getting to Know You,” and Harrison, *One Day*, ch. 5.

device, it was not used to forge a socialist body politic, nor did it serve to generate targets for repression. Instead, surveillance became a form of social epidemiology, aiming to penetrate every nook and cranny of Soviet society, in order to identify and disrupt “diseased cells” before they spread further - and if possible, to make the formation of such cells impossible. This refined method of surveillance was the perfect tool for battling the spread of foreign-introduced ideological infection.

Perhaps the best way to assess the operational assumptions that overlay surveillance of foreigners is to begin examining it via a somewhat indirect means, by looking at how the KGB solved an obvious problem: given the ever-growing volume of interactions between Soviet people and foreigners, how to tell which contacts were innocent and which an indication of dangerous intentions? The answer seemed to be as simple as it was telling: contacts with foreigners were *ipso-facto* seen as positive indication of danger. In short, the KGB collected all the information about transnational contacts it could, and sorted it later. Thus, a 1961 report from Vilnius, issued about a year after the city was opened to foreign traffic, indicated that over 2,300 residents (about 1% of the total population of the city)⁷³² came into the KGB’s purview due to encounters with foreigners. Of this number, 110 were put under close surveillance, several others were undergoing a thorough examination (*pod proverkoi*), while the vast majority of cases were deemed innocuous- and yet were maintained in the KGB’s card catalog of

⁷³² According to the Soviet census of 1959, the population of Vilnius numbered 236,100 people (Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 92.)

possible suspects.⁷³³ Inclusion in such card catalogs could have life-long implications, even when such contacts were fleeting indeed. A Jewish Leningrader, for instance, recounted to an American journalist that after he applied to immigrate to Israel, he was invited to a meeting where he was questioned about an encounter he had had in a bookstore with a Frenchman a decade earlier.⁷³⁴ If such stories could be discounted as sour grapes or exaggeration to impress sympathetic foreigners, they fully mesh with Bobkov's account of a case in which a Donetsk resident was deemed perpetually suspect (and thus denied promotions and travel abroad) after spending thirty minutes sharing a park bench with a Canadian tourist – one of the few criticisms of the KGB culture of suspicion Bobkov makes in his memoirs.⁷³⁵

Despite such retroactive misgivings about over-reach, it seems that during Soviet times, the KGB had few qualms about the scope of its surveillance operations. The best, if tantalizing, indication of the vast ambitions of its counter-intelligence empire is a copy of an instruction sent from Moscow to the Lithuanian KGB (and to all other republican organizations) on July 4, 1973. The instruction describes a soon-to-be-activated computer program, code-named FORT-67, aimed at “gathering, processing, and distributing information about contacts of foreigners from capitalist and developing countries with

⁷³³ “O sostoianii raboty po proverke lits imevshikh podozritelnye sviazi s inostransami, 1/9/1961), LYA, f. K-1, ap. 1, b. 299, ll. 57-58.

⁷³⁴ Kaiser, *Russia*, 13.

⁷³⁵ *KGB I vlast'*, 234.

citizens of the Soviet Union.”⁷³⁶ Based on the description provided in the document, the purpose of this project was to convert local index-card holdings into digital forms and allow easier cross-checking and cross-referencing across regional and republican lines. In theory, at least, this document describes a vast grid aimed to make any and all social interactions between foreigners and Soviet people visible to proper authorities.

Whether they were digitized or remained in paper format, to function properly, these databases needed a constant stream of input that could be generated only as long foreigners were closely observed. Figures on the extent of the resources devoted to this task are not easy to find, but scattered impressions from Lithuanian and Ukrainian archives give a good image of the scale of the KGB’s surveillance effort. For example, in the early 1970s during the summer season, the border crossing in the Ukrainian town of Chop, on the Slovak-Hungarian-Ukrainian border triangle, saw about 600 tourists from the West arriving daily. These were “served” by a staff of over 200 KGB officers, agents, and “trustees” [*doverennye litsa*].⁷³⁷ From Chop, foreigners advanced in train cars intensely surveilled by the KGB agents under guise of train conductors and passengers, as well as wiretaps, with suspicious foreigners (and Soviet people who interacted with foreigners) tagged for further surveillance.⁷³⁸ In the rural parts of the Donetsk *oblast’*, a

⁷³⁶ “Prikaz predsedatelia Komiteta Gosudarsvennoi Bezopasnosti pri Komitete Ministrov SSSR: o vvode v deistvie v kontrazvedyvatelnykh operatsii Komiteta gosbezopasnosti informatsionnoi sistemy Fort-67, 4/7/1973,” YLA, K-1, ap. 46, b. 118 ll. 72-79.

⁷³⁷ In the KGB parlance, officers were full-time operatives. Agents were civilians bound by an agreement with the KGB (and often paid for their services) and trustees were people who occasionally delivered information or conducted operational tasks voluntarily.

⁷³⁸ “Zonalnoe soveshchanie,” DGA SBU, d. 28, t. 1, ark. 191.

local officer complained, agents and officers assigned to surveil the few foreigners arriving to the area actually outnumbered the latter.⁷³⁹ The Crimean port city of Yalta experienced a large seasonal migration of KGB officers and agents who received highly desired hotel rooms in exchange for helping the local KGB department with surveillance of foreigners and their contacts during the summer tourist season.⁷⁴⁰ To the north, in Lithuania, in the key strategic port city of Klaipeda, the local port and other facilities visited by foreigners were honeycombed by surveillance: KGB agents tracked foreign sailors on the streets and in port facilities, set up multiple safe houses and wiretapping posts across town, worked to recruit Western crew members as agents to keep an eye on prospective spies and saboteurs, and recruited hundreds of locals as agents tracking “unhealthy elements” (nationalists, people with relatives in the West, Zionists, and so forth) who came in contact with them.⁷⁴¹

Institutions dealing with foreigners exhibited similar levels of penetration by state security agents. For instance, UPDK [*Upravlenie po obsluzhivaniuu diplomaticheskogo korpusa*], the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ department that handled the needs of foreign diplomats and other resident foreigners in Moscow, was widely assumed by its “clientele” to be a cover for intelligence operations, no doubt for very good reasons,⁷⁴²

⁷³⁹ Ibid, ark. 114.

⁷⁴⁰ “Stenogramma soveshchaniia rukovodiashchikh rabotnikov organov KGB Ukrainskoi SSSR, 24-26/2/1971,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op.8, spr. 1, ark. 75-76.

⁷⁴¹ See, for example, “Spravka o rasstanovke i zagruzke operativnoi rabotoi sostava apparata UKGB pri SM SSSR in na Litovskom morskome basseine, 15/6//1963.” YAL, F. K-18, ap.1, b.352, ll. 186-197.

⁷⁴² See, for example, Daniloff, *Of Spies and Spokesman*, 64-66. Also see an account of a British embassy driver, pressured into service as KGB agent: “Ex-Soviet Agent Vows to Fight Lubyanka ‘Cancer’,” *The Independent*, 10/13/1991.

while international departments of Soviet universities, handling exchange scholars from the West and students from the developing world, were heavily staffed with officers from the “active reserve” of the KGB (officers serving in and drawing their salary from a different Soviet institution while still maintaining their KGB rank and benefits, a practice that lasted well into the 1990s).⁷⁴³

Intourist, the Soviet institution that interacted with by far the largest number of foreigners, naturally stood at the epicenter of this surveillance effort. From top to bottom, involvement with the peculiar social ecology that sprouted in its facilities meant some entanglement with official mechanisms of surveillance. At the very bottom of the Intourist universe, both contemporary observers and post-Soviet accounts widely presumed that in order to ply their trade, foreign currency prostitutes and black marketeers had to provide information on their business partners to the KGB.⁷⁴⁴ The

⁷⁴³ Albats, *Minna zamedlennogo deistvia*, 50. As a number of observers note, Vladimir Putin’s first post-Soviet assignment after he left the KGB was as the Leningrad State University assistant chancellor for foreign affairs, a classic position for an officer in the “active reserve.” (See, for example, Gessen, *Man without a Face*, 92-93).

⁷⁴⁴ For examples of varying luridness, see: Popovskii, *Tretii lishnii*, 323-331, Anderson, *Undeground*, loc.370 ff., “Riadovye seksa,” *Novyi vzglad* 105(1993) [accessed online, at: http://www.newlookmedia.ru/IDNV/Novyj_Vzglad/Stranic/Novyj_vzglad_1993.html#5, on 5/1/2016), Vasil’ev, *Sostoianiia*, 83-85. Other, usually more reliable authors, correct this image, arguing that the KGB was not involved with hard currency prostitutes, preferring to set up “honey traps” using better trained and educated agents. Shraiman, “Vladimir Kunin,” Oleg Kalugin, *Spymaster: My 32 Years in Intelligence and Espionage against the West* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 257-258. As I show below the general topic of sex and Soviet espionage is shrouded in much mystery, and the current state of our archival knowledge does not allow us to say much about it. Yet, interestingly, one of the few available documents that touch on the topic is a 1962 memorandum from Klaipeda, detailing work with a female agent code-named Neris, working in a facility serving foreign sailors, specifying the efforts her handlers took so that she won’t allow foreigners to take “freedoms” with her and she would make clear to her contacts that “she is a morally upstanding girl, thinks about her future, and wants to create a family and live honestly.” In this instance at least, the KGB took its educational functions seriously. “Spravka na agenta Neris, 22/1/1962,” LYA, K-1, ap. 10, b. 311, ll. 17-18ar.

same was true of many other Intourist employees. For instance, the son of a dissident who returned from exile in the early 1970s and was assigned to live in a communal apartment in Kaluga recalls that he and his father were especially wary of a neighboring couple, as both were employed in the local Intourist motels and thus, they surmised, “were surely KGB, like all waiters in hard currency hotels.”⁷⁴⁵

For other people employed at or by Intourist, surveillance was part of the job description. Doormen in Intourist hotels (many of whom were former or reserve KGB officers),⁷⁴⁶ charged with barring a-social elements from entering hotels, and the renowned *dezhurnye*, “the elderly ladies who were positioned on every hotel floor to monitor the comings and goings of guests,”⁷⁴⁷ were key to facilitating control over foreigners. In hotel lobbies, officers of the KGB’s Seventh Department were in constant communication with their “volunteer collaborators” and stood ready to take up visual surveillance of suspicious foreigners (and their Soviet contacts) pointed out by the latter.⁷⁴⁸ Other officers manned surveillance stations to which audio (and, later, video)⁷⁴⁹ signals from rooms housing suspect foreigners were broadcast. In Tallinn’s hotel Viru, for instance, about on in five rooms was bugged.⁷⁵⁰ Similarly, in restaurants receiving

⁷⁴⁵ Paola Messina, *Soviet Communal Living: an Oral History of the Kommunalka* (London and New York: Palgrave, 2009), 101.

⁷⁴⁶ Albats, *Minna*, 57.

⁷⁴⁷ Amy Knight, “The Two Worlds of Vladimir Putin,” *Wilson Quarterly*, 24 (no.2), 32.

⁷⁴⁸ “Spravka o sostoianii i merakh ulucheniia sluzhby naruzhnogo nabliudeniia v kontr-razvedyvatelnoi deiatelnosti KGB pri Sovete Ministrov Lit. SSSR, 17/3/1974,” LYA, f. K-1, ap. 10, b. 786, l. 52.

⁷⁴⁹ Aleksandr Nezdolia, *KGB: rassekrechennye vospominaniia* (Donetsk: Kahstan, 2008), 103.

⁷⁵⁰ Personal communication during a visit to Viru’s 23rd floor “KGB Museum,” May 15, 2014. On the museum, see “Pay no Attention to the Spy on the 23rd floor,” *The Smithsonian.com*, 8/4/2013, accessed online at <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/ist/?next=/history/pay-no-attention-to-the-spies-on-the-23rd-floor-17885145/>, on 30/10/2015.

foreigners, the latter were shunted to tables containing hidden microphones.⁷⁵¹ This activity was coordinated by “active reserve” KGB officers embedded in Intourist hotels and departments. The responsibilities of these officers included “the study of foreign tour firms and their representatives in order to locate persons of operational interest⁷⁵²... Locating potentially suspicious foreigners ... [and] controlling foreign compliance with travel regulation... Heightening the political vigilance of Intourist workers, discovering their informal contacts with foreigners... [and] improving the KGB’s agent apparatus [i.e. recruiting more agents] among Intourist staff.” In theory at least, these officers served as the central processing node of a powerful surveillance matrix that touched any and all Soviet people who were involved with Intourist.⁷⁵³

Given their central role in accommodating foreign visitors, Intourist guides were surely the most essential component of this surveillance matrix. And indeed, for any Intourist guide, interactions with “men from the sixth floor,”⁷⁵⁴ security briefings, background checks, inspections of morals and good behavior, and political education

⁷⁵¹ Victor Sheymov, *Tower of Secrets: a Real Life Spy Thriller* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1993), 177-179. Sheymov was a senior officers in the Eighth Directorate (signals security), was recruited by the CIA and was smuggled out of the Soviet Union in a major CIA operation. (David Hoffman, *The Billion Dollar Spy: a True Story of Cold War Espionage and Betrayal* (New York: Double Day, 2015), 126-128.

⁷⁵² I.e. either people connected to émigré organizations and foreign secret services, or potential recruits to the KGB. In Lithuania at least, the interest the KGB exhibited in tour firms and their representatives compliments the historical accuracy exhibited by the writers and producers of FX’s *The Americans*.

⁷⁵³ “Spravka o rabote ofitsera deistuvshchego rezerva KGB LSSR, raboatiushchego pod prikryiem v otdelenii VAO Inturist za 1979 god,” LYA, f. k-41, ap. 1, b. 758, l. 82.

⁷⁵⁴ Kenderovskaia, “Moia zhizn’ v Inturiste. Shestoi etazh,” accessed online at: <http://kraeved1147.ru/intourist-2>, on 5/2/2016. According to her, this was the colloquial term for KGB agents among Intourist staff- supposedly because the KGB office in Moscow’s Metropol hotel was located there.

talks – were an inevitable price of employment.⁷⁵⁵ Furthermore, recollections of former Intourist guides almost universally contain tales of KGB recruitment as a necessary rite of passage.⁷⁵⁶ While, judging by the evidence of said recollections, as well as scattered available figures,⁷⁵⁷ one could easily avoid recruitment as agent, none could escape the duty of generating information for the KGB’s surveillance mechanisms. Specifically, an Intourist guide recruited as an agent had to commit to reporting on colleagues behaving suspiciously⁷⁵⁸ and to seek out contacts with foreigners “of interest.”⁷⁵⁹ Other Intourist guides might have avoided such unpleasant tasks but had to make a daily trip to the “sixth floor” to fill out a report on the activities of their charges, their possible contacts with unsavory elements, possible provocations, and responses to Soviet life. These reports, filed in a special notebook accessible only to embedded KGB officers,⁷⁶⁰ were then collated, processed, and moved up the ladder to officers of the Second Chief

⁷⁵⁵ See *ibid* for the content of these security briefings, and “Stenogramma ... 17/1/1969,” GARF, f. 9612, op.2, d. 286, ll. 159-165, for an example of a security talk focusing heavily on the morals of Intourist’s guides.

⁷⁵⁶ For such accounts, see Lyudmila Noble, *Just Touching the Memory* (New York:X-Libris, 2013) [e-book], Russel L. Volkema, Elena Turner, *A Russian Intourist Guide Visits the USA* (New York: Vintage, 1996) 6-9, Dora Anchipolskaia *Memuary odinokoi zhenshchiny* (Jerusalem: Mishmeret shalom, 1998), 100-101, Oleg Khlebnikov, “Shpion, nakhodka dlia shpiona,” *Luch* 1(1992), 52-56.

⁷⁵⁷ In 1979, the entire staff of the KGB office in Vilnius contained 19 agents and 35 trustees. Given that Vilnius saw relatively large numbers of foreigners and, as we had seen above, many of them were members of hotel staff, this implies the large majority of Intourist guides were not among their ranks.

⁷⁵⁸ Khlebnikov, “Shpion,” 54.

⁷⁵⁹ For example, “Agenturnoe soobshchenie. Pseudonim agenta: Maria, 24/7/1987,” YLA f. K-35, ap. 2, b.333, ll.217-221. In this case, agent Mariia was a female guide, assigned to escort a tourist group one of which members, a Chicago businessman, was an “object of operational interest.” Said businessman was “openly interested in our source, paid her heightened attention, and aspired to be near her at all times.”

⁷⁶⁰ Kenderovskaia, “Shestoi etazh.”

Directorate, where they were scoured for behavioral irregularities and suspicious activities – and, one presumes, served as foundations of myriad personal files.⁷⁶¹

As was the case with the policing of Soviet society in the post-Stalin era, this massive surveillance project operated like a giant funnel, gathering information on any and all foreigners crossing Soviet soil, in order to identify a narrow band of targets that could then be deterred, punished or “turned” with minimal disruptions to “channels of tourism and international exchange.” In simpler terms, while information was gathered on all foreigners, some selection criteria had to be applied to pick foreigners “eligible” for *profilaktika* and active measures. In addition to resident foreigners (mostly diplomats and journalists) these groups included, according to the KGB’s official textbook:

Officers of military, political and propaganda institutions... scientists seeking access to institutions.. where the enemy could receive information that interests him, people seeking informal relationships with Soviet officials, representatives of the ‘Civil Exchange Corps’⁷⁶² and ‘Peace Corps,’ employees of ‘research institutes’ of politics, economics, sociology and various ‘Russia experts,’ members of reactionary student organizations and Zionist elements, tourists interested in specific areas and population groups, people who know Russian and hide it, and people on return trips to the Soviet Union.⁷⁶³

This was, moreover, only a partial list, as even eccentricity could suffice to make one a suspect: according to an officer of the Seventh directorate, one American tourist in

⁷⁶¹ Oleg Nechiporenko, *KGB i zagadka smerti Kennedy* (Moscow: Algoritm, 2013), 28. Despite this book’s somewhat sensationalist title, the information provided by the author, a KGB colonel, confirms my impression of Intourist practices.

⁷⁶³ *Istoriia*, 364-365.

Moscow became a subject of intense surveillance, as his habit of taking long daily walks seemed like a potential agent-running operation.⁷⁶⁴

What did *profilaktika* and “active measures” mean when applied to foreigners? For once, for many, the knowledge that they were surveilled surely served exactly the prophylactic purposes the KGB intended. With more obdurate souls, the KGB again used tactics clearly borrowed from its domestic toolkit. The most basic and probably most common disciplinary action taken by the KGB was a “friendly warning” issued to misbehaving foreigners at Intourist offices or militia stations under KGB tutelage.⁷⁶⁵ In tune with its growing tendency to maintain legal fictions, often when encountering troublesome foreigners, the KGB documented their behavior by taking in “complaints” from Soviet citizens that could be used as a foundation for deportation and barring them from further entry to the Soviet Union.⁷⁶⁶ Foreigners who especially aggrieved Soviet authorities (most often journalists and exchange scholars) often underwent public humiliation: publications in the Soviet media charging them with everything from collaboration with the CIA to distributing pornography.⁷⁶⁷

⁷⁶⁴ Grig, *Ia tam rabotal*, 53.

⁷⁶⁵ “Spravka o sostoianii profilakticheskoi raboty 1 Otdela 2 Upravleniia KGB pri SM LSSR, 25/10/1974,” LYA F. K-41, ap. 1, b. 786, l. 150.

⁷⁶⁶ See, for example, “IS 24/7/1972”, DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 3, spr. 10, ark. 17-18.

⁷⁶⁷ See for an example, V. Andreev, *Nauchnyi obmen i ideologicheskaiia diversiia* (Lenigrad: Lenizdat, 1970), 20-29, for an attack on American historian Edward Keenan, charged with, among other things, not working hard enough in the archives, spending his time in “markets and synagogues,” glorifying the Western way of life, faking a boat ticket to visit a monastery on a White Sea island to which foreigners were banned from entry, and, inevitably, CIA connections. For another example, see “Mnogostradaiuschii Khutter,” *Izvestiia* 15/11/1978 – an assault on an Austrian journalist with close dissident links, charged with, among other things, beating up his sister-in-law, keeping stolen property, buying up icons, and distributing magazines “known for their pornographic content.”

At times, Soviet authorities strayed from such psychological measures into the realm of direct action. For instance, an Italian journalist in Vilnius, under suspicion because of her meetings with staff members at the Italian embassy, “slander of Soviet reality,” and taking photos of “negative aspects” of Soviet life, was the subject of an elaborate operation. During her first visit to Vilnius, she was introduced to an agent (“Neman”), who became friendly with her. On her second visit, alongside an Italian diplomat “fond of women and drink,” Neman invited the two to a dinner in the company of a local actress. As the Italians ate and drank, the KGB surrounded both the hotel and restaurant with a surveillance squad to make sure they were not disturbed, entered her room with a portable x-ray machine, and destroyed hundreds of negatives she kept there.⁷⁶⁸ Perhaps employing similar methods, KGB agents in Moscow entered the hotel rooms of foreigners keeping pornographic literature and confiscated it.⁷⁶⁹ Less subtly, suspect foreigners often faced “resistance [*otpor*] from of “operative groups” made of Komsomol *aktiv* members, agents and trustees” –everything from provocative questions meant to stop them from interacting with Soviet people, to harassment and open violence.⁷⁷⁰ Journalists, especially in the years of the “Andropov interlude,” were especially likely to experience what British reporter Robin Knight described as “pitfalls

⁷⁶⁸ “Spravka, 27/9/1960,” LYA F. K-41, ap. 1, b.275, ll. 25-29.

⁷⁶⁹ Andropov to TsK KPSS, “Rapport du K.G.B. sur la diffusion d'ouvrages pornographiques par des étrangers, 2/2/1970,” cited in Nicholas Werth (ed.) *Rapports secrets soviétiques. La société russe dans les documents confidentiels, 1921-1991* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 441. No record remains of what KGB operatives did with this particular form of contraband.

