SOVIET CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST:
A CASE STUDY OF USSR'S CULTURAL RELATIONS
WITH EGYPT AND SYRIA, 1955 - 1971

THESIS

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This study examines the nature and patterns of Soviet cultural activities in Egypt and Syria, the motivations behind those activities, and the contribution of the Soviet cultural effort toward the attainment of overall Soviet Middle East policies. Chapter I provides background information on Soviet-Arab relations, and in Chapter II Soviet objectives in the Middle East are examined. Chapter III identifies the important components of the Soviet cultural instrument in Egypt and Syria. Chapter IV assesses the contribution made by the cultural tool toward the attainment of Soviet objectives in Egypt and Syria. Finally, Chapter V demonstrates that the Soviet cultural enterprise exerted little impact on overall Soviet policy in the Middle East.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**LIST OF TABLES** .................................................. v

**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS** ........................................ vi

**Chapter**

I. INTRODUCTION ..................................................... 1

  - Statement of the Problem ........................................ 5
  - Purpose of the Study ........................................... 8
  - Method of Data Collection and Problems ......................... 10
  - Organization of the Study ..................................... 11
  - Chapter References ........................................... 13

II. THE EVOLUTION OF SOVIET CULTURAL POLICY IN EGYPT AND SYRIA ................. 15

  - Review of Literature ........................................... 15
  - Soviet Objectives in Egypt and Syria .......................... 20
  - Underlying Themes of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy ............... 25
  - Summary .......................................................... 29
  - Chapter References ........................................... 32

III. ELEMENTS OF SOVIET CULTURAL POLICY IN EGYPT AND SYRIA ......................... 34

  - Coordination of the Soviet Cultural Enterprise ................. 36
  - Important Programs of Soviet Cultural Policies ................. 39
  - Education ....................................................... 39
  - Exchange of Persons ........................................... 46
  - Tourism ......................................................... 49
  - Performing Artists ............................................. 51
  - Publication and Films .......................................... 55
  - Summary .......................................................... 59
  - Chapter References ........................................... 61
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE EFFECT OF THE CULTURAL INSTRUMENT ON SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY IN EGYPT AND SYRIA</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutralizing Western Influence in the Middle East</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange of Persons</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing Artists</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications and Films</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing the Legitimacy of the Soviet State as a Great Power</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervising Arab Transition to Socialism</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter References</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter References</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## APPENDIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Soviet Cultural Relations with Middle East States: Level of Cultural Activity</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Chronology of Important Events in Soviet-Arab Cultural Relations</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Maps</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Egyptian Students Abroad</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Syrian Students Abroad</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Soviet Personnel Posted to Two Arab Nations as Part of Formal Cultural Agreement, 1955-1970</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Number of Tourists in Syria</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Responsibility Roster (Production and Distribution) of the Soviet Publishing and Film Program 1955-1971</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Imports of Printed Matter by Egypt</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Imports of Films by Egypt</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Cultural Diplomacy vs. Propaganda</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Soviet cultural activities in the Middle East up to 1971 need to be studied in the context of military, political, ideological, and economic thrusts. A brief listing of the major military, political, ideological, and economic developments is in order.

The first of these major developments was the Soviet-Egyptian arms deal of 1955. This military agreement marked the beginning of active Soviet involvement in the Middle East after the Second World War.

At this time, the Soviet Union and its predecessor, Russia, were not making its first appearance on the Middle East scene. Its active interest in the region stretched back to the Czarist era (McLaurin, 1975, p. 4; Smolansky, 1984, pp. 205-208; Ulam, 1968, p. 744). That interest, however, was interrupted and affected by the Bolshevik Revolution and the subsequent exigencies of Soviet domestic security considerations during the Lenin and Stalin regimes.

At the time of Stalin's death, but especially in its aftermath, the Soviet leadership moved to bring to an end the inwardly-oriented outlook that characterized the
Stalinist era. The time seemed apposite indeed to shed some of the restriction on the "Iron Curtain." Regime consolidation by the Kremlin had taken place at home and within Eastern Europe; the gains of the Soviet leadership now stood more secure before an outside capitalist "aggression." This political event was a second major development.

The third major thrust that lent context to Soviet cultural activities in the Middle East during the period under review were the ideological justifications made by the Soviets for their involvement in the Middle East. One of these ideological pronouncements was that the "national bourgeoisie," hitherto depicted as minions of imperialism, had been found to be fulfilling a progressive role in the liberation movements of many developing countries. Another of the new ideological pronouncements modified the Stalinist "two-camp" image of a world irreconcilably divided between the "socialist camp" and "American imperialism." The two-camp position gave way to a tripartite formulation which recognized the existence of a "peace zone" of neutralist states where Arab states such as Egypt were regarded to have been placed. To understand the extent of the change in the Soviet ideological position as it affected the Middle East, a brief comparison of some aspects of Soviet-Middle East relations in the pre-1955
period with the period during 1955 and immediately after 1955 is necessary.

When the Najib-Nasser government came to power in Egypt in July, 1952, the Soviets denounced it as the handiwork of "reactionary officers linked with the USA" and deplored its "savage repression" of workers and Communists (Laqueur, 1957, p. 20; McLane, 1973, p. 30; Ro'i, 1974, pp. 101-103). In 1953, a Soviet book on Egypt described the policy of the new Cairo regime as "demagogic" and "antiworking class" and pointed out that progressive elements among the coup plotters had been displaced (Laqueur, p. 20).