⁷⁷⁰ “Spravka o rabote 2 otdela 2 upravleniia pri SM LSSSR v svete trebovanii Predsedatelia KGB pri SM SSSR tov. Andropova Iu. V, dannykh na maiskom (1975 g.) soveshchanii rukovodiashchikh rabotnikov organov i voisk KGB,” LYA, f. k-41, p.1, b. 731, l. 173. On harassment of Western diplomats, see Williams, *Hot Seat*, passim, and Barron, *KGB*, 121-122.

of the Soviet kind”- assaults ranging from defamation in the Soviet press, through violent provocations, and up to charges of espionage (which however invariably led to deportation, not imprisonment).⁷⁷¹

Finally, the presence of foreigners on Soviet soil represented not only danger but opportunity for Soviet secret services. Here, the KGB took a decidedly carrot and stick approach. On the one hand, even in the cynical late Soviet period, attempts to show foreigners the benefits of the Soviet way of life were not abandoned- and not left to Intourist and Sputnik only, either. In Lithuania, for instance, participants in language classes for North American heritage students lived inside a veritable bubble. The KGB helped filter out unwanted candidates for the classes, helped the rectorate “plan the leisure time of the foreign students to avoid contacts with undesirable people,” cleared teachers assigned to the class and Soviet students sharing their dorms, made plans with the Polish secret services to infiltrate the group with the latter’s “ethnic” agents, wiretapped a significant proportion of the rooms students stayed in, made contacts with relatives of incoming students to “make use of them for our benefit,” designed a plan for KGB agents from among “youth and creative intelligentsia of the Lithuanian Republic” to slake their thirst for intellectual contacts – all in order to “exert positive ideological

⁷⁷¹ “Pitfalls of the Soviet Kind for Unwary Correspondent,” *The Times*, 02/09/1986. See also Kevin Kruse, “Living by Moscow Rules: A Western Correspondent Learns Soon to be Suspicious of Everyone.” *Washington Post*, 9/8/1986. In perhaps the most famous incident of this sort, the New York Times reporter Christopher Wren was targeted by KGB goons and lost a tooth during the suppression of the 1977 Moscow “bulldozer exhibit,” Doucette, “Norman Dodge,” 148. In a more subtle incident, David Satter, an especially unruly reporter, recounts how in a train ride to meet Estonian nationalists, he got into conversation with 2 attractive young women who plied him with drinks- and woke up several hours later, with his notebook and other documents missing (Personal Communication, August 2011, Palo Alto, California).

influence.”⁷⁷² On a more personalized level, members of nationalist émigré organizations, including ones with a rich past as “emissaries” and book smugglers, were often given repeated access to the republic, with the hope that extensive wooing and manipulation of their disagreements with current tactics of their organizations would help divide émigré communities at worst, or even better, turn them into KGB “sources.”⁷⁷³

Turning foes into friends was not, of course, the only or most common method of turning visitors into assets. Agent recruitment was, in this regard, a far more cost-efficient proposition. Here, again, carrots were at times used: the Lithuanian and Ukrainian KGB both used tactics similar to the ones described above to entangle visiting “ethnic” scientists and engineers, the best way these moderately-sized republican organs could aid in the KGB’s crucial task of industrial espionage against the West.⁷⁷⁴ At other times, more aggressive approaches were taken. Many visitors, were, for example, targeted by alleged dissidents who asked for help or *fartsovshchiki* offering to exchange dollars to rubles – a quick and easy way to get a foreigner in some trouble that could be used as leverage against them in a recruitment attempt.⁷⁷⁵ More subtle KGB operatives attempted to forge relationships with foreigners, hoping that fear of entanglement and

⁷⁷² “Plan agenturno-operativnykh meropriatii po kontrrazvedyvatel’nemu obespecheniu gruppy inostrantsev litovskogo proikshozhdeniia, priezhaiushchikh na kursy litovskogo iazyka pri VGU, s 4/07 po 18/08/1977 goda,” LYA f. k-35, ap.2, b.2999, ll. 118-122.

⁷⁷³ “Plan agenturno-operativnykh meropriatii na period prebyvaniia obekta DOR n. 1212 ‘Professora’ v LSSR. 23/8/1987,” LYA, f. k-35, ap. 2, b. 165, l. 78-82, “Spravka o provedennykh vstrechakh s ob’ektom operativnoi podborki, “Skulptor,” N/D [after July 15, 1986], LYA k-35, ap. 2, b. 316, l. 259-261.

⁷⁷⁴ For Lithuania, see, for example, “Plan agenturno-operativnykh meropriatii na period prevyvaniia ‘Znatoka’ v LSSSR, 3/10/1977,” LYA, f. K-35, op. 2, b. 129, ll. 187-188.

⁷⁷⁵ See, for example, Amy Knight, “Two Worlds of Vladimir Putin,” 32-33.

exposure of their connections to the KGB could turn them into informants.⁷⁷⁶ Finally, and most famously, the KGB specialized in the use of “honey traps” – sexual entrapment of married or homosexual foreigners who were then blackmailed with scandal and exposure and enticed to work for the KGB.⁷⁷⁷

Glitches in the Matrix: Surveillance as Late Soviet Institution

Round the clock surveillance, secret databases, break-ins and harassment, honey traps and provocations: in theory at least, travel to the Soviet Union had the potential of becoming an admixture of dystopian nightmare and a not particularly good spy movie. And, from the point of view of the KGB, to reach its goals of minimizing interactions between foreigners and Soviet people, maximizing the information it possessed on such interactions, and turning this information to the Soviet state’s favor, creating the

⁷⁷⁶ See, for example, Douroff, *Iz dnevnika*, 65-69. Matthews, *Mervusha*, ch. 1,2.

⁷⁷⁷ The most famous cases in this regard were the recruitment of the French ambassador to Moscow, Maurice Dejean (Barron, *KGB*, 170-192), and several decades later, a similar entrapment of Marine Guards in the American Moscow Embassy in the 1980s (Rodney Barker, *Dancing with the Devil: Sex, Espionage and the U.S Marines. The Clayton Lonetree Story* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). On homosexual entrapment, see Terry Teachout, “A New Columnist with his own Secret,” *Wall Street Journal*, 4/26/2012.

perception or (even better) reality of total surveillance would have plausibly counted as a positive policy outcome.

To what extent was this outcome achieved? The isolation, surveillance, and harassment of foreigners formed a significant ingredient in Cold War era accounts of life in the Soviet Union. For instance, the *Washington Post's* Anatole Shub, in his *New Soviet Tragedy* (1969), complained that “the foreigner in Moscow... lives in a state of permanent disability,” detailing life in fenced “ghettos,” the strain of every Soviet “local helper” being a KGB informant, bugs in hotels rooms, wiretaps and blackmail attempts.⁷⁷⁸ Writers specializing in security services went even further. John Barron, the author of *KGB: the Work of Soviet Secret Agents*, the defector testimonials-based best-seller purporting to show the immense scope of the KGB, concluded that “a visitor unknowingly passes through the Soviet Union wrapped in an invisible KGB cocoon that effectively shields him from what the KGB does not want him to see or hear.”⁷⁷⁹ Less prominent but much more piquant, David Lewis’ *Sexspionage* mingled details about verifiable Soviet “honey trap” operations, and tales of the “secrets of sex schools,” where “tall, blonde and elegant” Soviet seductresses were taught to ensnare Westerners.⁷⁸⁰

If such fare could be considered a blatant attempt to capitalize on prurience and Cold War paranoia, there can be little doubt that surveillance left its imprint on the minds

⁷⁷⁸ Shub, *The New Russian Tragedy*, 27-31.

⁷⁷⁹ Barron, *KGB*, 120.

⁷⁸⁰ David Lewis, *Sexspionage: the Exploitation of Sex by Soviet Intelligence* (New York and London: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1976), 33.

of foreigners in the Soviet Union. The Soviet practice of naming and shaming scholars who aggravated them was rather efficient in breeding fear and anxiety.⁷⁸¹ Soviet hounding of unruly journalists during the Andropov interlude created a deep rift in the Moscow reporter community between activist journalists who considered many of their colleagues subservient to the Soviets and others who viewed activists as provocateurs who broke the bounds of professional ethics.⁷⁸² Even foreigners friendly to the Soviet Union were discomfited with the level of surveillance they encountered.⁷⁸³ Less friendly travelers also experienced strong levels of discomfort. For instance, then senatorial aide Robert Kennedy refused to eat Soviet food or be “doctored by Communists” out of fear of poisoning during his 1955 Central Asian trip.⁷⁸⁴ The renowned child writer Kay Thompson, visiting Moscow in 1959, “got spooked” by the suspicion she was watched everywhere, spending much of her time in the hotel rooms looking for bugs “in the chandeliers ... below the rugs... in cupboards.”⁷⁸⁵ The anxiety produced by Soviet surveillance did not disappear even 25 years later, when travel to the Soviet Union was a

⁷⁸¹ On the psychological effects of such attacks, see Fitzpatrick, *Spy in the Archives*, 47.

⁷⁸² Nagorsky, *Reluctant Farewell*.

⁷⁸³ The historian Ron Suny, for instance, reports he wished to ask his KGB shadows: “I’m on your side; why are you following me?” Cited in Engerman, *Know your Enemy*, 175. See also Pereira, “Vpechatleniia,” 231-232.

⁷⁸⁴ Robert Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson. The Passage of Power* (New York: Knopf, 2012), 235.

⁷⁸⁵ Sam Irvin, *Kay Thompson: from Funny Face to Eloise. A Biography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010), 277-278. For similar example of dread among early cohorts of visitors See also “Protokol soveshchaniia...16-18/5/1957” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 237, l. 50, for an example of Soviet officials making fun of an American tourist for his “cowardice” and manic suspicion he was followed everywhere. Tellingly, they gained this knowledge from his (presumably pilfered) diary.

mundane affair, with travelers reporting paranoia, isolation, and fear as inevitable consequences of Soviet travel.⁷⁸⁶

And yet, such somber views of the Soviet Union were not universal or uniform. Just like Soviet wags, many Westerners perceived spy games as just that –and had little affection or respect for people who took them too seriously. Lewis' *Sexspionage* was savaged in the *New York Times* as “a skimpy little book...telling patriots to look for Reds not underneath their bed, but inside it.”⁷⁸⁷ Polonsky and Taylor mercilessly spoofed travelers who, like Thompson, succumbed to wiretapping mania: “his type, on entering his hotel room, will spend the first ten minutes searching in tense silence for listening devices. To flatter such guests' egos, the hotel management has equipped rooms with a range of sinister and suspicious fittings... which very stupid people may knowledgeably identify as sophisticated surveillance equipment.”⁷⁸⁸ Despite her fright in Moscow, the bestseller Thompson produced after the visit, *Eloise in Moscow*, also recognized some of the hilarity of spy games. The animated tale of the adventures of the titular six year old “rich girl” in her hotel and around it, turns surveillance into a game: Eloise bribes the *dezhurnaia* with a copy of *Life* magazine to get keys to other rooms, uses disguises to confound KGB officers, speaks absurdities on the phone to confuse her KGB audience, and then coyly reports to the American ambassador that she was “an absolutely darling

⁷⁸⁶ For example, Lisa Grekul, *Leaving Shadows: Literature in English by Canada's Ukrainians* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press), 203-205.

⁷⁸⁷ “Sexpionage,” *New York Times* 8/29/1976.

⁷⁸⁸ *From an Original Design*, 25.

Sweetnik.”⁷⁸⁹ Such playful attitudes were taken by at least some real-life travelers. One art professor, for instance, recalled the mixture of thrill and danger generated by dealings with informal artists, American collectors and the KGB: “It was a game. For me, it was dangerous living.”⁷⁹⁰

Which of the two visions of foreign experience in the Soviet Union rings truer? Without diminishing the psychological costs of Soviet surveillance so acutely felt by some travelers, the evidence is overwhelming that the Soviet Union was hardly a panopticon. On the most basic level, the mechanisms of evasion that defined so much of Soviet life were not unknown to foreigners. As early as the mid-1950s, for instance, foreign researchers easily bypassed Intourist restrictions regarding meetings with Soviet colleagues by simply calling them up directly.⁷⁹¹ Despite regulations to the contrary, the economist Norman Dodge, in the Soviet Union on a tourist visa, researching a dissertation on women in the Soviet economy, discovered that he could “just take a cab to this and that Soviet institution” and obtain all the information he required.⁷⁹² Just like Soviet citizens, foreigners felt that paradoxically, it was the ubiquity of Soviet laws and regulations that made them inconsequential- and if Soviet authorities tried to enforce them, hardly a foreigner would remain on Soviet soil. The exchange scholar Norman Pereira, for instance, lists the violations he committed as a matter of course without any consequences:

⁷⁸⁹ Kay Thompson, *Kay Thompson's Eloise in Moscow* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959).

⁷⁹⁰ McPhee, *Ransom of Russian Art*, 91.

⁷⁹¹ “Spravka o poseshchenii,” GARF f. 9612, op.2, d. 268, ll. 142-143.

⁷⁹² McPhee, *Ransom of Russian Art*, 2.

crossing Red Square in a car-only zone... visiting the Chinese embassy... participation in religious propaganda (I visited the Moscow synagogue for Passover), meetings with ‘speculators and criminal elements’ (book and art sellers), secret meetings with unhealthy elements (acquaintances who didn’t want to invite a foreigner home and met.. in a subway station), violating travel restrictions (how should have I known that Khimky was outside the allowed zone and had a military installation nearby?), and spreading “false rumors”...(as I was expressing my own opinions).⁷⁹³

Resource constraints and the structures of the Soviet economy represented another grain of sand in the wheels of the Soviet surveillance machine. For once, as we’ve already seen, such constraints made it impossible to keep Soviet people from Intourist hotels, or foreigners from non-Intourist hotels. In restaurants serving foreigners, 100-150 rubles slipped to the head waiter could get any “unhealthy element” a good table.⁷⁹⁴ While trains were, as we have seen, heavily policed by the KGB, Soviet authorities didn’t seem to have even tried to separate foreigners from Soviet citizens, and accounts of train car transnational bonhomie are an important ingredient of many a Soviet-era travelogue.⁷⁹⁵ On board Soviet airplanes, seat deficits overrode concerns for keeping foreigners away from “secret-bearers.”⁷⁹⁶ Even in theaters, foreigners faced an onslaught of scalpers and desperate music-lovers that nullified the efforts of Intourist service bureaus.⁷⁹⁷

Furthermore, the KGB and other coercive agencies were not exempt from resource constraints and coordination problems. On the one hand, as the official KGB

⁷⁹³ Pereira, “Vpechatleniia,” 230-231.

⁷⁹⁴ Panov, *Fartsovshchiki*, 43.

⁷⁹⁵ See, for example, Shishin, *Rossiya*, Eric Newby, *The Big Red Train Ride* (New York, St. Martin’s, 1978). Smith, *Russians*, 19-20.

⁷⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 22.

⁷⁹⁷ Geoffrey Bocca describes how when foreigners with spare tickets were assaulted by throngs of cultured Muscovites in front of theaters and concert halls “touring bachelors” who acquired two tickets at the Intourist service bureau would “offer spare tickets to the prettiest girl,” and thus acquire a date for the night, or more. (*Moscow Scene*, 20-21).

textbook conceded, the KGB gathered too much information and included too many people in its surveillance target lists.⁷⁹⁸ On the other hand, as a 1971 meeting of the Ukrainian KGB leading cadres revealed, it lacked resources to maintain the level of surveillance it found appropriate. Manpower for surveillance squads outside major cities was insufficient.⁷⁹⁹ The KGB could not raise sufficient numbers of agents with knowledge of relevant languages, and thus was forced to lower its recruitment standards.⁸⁰⁰ A KGB officer in charge of border oversight estimated that due to lack of manpower and backward technology, no more than 10% of printed materials smuggled by foreigners was apprehended.⁸⁰¹ The latter problem especially was noted by enemies of Soviet power: one NTS official recalled that he had “eagles” drop clandestine methods of smuggling literature, because “border guards thoroughly checked only 1 in 15 people.”⁸⁰² In a similar spirit, Los-Angeles based literary agent Olga Andreeva-Carlyle, a key part of Solzhenitsyn’s “invisible” network, recalled that she sent one of her “couriers” to conduct negotiations and exchange materials with the author armed with an array of Bic pens to bribe customs officials, and made sure he would arrive “on the eve of the October Revolution celebrations. Everyone was drunk and the vigilance of customs and Intourist was blunted.”⁸⁰³

⁷⁹⁸ *Istoriia*, 562.

⁷⁹⁹ “Stenogramma,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 8, spr. 1, ark. 15,

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid*, ark. 136.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid*, ark.120-121.

⁸⁰² Andrei Vasil’ev, “Tretiiia grazhdanskaia,” in Senderov (ed.), *Ot Zarubezhia*, 277.

⁸⁰³ “Solzhenitsyn. V krughe tainom,” *Voprosy Literatury* 4 (1991), 195-196.

Most significantly, however, the KGB was a Soviet institution, functioning in a planned economy, where quality could count more than quantity. Republican KGB departments, bound by strictures of plans, conducted operations that one could safely surmise brought no benefit to Soviet security. More than one traveler, for instance, reported that the Uzbek KGB conducted crude provocations aimed to get foreigners into brawls and then be either forced into signing documents testifying to their improprieties, or pressed to provide “secret” information (which they did not possess).⁸⁰⁴ In the city of Ulianovsk, one former Intourist guide recalled, local counter-intelligence officers, convinced that, just like in Soviet practice, tourist groups were accompanied by secret security minders, staged a provocation, arranging for one of the tourists to be seduced by a local girl, and hoping that the alleged minder will reveal himself when he realizes he “lost” a tourist.⁸⁰⁵

Intourist, yet again, represents a useful case study of the difficulties surveillance faced in the late Soviet era. KGB officers often complained that Intourist officials were too interested in “commercial” affairs and did not devote enough resources and attention to the “political” aspects of their organization’s work.⁸⁰⁶ Doormen and *dezhurnye* often were interested not so much in conducting intelligence work as in gathering “tribute” from various unwanted elements in exchange for access to foreigners.⁸⁰⁷ While

⁸⁰⁴ John Carl Falk, *The Bokhara Incident* (New York: Exposition Press, 1970), Dick Combs, *Inside the Soviet Alternative Universe. The Cold War’s End and the Soviet Union’s Fall Reappraised* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 22-23.

⁸⁰⁵ Khlebnikov, “Shpion”, 53.

⁸⁰⁶ See for example, “Stenogramma zasedaniia Soveta po glavnomu Upravleniu po inostrannomu turizmu pri SM SSSR, 27/1974,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 837, l. 45.

⁸⁰⁷ Vasil’ev, *Sostoianiiia*, Panov, *Fartsovschiki*.

undoubtedly, their assistance in surveilling suspect foreigners as part of the tribute *they* paid to the KGB in exchange for this graft opportunity, at times, even self-interest failed to motivate them: a 1965 inspection of the hotel *Natsional* revealed that the *dezhurnye* there were more interested in knitting than in maintaining order.⁸⁰⁸

Guides were a still more significant element of weakness in the surveillance scheme. Especially in the late 1950s and 1960s, some of them seem to have taken their surveillance tasks seriously, with reports from that era full of minute details of foreign behavior and interactions with Soviet people.⁸⁰⁹ As late as 1977, two senior guides sent to an inspection tour of the Kazakh Intourist wrote back complaining that the local KGB and military authorities let military officers mingle with tourists in a hotel bar in the remote town of Taraz (Jambyl). However, we already seen how, even during the ideologized Khrushchev years, Intourist guides often failed to meet the expectations set by the KGB and their superiors, whether politically, culturally, or sexually. In line with the general drift of Soviet culture, in later years, open dissent did become rare, but quiet disobedience seems to have become the norm. Perhaps wishing to avoid unnecessary headaches, some guides failed to report on tourists who left their groups, stayed outside Intourist hotels, or entered closed regions.⁸¹⁰ Going further, some Intourist guides

⁸⁰⁸ “Spravka po proverke raboty i sostoiania obsluzhivaniia v gostinitse Natsional, 2/6/1965,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 49, l. 86.

⁸⁰⁹ “Spravka... v 1959 godu,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 2, d. 268, ll. 143-147; “Spravka o prebyvanii v SSSR gruppy amerikanskikh turistov –studentov i prepodavatelei,” RGANI, f. 5, op. 55, d. 112, ll. 89-90; “Spravka o prebyvanii v SSSR 4-amerikanskikh turistov- slushatelei amerikanskoi voennoi akademii Vest-Point,” RGANI, f. 5, op. 55, d. 121, ll. 99-101.

⁸¹⁰ “O sostoianii pasportnogoo-vizovogo rezhima na predpriatiakh Goskominturist i merakh po ustraneniui vyivlennykh nedostatkov, 6/3/1985,” GARF, f. 9612 op.3, d.1755, ll. 6-9.

protected their charges from KGB and vigilante attacks,⁸¹¹ helped tourists obtain permission to visit closed areas under false pretenses,⁸¹² or took pride in their charges thinking they were “the freest person they met in the Soviet Union.”⁸¹³

Most importantly, however, at least according to post-Soviet recollections, when it came to compliance with KGB regulations, many guides took “formal” approaches. The Crimean guide Ivanova describes, for example, how compliance with regulations banning tips from foreigners were subverted: “when the minder approaches you, you give him some money from one pocket, but keep what’s in the other. If they ask whether you got tips, you say “yes” give him some, and keep the rest for yourself... [And] later, you could see them [the minders] sitting in hard currency bars, that’s for sure.”⁸¹⁴ In a similar vein, Kenderovskaia recalls being terrified when being summoned to the “sixth floor” for the first time, but then discovered that the local embedded active reserve officer was “a tiny little white-haired grandpa, and you wanted to do something nice for him. Later we met the other *chekists* and they all looked old, slightly senile retired nice guys [*dobriakami*] who simply adored playing spies.” And accordingly, when time came to file her reports, “I had my stable of tourists making the pilgrimage from one report to the other. Their names were monsieur Tomate... monsieur Konkomb, and my favorite

⁸¹¹ “Otchet o komandirovke v Kazakhskuiu SSSR 16/6-10/7/1977,” GARF, f. 9612, op. 3, d. 1126, ll. 26-27.

⁸¹² Neil Kobrin, *Emotional Well-Being: Embracing the Gift of Life* (New York: Morgan James Publishing, 2012), 82-83. The author, a Jewish-American psychotherapist, recounts how an Intourist guide helped him to concoct a story of being descended from “a servant of a famous Russian general” in order to obtain permission to visit his family’s Pale of Settlement town of origin in a “closed” region of Belarus.

⁸¹³ Shakurov, “S prikhodom Rossii.”

⁸¹⁴ Ibid.

monsieur Pamplémousse. They all exhibited uniform enthusiasm for the socialist way of life and the Soviet foreign policy... due to the heroic efforts of their guide.”⁸¹⁵ While such accounts are clearly self-serving and probably should not be taken literally, they do jibe with the memoirs of retired KGB General Oleg Kalugin, who found that cooperation between Intourist and the KGB yielded “little if anything in way of concrete results.”⁸¹⁶

These weaknesses no doubt blunted the effectiveness of KGB operations on the margins. However, the most telling evidence about the gap between the analytic assumptions behind the Soviet surveillance effort and its actual performance may be gleaned in a more straightforward manner - by looking at facts and figures. Yearly reports by the KGB to the Politburo, available to researchers from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, provide a breakdown of the numbers of foreigners the KGB pinpointed as spies or expelled for political, administrative, or criminal offenses. In 1976, 114 foreigners were deported from the Soviet Union and 11 foreigners were exposed as officers of foreign intelligence services.⁸¹⁷ In 1978, the former number declined to 100 and the number of “burned” intelligence officers declined to 2.⁸¹⁸ In 1982, at the height of the Andropov interlude, the combined number for both categories was 75.⁸¹⁹

⁸¹⁵ “Shestoi etazh.”

⁸¹⁶ Kalugin, *Spymaster*, 347-348.

⁸¹⁷ “Zapiska n. 709- A/OV, predsedatelia KGB SSSR Iu.V Andropova Generalnomu Sekretariu TsK KPSS L.I Brezhnevu, ‘Othchet o rabote KGB SSSR za 1975 god’ in Makarov, ed. *Vlast i dissidenty*, 112.

⁸¹⁸ “Zapiska n. 646- A/OV, predsedatelia KGB SSSR Iu.V Andropova Generalnomu Sekretariu TsK KPSS L.I Brezhnevu, ‘Othchet o rabote KGB SSSR za 1978 god’,” in *ibid*, 211.

⁸¹⁹ “Zapiska n. 574- Ch/OV, predsedatelia KGB SSSR V.M Chevrikova v TsK KPSS i Generalnomu Sekretariu TsK KPSS Iu.V Andropovu ‘Othchet o rabote KGB SSSR za 1982 god’,” *ibid*, 255.

Given what we know about the extent of illicit activities foreigners conducted on Soviet soil and KGB knowledge of these activities, such numbers demand a better explanation than operational weaknesses or late Soviet malaise. Rather, while direct evidence on the considerations that led to this relative leniency is lacking, the vast discrepancy between threat assessment and coercive action leads one to conclude that policy choices were involved.

Crucially, no matter how hard the KGB borrowed policing mechanisms from domestic practice and no matter their de-jure status, foreigners were de-facto imbued with privileges and immunities no Soviet citizen enjoyed. First and foremost among these was, of course, the right to exit the Soviet Union at will. To cite an easy example, while a commitment to work for the KGB was very much an enforceable contract for a Soviet citizen, Kalugin recalls that his review of dozens of cases involving victims of honey traps showed that “few if any could be persuaded to fulfill their promises once they were back in their native land.”⁸²⁰ Even in the USSR, the coercive capacity of the Soviet state was limited, in both in formal and informal ways. The most a foreigner could typically expect from entering a “closed” area was a short detention, followed by a fine and a prophylactic talk at Intourist or other relevant organization.⁸²¹ While buildings housing foreigners were surrounded by militiamen and KGB operatives, Soviet people brave enough to pass these barriers had temporary immunity, a fact which, for instance, allowed

⁸²⁰ Kalugin, *Spymaster*, 257.

⁸²¹ “Spravka o rabote,” LYA, f. k-41, ap. 1, b. 758, l. 87; Personal communication with Professor David Barber, August 2012, Palo-Alto, CA.

dissidents space and time to provide vital information that then was smuggled abroad by friendly journalists.⁸²² In a less inspiring manner, *fartsovshchiki* and sex workers knew that leaving an Intourist hotel and walking to the nearest subway station alongside a foreigner meant immunity from assaults by police, hotel staff, or *druzhinniki*.⁸²³

The band of immunity enjoyed by foreigners on Soviet soil was especially evident when it came to the thorny issue of emissaries and “tourist-spies.” Here also, circumstantial evidence suggests that after the vigilance campaign of the early 1960s was rolled back, the Soviet state treaded very carefully.

The legal clash between the Soviet authorities and subversive foreigners began shortly after the Powers shoot down. According to the authorized biography of General Dimitrii Boiarov, then head of Ukrainian counterintelligence, the U-2 incident was followed by a quick set-up of a defensive grid around military installations near roads frequented by “tourist-spies.”⁸²⁴ And indeed, these traps ensnared a number of victims. By October 1960 three Americans were charged with taking photos of secret activities or military installations and deported.⁸²⁵ The following year, Soviet policies hardened. American chemistry graduate student Marvin McKinnen was apprehended in Kiev while

⁸²² Kruse, *Closed Society*, 17-25.

⁸²³ Panov, *Fartsovshchiki*, 46-47.

⁸²⁴ Kevorkov, *General Boiarov*, 6-7

⁸²⁵ “East-West Issue: Espionage,” *Stanford Daily* 11/23/1960. The three Americans arrested in 1960 were Irvin T. McDonald, an air attaché in the American Embassy in Moscow who was apprehended during a tourist trip near Kharkov, Harvey C. Bennett and Mark Kaminsky, two students and Air Force veterans who were arrested in Kiev. Kaminsky and Bennett were put on trial, convicted and only then expelled from the USSR. The two deny their involvement in espionage but a description of their case by N.F Chistiakov, their prosecutor, describes their case in his memoirs in a way very similar to Peebles’ description of American VISINT operations in the Soviet Union (*Po zakonu i sovesti*, 167-168.)

spying on Soviet military facilities in a Beetle purchased for him by American military intelligence and was sentenced to 8 years in prison camps. He was shortly followed by six West European tourists, imprisoned to terms of 7-13 years.⁸²⁶

While this harsh strategy was rather successful in signaling to Americans that the Soviet Union would not tolerate espionage under guise of tourism, imprisoning foreigners carried significant downsides. This became clear as early as November 1963, when Yale political scientist Frederick Barghoorn was arrested on espionage charges in Moscow- an arrest meant to facilitate an exchange of a Soviet agent recently arrested by the KGB.⁸²⁷ Barghoorn's detention, however, triggered massive negative coverage abroad, and a direct threat from President Kennedy (who, KGB chief Semichastnyi surmised, was a personal friend of Barghoorn)⁸²⁸ to cut off bilateral negotiations.⁸²⁹ Barghoorn was quickly released, with the whole issue laconically regarded as an "error" at a Politburo meeting.⁸³⁰

⁸²⁶ For McKinnen's case see Borman, "A Chemistry Spy Story." According to the official KGB history, McKinnen was tagged as suspect because he was on his 2nd trip to the USSR in a year, and was followed from the border to Kiev, with video surveillance in his hotel rooms showing he put used films in a hidden compartment in his suitcase. During a stop at camping site, he was approached by an officer disguised as tourist, who befriended him, and used the opportunity to search his car, finding a notebook registering his observations of Soviet military installations and columns he encountered. In Kiev, another operative helped him to find the street where a military installation was found, where he was arrested by a security team laying in wait. (*Istoriia*, 566.) On other cases, see Peebles, *Twilight Warriors*, 156-158. For more details on the German and Dutch nationals arrested in 1961, see German Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Speaker of the Bundestag, 12/20/1961, [in response to a parliamentary inquiry by the SPD faction], accessed online, at: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/04/001/0400106.pdf>,

⁸²⁷ This theory of Barghoorn arrest, suspected by him and the CIA (Barron, *KGB*, 63-65 and Engerman, *Know Your Enemy*, 243), was confirmed by then KGB chief Semichastnyi, (*Serdise*, 181-182).

⁸²⁸ *Ibid*, 181.

⁸²⁹ "President Kennedy's News Conference, 11/14/1963." Accessed online at: <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Research-Aids/Ready-Reference/Press-Conferences/News-Conference-64.aspx> on 5/4/2016.

⁸³⁰ Cited at Engerman, *Know your Enemy*, 243.

Whether due to such negative consequences or to other factors, cases in which Soviet authorities arrested foreigners after Khrushchev's ouster tended to follow similar patterns. All imprisoned "tourist-spies" were released by the late 1960s.⁸³¹ As British historian Roger H. Platt shows, the last case of a tourist charged with espionage, the NTS emissary Gerald Brooke, went to trial in 1965 due to British authorities' refusal to exchange him for a British couple caught spying for the Soviet Union.⁸³² Two years later, another NTS emissary, the Russian-Venezuelan student Nikolai Broks-Sokolov, was indicted for a lesser charge: anti-Soviet propaganda, confessed to his "crime," condemned to a six-month suspended sentence, and deported from the Soviet Union.⁸³³ For the next decade and a half, similar patterns were exhibited in the cases of other emissaries, usually released before trial in exchange for televised confessions (as was the case with Yaroslav Dobosh, the main protagonist of the "Block" drama),⁸³⁴ or as a display of Soviet leniency.⁸³⁵ The only foreigner to be put on trial and convicted under Article 70 after the 1960s, the Belgian student Antoon Pype, caught distributing NTS leaflets on the campus of LGU in an attempt to test Soviet commitment to the human rights basket of

⁸³¹ Pebbles, *Twilight Warriors*, 78.

⁸³² "The Soviet Imprisonment of Gerald Brooke and Subsequent Exchange for the Krogers, 1965–1969," *Contemporary British History* 29, no. 2 (2010), 193-212.

⁸³³ Kozlov (ed.), *Nadzornye proizvodstva*, 688-689.

⁸³⁴ Spetsialnoe soobshchenie, 7/6/1972" DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 8, spr. 3, ark. 26-32. Two months later, proper reactions to Dobosh's confession and condemnation of Ukrainian nationalism already featured as a test question in *profilaktika* conversations. "IS, 2/8/1972," DGA SBU f. 16, op. 3, spr. 10, ark. 119.

⁸³⁵ For instance, the Italian student Gabrielle Cocco, apprehended trying to smuggle out dissident writings, was released after his parents obtained the services of a Communist lawyer, who issued a not-so-veiled threat to take the case to the court of public opinion in a letter to Soviet attorney general Rudenko. See correspondence between Eva and Artur Cocco and Franco Boffa, and Franco Boffa and Rudenko, 6/6/ - 8/6/1971 and "Postanovlenie po prekrashcheniiu ugolovnogo dela, 24/7/1971," in GARF f. 8131, op. 36, 4673, ll. 7-8, 19-21.

the Helsinki accords, was released 3 months after his conviction.⁸³⁶ As we've seen in chapter 3, charges for espionage could also be filed against foreigners- with the last such case being the arrest and weeks-long detention of journalist Nicholas Daniloff occurring as late as 1986.⁸³⁷ Without denigrating the dire straits such arrests and detentions caused for foreigners so affected, the small number of these incidents, and rapid releases of all involved, indicate that they were exceptions that proved the rule regarding foreigners' band of immunity.

Even more strikingly, some evidence exists that coercive agencies did not win all battles to control foreign traffic flows. For instance, the KGB, MVD and the Red Army all objected to loosening restrictions on unescorted car travel by foreigners in the Western USSR in the late 1950s - to no avail.⁸³⁸ While as late as 1988/9, the KGB successfully held off demands from local authorities to open closed cities to foreign travel and investment,⁸³⁹ it also lost its share of fights over geographic restrictions – for instance over opening the Moscow-Vladimir road to tourists in the mid-1960s (despite the many “post-boxes” strewn around the area).⁸⁴⁰

Most crucially, enough evidence exists to offer the tantalizing possibility that, from the 1960s onward, KGB efforts to reduce the flow of foreign traffic to the Soviet

⁸³⁶ Kozlov (ed.) *Nadzornye proizvodstva*, 772.

⁸³⁷ Bastow, *Reporters*, 335-337.

⁸³⁸ “Dudorov to TsK KPSS, 9/7/1959,” GARF, f. 9401, op.2, d. 506, l. 222,

⁸³⁹ “G.N Gudkov, [Vice Chairman Gor’kii Soviet], to Silaev I.S [RSFSR Prime Minister],” 20/4/1990,” GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 835, l. 151; “A.A Sobchak [Mayor, St. Petersburg] to V.S Pavlov [USSR Prime Minister], 25/5/1991,” *ibid*, l. 153.

⁸⁴⁰ “Sovet Ministrov SSSR, postanovlenie [draft form, N/D, 1964], f. 9612, op. 4, d.3, l. 107.

Union were largely unsuccessful. Less than a year after the Prague events, Andropov sent out a circular letter to republican-level KGB chiefs regarding the ideological dangers of incoming tourism. While the letter itself is not available, local reactions make its contents clear: in Estonia, the only Soviet republic where foreign tourism formed a significant sector of the economy, the local KGB demanded to reduce the number of foreigners visiting the Republic. When local leadership resisted this push, it agreed to a compromise under which the number of tourists was to be kept from rising for several years.⁸⁴¹ A Lithuanian KGB follow-up to an Andropov talk to leading KGB cadres in May 1975 indicates that, even at the height of détente, the KGB was pushing for more mobility restrictions on foreigners.⁸⁴² In a 1981 talk, Andropov conceded that this push failed during the détente years: “after Helsinki... we faced pressure from the West, which tried to use the accords to pursue its own goals... we had to make some concessions, loosening restrictions [*poslablenie rezhima*] ... for diplomats, journalists, tourists”; concessions, he implied, could be safely rolled back.⁸⁴³ This rollback was evident already in the run-up to the Olympics, as the Soviet leadership, inundated with KGB warnings that “imperialists,” Zionists, and émigré organizations planned to use Olympic travelers as provocateurs,⁸⁴⁴

⁸⁴¹ See correspondence in ERAF arf. 1, arv. 302, s. 129, ll. 10-21.

⁸⁴² “Spravka o rabote 2 otdela 2 upravleniia KGB pri SM LSSR,” LYA, f. k-41, p.1, b. 731, ll. 171-178.

⁸⁴³ Cited in V. Alidin, *Gosudarstvennaia bezopasnost' i vremia*, 221-222.

⁸⁴⁴ “Zapiska KGB pri SM SSSR v TsK KPSS ‘O zamyslakh zapadnykh spetsluzhb i zarubezhnykh anti-sovetskikh organizatsii v sviazi s Olimpiadoi-80, 16/6/1978,” “Zapiska KGB pri SM SSSR v TsK KPSS ‘o vrazhdebnoi deiatelnosti protivnika v sviazi s Olimpiadoi 80, 25/4/1979,” “Zapiska KGB pri SM SSSR v TsK KPSS ‘o vrazhdebnoi deiatelnosti protivnika v sviazi s Olimpiadoi 80, 30/7/1979,” in N.G Tomilina et al (ed.), *Piat kolets pod Kremlevskimi zvezdami: dokumentalnaia khronika Olimpiady-80* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi Fond Demokratiia, 2011), 177-179, 210-212, 220-222, 234-236, 242-245.

banned 6,000 foreigners from entering the Soviet Union, and extended wait periods for receiving tourist visas.⁸⁴⁵

During Andropov's short reign and its aftermath, attempts to restrict foreign travel both into and around the Soviet Union gained more traction. For the first time, the Soviet leadership took active steps to curtail travel to the Soviet Union from both socialist and capitalist countries. Least surprising in this regard was treatment of travel from Poland: during the Solidarność crisis, travel from Poland to the Soviet Union was significantly curtailed—by as much as 40%—in the wake of reports on subversive activities of Polish tourists all across the Western borderlands.⁸⁴⁶ Furthermore, as Zbigniew Wojnowksy discovered, Soviet authorities cracked down on Polish citizens in the Soviet Union: in the city of L'viv, over 1,500 KGB troops stopped more than 21,000 Polish tourists from entering the town without permission in 1981 alone.⁸⁴⁷ Even more strikingly, Soviet authorities, who had long been bothered by the “nationalist” activity of Romanian tourists in Moldova,⁸⁴⁸ stopped receiving Romanian tourists, unless they purchased a tour of other Soviet republics.⁸⁴⁹

⁸⁴⁵ “Zapiska KGB SSSR v TsK KPSS ‘Ob osnovnykh meropriatiakh po obespecheniiu bezopasnosti v period podgotovki provedeniia igr XXII Olimpiady 1980 goda, 12/5/1980,” in *idem*, 628.

⁸⁴⁶ Mark Kramer, “Soviet Deliberations on the Polish Crisis, 1980-1981,” *CWIHP Working Paper no. 1*, April 1999, 29-32. “Directive of the CC Secretariat of the CPSU ‘On Temporary Reduction in Tourist Exchanges between the USSR and the PPR, 28/11/1980,” accessed online at: https://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/archive/files/tightening-soviet-borders_44b1dd95ee.pdf on 2/2/2016.

⁸⁴⁷ “Bulwark,” 14-15.

⁸⁴⁸ Informatsiia o rabote s Rumynskimi turistami posetivshimi Moldavskuiu SSR vo vtoroi polovine avgusta 1968,” Arhiva Organizațiilor Social-Politice din Republica Moldova [AOSPRM], f. 51, inv. 29, d. 102, ll. 1-4. I thank Professor Amir Weiner for providing me with this document.

⁸⁴⁹ “S.S Nikitin to P.P Petrik, Secretary of Moldovan TsK, 20/2/1981,” [AOSPRM], f. 51, inv. 56, d. 7, f. 8; accessed online at:

Finally, under Andropov, for the first time since the Stalinist period, Soviet authorities were willing to sacrifice international exchanges and hard currency proceeds on the altar of state security. Dimitrii Volkogonov, who examined Andropov's "special file" for the period when he served as General Secretary, found that in 1983 the Soviet Foreign Ministry and the KGB were working on new procedures to make obtaining Soviet visas for Americans more difficult.⁸⁵⁰ In the subsequent year, Karl Vaino, First Secretary of the Estonian Communist Party, wrote to Intourist Chairman Abrasimov, proposing to reduce Finnish travel to the Republic from 80,000 people in 1983 to 45,000 in 1986, by making travel to Estonia more expensive and less pleasant, as "the vast majority of visiting Finns evade their itineraries... establish friendly, family, contraband-speculative or intimate connections" with locals.⁸⁵¹

Conclusion

The chronological coincidence of these victories for vigilance with Andropov's reign emphasizes the seriousness with which Soviet coercive agencies took the problem of foreign travel. And yet, they were incomplete and transitory in ways that highlight the limits of coercion and surveillance in the late Soviet period. Even as it was receiving

<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116397.pdf?v=a2ce450554520cefa162c0dca9bec0d6> on 3/30/2015.

⁸⁵⁰ Volkogonov, *Autopsy for an Empire*, 357.

⁸⁵¹ "Vaino to Abrasimov, 22/8/1984," ERAF arf. 1 arv. 302, s. 460, ll. 6-7.

pressure from Estonia to reduce tourism there, Intourist celebrated capitalist tourist traffic hitting 40% of its total tourist base, and planned further expansion in the second half of the 1980s.⁸⁵² By that time, needless to say, both tourist travel and illicit activities by Finnish and Polish travelers were in full recovery.⁸⁵³ Finally, not only did the KGB fail to prevent the 1986 Council of Ministers resolution that allowed Soviet people to stay at Intourist hotels (see Chapter 3), but in Lithuania at least, it was involved in efforts to effectively implement it.⁸⁵⁴

So, in the end, we are forced to return to the question with which we started: why did the KGB's actions did not track with its threat assesment? Why did the KGB struggle to translate the dire warnings of its security services regarding the dangers of foreign presence on Soviet soil, and the vast resources it piled into surveilling foreigners failed to translate into resolute coercive action? Some answers come easily to mind. A cynic might conclude that, to the extent the KGB was a massive bureaucracy operating in a state that enjoyed an exceptional level of political stability, resolving the problem once and for all would have put a crimp on the job prospects of many a KGB officer, whose livelihood after all depended on maintaining high levels of threat perception among Soviet policy-makers. More seriously, a quick counter-factual thought experiment could

⁸⁵² "O sostoianii razvitiia inostrannogo turizma v 1980-82 gg. i perpektivakh ego razvitiia v 1983 g.," GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d. 1594, ll. 1-3.

⁸⁵³ On Polish tourists, see: "O protivopravnoi deiatelnosti turistov iz PNR, 11/1/1989." GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 802, l. 97. On Finnish tourists, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

⁸⁵⁴ "O khode vypolneniia postanovlenii kollegii i prikazov Goskominturista SSSR priniatykh v ispolnenie Postanovleniia Soveta Ministrov ot 7 fevralia 1985 goda ob organizatsii obsluzhivaniia i prodazhi turistkikh poezdok sovetskim grazhdanam na territorii SSSR, 17/12/1985," LYA, f. K-1, ap. 46, b. 810, ll. 66-70.

suggest that the question itself is misplaced, as the late Soviet political stability might very well have been a product of the KGB's surveillance efforts –and that without such efforts, the impact of contact with the outside world would have been much more explosive - as it became in 1985-1991.

However, the discrepancy between the genuine alarm exhibited by the KGB regarding the subversive effects of foreigners on Soviet soil and the relatively feeble nature of its response requires more than snide dismissal or counter-factual analysis. Rather, we must seek to understand the political calculus that restrained Soviet policy-makers from taking appropriate measures to address the problem. Unfortunately, sources produced by the Soviet state are to no avail here, as the entire rhetorical intent of KGB reportage was to convince the decision-makers that its efforts were indeed appropriate to the level of threat the Soviet state faced. We are faced therefore with a conundrum: how do we explain this curious gap between perceptions and actions, when the documents at our possession ignore the very existence of this gap? To truly answer our question, we must gain a better understanding of the constraints under which the KGB operated in an era of growing Soviet integration with the outside world – constraints about which the KGB's archives are conspicuously silent. Therefore we would do well to give a second look at Dash, or rather at the way the movement which he represented used transnational mobility to challenge the total sovereignty claims of the Soviet state.

Chapter 5: Transnational Nationalists: 'Zionist Emissaries' Tour the Soviet Union

As Dash was struggling for his pants in Kharkiv in 1972, he was participating in a historical confrontation that went back to the late 19th century, and was about to enter its culminating point. As Yuri Slezkine argues in his *Jewish Century*, the 20th century history of Russian/Soviet Jewry was defined by a long argument between Zionists,

Bolsheviks, and proponents of emigration to America, or, as he memorably put it, the children of Tevye's daughters Chava, Hodl, and Beilke.⁸⁵⁵

While in the first 40 years of Soviet history, this argument seemed to have been resolved by a mixture of persuasion, social mobility, and violence in favor of the Bolsheviks, since 1948 and the founding of the State of Israel, the Zionists rejoined the fray. After 1967, when Israeli access to Soviet soil was strictly curtailed, American Jews put their considerable weight on the side of the Zionists, forging the transnational Soviet Jewry movement – perhaps the Cold War's most prominent and successful human rights campaign.⁸⁵⁶ Dash's mission to meet and greet the refuseniks was an expression of its most powerful tactic- using international travel to support, publicize and, to the extent possible, protect Soviet Jewish activists.

In other words, this tactic was a powerful confirmation of the KGB's institutional view of the dangers of foreign travel. The history of the encounter between the KGB, Jewish nationalists, and foreign "emissaries" was therefore a microcosm of the Soviet state's struggle to accommodate both its institutional paranoia and the realities of the

⁸⁵⁵ Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

⁸⁵⁶ The literature on the Soviet Jewish emigration movement is immense. For prominent works see Boris Zinger and Lilia Belenkaia *Naperekor: Evreiskoe natsional'noe dvizhenie v Sovetskom Soiuzе, 1945-1976*, (Minsk: Met, 2004); A.M Morozova, *Anatomiia otkaza* (Moscow: RGGU, 2011); Vladimir (Ze'v) Khanin (ed.) *Shestidnevnaia voina i evreiskoe dvizhenie v SSSR* (Moscow: Akademicheskaiia seriiia, 2008), Iulii Kosharovskii, *My snova evrei: ocherki po istorii sionistkogo dvizheniia v Sovetskom Soiuzе*, (Jerusalem: Self Published, 2007); Bin'yamin Pinkus, *Tehiyah u- tekumah leumit: hatsiyonut ve ha-tenuah ha- tsiyonit be Verit ha-Moatsot 1947-1987* (Sde Boker: ha-merkaz le moreshet Ben Guryon, 1993); Gal Beckerman, *When They Come for Us, We'll be Gone: the Epic Struggle to Liberate Soviet Jewry* (Boston: Houghton, 2010); Pauline Pererz, *Let my People Go! The Transnational Politics of Soviet Jewish Emigration during the Cold War* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 2010); Yaacov Ro'i (ed.), *The Jewish Movement in the Soviet Union* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Institute University Press), 2012.

post-Stalin era. In this chapter, I sketch out the history of the transnational effort to aid the Soviet Jewish emigration movement, survey KGB's lackluster policy response to it, and demonstrate how this reaction was limited by the uses transnational Zionist activists made of channels of international exchange to constrain the policy choices of Soviet security services.

Diplomats from Lilienblum Street: 1948-1967.

From its inception in 1948, the year in which Israel obtained its independence, the struggle for Soviet-Jewish allegiance was rooted in a clash between two claims: the Soviet state's claim for the absolute, undivided allegiance of its citizenry, and the Jewish state's claim on the hearts and minds of Jews everywhere. In less florid language, for both ideological and demographic reasons, fostering nationalist, Zionist and migratory moods among Soviet Jews was a central Israeli foreign policy goal.⁸⁵⁷ In the context of the xenophobic late Stalinist period, this was a direct provocation - and still ran contradictory to Soviet claims of multiethnic harmony in the more tolerant era that followed.

⁸⁵⁷ Yaacov Ro'i, *The Struggle for Soviet Jewish Emigration, 1948-1967*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

These realities came to a head already during the short “honeymoon” between the Soviet Union and the fledgling Jewish state in 1948/9. While the USSR provided Israeli forces with arms and diplomatic support, authorities were alarmed by numerous instances of Soviet Jews who wrote them with offers to volunteer and fight in Palestine.⁸⁵⁸ Even more concerning from this point of view was the mass outpouring of Moscow Jews who came to see the Israeli ambassador, Golda Meir, attending High Holidays services there in September 1948.⁸⁵⁹ Images of tens of thousands of Soviet Jews massing on Moscow streets rapidly became a powerful international Zionist icon (they were, for instance, until recently featured on Israeli currency).⁸⁶⁰ In the Soviet Union, however, they served as catalyst for the anti-cosmopolitan campaigns of Stalin’s later years, and contributed to the anti-Semitic atmosphere that culminated in the “Doctor’s plot” of early 1953.⁸⁶¹ In these circumstances, it was little wonder that the only Israelis on Soviet soil, members of the small Israeli legation, didn’t make much headway in connecting to Soviet Jews. And even that link with Soviet Jewry was broken when the Soviet Union broke diplomatic relations with Israel in February 1953, in the midst of the Doctor’s Plot crisis, and the antisemitic campaign it wrought.⁸⁶²

⁸⁵⁸ Shimon Redlich and Gennady Kostyrchenko, ed., *Evreiskii antifashistkii komitet. Dokumentirovannaia istoriia, 1941-1948* (Moscow: mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 1996), 293-298,

⁸⁵⁹ Golda Meir, *My Life* (Boston: Futura, 1976), 250-255.

⁸⁶⁰ Clyde Haberman, “Face that Launched Millions of Shekels Heads for Retirement,” *New York Times*, 2/8/1995.

⁸⁶¹ Gennady Kostyrcehno, *V plenu krasnogo faraona: politicheskie presledovaniia evreev v SSSR v poslednee stalinskoe desiatiletie: dokumental'noe issledovanie* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 1994), is the best account of this era as it pertains to Soviet Jews.

⁸⁶² On life in the Israeli embassy, see: Mordechai Namir, *Shelihut be-Moskvah: yerah dvash u-shenot za'am* (Tel Aviv: 'am oved, 1971). On the Doctors’ Plot, see Jonathan Brent and Vladimir Naumov, *Stalin's Last Crime: The Plot against the Jewish Doctors* (New York: Harper and Collins, 2003).



Figure 5.1: Crowd outside the Moscow Synagogue, September 1948)

(Source: israelim.ru)

Faced with these realities, Israeli authorities could do little but to prepare the ground for future activities. In 1952, the Israeli government established a clandestine organization named *Lishkat ha-keshet* [Bureau of Communications], better known as *Nativ* [the Path], charged with facilitating clandestine Zionist organizations Eastern Europe, seeking ways to establish connections with Soviet Jewry, and swaying Western public opinion to apply pressure on Soviet authorities to open their borders.⁸⁶³

⁸⁶³ The archival files of *Nativ* are not available for researchers. However, two of its chiefs released their memoirs: Nehemiah Levanon, *ha-Kod: Nativ* (Tel Aviv: 'Am 'oved, 1995), Ya'kov (Yasha) Kedmi, *Milhamot avudot* (Tel-Aviv: Matar, 2011). Additionally, the Israeli Association for the Documentation of

Stalin's death and the attendant Soviet opening up to the world completely transformed the environment in which *Nativ* operated. Within months, the Israeli embassy in Moscow was reopened, with a number of *Nativ* operatives, most prominently Nehemiah Levanon, its future long-serving head, installed there under diplomatic cover.⁸⁶⁴ Various bilateral agreements, from cultural accords to commercial deals that brought Israeli oranges (and sailors) to Odessa ports, allowed Israelis access to Soviet soil.⁸⁶⁵ Israeli tourists, most often former residents of the Soviet West coming to see relatives, started appearing in Soviet cities.

These circumstances proved an opening for the renewal of Israeli activity on Soviet soil. In secret, *Nativ*'s diplomats worked to re-establish connections to prewar Zionist circles, hoping that they could be used as nuclei of a new Zionist movement.⁸⁶⁶ Beyond this clandestine activity, they traveled widely through the Soviet periphery, hoping that encounters with living, breathing Israelis would trigger Soviet Jews' interest in Israel and Zionism. In the Ukrainian town of Chernovtsy, for instance, a local official complained that representatives of the Israeli embassy publicized the ambassador's visit to the local synagogue by "walking around town with a large bag emblazoned with the

Clandestine Activity for Soviet Jewry, a veterans' association of *Nativ*, published an oral history of its operations, a condensed version of an unpublished, and probably classified, manuscript (Shelomoh Rosner, *Bi Netiv ha-demamah: ha-peilot ha-hashai le-maan yehudei Verit ha-Moatsot* (Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar le-heker toldot ha-'am ha-Yehudi, 2012).

⁸⁶⁴ Levanon, *Nativ*, 32-39.

⁸⁶⁵ Govrin, *Yechasei*, 122-128.

⁸⁶⁶ Pinkus, *Tehiyah*, 104.

word ‘Israel’ in large foreign [i.e. Hebrew] script” – and were successful in triggering an extremely high (and mixed gender) turnout in the local synagogue.⁸⁶⁷

With or without *Nativ* nudging, Israelis without diplomatic passports also participated in this effort. For instance, the “Zionist” section of the Israeli delegation to the Moscow Youth festival was staffed with many recent IDF veterans with connections to *Nativ*.⁸⁶⁸ According to Levanon, all Israeli ships sailing to Odessa had a *Nativ* agent on board, charged with meeting local Jews and distributing Israeli paraphernalia (postcards, pins, and religious objects).⁸⁶⁹ Additionally, Israeli tourists, Soviet authorities fretted, were spreading Zionist propaganda and bourgeois influence by everything from providing their relatives with Israeli gifts to favorably comparing *kibbutzim* with Soviet *kolkhozes*.⁸⁷⁰

All this activity had an important, but limited effect on the development of Soviet Jewish nationalism. As was the case in Chernovtsy, Israeli diplomats were often mobbed by crowds of excited Jews during their travels. Israeli travelers to Moscow, even ones friendly to the Soviets,⁸⁷¹ invariably reported being the objects of intense interest by Soviet Jews.⁸⁷²

⁸⁶⁷ Cited in Ze’v Khanin, Boris Morozov, *Bogdim ba-moledet: ha-hagirah he-yehudit be-einei ha-shilton ha-Sovyeti* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2005), 78.

⁸⁶⁸ See below.

⁸⁶⁹ Levanon, *Nativ*, 68.

⁸⁷⁰ “Spravka o rabote Kishinevskogo Otdelenia VAO Inturist s turistami- emigrantami s byvshei Bessarabii v 1963 godu,” GARF f. 9612, op. 1, d. 558, ll. 150-151.

⁸⁷¹ See the account of Margot Clausner, chairman of the Israeli-Soviet Cultural Relations Society (Margo Clausner, *Shalosh nesiot li-Verit ha-Moatsot* (Tel Aviv: Niv, 1965), 65-70).

⁸⁷² See for example, Shlomo Even-Shoshan, *Sipuro shel masa: ‘esrim yom be Verit ha-Moa’tsot* (Tel-Aviv: ha-Kibbutz ha-meuhad, 1964), 28-32; Hayim Shorer, *Arbaim yom bi Verit ha-Moa’tsot* (Tel Aviv:

As was the case with so many other transnational phenomena, the Moscow Youth Festival was the most brilliant success the Israeli strategy of encounters enjoyed. Many young Soviet Jews made the trip to Moscow, as individuals or informal delegations, for the specific purpose of meeting the Israeli delegation.⁸⁷³ Despite efforts to isolate it and close surveillance of its members,⁸⁷⁴ Komsomol authorities had to concede that “many Muscovite groups are causing a sensation [*azhiotazh*] around this delegation. They gather around theaters, hotels, invite the Israelis to their apartments... declare they are being repressed and dream of moving to Israel.”⁸⁷⁵ Overall, Israeli historian Bin’yamin Pinkus estimates that the Israeli delegation was seen by between 30 and 60 thousand Soviet Jews.⁸⁷⁶

While it would be misguided to presume that anyone who excitedly met an Israeli was *ipso-facto* a Zionist, such encounters often provided emotional jolts that provided intense nationalist awakenings. One fan of the delegation, Minsk's Anatolii Rubin, recalls that “I did not budge [from the delegation] for days... I just wanted to look at them, at boys and girls like me, but proud and independent.”⁸⁷⁷ Other festival attendees

Am oved, 1955); Nathan Shaham, *Pegishot be-Moskvah* (Merhaviyah: Sifriyat Po'alim, 1957); Arie Eliav, *Ben ha-patish v'ha-magal: nisiyon ishi ben Yehudei Verit ha-Moatsot* (Tel Aviv: 'Am oved, 1965).

⁸⁷³ Kosharovskii, *Snova evrei*, volume 1: 100-101. Tumerman, *Moi Put'*, 88-90.

⁸⁷⁴ “Dudorov to TsK KPSS, 29/7/1957,” GARF, f. 4901, op. 2, d. 491, l.260.

⁸⁷⁵ “Spravka, 9/8/1957,” RGANI, f. 5, op.30, d. 233, l. 123.

⁸⁷⁶ Pinkus, *Tehiyah*, 219-221.

⁸⁷⁷ Cited in Lev Tumerman (ed.) *Moi put' v Izrail'* (Jerusalem: Biblioteka aliia, 1977), 149-150. For more on details on meetings between Israeli Festival participants and local Jews, see David Shaham, *Pegishot be-Moskvah*.

interviewed by historian Vladislav Zubok adored the Israelis for their “demeanor, dignity, [and] fearlessness.”⁸⁷⁸

Such emotional effects were not limited to 1957 alone. Nine years later, Hillel Butman, a young Leningrader who recently lost his job as militia officer, experienced a near-mystical rapture while watching a show by an Israeli mime acting out the role of a soldier planting a flag on enemy soil:

This was the people of Israel in its difficult march forward! This is an IDF [the Israeli Army] soldier, fighting alone against ten [foes], because the dozens of young guys sitting in this concert hall cannot run to his side and support this flag with dozens of powerful hands.⁸⁷⁹

One on one encounters also produced moments of ideological activation. During his short posting in Moscow, Levanon was able to seed several Zionist circles centered on venerable activists who now started raising a new generation of acolytes.⁸⁸⁰ The Riga scientist German Branover recounts a chance encounter with Israeli diplomats in a restaurant, leading to a trip to the embassy where he received holy books and ritual items, as well as instructions to go on a conspiratorial trip to the resort town of Sochi where he was supposed to discuss avenues for further activity.⁸⁸¹ During his festival stay, Rubin received Zionist literature and Hebrew textbooks from his interlocutors, and promptly established a Zionist network when he came home to Minsk.⁸⁸² Even people who did not

⁸⁷⁸ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 108.

⁸⁷⁹ Butman, *Leningrad-Ierusalim s dolgoi peresdakoi* (Jerusalem: biblioteka Aliia, 1981), 20.

⁸⁸⁰ Pinkus, *Tehiyah*, 201-217, Levanon, *Nativ*, 86-92.

⁸⁸¹ German Branover, *Vozvrashchenie* (Jerusalem: Shofar, 1991), 88-91.

⁸⁸² Timmerman, *Moi put'*, 54. See also Iosif Begun, “Trudnyii put' k svoemu narodu,” in Ze’v Khanin (ed.), *Shestidenvnaia voina i evreiskoe dvizhenie v SSSR* (Moscow: Akademicheskaiia seriia, 2008), 118.

have direct contacts with Israelis were influenced by their presence: Yasha Kazakov, then a Moscow teenager, recalls being energized by materials a friend received from an Israeli diplomat, and deciding on the spot to become a Zionist.⁸⁸³

And yet, it would be an error to classify Israeli-led activities on Soviet soil as an unqualified success. By 1967, Soviet-Jewish emigration numbers were still a trickle, and the Zionist movement there numbered, at most, several hundred people, heavily concentrated in less-assimilated areas of the Soviet West, rather than the major cities where the majority of the Soviet Jewish population lived.⁸⁸⁴ Communications between the Zionist underground and the Israelis were encumbered not only by the realities of a closely surveilled society, but also by ideological factors. Israeli diplomats were almost universally members of the ruling socialist party *Mapai* and advocated quiet work behind the scenes with minimal aggravation of Soviet authorities, while local activists, overwhelmingly from areas where the Zionist movement before the war was dominated by right wing revisionists, were suspicious of all varieties of socialism, in sympathy with revisionist (i.e, right wing) Zionism, and favored bold action.⁸⁸⁵

Most importantly, however, the structure of the early Zionist movement in the Soviet Union - clandestine, reliant on communications with a single center and dependent on support from an easily identifiable group of foreigners - was ideally designed for surveillance and disruption by the KGB. In a clear signal about the limits of what Soviet

⁸⁸³ Kedmi, *Milhamot avudot*, 17-19.

⁸⁸⁴ Pinkus, *Tehiyah*, 217.

⁸⁸⁵ Kedmi, *Milhamot avudot*, 59-63.

authorities would tolerate, Levanon was detained in the apartment of a Moscow Zionist in July 1955, and was shortly afterwards deported along with 3 other diplomats.⁸⁸⁶ His principal Moscow contact, the 70 year old Zionist Ilia Guberman, was condemned for espionage and spent 5 years in Soviet prison camps.⁸⁸⁷

Beyond such crudities, the comings and goings of Israeli diplomats were of course well-known to the KGB, and they could be targeted for harassment and *profilaktika*. For instance, a few months after the Moscow Festival, the Israeli diplomat Eliyahu Hazan was attacked in *Izvestiia* as a “Diplomat from Lilienblum Street,” (the location of Israel’s black dollar market, as *Izvestiia* helpfully pointed out to its readers), for allegedly trying to bribe Odessa Jews with money and gifts in order to convert them to Zionism – a familiar enough refrain to the general Soviet public.⁸⁸⁸

Even worse from the Israeli point of view, the majority of their contacts were from the Soviet West, where the Soviet security services achieved full penetration of pre-annexation political structures.⁸⁸⁹ The reactivation of Zionist circles therefore meant the reactivation of long implanted agents. In Vilnius, one such agent, code-name Gobis, managed to infiltrate the local “delegation” to the Moscow Youth Festival. There, he met other “Jewish nationalists” and attended their meetings with Israeli diplomats. During his conversation with the latter, he agreed to become one of their Lithuanian contacts. This

⁸⁸⁶ See, for example, various reports on visits of Israeli diplomats to Ukrainian cities in 1955-1967, published in Vladimir (Ze’v) Khanin (ed.), *Documents on Ukrainian-Jewish Identity and Emigration, 1944-1990* (London: Frank Cass, 2005).

⁸⁸⁷ Levanon, *Nativ*, 112-118.

⁸⁸⁸ “Diplomat s ulitsy Lilenbiluma,” *Izvestiia*, 9/22/1957.

⁸⁸⁹ Weiner, “Getting to Know You.”

connection was kept alive for at least 3 additional years, giving the KGB hours of recordings of Israeli diplomats engaging in conspiratorial activities, the names of some of their contacts, and helping it frustrate efforts to set up a Zionist network in Vilnius.⁸⁹⁰

Beyond such conspiratorial feats, the KGB possessed other means to penetrate and disrupt ties between Soviet Jews and Israelis. In Vilnius, KGB documents show that every Israeli tourist who came to town, their contacts, and sometimes their contacts' contacts, became targets of KGB background checks, agent "penetration," wiretaps and other forms of close surveillance.⁸⁹¹ The few Israeli tourists who visited Leningrad and Moscow reported similar levels of surveillance that was often made visible to its targets in a way that was clearly meant to deliver a message to them and their relatives.⁸⁹² The Israeli author Hanoch Bartov highlights the escalating nature of Soviet surveillance and the effective chilling effects it created. During a train trip he and a small group of friends took from the Polish border to Moscow and Leningrad, they first were able to freely converse with small groups of Jews on the station platforms. And then:

After our second or third stop, nervousness was everywhere. In one town, I saw how the gate to the station was locked. In another, men dressed in suits scattered small groups of people curious about us. Whenever our accordion started playing some Hebrew song, some volunteer orchestra drowned it.... Even in the smallest, poorest station, we saw the men in the brown suits and straw hats ... standing everywhere. They eavesdropped on every conversation. Their presence was nuisance enough. But when things got far enough they started snatching our gifts: a pin, a record, a postcard.⁸⁹³

⁸⁹⁰ "Obzornaia spravka na agenta Gobis, 24/9/1960," LYA f. K-1, ap. 10, b. 213-218.

⁸⁹¹ See many files in LYA, f. K-41, ap. 1, b. 648. Mark Harrison provides an in-depth analysis of one such surveillance operation in *One Day*, ch. 7.

⁸⁹² Rosner, *Bi-Netiv ha-demamah*, 32-34.

⁸⁹³ Hanoch Bartov, *Yarid be-Moskvah* (Tel Aviv: Ma'ariv, 1988), 57-69.

In short, as long as the international links of the Soviet Zionist movement depended on the thin thread of a handful of Israeli tourists and diplomats operating under near-total surveillance, its practical achievements were minimal.

Zionist Emissaries Are Coming: 1967-1989

1967 was the great watershed of the Soviet Jewry movement. Pride over the Israeli triumph, horror at the stridently pro-Arab Soviet stance,⁸⁹⁴ the rising tide of anti-Jewish discrimination,⁸⁹⁵ and (later and to a lesser extent) the crushing of the Prague Spring⁸⁹⁶ greatly expanded the numbers of Soviet Jews willing to emigrate. In parallel in the West, the electrifying effects on the Six Day War created hosts of Western Jews eager to do their part for the Jewish people – and the plight of Soviet Jewry was a cause on which they could focus their energies (not without some guidance from *Nativ's* North American emissaries).⁸⁹⁷

In these circumstances, Butman finally managed to fulfill his patriotic dreams. Now a leading activist of the clandestine Leningrad Zionist Committee, he helped plan a hijacking of a small Soviet airliner in order to take it to Sweden (or, as other members of

⁸⁹⁴ See the essays gathered in Vladimir (Ze'v) Khanin (ed.) *Shetidnevnaia voina* and Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 255-257.

⁸⁹⁵ Sara Fainberg, *Les Discrimines : L'Antisemitisme Soviétique de Staline à nos Jours* (Paris: Fayard, 2014).

⁸⁹⁶ See the example of Vitalii Rubin, a sinologist and leading refusenik intellectual. Vitalii Rubin, *Dnevnik. Pis'ma*. (Jerusalem: Biblioteka aliia, 1988), volume 2, 15-38.

⁸⁹⁷ On the emotional responses in the US to the Six Day War, see Yossi Klein-Halevi, *Memoirs of a Jewish Extremist: an American Story* (Boston: Little and Brown, 1995), 47-83. On post-1967 organizing see Peretz, *Let My People Go*, 135-191.

the group realistically assessed, to publicize the emigration cause by martyrdom).⁸⁹⁸ Soviet authorities, well aware of the operation, easily foiled it - and provoked a maelstrom of international outrage by condemning three members of the group to death and others to long imprisonment.⁸⁹⁹ Seeking to assuage Western public opinion in the era of détente, Soviet authorities allowed increasing numbers of Jews, predominantly from the Baltic States, the Caucasus and Central Asia, to emigrate. And yet, for a variety of reasons having to do with concerns about brain drain, leaks of state secrets, objections of Arab allies, and the deleterious effects of mass emigration on Soviet claims of the superiority of the socialist way of life, many (and by the early 1980s, the vast majority of) prospective emigrants - predominantly young, educated, formerly assimilated urbanites - were refused permission to go, with some of them stuck in the limbo of “refusal” for periods of ten to twenty years.⁹⁰⁰

Thus, unwittingly, Soviet authorities provided *Nativ* with everything it worked for before 1967: hundreds of thousands of Jews willing to emigrate, a cohesive, activist, several-thousand-large nationalist community to serve as focal point of the emigration

⁸⁹⁸ Butman, *Leningrad*, 75,

⁸⁹⁹ For memoirs of participants in the operation, see *ibid* and Iosif Mendelevich, *Operatsiia svad'ba* (Kyiv: Midrasha Tsionit, 2002.) For the Israeli angle, see Levanon, *Nativ*, 347-372. For the American reaction see Beckerman, *When they Come*, 211-242.

⁹⁰⁰ On emigration numbers, see Rosner, *bi-Netivei*, 238-239. For Soviet policy considerations, Morozova, *Anatomiia otkaza* 61-77. Perhaps the best account of life “in refusal” is David Shraer-Petrov’s novel *Gerbert i Nelli* (St. Petersburg: Akademicheskii Proekt, 2005). See also the memoirs of his son, Maxim Shrayer, *Leaving Russia: A Jewish Story* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2013) and Theodore H. Friedgut, “The Zionist Family,” in *Ya'cov Ro'I* (ed.) *The Jewish Movement in the Soviet Union* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, 2012), 250-272.

movement,⁹⁰¹ and a sympathetic body of victims and martyrs to present to the movement's Western supporters. Its operatives, however, faced a significant hurdle: with the end of Soviet-Israeli diplomatic and cultural ties after the Soviet Union broke diplomatic relations with Israel in 1967, they lost their main means of access to Soviet soil.

Fortunately for its purposes, *Nativ*, well aware of the limitations of the Israeli-only strategy, already had a wealth of experience with using third country citizens for its purposes. Already in early 1953, Levanon, then serving in Stockholm, bribed Swedish marine officers en route to Leningrad (perhaps the very same officers that so excited Mikhail German) to send letters with fake return addresses to old Zionist activists to let them know they were not forgotten.⁹⁰² In 1965, *Nativ*, possibly alarmed at the relative success the Soviet authorities had in convincing visiting religious Jewish-American delegations that all was well with Soviet Jewry,⁹⁰³ helped organize the trip of a young French journalist, Elie Wiesel, to the Soviet Union to write a report on the conditions Jews faced there. The text he produced, *The Jews of Silence*, rapidly became a rallying cry and a central slogan of the international Soviet Jewry movement.⁹⁰⁴

Activist Soviet Jews also grasped the possibilities offered by foreign presence in the USSR. On June 11th, 1967, Yasha Kazakov, already a semi-regular visitor to the

⁹⁰¹ The exact number of Jewish activists is very hard to assess. Overall, between 1969 and 1981, over 15,000 Jews were refused permission to emigrate. Pinkus estimates that 3,000 of them were active in the movement and that up to 300,000 Soviet Jews had some at least some contact with it. (*Tehiyah*, 382-383).

⁹⁰² Levanon, *Nativ*, 23.

⁹⁰³ Altshuler, *Yahadut*, 404-408/

⁹⁰⁴ Beckerman, *When They Come for Us*, 130-133.

Israeli embassy, decided that “if the Soviet Union breaks relations with Israel, I will break relations with the Soviet Union,” stormed into the US embassy, delivering a letter to the UN General Secretary in which he renounced his Soviet citizenship and demanded the right to emigrate. After this action failed to garner media attention, Kazakov approached a group of German students and asked them to deliver a similar letter to an Israeli newspaper – and in short order became an international media sensation.⁹⁰⁵ In a similar maneuver, Butman and his Leningrad cohort, wishing to consult with Israel before they started their adventure, intercepted an Israeli-Norwegian tourist who, like many other young visitors,⁹⁰⁶ attended the local synagogue, briefed them on their plans, and had him deliver word to Israel (they subsequently rejected Israeli advice to abandon the operation – a sympathetic miscommunication between the cautious Israelis and the radical Soviet activists).⁹⁰⁷

According to available evidence, *Nativ* began systematically employing the possibilities offered by travelers from third countries starting in the 1960s. Initially, this group, the so-called tourist-emissaries (*tayarim-shelihim*), consisted of well-briefed, tightly controlled members of the international religious Zionist movement *Bnei-Akiva*, recruited by Levanon’s subordinate Aryeh Krol (incidentally, one of the few religious non-socialists serving in *Nativ*). Their initial mission, based on hints in the memoiristic

⁹⁰⁵ Kazakov, *Milhamot*, 22-49.

⁹⁰⁶ Pereira, “Vpechatleniia,” 230. Konstantinov to TsK KPSS, 10/6/1963, RGANI, f. 5, op. 55, d. 3, l.214.

⁹⁰⁷ Butman, *Leningrad*, 183-188. Whether or the tourist, Rami Aronson was a *Nativ* operative is an open question.

literature, focused not so much on providing aid or Zionist literature, as on helping to keep the lid on often unruly activists.⁹⁰⁸

The consequences of the 1967 war vastly increased the numbers and importance of the tourist-emissaries. As mentioned above, the Soviet stance on the Six Day war provoked a wave of fury among American Jewry. Intourist guides in Moldova, for instance, picked up anger among American-Jewish tourists that their tourist dollars went “towards aiding Arab states against Israel.”⁹⁰⁹ Indeed, according to Levanon, American Jewish organizations pondered a partial travel boycott of the Soviet Union- and were quickly dissuaded by the Israelis who knew that without Western travelers, they would lose their last links to Soviet Jewish activists.⁹¹⁰ Over the next 25 years, as emigration from the Soviet Union grew into a stream, then slowed to a trickle and finally surged into a flood, Western travelers became the main connecting link between Soviet activists and their international support networks.

While *Nativ* kept closely interacting with American activists throughout the Cold War era, the growing scope of the American movement for Soviet Jewry mean that Zionist travel to the Soviet Union soon escaped the narrow bounds of its control. Until the end of the Cold War, *Nativ* kept its corps of tourist-emissaries under tight control, preferring to send travelers with either an Israeli background or strong religious affiliations, and provided them with military-style briefings and elaborate cover stories.

⁹⁰⁸ Rosner, *Demamah*, 35-42, Levanon, *Nativ*, 69-72.

⁹⁰⁹ “Otchet Kishinveskogo otdeleniia VAO Inturist o rabote s inostrannymi turistami v sezone 1967 goda,” AOSPRM, f. 51, inv. 29, d. 100, l. 4. I thank Professor Amir Weiner for providing me with this file.

⁹¹⁰ Levanon, *Nativ*, 227.

No less importantly, it made strenuous efforts to steer them towards Soviet activists who towed the Israeli “line.”⁹¹¹ American travelers were divided between “establishment” organizations, operating under the umbrella of the National Conference for Soviet Jewry and an array of “rebel” organizations, like the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, or even the Rabbi Meir Kahane’s extremist Jewish Defense League.⁹¹² While originally, the recruitment and preparation of American travelers were conducted by *Nativ*’s “local friends,”⁹¹³ by that the numbers and demographic profiles of American travelers seemed to have sharply exceeded *Nativ*’s strict guidelines by the mid 1970s.⁹¹⁴ Additionally, many travelers lacking any particular affiliation also saw it as their duty to visit refuseniks.⁹¹⁵ Finally, outside the Zionist framework of the rest of the movement, ultra-orthodox rabbis and activists worked to form Hasidic and ultra-orthodox communities on Soviet soil.⁹¹⁶ While hard figures are hard to assess, given the lack of access to *Nativ*’s archive and the polycentric nature of the movement elsewhere, a safe assumption would put the number of travelers to the USSR involved with Jewish affairs in a given year at somewhere in the mid to low thousands by the 1980s.⁹¹⁷

⁹¹¹ Rosner, *be-Netivei*, 80-91. Oral history interview with Avner Greenberg, 7/27/2014.

⁹¹² On the struggles between radicals and establishment organizations backed by Israel, see Beckerman *When They Come* and Klein-Halevi, *Jewish Extremist*.

⁹¹³ Rosner, *bi-Netivei*.

⁹¹⁴ For instance, trip reports of the NCSJ indicate that many travelers were suburban women- very far from *Nativ*’s preferred emissary profile.

⁹¹⁵ See, for example, oral history interview with Rabbi Bob Sacks, 7/23/2014. For other examples see below.

⁹¹⁶ See, for example, Rivkah Teitz Blau, *Learn Torah, Love Torah, Live Torah: ha-Rav Pinchas Mordechai Teitz, the Quintessential Rabbi* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 2001). “Trip Report by Shulamith Teitz Ebner, August 1967,” Pinchas Mordechai Teitz Paper, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 1, Folder 7, and below.

⁹¹⁷ For instance, trip reports from a single umbrella Jewish organization, the Bay Area Council for Soviet Jews for the Year 1984 feature near 200 travelers’ names. Records of the Bay Area Council for Soviet Jews, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 88, Folder 16.

Whatever their disparate agendas, taken as a whole, Zionist travel and the support systems that underlay it amounted to a substantial transnational network linked to the small world of Soviet Jewish activists in a myriad ways that made their plight much easier than it would otherwise have been. Travelers heading to the Soviet Union were thoroughly briefed, given names and addresses of refuseniks they were to visit and their spiritual and material needs. Upon return, they composed trip reports, including everything from the names and addresses of Jews who wished to emigrate and required invitations from Israeli “relatives” (which were provided by *Nativ*- with very few actual relatives involved in the effort), through rumors of Soviet clampdowns and relaxations, and up to impromptu studies of demand on the Soviet black market.⁹¹⁸ This information was then processed, used to brief subsequent cohorts of travelers, and fed into files that contained thousands of names of refuseniks and used to target them with aid packages, letters and phone calls of support, future visits, and post-emigration aid.⁹¹⁹

Inside Soviet borders, foreign travelers did much to reverse the the isolation, ostracism, and penury that Soviet authorities attempted to impose on the refuseniks. Travelers provided refuseniks (who as general rule lost their jobs) with various forms of

⁹¹⁸ For details on the organization of this effort, see: NSCJ Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 86, Folder 1, “Briefing Materials,” Box 87, Folder 1, “Debriefing Questionnaires,” Box 89, folders, 1-3. For perspectives of individual tourists, see: Nancy Rosenfeld, *Unfinished Journey: Two People, Two Worlds, From Tyranny to Freedom* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993), 37-67; Wendy Eisen, *Count us in: the Struggle to Free Soviet Jews: a Canadian Perspective* (Toronto: Burgher Books, 1995), 133-145; Dov Peretz Elkins, *My Seventy Two Friends: Encounters with Refuseniks in the USSR* (New York: Growth Associates, 1989); Andrew Harrison, *Passover Revisited: Philadelphia’s Efforts to Aid Soviet Jews, 1963-1998* (Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001), 115-144. Additionally, thousands of trip reports are extant in the files of different Soviet Jewry organizations housed at the Soviet Jewry Movement Archives and elsewhere.

⁹¹⁹ See the NCSJ card catalog system (NCSJ Records, Soviet Jewry Archive, boxes 141-149. According to Kazakov/Kedmi, *Nativ* also possessed a major computerized database of Soviet Jews (*Milhamot*, 132).

material aid: *Berezka* certificates, cash, items to resell on black markets (ranging from ever popular jeans to cameras and video equipment).⁹²⁰ Medical doctors were dispatched to provide medications and emergency treatments for seriously ill refuseniks.⁹²¹ On one occasion, when a group of female refuseniks needed urgent gynecological checkups, a “battle group” [*desant*] of doctors arrived from the United States to aid them.⁹²² A stream of artifacts brought by foreigners: Zionist literature, religious items, Israeli music recordings, and, most crucially, Hebrew textbooks and study aids, helped spread the Zionist gospel among hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews, the majority of whom never met a foreigner.⁹²³ Leon Uris’ Zionist epic *Exodus* was a key text in this regard, with its fictionalized Hebrew warriors serving to inspire activists in the same way flesh-and-blood Israelis did in 1957.⁹²⁴ This *samizdat* hit, first brought to the Soviet Union in the mid -1960s by a tourist and widely circulating among the Jewish community there for the

⁹²⁰ Michael Beizer, “How the Movement was Funded,” in Ro’i, *Jewish Movement*, 359-361. For the the impact of such gifts on individual refuseniks, see Mark Azbel’, *Refusenik: Trapped in the Soviet Union* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), 292-293. See ““Briefing Requests,” Bay Area Council for Soviet Jewry Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 87, Folders 1-4, on the operations of the supply and demand system that matched gifts to conditions on the Soviet black markets.

⁹²¹ See, for example, ” New Medical Case, Ernst Adel” Sept. 7, 1982, Bay Area Council for Soviet Jewry Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 87, Folder 1.

⁹²² Iudith Agracheva, “My, evreiskie zhenshchiny,” at: http://www.angelfire.com/sc3/soviet_jews_exodus/Interview_s/InterviewJewishWomen.shtml (accessed online, 5/4/2015).

⁹²³ Pinkus, *Tekumah*, 144.

⁹²⁴ On the emotional power of *Exodus*, see Stefani Hoffman, “Jewish Samizdat and the Rise of Jewish National Consciousness” in: Ya'cov Roi and Avi Beker (ed.), *Jewish Culture and Identity in the Soviet Union* (New York: New York University Press, 1991), 89-91; Alla Rusinek, *Like a Song, Like a Dream: a Soviet Girl's Quest for Freedom* (New York: Scribner, 1973), 36; Khana Meirstein, “Ola Khadasha”, in: Timerman (ed.) *Moi put'*, 382-383.

subsequent two decades,⁹²⁵ was still high on the list of items emissaries were recommended to bring to the Soviet Union in the 1980s.⁹²⁶

Zionist travelers could, of course, do little about the things that made life in refusal harrowing: unemployment, fear, systematic harassment, uncertainty about the future, and regrets about lost years.⁹²⁷ Their aid to Jews imprisoned for Zionist activities (internationally renowned as Prisoners of Zion) was limited to aid packages and endless streams of complaints to Soviet authorities. Yet, to the extent the policy goal of the Soviet authorities was to use hardship, isolation, and repression to keep Jews away from the emigration movement, the activities of Zionist travelers did much to frustrate these policy goals. On the most basic level, the fact that foreigners cared enough about their fate to risk a visit to their Soviet apartments could provide immense emotional sustenance to people the Soviet state was determined to mark as pariahs.⁹²⁸ As Martin Gilbert wrote in his account of encounters with refuseniks in 1983: “all of them are given hope when visitors come, listen to their stories and talk about them when they come back to the West” (and indeed, even though it was composed at a moment when Jewish emigration was shut down by the authorities, Gilbert’s pointedly titled *The Jews of Hope* was a

⁹²⁵ On the smuggling, translation and distribution of *Exodus*, see: Butman, *Leningrad*, 85,93-95,111

⁹²⁶ “Memo to Briefers, 2/23/1981,” Bay Area Council for Soviet Jewry Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 87, Folder 1.

⁹²⁷ For a poignant example, see Agracheva, “My evreiskie zhenshchiny.”

⁹²⁸ See for instance, Evgenii Lein, *Zabyt’ nelzia: bor’ba otkaznikov 1980-kh za repatriatsiu v Izrail* (Jerusalem: Judea, 2003), 78-90, Elena Kais-Kuna, *Caged* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Publishing Center), 203-212.

celebration of the end of isolation and fear Wiesel bemoaned).⁹²⁹ Refusenik activists shared these lofty sentiments, at least to some extent: trip reports reveal that activists whom Western travelers frequented attempted to direct tourist traffic to less “popular” activists who they felt needed encouragement and support, lest they drop out of the movement.⁹³⁰

On a more practical level, foreign aid was crucial for the survival and growth of myriad informal institutions that allowed the refuseniks to live life outside the bounds of the Soviet system. To cite one telling example, Leningrad refusenik Mikhail Beizer developed a small private alternative to Intourist itineraries, taking both foreign travelers and curious Soviet Jews on tours of “Jewish Leningrad.”⁹³¹ On a far grander scale, given the lack of Hebrew materials in the Soviet Union, the thriving network of Hebrew teachers and classes (*ulpanim*) found it very hard to function without large amounts of teaching aids brought into the Soviet Union by foreigners.⁹³² Scientific seminars organized by refusenik scientists and scholars were given protection and publicity by visiting foreign colleagues, who also helped academic refuseniks keep their careers alive by bringing scientific publications into and smuggling manuscripts out of the Soviet

⁹²⁹ Martin Gilbert, *The Jews of Hope* (London: St. Martin's, 1983), *i*. On Gilbert's contribution to the Soviet Jewry Movement, see Michael Beizer, “Sir Martin Gilbert, A Jewish Knight and hero of Soviet Refuseniks,” *Haaretz English Edition*, 09/02/2015.

⁹³⁰ “Confidential Report to Briefers, 5/28/1980,” Bay Area Council for Soviet Jewry Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 87, Folder 1.

⁹³¹ Martin Gilbert, *The Jews of Hope* (New York: Viking, 1984), 32-42. According to Beizer's obituary of Gilbert, the latter smuggled the manuscript of his book on the same topic. Beizer, “Knight.”

⁹³² On the Hebrew milieu see Aleksandr Kholmianskii, *Zvuchanie tishiny*, (Jerusalem, self-published,) 2007.

Union.⁹³³ In a more mundane fashion, by the 1980s, the joint efforts of refusenik doctors, Western doctors on Zionist visits, and other visitors who brought as much medications as the former groups required, led to the formation of an impromptu medical service which probably provided its clients with better treatment than anything non-elite Soviet citizens could access.⁹³⁴ Finally, by controlling access to foreigners and transforming certain activists into distribution nodes of goods received from them, *Nativ* and establishment American organizations could at least attempt to create a rough hierarchy among the cantakerous Soviet Zionist community. This practice inevitably stirred both political disagreements and personal jealousies,⁹³⁵ but also helped created a leadership structure, conflict resolution methods, and international coordination mechanism that helped forge the refuseniks into a coherent (if contentious) political force.⁹³⁶

Perhaps the best evidence for the possibilities transnational networks allowed for the development of sub-cultures thoroughly alien to Soviet norms was the emergence of a small, but thriving ultra-Orthodox communities in Moscow and Leningrad by the 1980s.

⁹³³ The most famous was the Moscow Scientific Seminar organized by Mark Azbel and Aleksandr Voronel. See Azbel, *Refusenik*, 460-471, Levanon, *Nativ*, 425-428, and the testimonial of Viktor Brailovskii, a physicist who took charge of the seminar after the original organizers were allowed to emigrate (online at: http://www.angelfire.com/sc3/soviet_jews_exodus/Interview_s/InterviewBrailovsky.shtml). Yakov Alpert, another notable refusenik scientist, provides a roster of the foreign scientists who gave talks at the seminar, totaling 350 foreign guests: *Making Waves: Stories from My Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 247-252. On smuggling of manuscripts, see *ibid*, 168-170.

⁹³⁴ Kosharovskii, *Evrei*, 4, 362-366.

⁹³⁵ On material jealousies, see Levanon, *Nativ*, 385 and Aleksander Paritskii, *Molitva* (Jerusalem: Verba, 2006), 144-145, 165, 316-317.

⁹³⁶ Rosner, *bi-Netivei ha-demamah*, 150-155. Iulii Kosharovskii was universally considered the hinge of the *Nativ* network in the Soviet Union and his four volume memoir (*My snova evrei*) provides perhaps the most comprehensive picture of how the various strands of the Soviet Jewish national movement operated in disparate, but interlocking, ways.

Unlike the surviving pre Stalin-era orthodox communities in the Soviet periphery, Leningrad and Moscow-based Orthodox groups were dominated by young, university educated, Russian-speaking refuseniks, who had little preexisting knowledge of Jewish law.⁹³⁷ Given the tight control Soviet authorities exercised over religious education and the manufacture of items necessary for Jewish religious life (kosher food, religious literature, and prayer artifacts), support from abroad was the only viable path for living an Orthodox life in the USSR. Foreign emissaries brought the Soviet Orthodox items as diverse as compilations of Talmudic law, kosher cookbooks, and canned food.⁹³⁸ Even more importantly, roving American rabbis conducted classes on Jewish law, brought and interpreted *halakhic* literature, gave classes about the intricacies of running kosher households, circumcised babies, and trained Soviet Jews to become the functional equivalent of rabbis for their underground communities.⁹³⁹ And thus, in the seventh decade of Soviet power, in Leningrad, the cradle of the Revolution, some of Hodl's

⁹³⁷ On this community, see: "Soviet Refuseniks Turn towards Orthodox Judaism," *East European Jewish Affairs* 22, no.1(1992), 51-62; Dov Kontorer, "Moe evreivstvo i Izrail'," in: Khanin (ed.), *Dvizhenie*, 176-190; Miriam Stark Zakon with Eliahu Essas, *Silent Revolution: Torah Network in the Soviet Union* (New York: Mesorah, 1992).

⁹³⁸ "Memo to briefers, February 23, 1981" and "Trip Report, Jan 15,1981, Ruth Goldsmith and Norma Joseph," Bay Area Council for Soviet Jewry Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 87, Folder 1.

⁹³⁹ Since the ultra-orthodox networks were not part of the establishment Soviet Jewry organizations neither ideologically nor organizationally, both works and sources on the activities of the ultra-orthodox visitors to the Soviet Union are scarce, but see: Miriam Zakon and Eliagu Essas, *Silent Revolution: a Torah Network in the Soviet Union* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Press, 1992); 118-134, Teitz Blau, *Learn Torah, Love Torah*; Itskhak Zilber, *Chtoby ty ostalsia evreem* (Jerusalem:Toldos Yeshuron, 2004), 329-335. Also see Adam S. Fergizer, "Outside the Shul": The American Soviet Jewry Movement and the Rise of Solidarity Orthodoxy, 1964–1986." *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 22, no. 1 (2012), 83-130.

grandchildren experienced something completely unforeseen: a happy Hassidic childhood.⁹⁴⁰

Battling the “Zionist Peddlers”

From the point of view of Soviet authorities, all this activity amounted to an embodiment of their darkest fears regarding foreign subversion: an international movement, supported by a hostile government manipulating a range of “ideological centers,” sending thousands (and, cumulatively over a period of 25 years, probably tens of thousands) of emissaries on missions of subversion that aided and abetted activities that shattered the Soviet myth of the “friendship of the peoples,” highlighted the willingness of many Soviet citizens to abandon the socialist way of life, and promoted activities that the Soviet state deemed just short of treason.

As was usually the case with dangers rooted in the Soviet opening up to the world, Soviet security authorities read this threat through the prism of institutional paranoia, perceiving the Jewish problem in the context of an alleged global conspiracy against Soviet power. Thus, the KGB’s 1956 textbook on the history of the clash between Zionism and Soviet power lays clear lines of continuity between the ideological foundations of Zionism (“a tool of the bourgeoisie...aiming to distract workers from class struggle”) its past as “an ally of Denikin and Petliura despite the appalling massacres that

⁹⁴⁰ Moshe Rokhlin, “Detvsvo khassida v sovetskom Leningrade,” accessed online at http://www.angelfire.com/sc3/soviet_jews_exodus/Memory_s/MemoryRokhlin.shtml on 5/5/2015.

their forces conducted in the Jewish *shtetls* of Ukraine and Belorussia,” and its present, in which “foreign-based ideological Zionist centers are being used by the American and Israeli secret services to subvert Soviet power.”⁹⁴¹

Here again, such ideologically inflected statements were not mere phraseology, but building blocks of Soviet threat assessment. Semichastnyi, for instance, considered *Nativ's* activities in Eastern Europe (which he ascribes to the more famous Israeli service *Mossad*) as model that the CIA employed in its mission to create Soviet domestic opposition to Soviet power.⁹⁴² In a 1972 note to the Politburo, Andropov found that “the Zionists wish to ideologically influence the Jewish population of the Soviet Union... to create a nationalist underground... [in order to] change our Middle Eastern policy, cause harm to the friendship of the peoples, to turn a segment of the Jewish population into a destabilizing social factor [and] provoke anti-Semitic feelings among the Soviet population.”⁹⁴³ As Edith Rogovin-Frankel points out, even minor issues involving the Zionist movement, like the case of an Intourist guide who maintained a correspondence with a family in Israel and showed signs of studying Hebrew, crossed Andropov’s desk and was rerouted to the highest level of Soviet decision-makers – a sure sign of the seriousness with which the problem was perceived by the KGB.⁹⁴⁴ Even as late as 1989, Vladimir Kryuchkov, the last KGB Chairman, complained that Jewish nationalists and

⁹⁴¹ L.A Mamaev, *Antisovetskaia deiatelnost' evreiskikh natsionalistov i bor'ba s nei organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti* (Moscow: Vyshaia shkola KGB, 1956), 3-4.

⁹⁴² Semichastnyi, *Bespokoinoe serdtse*, 244. b

⁹⁴³ “Spravka, 17/5/1971,” cited in Boris Morozov (ed.) *Evreiskaia emigratsiia v svete novykh dokumentov* (Tel Aviv: Ivrus, 1998), 105.

⁹⁴⁴ “Behind the Scenes: the Attitude of the Regime and Society towards Jewish Emigration,” in Ro'i, ed., *The Jewish National Movement*, 194.

“foreign agitators” were key elements in the efforts of “a-social elements” to slander the KGB.⁹⁴⁵

In Ukraine, local KGB officers took an even more dour view of the Zionist problem. The republican KGB considered the refuseniks as a key element in the ephemeral dissenting coalition they fretted about in the years leading up to Operation Block.⁹⁴⁶ Such fears lasted well in the 1980s. During Israel’s invasion of Lebanon (1982-1985), for instance, the Ukrainian KGB informed the republican Politburo that the Israelis included in their ranks volunteers raised by the nationalist Ukrainian organization OUN (presumably in order to use military experience they gained for future guerilla operations on Soviet soil).⁹⁴⁷ In a darker key, for some KGB officers, Zionism seemed less like the tool of an imperialist conspiracy and more like its puppet-master. Thus, one report to the Ukrainian Politburo mentioned as a matter of fact that “Zionists” controlled many large American monopolies and “up to 80% of international press agencies.”⁹⁴⁸

Given these fears, it was little wonder that Soviet efforts to combat Zionism escalated after 1967. While before 1967, Israeli diplomats and emissaries were handled by the general counter-intelligence mechanism, in 1971, the Fifth Directorate set up a

⁹⁴⁵ Cited in Evgeniya Albats, *The KGB: State within a State* (London: I.B Taurus, 1994), 254. As usual in such matters, the KGB’s fears had elements of truth. According to Kosharovskii, by 1987/8 even refuseniks who previously towed the Israeli line which called for distance from Soviet dissidents changed their approach, and using their superior resources, organized and led a number of human rights seminars well-attended by foreigners. (Kosharovskii, *Evrei*, 4:226.)

⁹⁴⁶ “Protokol zonalnogo soveshchaniia... 1971,” DGA SBU, d. 28, t.1, ark. 123.

⁹⁴⁷ “IS, 28/10/1982,” DGA SBU f. 16, op. 7, spr. 16, ark. 61. To the KGB’s credit, it suggested the information not be used in Soviet propaganda until it was confirmed.

⁹⁴⁸ “V. Fedorchuk to V. Scherbritskii [Head of Ukrainian Communist Party], 5/2/1982,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 7, spr. 66, ark. 229. This was not an isolated point of view within the KGB- see similar reports cited in Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The World was Going Our Way*, 226-237.

Jewish section meant to battle Zionism and migratory moods.⁹⁴⁹ This, of course, did not absolve territorial departments from joining the struggle.⁹⁵⁰ On the propaganda front, Soviet authorities organized a vast anti-Zionist machine, featuring everything from the “pocket Jewish” Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Public to rabid anti-Semitic elements among the Russian nationalist wing of the Soviet establishment.⁹⁵¹

Therefore, despite the vast expansion of the Zionist network in the Soviet Union, the level of surveillance its members could expect more than kept pace. Zionist meetings were closely surveilled, wiretapped, and penetrated by KGB agents who both reported on the movement and helped sow dissension and suspicion among authentic activists.⁹⁵² Zionist “emissaries” were well-tracked, and even their future intentions were sometimes known by the KGB.⁹⁵³ Foreign travelers reported constant low-level harassment: “tails” that made no attempt to disguise themselves, midnight phone calls, and attempts to provoke illegal activities.⁹⁵⁴ Detentions, KGB interrogation, and deportations were a relatively rare but profoundly unpleasant possibility.⁹⁵⁵ In a less formal way, KGB

⁹⁴⁹ Barron, *KGB*, 85.

⁹⁵⁰ Besides the Ukrainian material cited above, see “Plan agenturno-operativnykh meropriatii LGB Litovskoi SSSR po bor’be s podryvnoi deiatelnosti spetsluzhb Izrailia, zarubezhnykh sionistskikh tsentrov i organizatsii a takzhe pro-sionistski i natsionalistki nastroennykh lits evreiskoi natsionalsti v respublike na 1982-1985 god, 17/8/1982,” LYA, f. K-41, b. 774, ll. 114-130.

⁹⁵¹ On the intersection of anti-Zionist propagandists and racial antisemitism, see Mitrokhin, *Russkaia partiia* 404-428 and William Korrey, *Russian Antisemitism, Pamyat and the Demonology of Zionism* (Chur, Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995).

⁹⁵² See for example, “Dokladnaia zapiska, 15/12/1978,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 7, spr. 37, ark. 369-370, “Dokladnaia zapiska, 16/2/1978,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op. 7, spr. 33, ark. 38-42.

⁹⁵³ This method of agent recruitment was often used by the KGB, most often in order to infiltrate spies into Israel.

⁹⁵⁴ For a typical example, see Philip Baskin “Journey to the Unknown” (n/d 1977),” NCSJ Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 12, Folder 3. For examples of arrests and harassment, see Paritskii, *Molitva*, 118-120, 173-174, Eisen, *Canadian Perspective*, 139-141, Lein, *Zabyt’*, 162, and oral history interview with Mark Glotter, 10/14/2014.

operatives, especially in the periphery, were not above the occasional “hooligan” beatings.⁹⁵⁶

Beyond such crudities (or for that matter, the clumsy Dash operation), the KGB was more than capable of conducting complex operations that caused real harm to the Soviet Jewry movement. For instance, a KGB agent recruited in the 1960s and given permission to move to Israel in order to infiltrate the international Zionist movement⁹⁵⁷ was able to convince various Western Zionist organizations of the existence of a powerful Zionist cell in Odessa, which was in fact controlled by the KGB. The members of that “cell” then were used to divert material aid from authentic Zionist circles, to provide false information to visiting American Jews, and, most importantly, to sow doubts regarding the authenticity of other Ukrainian cells.⁹⁵⁸ In a much more famous operation, Aleksandr Lipavskii, a doctor from Uzbekistan recruited as a KGB agent in the 1960s to rescue his father (a factory manager charged with “economic crimes”), was able to infiltrate Zionist circles in Moscow and to become especially close to the Anatoly Shcharanskii.⁹⁵⁹ On March 5, 1977, Lipavskii “published” an open letter in *Izvestiia* in which he (or his KGB ghost writer) charged that Moscow Zionists were in the employ of the CIA, providing it with state secrets and anti-Soviet slander- in exchange for dollars, gifts, Western consumer goods, and lavish attention received from sundry Western

⁹⁵⁶ Khlebnikov, “Shpion,” 56.

⁹⁵⁷ Shlomo Shpiro, “Soviet Espionage in Israel, 1973-1991,” *Intelligence and National Security* 30, no. 4 (2015), 486-507.

⁹⁵⁸ “Dokladnaia zapiska o meropriatiakh protiv zarubezhnykh sionistkikh organizatsii, 5/2/1982,” DGA SBU f. 16, op. 7, spr. 66, ark. 219-222.

⁹⁵⁹ Kosharovskii, *Evrei*, 3: 159-169.

visitors – an open letter that served as the opening shot of Shcharanskii’s unprecedented trial for espionage.⁹⁶⁰

While even by the standards of Soviet treatment of dissidents, Shcharanskii’s trial was unusual, the tactic of associating refuseniks with foreign money was perhaps the best rhetorical weapon the Soviet Union could employ in the battle against transnational Zionism. In the same way the rhetorical weight of the official assault on black marketeers and frivolous girls under Khrushchev was transposed onto dissidents in the 1970s, the language of Khrushchev’s campaign against “economic criminals,” and the stereotypes that underpinned it were repurposed to combat would-be emigrants.

In this spirit, the Soviet media broke its silence on the topic of cross-border illicit trade when it involved would-be Jewish immigrants. *Sovetskaia kul'tura*, in a story with the tellingly dehumanizing title “Insects,” relayed the story of one David Klain, a former Soviet citizen and now a Budapest factory manager, who used business travel to Moscow to smuggle out the ill-gotten gains of Jewish-Azeri black marketeers so that they would have them available upon emigration.⁹⁶¹ Even more telling was the story of one Leviev, as told by *Trud*. Leviev, a Tadjiki Jew, made a fortune from textile and jewelry trade with the connivance of local authorities. He then used foreigners to smuggle his profits abroad, to prepare for his pending emigration. Leviev, the story did not neglect to mention, was the recipient of wartime medals, even though “he spent the War running around Central

⁹⁶⁰ Reprinted in L.N Smirnov et al (ed.), *Belaia kniga: fakty, svidetelstva, dokumenty* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaia literature, 1979, 181-184.

⁹⁶¹ “Tarakany.” *Sovetskaia kul'tura*, 25/12/1977.

Asia and did not spend a day in the military,” an open allusion to the widespread myth Soviet Jews avoided frontline service by escaping to Central Asia during the war.⁹⁶²

In a similar vein, Zionist travelers bearing gifts for refuseniks could serve as the living embodiment of the official argument about Soviet Zionism as product of avarice and treason. Mark Glotter, a 20 year old University of Michigan student, was one emissary cast into such role. Glotter, an activist associated with the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, was a member of a student tour group of the Soviet Union, doubling as a Zionist emissary. In Kyiv, days before his scheduled departure home, he sustained food poisoning,⁹⁶³ along with other members of the group. In the hospital, he recalls, he was kept isolated from other patients, and underwent interrogation by men who he presumed were KGB officers, who pressured him to write a letter of apology to the Soviet people for his actions. After his release from the hospital, he discovered other members of his group were sick, and was interrogated again, in his hotel group, and threatened with lengthy imprisonment. Pressured and alone, he agreed to provide a televised confession of his crimes against the Soviet people, and was subsequently deported.⁹⁶⁴ His confession was broadcast on Ukrainian TV, incorporated into a widely circulating *White Book* on Zionist subversion released by the Soviet authorities,⁹⁶⁵ and featured in a 1977 central Soviet television documentary entitled “The Soul Buyers” [*Skupshchiki dush*] which

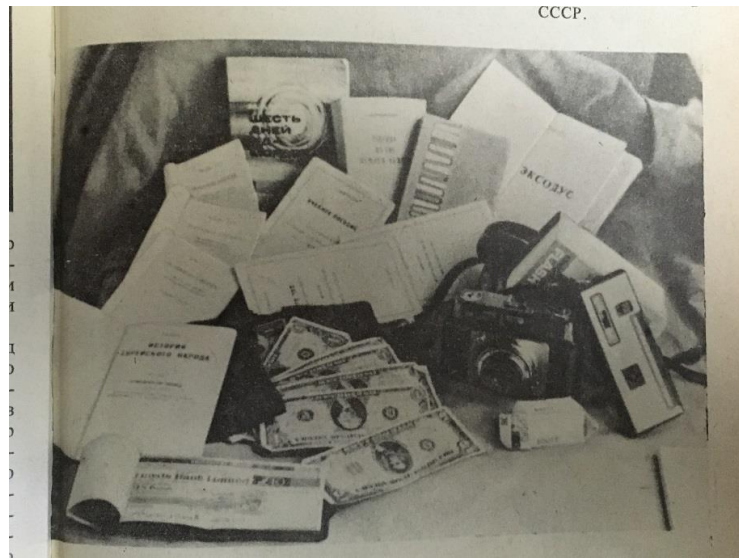
⁹⁶² “Raskhititeli,” *Trud* 1/9/1975.

⁹⁶³ According to John Barron’s interviews with KGB defectors, this was a common Soviet practice in operations against foreigners, *KGB*, 121.

⁹⁶⁴ Interview with Mark Glotter, 10/14/2014.

⁹⁶⁵ L.N. Smirnov (ed.), *Belaia kniga: fakty, svidetelstva, dokumenty* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaja literatura, 1979).

was widely interpreted by Soviet Zionists as an indication of a coming clampdown.⁹⁶⁶ And indeed, in the following years, Soviet audiences were treated to similar “confessions” by seized travelers.⁹⁶⁷



⁹⁶⁶ Kosharovskii, *Evrei*, 3: 157-158.

⁹⁶⁷ See, for example, “Korobeinitsy ot sionizma,” *Leningradskaiia Pravda* 8/4/1984, detailing the arrest of two American emissaries detained while “bent under the weight of their enormous rucksacks” stuffed with gifts for Zionists. Text cited in Beizer, “Financing the Movement,” 386. Kassis’ writings were heavily featured in this effort. See L. Kassis et al., *Caught in the Act* (Moscow Progress: 1977), 187-205. This collection of broadsides included such gems as “Zionist Twins,” and “Travelling Salesmen from Philadelphia.” See also the sequel to the original *White Book* (A.I Filatova, *Belaia kniga: novye fakty, svidetel’sstva, dokumenty* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaiia literatura, 1985).

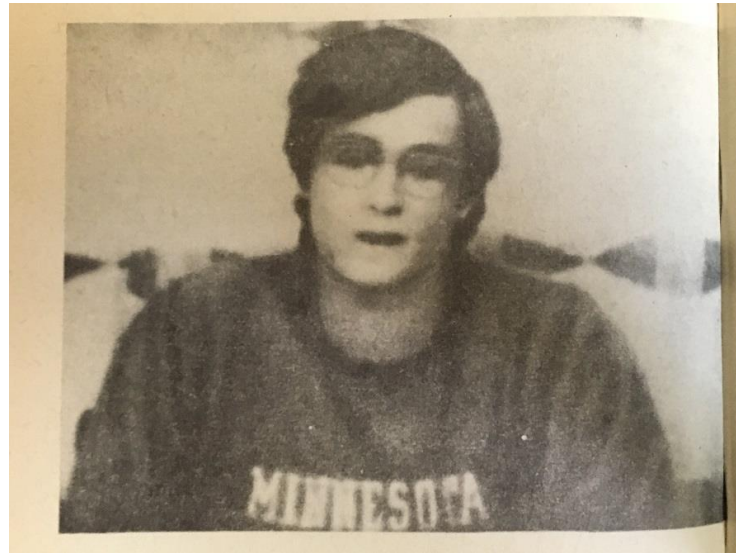


Figure 5.2, Figure 5.3: Books, gifts and Money Seized from “Emissaries” and Marc Glotter providing his confession

(Source: Belaia Kniga. Fakty, svidetelstva, Dokumenty).

Detering the KGB

All this meant that the KGB enjoyed a share of successes in its battles against “Zionist peddlers.” Even among *Nativ’s* carefully selected emissaries, some chose to abort their missions when they hit Soviet soil, and others reported feelings of constant anxiety that made every-day occurrences (like *fartsovshchiki* approaching to buy one’s jeans), or even

approaches by Jews with a smattering of Hebrew appear as a KGB trap.⁹⁶⁸ Among the refuseniks, uncertainty about who was and wasn't a KGB source was a fact of life.⁹⁶⁹

And yet, the fact remains that, even during the darkest years of the Soviet Zionist movement (during the Andropov interlude, when emigration was frozen, “Prisoners of Zion” proliferated, and many refuseniks gave up on the cause), foreign traffic didn't taper off, and the informal institutional environment built by Soviet activists and their Western supporters remained intact. Briefing materials for travelers emphasized prudence, safety protocols, and avoiding possible provocations and violations of Soviet law- but gave no impression that they were preparing travelers for physical danger.⁹⁷⁰ A series of oral history interviews with former emissaries reveal that few of them fretted or feared travel to the Soviet Union.⁹⁷¹ As one British-Israeli traveler put it: “the worst they could do was put me on a plane to London, and I wasn't enjoying the Soviet Union much anyway.”⁹⁷² And indeed, during the 25-year run of Zionist travel, not a single visitor was put on trial for violations of Article 70 of the Soviet constitution.

So, we are back to the inquiry with which we finished chapter 4. Why did the Soviet alarm at Zionist machinations and awareness of the crucial role of Zionist travelers in supporting the refuseniks not translate into resolute action? As usual, Soviet archives are rather quiet on the question – and, with the exception of the KGB, the general impression

⁹⁶⁸ Rosner, *bi-Netivei*, 91-92. See also Harrison, *Passover Revisited*, 140-142.

⁹⁶⁹ Kosharovskii, *Evrei*, 4:219.

⁹⁷⁰ “See, for example, ““Shorthand Guide for Soviet Tour, 4/14/1977,” NCSJ Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 12, folder 3.

⁹⁷¹ Interviews with Mark Glotter, Avner Greenberg, Sylvia J. Yehiel, Rabbi Bobby Sacks, Stephen Meizlish, conducted in September-October 2014.

⁹⁷² Interview with Avner Greenberg.

they create is that many Soviet officials charged with dealing with the problem simply wished it didn't exist, at least as far as the paperwork they failed to produce about it indicates.⁹⁷³ And yet, the scope of the Soviet Jewry Movement activities, the multitude of fronts on which it engaged the Soviet state, and the vast paper trail it left behind, allow us to infer some answers.

A good starting point is a series of Soviet actions, or rather pointed inactions, in the summer and spring of 1973. In March of that year, Yossi Klein Halevi, a self-described "Jewish extremist" loosely associated with Meir Kahane's JDL (which made a name for itself by direct action and terrorist activities aimed at Soviet targets on American soil-including Intourist offices),⁹⁷⁴ organized a group trip of young Jewish radicals to the Soviet Union, planning a demonstration at the central OVIR (the MVD unit in charge of processing emigration requests). The purpose of the trip was to get arrested, and if possible sent to Siberia, in order to become martyrs for the plight of Soviet Jewry. The group infiltrated OVIR's Moscow offices, unfurled its banners, and quickly got ejected from the building by burly men who pointedly avoided arresting the Americans. Knowing that they "simply *had* to be arrested," Klein Halevi's group loitered outside- until they were taken to a police station, where they were given cookies, and then told that as first-time violators, they were forgiven and could go back to their tour.⁹⁷⁵ A few months later, another group

⁹⁷³ After 1967, I was able to find only one instance in which the Intourist senior brass discussed their Zionist problem, "Stenogramma zasedaniia...26/5/1976, GARF, f. 9612, op.3, d.1014, l. 156. Even more striking, the international department of the Soviet Ministry of Justice, which faced serious onslaught from Zionist visitors (see below), has no evidence of it in its (admittedly, thin) record. (GARF, f. 9492, op. 8).

⁹⁷⁴ Beckerman, *When they Come*, 170, 211,231.

⁹⁷⁵ Klein Halevi, *Extremist*, 140-146.

of JDL activists, in transit from New York to Istanbul and lacking Soviet visas, touched down in Sheremetyevo airport, planning to break out to Moscow. Soviet authorities responded by providing them with rooms at the airport hotel, and “proper leisure, food, phone calls to the American embassy and offer of Moscow sightseeing in a bus with a tour guide.”⁹⁷⁶

There was little mystery regarding why these two incidents unfolded the way they did: in Klein-Halevi’s case, seven US Senators were in Moscow for official meetings on the implications of the Jackson-Vannick amendment and were glad to be seen giving support for the fight for Soviet Jewry,⁹⁷⁷ and the Sheremetyevo visit coincided with Nixon’s visit to Moscow, and “neither side was interested in any excesses.”⁹⁷⁸

To the extent they cared about *détente* and bilateral negotiations, JDL-style radicals considered such activities a betrayal of Soviet Jewry to “new Pharaohs.”⁹⁷⁹ However, while it was by no means enthusiastic about *détente*, the larger Soviet Jewry movement, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, was very well aware that *détente* represented only one facet of the larger Soviet bet on international exchanges as a modernization strategy.⁹⁸⁰ Armed with this insight, the international Soviet Jewry movement proved capable of leveraging networks of exchange that increasingly bound the Soviet Union to the rest of global society, by both shrewdly nestling itself into these

⁹⁷⁶ “Andropov to TsK KPSS, 23/6/1973,” cited in Morozov, *Dokumenty*, 175-176.

⁹⁷⁷ Klein-Halevi, *Extremist*, 147-148.

⁹⁷⁸ “Andropov to TsK KPSS, 23/6/1973,” Morozov, *Dokumenty*, 176.

⁹⁷⁹ Klein-Halevi, *Extremist*, is an indispensable guide to the world of *détente* era Jewish radicals.

⁹⁸⁰ On exchanges as modernization strategy, see Sari Autio-Sarasma, “Stagnation or Not? The Brezhnev Leadership and East-West Interaction,” in Fainberg and Kalinovsky (ed.), *Stagnation*, 86-104.

networks, and by being able to credibly threaten damage to them in case of Soviet counter-attack.

Put simply, if in the 1950s Soviet authorities could relatively easily deter provincial Soviet Jews - for whom emigration was a distant dream and the KGB a concrete reality - from contacting rare Israeli visitors in small and easily surrounded train stations, things were much more difficult in the 1970s and 1980s. The refusenik movement was concentrated in the largest Soviet cities, where even the KGB's enormous resources did not allow it to surveil every foreigner at will.⁹⁸¹ Zionist activists were well-educated professionals with good understanding of how Western media operated and also had relatively little to lose from meeting with foreigners, having given up on their Soviet careers.⁹⁸² High profile visitors- most commonly American politicians,⁹⁸³ but also celebrities such as the Indian maestro Zubin Mehta,⁹⁸⁴ relished opportunities to demonstrate support for refuseniks. Celebrities who were hesitant to raise the issue while on Soviet soil faced quiet pressure to do so. In March 1975, for instance, the NCSJ appealed to the cast of the high-profile Soviet-American co-production *Blue Bird*, then in Leningrad, with the request that they publicly address the cases of two young imprisoned refuseniks.⁹⁸⁵ A decade later the star cast-member of *Blue Bird*, Jane Fonda, back in the

⁹⁸¹ Kalugin, *Spymaster*, 347.

⁹⁸² Sarah Fainberg, "Friends Abroad: how the Soviet Campaign for Soviet Jewry Influenced Activists in the Soviet Union," in Ro'i, *Movement*, 402-403.

⁹⁸³ See, for example, Alexander Lerner, *Change of Heart* (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 189-203), Harrison, *Passover Revisited*, 177, "Former Refusenik Recalls Kennedy's Helping Hand," accessed online at: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112264395/>.

⁹⁸⁴ Keis-Kuna, *Caged*, 225-228,

⁹⁸⁵ "Telegram from NCSJ to Jane Fonda, Tom Hayden, George Kukor [and others], 3/25/1975, NCSJ Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 2, Folder 18. On the film, see Tony Shaw, "Nightmare on

USSR on a peace tour, was the first foreigner to meet with recently released Prisoner of Zion Ida Nudel.⁹⁸⁶ While the KGB could sometimes prevent such meetings by detaining refuseniks or forcing them to go out of town during high profile foreign visits,⁹⁸⁷ on the rare occasions when such high profile personae were detained, reputational damages to the Soviet Union were surely greater than any possible benefit it gained in deterrence.⁹⁸⁸

Even travelers not protected by celebrity status had ways to deter the Soviets from punitive action. Most importantly, Zionist travelers (and their briefers) were surely familiar with the Soviet dissident tactic of demanding the Soviet state respect its own laws, and, unlike the former, had enough leverage to use it to their benefit.⁹⁸⁹ Thus, when the Canadian human rights lawyer Irving Cotler, going to a wedding in a Moscow suburb with the refusenik scientist Aleksandr Lerner, was detained for going into a closed area, he stumped his Soviet interrogators by pointing out his permission slip from Intourist and refusing to speak or sign any documents. After several hours, they had little choice but to bring him back to his hotel and instruct him to leave the country. Even before he landed

Nevsky Prospekt: *The Blue nevsky* as a Curious Instance of U.S.-Soviet Film Collaboration during the Cold War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 14, no.1 (2012),3-33.

⁹⁸⁶ “Jane Fonda Speaks on Behalf of Soviet Jews, *UPI* 3/15/1985. A clipping of a *Time Magazine* report on Fonda’s tour is found at the NCSJ Records, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 2, Folder 18.

⁹⁸⁷ “Spetsialnoe soobshchenie, 1/4/1978,” DGA SBU, f. 16, op.7, spr. 35, ark. 277-278.

⁹⁸⁸ Lerner, *Change of Heart*, 188-191, describes the KGB’s horror when it incidentally arrested the Congressman James Shoyer who was visiting his apartment, especially since this arrest was broadcast on American radio within 15 minutes. On a repeat visit, Shoyer thanked Lerner for helping boost his popularity at home.

⁹⁸⁹ The Soviet human rights activist Valerii Chalidze even prepared a memorandum for foreigners facing interrogation, modelled after equivalent documents prepared for domestic dissidents. Valerii Chalidze, *Inostranets v SSSR. Iurideicheskaia pamiatka* (Benson, VT: Chalidze Publications, 1980).

in London, the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs lodged an official complaint with Soviet authorities.⁹⁹⁰

Beyond such dramatic encounters, foreigners had a myriad of ways to confound Soviet authorities. To take an easy example, even if they knew that the person they were examining was a Zionist emissary, customs officers could hardly confiscate the cameras they carried (which were then gifted to refuseniks). Soviet regulations prohibited the distribution of religious items and anti-Soviet propaganda, but foreigners were allowed to bring these items for personal use. And how were customs officials to know which piece of luggage was Zionist contraband and which intended for personal use?⁹⁹¹ *Nativ* also could manipulate the subtleties of Soviet customs: since tourists coming Scandinavia on cruise ships enjoyed visa free travel, and faced much less stringent customs procedures than foreigners coming through other channels, it engaged Christian Zionists from Scandinavia to lease small tourist boats, sail up the Baltic shore, and off-load rucksacks full of Zionist literature at every stop.⁹⁹²

Intourist was naturally the site of many such clashes, with its guides as general rule pretending to ignore what tourists did in their free time, as long as they avoided arguments and made a show of attending sightseeing tours, recalled one frequent Zionist traveler.⁹⁹³ Even in the early 1980s, when Intourist attempted to clamp down on evasive tourists, all they needed to do was “invent some stomach illness or headache. Intourist

⁹⁹⁰ Aisen, *Count us in*, 149-151.

⁹⁹¹ Kedmi, *Milhamot*, 120.

⁹⁹² Eitan Sat, a *Nativ* officer charged with coordinating North American travelers, cited in Kosharovskii, *Evrei*, 4:89.

⁹⁹³ Interview with Sylvia Orenstein, 8/10/2014.

guides knew what was going on, but they were understanding.”⁹⁹⁴ During the 1980s, as assaults on refuseniks and emissaries intensified, Soviet Jewry movement organizers were applying behind-the-scenes pressure on Intourist’s foreign partners to complain about the negative effects such attacks were having on travel to the Soviet Union. In June 1986, NCSJ filed suit against Intourist’s American affiliate arguing consumer fraud, alleging that Intourist made false claims in its advertisement by promising that its clients would not be harassed in the Soviet Union.⁹⁹⁵

And here lay the rub: Zionist travelers could leverage not only nebulous concepts like global public opinion but could harm specific Soviet interests in ways that required Soviet elites to find ways to live with their presence on Soviet soil. For instance, while direct evidence for such a contention is lacking, it doesn’t take much imagination to realize that youth exchanges like the one Levitt went on would have run aground if Soviet authorities attempted to screen them for Jewish travelers- and thus deny many a Komsomol official and/or KGB asset an American junket.⁹⁹⁶ Inna Rubin-Akselrod, widow of the sinologist Vitalii Rubin, a leading refusenik activist, recalls that Western sinologists working on behalf of her husband convinced the World Congress of Oriental Studies to choose Mexico City over Moscow as a location for its 1976 meeting. This choice of venue gravely embarrassed Bobojon Ghafurov, the functionary in charge of

⁹⁹⁴ Sat, cited in Kosharovskii, *Evrei*, 4:90-91.

⁹⁹⁵ “Harassment of American Visitors Charged in Lawsuit against Soviet Travel Agency,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 6/27/1986. This lawsuit never went to court, maybe because by 1987/8, conditions changed dramatically.

⁹⁹⁶ On Soviet uses of international exchanges, see Sergei Zhuk, “Academic détente”: IREX files, Academic Reports, and American Adventures of Soviet Americanists during the Brezhnev era,” *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 54, no. 1/2 (2013), 297-328.

Soviet oriental studies. Ghafurov, as Masha Kirasirova shows,⁹⁹⁷ was a figure of some influence in Soviet foreign policy circles, and a hit to his prestige could plausibly have played a part in Rubin receiving permission to emigrate shortly afterwards.⁹⁹⁸

While these personalized issues must remain a matter of speculation, we are on more solid ground when examining the use Western activists made of international exchange systems to get inside Soviet borders. For instance, as the Soviet Union was lobbying the International Olympic Committee to host the Olympics, it could not deny Israeli athletes access to competitions in the Soviet Union, and the latter could use the opportunity to “distribute propaganda magazines, religious literature and religious artifacts.”⁹⁹⁹ On a far grander scale, when in 1977, four years after the Soviet Union joined the International Copyright Convention, and two years after the Helsinki accords, Soviet officials were negotiating with American publishers in an attempt to get them to join the inaugural Moscow Book Fair, the Americans, under pressure from American Jewish organizations, agreed to join only on the condition that Israeli publishers were

⁹⁹⁷ Masha Kirasirova, “Sons of Muslims in Moscow: Soviet Central Asian Mediators to the Foreign East, 1955-1962,” *Ab Imperio* 4 (2011), 106-132.

⁹⁹⁸ Inna Rubina-Aksel'rod, *Zhizn' kak zhizn'*, (Jerusalem: Self Published, 2006), 2, 218-220.

⁹⁹⁹ “Chebrikov [Vice-Chairman, KGB] to TsK KPSS, 13/4/1972,” cited in Morozov, *Dokumenty*, 135.

Incidentally, the possibility that Israeli athletes would distribute Zionist propaganda or, even worse that Soviet Jews would openly root for them probably stood behind the Soviet demand that its basketball powerhouse, CSKA Moscow, play all its games on neutral grounds- usually in Belgium. Thus, perhaps the most renowned moment in Israeli sports history- Maccabi's first win over the Soviet juggernaut (which took the previous four European cups), in the 1977 European Cup semi-finals, took place in the Belgian town of Virton. Irked by the defeat and the fact that Maccabi had numerous naturalized American players, the Soviet coach Alexander Gomelsky quipped “we lost to an American team that plays in Europe, and is located in Asia.”

invited too.¹⁰⁰⁰ In the Fair itself, The Israelis, in collaboration with friendly Westerners, staged a massive operation that distributed vast amounts of “Zionist propaganda” to hundreds of local Jews who swarmed their exhibits.¹⁰⁰¹

Professional exchanges were perhaps the most important forum in which Western activists could demonstrate their strength. Lawyers were one key group in this regard. Like Cotler, many Jewish North American lawyers were passionately committed to the refusenik cause, perhaps because it allowed them to resolve the tension between their universalistic commitment to human rights and their attachment to the Jewish nation.¹⁰⁰² Soviet Jewry movement lawyers offered their services to defend refuseniks, publicized their plight in the West, and incessantly badgered Soviet officials about the Jewish emigration problem.¹⁰⁰³ And if the Soviets had in mind to use visa regulations or other procedures to cut off the stream of such visitors, movement lawyers had powerful counter-measures in their disposal. When in the early 1980s, Soviet legal authorities, seeking to integrate their practices into international commercial law, negotiated with the American Bar Association the establishment of a formal exchange agreement, a considerable faction of the latter body vowed to resist any such agreement unless all

¹⁰⁰⁰ Kevin DiCamillo, “How a Book Fair forever Changed, US/Soviet Literary Relations,” *Publishing Perspectives*,” 8/27/2014, accessed online at: http://publishingperspectives.com/2014/08/how-a-book-fair-forever-changed-ussoviet-literary-relations/#.V1df6_krK70 on 5/24/2016.

¹⁰⁰¹ Aisen, *Count us in*, 163-164; Beckerman, *When they Come*, 428-43; Rosner, *Demamah*, 171-186. Jewish organizations and Israeli publishers kept participating the subsequent biennial book fairs in Moscow. Bartov, *Yarid*, is an account of the 1989 Israeli exhibit that drew hundreds of thousands of attendees.

¹⁰⁰² See, for instance, Alan Dershowitz, *Chutzpah* (New York: Touchstone, 1991), 209-250.

¹⁰⁰³ For a snapshot of the activities of Jewish-American lawyers visiting the Soviet Union, see the travel accounts by Baskin and Dash, as well as “Points on Soviet law and Arguing with Soviet officials,” Joel G. Ackerman, Collection, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 1, Folder 1.

American legal delegations to the Soviet Union contained a strong contingent of lawyers associated with the Soviet Jewry movement.¹⁰⁰⁴

Scientific, cultural, and technological exchanges were an even more important ingredient of networks connecting the Soviet Union to the outside world that the Soviet Jewry movement could leverage for its purposes. Some of the actions taken by exchange scholars were individualized. Thus, for instance, one French philosopher who repeatedly travelled to the Soviet Union under the aegis of the French Academy of Sciences exchange agreement with its Soviet counterpart, not only taught classes on Jewish tradition to refuseniks but also browbeat Soviet customs officers into letting her keep notes with information she received from the refuseniks, arguing they were part of her research project and thus protected by the exchange agreement.¹⁰⁰⁵ Collective actions were even more powerful: In 1980, an organization devoted to the release of Anatolii Shcharanskii and dissident physicists Andrei Sakharov and Yuri Orlov was able to get 8,000 scientists to cease visits and other forms of cooperation with the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁰⁶

As was often the case, visits to the Soviet Union proved an even more powerful tool of the Soviet Jewry movement than travel boycotts. We have already noted above the crucial contribution of scientific networks in fostering aid to the refuseniks. At times, scientists' visits could be transformed into both powerful public relations coups for the

¹⁰⁰⁴ "Michael A. Jacobs, Memorandum: ABA/ASL AGREEMENT: meeting with Weyman Lundquist March 25, 1986," Joel G. Ackerman Collection, Soviet Jewry Movement Archives, Box 1, Folder 6.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Rosner, *Demamah*, 165.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Monica Friedlander, "Morris Pripstein Wins Human Rights Award for Effort to Help Soviet Dissidents, 7/10/1998." Accessed online, at: <http://www.lbl.gov/Science-Articles/Archive/pripstein-sakharov.html> on May 3rd, 2012

Soviet Jewry movement, and subtle demonstrations of the price Soviet authorities would pay if they decided to deal decisively with the problem. Thus, in April 1974, Soviet authorities had to confront a mass international outpouring of support for the organizers of an international session of the Moscow Scientific Seminar- the most famous of refusenik semi-regular gatherings in the 1970s. Mark Azbel' and Aleskandr Voronel', the seminar's organizers, used a lacuna in Soviet law - the lack of any ban on independently organizing international scientific meetings - to send invitations to hundreds of foreign scientists, many of whom (including 8 Nobel Prize winners) gladly accepted. Faced with the prospect of a massive Zionist gathering on Soviet soil, Soviet authorities refused visas to foreign attendees, arrested the seminar organizers, and scattered the few foreign scientists present in Moscow for other purposes who attempted to attend it. However, Voronel', Azbel', and many other seminar attendees were allowed to emigrate in the next 2 years.¹⁰⁰⁷

In an even more powerful action, the 1984 Congress Federation of European Biochemical Societies in Moscow was a Zionist tour de force. Again, the Soviets could not deny the Israeli delegation, headed by biochemist and ex-President Ephraim Katzir, permission to attend the Congress. They and many other participants used the Congress to smuggle large amounts of Zionist materials into the Soviet Union. Some scientists included dedications to refusenik scientists on their slides, while others conducted side-seminars with Moscow refuseniks.¹⁰⁰⁸ The Soviets retaliated by deporting a small number

¹⁰⁰⁷ Azbel, *Refusenik*, 330-350. "Andropov to TsK KPSS, 18/4/1974," in Morozov, *Dokumenty*, 190-191.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Rosner, *Demamah*, 160-162.

of participants, and briefly detaining Katzir and his wife during a visit to Leningrad— a detention Soviet authorities were then forced to disavow when it became international news.¹⁰⁰⁹ And what better epitaph could there be for the Soviet effort to deter the “Zionist peddlers”

Conclusion

Somewhere in the 1990s, Yasha Kazakov, now known as Ya'kov Kedmi and serving as head of *Nativ* since 1992, went on an official trip to Moscow. There, he met Filipp Bobkov, the now retired chief of the defunct Fifth Department, for a professional summit of sorts. According to Kedmi, this was Bobkov's message to *Nativ*: “you beat us, you broke us. Using the West, you managed to keep the refusenik movement strong, and then used that movement to make us lose the Soviet Jews.”¹⁰¹⁰

Whether one can trust this second-hand account, or whether this was an attempt at flattery, or perhaps post-Soviet depression on Bobkov's part, this declaration rings far too strong. Despite the Soviet Jewry Movement's best efforts, the Soviet Union did not open

¹⁰⁰⁹ “Russians said to seize Ex-President of Israel,” *New York Times*, 7/2/1984; “Katzir Describes Arrest, Questioning by KGB in Leningrad,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 7/5/1984.

¹⁰¹⁰ Kedmi, *Milhamot*, 296.

its gates until 1989. Prominent Zionists were as likely to be imprisoned and sent to the Far East as released and allowed to immigrate to the Middle East until *perestroika* began in earnest, and Shcharanskii remained in prison for six long years after 8,000 scientists vowed to boycott the Soviet Union until he was released.

And still, the success the international Soviet Jewry Movement enjoyed in forcing the Soviets to *de-facto* tolerate the existence of a Jewish religious-nationalist community on Soviet soil was evidence of the extent to which growing integration with the outside world challenged the strategic assumptions of the Soviet state and its coercive agencies. The latter found themselves constrained by growing Soviet dependence on the economic, reputational, and scientific-technological benefits of international exchanges- and the serious threat to the welfare of the Soviet state that massive coercive actions against foreign visitors would have represented. Thus, even as it continued to operate on the basis of a deeply ingrained institutional paranoia, the Soviet state, and especially its sword and shield, the KGB, consistently failed to fully operationalize it. This partial withdrawal of the Soviet absolute sovereignty claims allowed a social space for the emergence and survival of a nationalist Jewish community in the Soviet Union- and the flourishing of the various social ecologies and non-conformist movements we covered in the preceding 2 chapters. As long as the underpinnings of Soviet power remained intact, these subcultures were effectively kept to the margins of Soviet life. But when the foundations of Soviet power were knocked out under *glasnost*, the full import of this gradual withdrawal was clear for all to see.

Conclusion

Let us imagine a visitor to Moscow, arriving somewhere around 1985 – a certain Mister T. perhaps. If Mister T. had visited Moscow before, perhaps 10 or 20 years prior, he would find that very little had changed. Intourist hotels, now built by Finns, French or Americans, are better than they used to be, but paint is already peeling, faucets are broken, toilet paper comes at a premium, and even at Intourist restaurants, food supplies can be spotty. Service is as rude and inefficient as ever, but one gets what one wants in the end, possibly after some money changes hands. During his sight-seeing tours, Mr. T.'s Intourist guide, who perhaps is preparing for a competition for the best *referat* on the 70th Anniversary of the October Revolution,¹⁰¹¹ is as full of facts and figures on the momentous achievements of Soviet power as ever.

In his hotel lobby, Mr. T. might find, with some annoyance, posters warning locals about foreigners carrying Bibles in one hand and a dagger in another.¹⁰¹² And yet, the strange men badgering him for jeans are as active as ever, as are girls offering him adventure for a night. If Mr. T. is on a group tour he might observe guides pretending not to notice that some members of his group are deliberately absent from most excursions –

¹⁰¹¹ “Polozhenie o trer'em vsesouiznom konkurse gidov-perevodchikov sistemy goskominturista SSSR na luchii referat posviashchennyi k 70-letiu Velikoi Oktiabrskoi Revoliutsii, 7/1/1986,” GARF f. 9612, op.3, d. 1856, l.18.

¹⁰¹² Lein, *Zabyt' nelzia*, 239.

and maybe followed around by furtive men in dark suits. If Mr. T. is there to make contact with dissidents or co-religionists, he will find the experience harrowing and the besuited men menacing, but probably not so menacing as to abort his mission. Like everything else in the late Soviet Union, the complex ecology woven around the hundreds of thousands of “Mister T.s” who visit the USSR yearly seems to be in a state of inefficient, but stable, equilibrium.

And then, it all dissolved into air. For Intourist, the early days of *perestroika* seemed like glimpses of a golden era, as it hosted record-breaking numbers of tourists,¹⁰¹³ was allowed, for the first time, to form joint ventures with foreign firms,¹⁰¹⁴ and was bombarded by ambitious, sometimes fantastic,¹⁰¹⁵ pitches for investment projects from foreign businessmen eager to colonize the virgin Soviet market. Between 1988 and 1990, Intourist went through a reorganization in the spirit of “full cost-accounting, self-financing and hard currency profitability.”¹⁰¹⁶ The Joint Stock Firm Intourist yet again emerged as a separate entity, owned by Goskominturist (the latest incarnation of the central Intourist bureaucracy), and a number of commercial operations were set up on the basis of functional and territorial Intourist units (for example, Intourist-Moscow,

¹⁰¹³ Over 2.7 million tourists visited the Soviet Union in 1989. (*Innostrannyi turizm*, 9).

¹⁰¹⁴ In 1987, for instance, Intourist and *Finnair* formed the first joint company operating on Soviet soil, INFA. The company refurbished Intourist’s Savoy hotel, aiming to make it a 5 star location. Dan Fisher, “Decadence Returns to the Hotel Savoy in the Land of Lenin,” *Los Angeles Times*, 9/11/1989.

¹⁰¹⁵ For instance, in 1990, one Australian businessman wrote Intourist with the proposal to create a tourism and free trade zone in Crimea, with an eye to replace Hong-Kong as central hub of world commerce before the British 1997 hand-off of the colony to the Chinese, while a would be Russian *biznesman* proposed to create a giant ecological tourism zone in Siberia. (GARF, f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 837, ll. 77-96, 153-157. Also see: “Soviets ask Trump to Build Luxury Hotels,” *Houston Chronicle* 7/7/1987.

¹⁰¹⁶ “O kompanii, 1983-1992,” http://www.intourist-vladivostok.ru/?action=info_view&name=about_company&sub_name=history8. Accessed online 6/1/2016.

Intourist-Leningrad, Intourist-Transport, and Intourist-Servis). Between this reorganization and infusion of foreign capital and knowledge, Intourist was set to conclude its integration into global markets, as (in theory) a flexible entity, combining a centralized infrastructure (for instance, Intourist's IT systems) and decentralized operations of its sub-units.¹⁰¹⁷

Unfortunately, things did not turn out this way at all. Most fundamentally, outside large cities, Intourist hotels and departments, faced with the collapse of Soviet supply networks, could barely feed their clients, let alone prepare for a hypothetical tourist surge.¹⁰¹⁸ By 1989/90, in some areas of the Soviet Union, say, Northern Ossetia, the only guests in Intourist hotels were journalists and diplomats attempting to broker shaky cease fires.¹⁰¹⁹ Republican Foreign Tourism Administrations, long frustrated by the center's practice of impounding all their hard currency proceeds, rebelled against the center in 1988/9,¹⁰²⁰ and by 1991, had mostly exited the scene. (In Ukraine, for instance, the question whether Intourist existed or not in 1992 was a matter of some debate).¹⁰²¹

¹⁰¹⁷ Unfortunately, the archives of the central Intourist system for this period don't contain much useful information. This and the following paragraph is based on RSFSR Foreign Tourism Administration archives, and media reports cited below.

¹⁰¹⁸ See, for instance, "Iu. A. Dmitriev, [Vladimir Oblispolkom] to Sovmin RSFSR, 06/12/1990," GARF f. A-10004, op. 1, d. 836, ll. 9-11.

¹⁰¹⁹ Personal communication, Ambassador Richard Norland, Tbilisi, December 2012. On travel in the soon to be former Soviet Union in 1990/199, see Von Bremzen, *Art of Soviet Cooking*, ch. 8.

¹⁰²⁰ "I. Kalin [Chairman, Moldavian Sovmin], to V.M Kamentsev [International Economic Cooperation Committee, Sovmin USSR], 10/12/1988," GARF f. A-10004, op.1, d. 781, ll. 181-182.

¹⁰²¹ Thus, the journalist Henry Kamm, ("In Ukraine, Bad Old Ways," *New York Times* 4/5/1992) complained that with Intourist's "dissolution" in Ukraine, both travelers and employees were defenseless against chaos. In response, Alexey Mesiatsev, the Deputy Director of Intourist in New York angrily wrote that Intourist *did* exist and provided services all over the CIS. To which Kamm replied these would be welcome news to Intourist employees who "told the company went the way of the Soviet Union," "Intourist Lives," *New York Times*, 5/24/1992.

In the Russian republic (RSFSR) itself, confusion reigned. The Intourist system became driven by a complex (and unfortunately ill-documented) struggle that, roughly speaking, pitted the RSFR Foreign Tourism Administration (now subordinated to Yeltsin's Russian government) and cooperatives organized by Intourist staff against the central all-Union *apparat*, now entrenched in Intourist's commercial structures, backed by hotel managers and local authorities. Based on documentation produced by the RSFSR Main Administration, the only extant archival evidence of this struggle, the former envisioned the new Intourist system as a network of worker-owned enterprises provided with informational and transport infrastructure by a state-owned Intourist-like entity, while the latter sought to municipalize and/or privatize (or, as the Russians say, *prikhvatat'*) Intourist's considerable assets.¹⁰²² In 1992, Intourist split into 2 bodies, each laying claim to the brand, and holding various bits of its erstwhile empire.¹⁰²³ Meanwhile, cities seized (and often sold for pittances or transferred to cronies) Intourist's real-estate holdings.¹⁰²⁴ Tourism and state proceeds from it collapsed, due to both the general economic crisis and the dissolution of Intourist's infrastructure, marketing, and network of international partners.¹⁰²⁵ Thousands of small, under-capitalized and often fraudulent

¹⁰²² "B.N Temnikov to Sovmin RSFSR, 3/12/1990," GARF A-10004, f. 1, d. 806, l. ll.1-4. "B.N Temnikov and I.Zapalskii [Deputy Minister of Economics RSFSR] to Sovmin RSFSR, 20/8/1991," GARF, f. A-10004, op.1, d. 837, ll. 1-4, "Obrashchenie kolektiva VAO Inturist k pervomu zamestiteliu Prem'er Ministru Rossiiskoi Federatsii E.T Gaidaru, [N/D, April 1992], GARF, f.A-10004, op. 1, d. 850, ll. 81-82.

¹⁰²³ "Imushchestvo Goskominturista eshche ne dodelili," *Kommersant'*, 01/20/1992.

¹⁰²⁴ Ibid; Ivan Golunov, "Imperskie ambitsii," *Forbes.ru*, 11/03/2005, accessed online at <http://www.forbes.ru/forbes/issue/2005-11/18748-imperskie-ambitsii> on 6/2/2016.

¹⁰²⁵ According to *Izvestiia*, by early 1993, income from tourism was at less than 10% of its 1989 level, with accurate figures impossible to come by due to the collapse of Intourist's information and accounting systems. "Raspad monopolii vyzval krizis v biznese," *Izvestiia*, 3/12/1992.

tour firms sold a dizzying array of services to the shrinking market, often at fire-sale prices, with some of their members calling on the government to step in and recreate Intourist, as “wild businesses” were destroying the industry.¹⁰²⁶ By the mid-1990s, the former *apparat* faction, having won the battle for the brand name but having lost nearly all of Intourist’s hotels and other assets in the process, found a home in the *Sistema* holding company owned by billionaire Vladimir Evtushenkov.¹⁰²⁷ In the meantime, foreign tourism in Russia in 2015 barely exceeded its 1989 numbers.¹⁰²⁸

The other elements of foreign experience of the Soviet Union covered in this dissertation also either dissolved or were transformed beyond recognition.

Unsurprisingly, Intourist’s propaganda functions gave up quickly and without much resistance. After the 1987 celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the October Revolution, 1988 saw a rapid shift, as Intourist celebrated 1,000 years of Christianity in Russia.¹⁰²⁹ In

¹⁰²⁶ “N.V. Pozhidaev [Manager, SP Georgii Tour Firm] to B.N. Temnikov, 1/10/1991,” GARF f.A-10004, op. 1, d. 850, ll.16-18. See also “V tiskakh dikogo biznesa,” *Trud*, 8/19/1991; “Firmy predpochitaiut voinu tsen original’nosti,” *Izvestiia*, 3/4/1993; Celestine Bohlen, “Tourism Transformed,” *New York Times*, 3/12/1992.

¹⁰²⁷ In 2014, Intourist’s gross sales, amounted to \$71 million- the vast majority of which came from outgoing tourism. “Sistema JSFC, Annual Report, 2014,” accessed online at: http://www.sistema.com/fileadmin/user_upload/annual_reports/annual_report.pdf. Since, conditions deteriorated further, and Evtushenkov was forced to concede that for now, *Sistema* considers Intourist a sunk cost. “Intourist ne produetsia,” *Hotelier.pro* 9/7/2015, accessed online at: <http://hotelier.pro/news/item/441-sistema/441-sistema> . Both accessed on 6/1/2016.

¹⁰²⁸ Official Russian statistics registered 20 million tourist entries in 2015. However, 15 million of these were citizens of former Soviet republics - the vast majority of whom were migrant laborers . Of the remaining 5 million tourist entries from non-former republics, about 3 million are either from countries in which a significant proportion of travel is for purposes of commerce or labor (Poland and China) or from countries with significant former Soviet populations (Germany and Israel) - which would put “pure” tourist travel at about 2 million- just about equivalent to 1989. (For official statistics see <http://www.russiatourism.ru/contents/statistika/statisticheskie-pokazатели-vzaimnykh-poezdok-grazhdan-rossiyskoy-federatsii-i-grazhdan-inostrannykh-gosudarstv/>).

¹⁰²⁹ M. Chernov, *K tysiachelitiiu vvedeniia khristianstva na Rusi* (Moscow: Goskominturist, 2008).

the next 2 years, guide training was stripped of its ideological components, Intourist guides became willing to speak about difficult topics, and were allowed to maintain personal relationships with their clients - and even visit them abroad.¹⁰³⁰ For many Intourist guides, the crumbling of the system offered new opportunities, first by forming cooperatives providing services to Intourist, and then as independent tour operators, especially for the rapidly expanding Russian outgoing tourism market.¹⁰³¹ For many other tour guides, however, the 1990s brought loss of job security, prestige, and *blat*, as well as the pains of deprofessionalization.¹⁰³² Things were no doubt even more dire for Intourist doormen, waiters, and *dezhurnye*, who lost their uniquely privileged positions vis-à-vis foreigners and their consumer goods.

If, as I have argued, the *demimonde* registered a symbolic victory over Soviet power, many of its practitioners discovered, to their misfortune, the extent to which their business was entangled with that power. The heyday of the foreign currency speculator ended quickly, as, starting in 1988, the Soviet state gradually loosened its exchange regime, thus sharply constraining the arbitrage opportunities they enjoyed.¹⁰³³ Russian currency markets were, of course, nowhere near “normal” even after the shock therapy of

¹⁰³⁰ Turner, *Intourist Guide*; Barry Newman, “Intourist Guides at Site where 4,143 Polish Officers Died now Waffle about Blame,” *Wall Street Journal*, 8/10/1989; Frank Wright, “Intourist Guides take along a Little Glasnost for Foreigners,” *Star Tribune*, 11/29/1987; Personal Communication with Professor Anna Krylova, November 2015, Philadelphia, PA.

¹⁰³¹ “Shakurov, “S prikhodom Rossii.”

¹⁰³² “Chem otlichaetsia Rossiiskii gid perevodchik ot Sovetskogo,” *Gorod 812*, 02/28/2013. Accessed online at: <http://www.online812.ru/2013/02/28/005/> on 4/5/2015.

¹⁰³³ “‘Dereviannye’ rubli tozhe den’gi,” *Izvestiia*, 6/8/1991; Corinne Krupp and Susan J. Linz, “Shock Therapy and the Market for Foreign Currency in Russia: Whither Currency Convertibility?” *Comparative Economic Studies* 39, no. 1 (1997), 43-79.

of the early 1990s. The Russian government still maintained multiple currency regimes that provided immense opportunities for well-connected speculators. Hyper-inflation, massive counter-fitting, and the wealth and prestige that came to be associated with those holding *baksy* and *kapusta* (U.S dollars), kept Russian attitudes to foreign currency, legally, economically and culturally peculiar. Still, business largely moved from the streets to currency exchange stalls and hastily established banks, often connected to emerging business, criminal and government networks.¹⁰³⁴ Lucky (and well-connected) currency speculators moved into this growing sector, sometimes in route to gathering dumbfounding riches, while less lucky ones had to discover other ways to make ends meet.¹⁰³⁵

Fartsovshchiki also did not fare well under the new order. While an impressive post-Soviet mythology celebrates their escapades,¹⁰³⁶ as a group they enjoyed far less post-Soviet success than one would have expected based on their entrepreneurial élan. Their place as a key component of urban Russian supply chains was rapidly lost to the vast armies of “shuttlers” [*chelnoviki*] - often desperately poor women who traveled back and forth between Russia and abroad, bringing back cheap consumer goods at quantities

¹⁰³⁴ Ibid and Alaina Lemon, “Your Eyes are Green like Dollars: Counterfeit Cash, National Substance and Currency Apartheid in 1990s Russia,” *Cultural Anthropology* 13, no. 1 (1998), 22-55.

¹⁰³⁵ See, for example, the case of Andrei Mel’nicenko, who started his career in the late 1980s and early 1990s as currency speculator, then opened a network of currency exchange spots, then a bank, and is now one of the 10 richest men in Russia. David Hoffman, *The Oligarchs: Power and Wealth in the New Russia* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), 228-229.

¹⁰³⁶ For instance, the hit TV Show *Fartsa* aiming to celebrate the adventures of a group of black marketeers from the late 1950s to the 1980s, had been running on Channel One since 2015.

fartsovshchiki could scarcely dream of.¹⁰³⁷ In the Russian business world, access to state assets and Party, state and Komsomol networks counted for quite a bit more than access to Intourist doormen,¹⁰³⁸ meaning that relatively few *fartsovshchiki* could use their business acumen for enrichment. Thus, in a comprehensive study of erstwhile Leningrad *fartsovshchiki*, a Russian journalist found that only a handful of people detained in St. Petersburg in the 1980s for badgering foreigners had prominent post-Soviet careers and about 50% had no assets whatsoever registered to their names (meaning that they were either dead, emigrants, or totally impoverished).¹⁰³⁹

A similar territorial transformation occurred in the sex work field. “Domestic” sex work involving foreigners, while it never disappeared,¹⁰⁴⁰ became a mere speck compared to the vast wave of international trafficking of women from the former Soviet space, fed by poverty and despair, but also, perhaps, by myths about the luxurious lives of the *interdevochki* and Russian women’s desire for Western men rooted in late Soviet myths.¹⁰⁴¹

¹⁰³⁷ Irina Mukhina, *Women and the Birth of Russian Capitalism: A History of the Shuttle Trade* (DeKalb, IL: NIU Press, 2015).

¹⁰³⁸ Hoffman, *Oligarchs*. Stephen K. Solnik, *Stealing the State: Control and Collapse in Soviet Institutions* (Cambridge: MA, University of Harvard Press, 1998).

¹⁰³⁹ Vyshenkov, “kak vyerli.”

¹⁰⁴⁰ See Mark Ames and Matt Taibbi, *The Exile: Sex Drugs and Libel in New Russia* (New York: Grove Press, 2000), for many stomach-churning examples.

¹⁰⁴¹ See, for example, Yulia V. Tverdova, “Human Trafficking in Russia and other post-Soviet States,” *Human Rights Review* 12, no. 3 (2010), 329-344. In a telling example, during the perestroika years Soviet firms inviting women to meet the (Western) “love of their lives” were receiving positive coverage in the *New York Times*. Ann Cooper, “Matchmaker’s Dream: From Russia with Love,” *New York Times* 6/26/1990.

When it came to encounters between foreigners and the KGB, outcomes are somewhat murkier. Based on materials from Lithuanian archives, the KGB kept its surveillance system intact to the last possible moment – tracking both the foreign businessmen who scoured the republic for business opportunities, and Lithuanian North Americans whom the KGB (rightly) suspected were assisting nationalist forces.¹⁰⁴² While evidence on this issue is lacking, there can be very little doubt that vast elements of the KGB’s surveillance, agent, and reserve officer networks (which now included an obscure colonel laboring as vice-rector of international affairs at LGU) remained intact.¹⁰⁴³

Yet, things changed. Bible smuggling became unnecessary, as the Soviet authorities allowed American evangelicals to legally deliver millions of Bibles.¹⁰⁴⁴ The entirety of the clandestine edifice built by *Nativ* was rendered obsolete, as the Israeli embassy reopened and American visitors (including Leon Uris himself) could legally bring copies of *Exodus* into the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁴⁵ In the next few years, nearly 2 million Soviet Jews emigrated, and a trickle of American rabbis and Chabad emissaries traveled in the opposite direction to establish an institutional Jewish community that to this day

¹⁰⁴² “Agenturnoe soobshchenie, Agent Adrean, 8/18/1989,” LYA, f. K-1, ap. 46, b. 2145, ll. 214-215; “Plan raboty I otdela po linii politicheskoi razvedki na 1991 god [draft version, December 1990], LYA, K-18, ap. 1, b. 491, ll. 57-59.

¹⁰⁴³ Karen Dawasha, *Putin’s Cleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013), 13-104; Andrei Soldatov and Irina Borogan, *The New Nobility: the Restoration of Russia’s Security State and the Enduring Legacy of the KGB* (New York: Public Affairs, 2010), 3-49.

¹⁰⁴⁴ John Dart, “Soviets Accept Offer of Scriptures from 2 ‘Bible-Smuggling’ Groups,” *Los Angeles Times*, 12/17/1988.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Harrison, *Passover Revisited*, 143.

enjoys very close relations to the Russian government.¹⁰⁴⁶ Finally, in a moment that perhaps best encapsulated the surrender to global forces, by early 1992, tourists could get a guided tour of the KGB headquarters - for \$35.¹⁰⁴⁷

So, one might reasonably inquire, if our story ends in the total defeat of the ultimate guardian of the socialist order by the all-mighty dollar and the “golden hordes” of international travelers, is this dissertation but another neo-liberal parable about the world becoming “flat,” and humanity surrendering to the “golden fetters” of democratic, transnational capitalism?¹⁰⁴⁸ On some level, the stories told in this dissertation are consistent with this narrative. Beginning in the late 1950s, the Soviet institutions surveyed here - Intourist, in both its propagandistic and commercial guises, the social-disciplinarians of the *Komsomol*, official media, and even the KGB – were all forced to make a series of compromises with forces stemming from the Soviet opening up to the outside world: increased dependence on foreign capital and technology, quiet acceptance of the impossibility of selling the Soviet way of life to foreigners, and increasing tolerance for unsanctioned commercial and, to a lesser extent, political, interactions with foreigners. The new post-Stalin order these compromises shaped was contradictory, reactive, and straddled a profound chasm between the ethos of Soviet institutions and the illicit practices they tolerated and, at times, engaged in. Seen from this vantage point,

¹⁰⁴⁶ Cnaan Lipshitz, “Why Russian Chief Rabbi Stands by Vladimir Putin,” *Forward*, 6/5/2015. Accessed online at: <http://forward.com/news/breaking-news/309514/russian-chief-rabbi-berel-lazar-stands-by-vladimir-putin/> on 5/31/2016.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Larry Rickman, “Spy Trap Now a Tourist Trap,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1/29/1992.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Short History of the 21st Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux), 2006, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

such compromises, by no means limited to foreigners and their Soviet interlocutors, hollowed out the Soviet order, and made its dissolution seem, using Yurchak's language "completely unsusprising" when the last barriers to the cultural and economic forces of Westernization were inadvertently removed under Gorbachev.

However, *Porous Empire* tells another, more complex (and, if one is so inclined, darker) story. Soviet institutions were no mere bystanders to the USSR's move from "isolation to globalization," from late-Stalinist Soviet naïve patriotism to late Soviet infatuation with the "True West."¹⁰⁴⁹ Rather, they actively shaped the terms under which this shift unfolded. As this dissertation amply demonstrated, attitudes inherited from the Stalinist period: a neo-mercantilist ethic regarding foreign trade, a deep commitment to moral purity and social discipline, profound suspicion of the outside world, and refusal to bow down to foreign judgments of Soviet reality, still shaped Soviet attitudes towards engagement with the outside world well into the 1980s.

Despite the contradictions that the clash between these attitudes and the realities of the post-Stalin period engendered, the institutional resistance of the Soviet state to the demands of this order helped shape the course of late Soviet and post-Soviet history. In the late Soviet period, the structures of the planned economy constrained the choices of even the most "global" of Soviet institutions, Intourist. Soviet tour guides' unflinching commitment to the official line vexed and amused their Western charges but also served

¹⁰⁴⁹ Stephen Lovell, *The Shadow of War: Russia and the USSR, 1941 to the Present* (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 287-314.

as a reminder of the seemingly unbreakable solidity of the Soviet state. The demimonde was an irrepressible social institution that embarrassed Soviet authorities and fed Soviet urban obsession with jeans and rock-n'roll – but it was also a marginal sub-culture belonging to which carried significant risk and social stigmas. Foreign travel provided force multipliers for small networks and communities of dissent, but effective repression prevented the transnational institutional building that helped forge liberal pressure groups that shaped transitions from authoritarianism to democracy elsewhere: the vast complex of Catholic and civil society institutions, academic communities, trade union activists, all able to gain easy access both to foreigners at home and to travel abroad which emerged in, say, late socialist Poland or late Francoist Spain was quite inconceivable in the USSR.¹⁰⁵⁰

The late Soviet opening up to the outside world is therefore best understood as a case of selective Westernization, or what anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing memorably termed friction: “the grip of encounter” between local cultures and global forces that reshapes non-Western localities but also helps forge new local, and often anti-Western, communities and identities.¹⁰⁵¹ From this vantage point, the late Soviet period saw not the erosion but the reconfiguration of Soviet identities, as Soviet elites (as well as a significant majority of the Soviet body politic) came to embrace some elements of

¹⁰⁵⁰ For Spain, see, Pick, *Tourism and Dictatorship*. For Poland, see Stewart Shields, “Global Restructuring and the Polish State: Transition, Transformation or Transnationalization?” *Review of International Political Economy* 11, no.1 (2004), 131-154 and Anthony Kemp-Walsh, *Poland under Communism: A Cold War History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), esp. 172-268.

¹⁰⁵¹ Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *Friction: an Ethnography of Global Connection* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 6.

Western culture, from jeans to rock ‘n roll to European high culture, while maintaining fidelity to a highly adversarial view of relations between the Soviet Union and the West.

This perspective on late Soviet society has the crucial benefit of allowing us to historicize contemporary Russian political culture. Following Gorbachev’s brief attempt to resolve the contradictions between Soviet institutional attitudes and global structures by means of unabashed internationalism and a view of the Soviet Union as an integral part of the West,¹⁰⁵² and the near dissolution of Russian institutions in the 1990s, official late Soviet views regarding relations between Russia and the West are still woven into the fabric of the newly reconstituted Russian state. Here, evidence from the last several years is overwhelming that the current Russian regime is both heavily influenced by suspicions of the outside world and is displaying an impressive measure of what political scientists term “authoritarian learning”- applying lessons from the failures of other authoritarian regimes- in regards to the ideological overreaches, contradictions, and inefficiencies that made Soviet responses to the global era brittle, unsatisfying, and in the end, self-defeating.¹⁰⁵³

The successful authoritarian learning of the Russian authorities is most evident in the two fields where Soviet responses to the outside world were weakest: economics and cultural consumption. As political scientist Anni Kangas shows, despite its recent flirtation with autarkic rhetoric, Putin’s regime successfully combined a deep

¹⁰⁵² English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*.

¹⁰⁵³ Steven Heydenmann and Reinoud Leenders, “Authoritarian Learning and Authoritarian Resilience: Regime Responses to the ‘Arab Awakening’,” *Globalizations* 8, no. 5(2011), 647-653.

commitment to economic nationalism with neoliberal reform by recasting the latter as the necessary foundation of state power in the modern age.¹⁰⁵⁴ Similarly, Russian authorities were, until very recently¹⁰⁵⁵, generally uninterested in its citizens' cultural consumption, reading habits, or travel patterns – thus resolutely taking such things out of the political arena.

On the other hand, the Russian state, famously manned by many graduates of the KGB, has maintained an ideological commitment to Soviet era state-paranoid views of the global age, ideological commitments that are increasingly becoming the foundation of state action. Thus, as we have seen in Chapter Four, KGB-derived Russian elites resolutely considered the collapse of the Soviet Union via the prism of Soviet state paranoia. As Julie Fedor demonstrates, from the very dawn of the post-Soviet era, such readings of the past made the FSB view itself as the guardian of the purity and integrity of the Russian nation, leading charges against “sects” and now, increasingly, queer people, as vectors of foreign-derived ideological pollution.¹⁰⁵⁶ Since the post-2012 elections, Russian elites have repeatedly connected domestic opposition with Western plans to destabilize Russia, moved to restrict Western NGOs, brand civil society institutions in Russia as “Foreign Agents,”¹⁰⁵⁷ and unsubtly connected effeminacy and

¹⁰⁵⁴ Anni Kangas, “Market Civilization Meets Economic Nationalism: the Discourse of Nation in Russia's Modernization,” *Nations and Nationalism* 19, no. 3(2008), 572-591.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Jessica Chesmer, “Russian Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky: the U.S Government is using Netflix for Mind Control,” *Washington Times*, 6/23/2016.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Fedor, *Cult of State Security*, 160-182.

¹⁰⁵⁷ “Russia Censures Memorial Rights Group as Foreign Agent,” *BBC World Service*, 11/9/2015.

privilege associated with the “creative class” - all rhetorical ploys familiar (*mutatis mutandis*) to readers of this dissertation.

As was the case in the Soviet Union, such rhetoric is often accompanied by action. In recent years, a number of scholars, sometimes at the instigation of state-owned television, conducted *profilaktika* by compiling “stop-lists” of enemies of Russia.¹⁰⁵⁸ Anecdotal reports by tour guides indicate that in a manner unprecedented even in Soviet times, American tourists are facing at least some level of street harassment from locals unhappy about Russian-American relations.¹⁰⁵⁹

Finally, as in the wake of the Ukrainian conflicts, terms like “political technology,” “hybrid warfare” and “Putin’s army of trolls” became buzzwords of global discourse on Russia and the West.¹⁰⁶⁰ Russian challenges to the Western-dominated global order and the central role of propaganda in providing backing to these challenges have yet again moved to the forefront of global politics.¹⁰⁶¹ And here, yet again, late Soviet practices prove rather illuminating. Seen from the early 21st century, the robotic utterances of Soviet tour guides that so often baffled and amused contemporaries seem

¹⁰⁵⁸ “Nizhegorodskii universitet uvolil amerikanskogo sotrudnika posle telesiuzheta,” *Kommersant*, 06/30/2015. I thank Chris Muenzen for sharing a similar experience with me.

¹⁰⁵⁹ “Inturisty zhalutsia na Moskvichei,” *Mk.ru*, 5/11/2016. Accessed online at, <http://www.mk.ru/moscow/2016/05/11/inturisty-zhaluyutsya-na-moskvichey-plyuyutsya-grubyat-krichat-yanki-gou-khoum.html> on 6/1/2016.

¹⁰⁶⁰ “Saceur: Allies Must Prepare for Russia’s “Hybrid Warfare,” *Stars and Stripes*, 9/4/2014 (accessed via: <http://www.stripes.com/news/saceur-allies-must-prepare-for-russia-hybrid-war-1.301464>, on 12/4/2014; Max Seddon, “Documents Show How Putin’s Army of Trolls Hit America,” *Buzzfeed*, 2/6/2014 (accessed via: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/maxseddon/documents-show-how-russias-troll-army-hit-america> on 12/4/2014.) Peter Pomerantsev, “The Kremlin’s Information War,” *Journal of Democracy* 26, no.4(2016), 40-50.

¹⁰⁶¹ Stephen Kotkin, “Russia’s Perpetual Geopolitics,” *Foreign Affairs*, 96, no.3 (2016), 2-9.

less and less like the last gasps of a dying ideology and more like a reminder of Russia's seemingly unlimited capacity to generate epistemological defiance of the West.

While we would be foolhardy to propose that any single manifestation of illiberalism or hostility to the West is a product of irreducible Soviet (or even worse, primordial Russian) xenophobia, taken together they suggest that historiographical narratives of the late Soviet period are due for an update taking account of the realities of Putin's Russia. Even as the Soviet opening up to the world promoted Westernization and undermined some of the ideological foundations of Soviet power, it also generated, within the bowels of Soviet institutions, a profound and honestly-held commitment to authoritarianism and social discipline as instruments of geopolitical resistance. This ambiguous response to the Soviet opening up to the world remains an underexplored aspect of the late Soviet experience – and the historical profession would do well to scour the period not only for harbingers of Soviet collapse, but also for the mental and institutional factors that helped so many Soviet institutional and mental habits to survive for so long after 199

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