After the July, 1954, Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, the Soviet press and the Soviet Academy of Sciences criticized the Nasser regime. To the Soviet leadership, the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty ran "contrary to the national interests of Egypt and the other Arab countries;" Egyptians, by signing the treaty, exhibited shortsightedness; and the Egyptian "toilers" now had to "fight many a battle before the victory of real democracy" (Laqueur, p. 20; McLane, p. 30).

In 1955, however, the Kremlin issued directives to Soviet experts on Asia and Africa to "reorient their work in the light of the new political opportunities that were opening up for Soviet penetration of these continents" (Barghoorn, 1958, p. 41). In further exhortations, the
Soviet leaders rebuked their Asian and African experts for failing to observe the progressive components of the movement led by Egypt's Colonel Nasser (Barghoorn, p. 42).

The fourth important development which gave context to Soviet cultural activities in the Middle East up to 1971 was the Baghdad Pact of February, 1955. McLane (1973, p. 11) views the event as the more immediate precipitant of Soviet post-Stalin involvement in the Middle East. In his opinion, renewed postwar Soviet interest in the Middle East coincided with the formation of the American-initiated pro-Western security alliance design near the Soviet southern border.

A fifth major thrust was the Aswan High Dam project in Egypt, an important symbol of Soviet economic assistance to the Arab world. The Soviets undertook the project completing it on schedule.

Subsequent Soviet activities in the Arab world built quickly upon the foundation events identified in the foregoing overview as these three illustrations suggest. First, the Soviet-Egyptian arms pact of 1955 was followed by another arms supply agreement with Syria in 1956. Second, during the Suez Canal crisis of 1956, the Soviet Union strongly backed Egypt. The Suez Canal crisis provided the Soviets the opportunity for their first direct involvement in Arab affairs. Subsequently, but especially
after Israel's preemptive attack on Egypt and Syria and its annexation of the Jordanian West Bank, the Soviet Union relentlessly wooed anti-Western Arab governments while denouncing Israel and Zionism (Daniels, 1984, p. 324).

Third, in January, 1964, a Soviet delegation, comprised of ex-First Secretary Khrushchev and a Soviet arts ensemble, took part in a ceremony in Egypt marking the completion of the first phase of the Aswan High Dam (United States Advisory Commission on International Education and Cultural Affairs, 1965, p. 39).

Following the death of Nasser in 1970, however, Soviet-Arab relations deteriorated. From that low point, a rapid improvement occurred with the signing on May 21, 1971, of the Soviet-Egyptian Friendship and Cooperation Treaty (Lenczowski, 1971, p. 84). Finally, by mid-1972, with Sadat's summary expulsion of Soviet advisors in Egypt, Moscow suffered the most severe setback in its Middle East policy. The Soviets managed to maintain friendly relations with such Arab nations as Syria and Iraq, but even those were threatened by a general anti-communist sentiment and political rivalries in these countries as well as by the absence of agreement over strategy on the "Palestinian problem" (Saivetz & Woodby, 1985, p. 49).
Statement of the Problem

The Soviet Union gained entry into the Middle East by offering military assistance. Military aid, however, was not the only instrument of Soviet foreign policy in the region. Such other instruments as the economic, the political, and the cultural, with which this study is concerned, were also important components of the Soviet Middle East penetration. In the Soviet execution of its Middle East policy, all these instruments were utilized, supplementing and/or complementing each other.

The Soviet Union assigned a significant role to cultural diplomacy in the achievement of its policy in other countries. For example, following Khrushchev's proclamation of "peaceful coexistence" with the capitalist West, the Soviet leadership at the Twentieth Party Congress announced publicly that one of the most important aspects of Soviet foreign policy was to be "more comprehensive contacts and cooperation with the developing countries in the sphere of culture and science." Subsequently, the Soviet regime stated that "cultural exchanges and personal contacts between peoples must play an important role in the mitigation of international tensions" (Materially Vneocherednogo XXI S'ezda KPSS, M., 1959, p. 150; cited in Dawisha, 1975, p. 420). Furthermore, a program adopted by the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the
Soviet Union (CPSU) October 31, 1961, declared that "the Party considers it necessary to expand the Soviet Union's cultural relations with the countries of the socialist system as well as with other countries with a view to promoting the exchange of scientific and cultural achievements and of developing mutual understanding and friendship between peoples" (CPSU, 1961, p. 119).

The Soviet Union was not the only developed nation which had employed the cultural instrument to advance its policy in foreign countries. Such developed nations as the United States, Britain, France, and Germany in various ways and at various levels have employed the same instrument (Barghoorn, 1960, pp. 4-6; Flack, 1972-73, p. 15). Less developed nations such as China, Mexico (Flack, p. 15), Egypt (Dawisha, 1976), North Vietnam, and North Korea (United States Advisory Commission on International Education and Cultural Affairs, 1965, p. 40) also have used the same tool to a more or less considerable extent. Soviet cultural relations in the Middle East were distinguished by their relative extent as well as by the level to which they involved numerous public and private organizations within and, in many cases, outside the USSR.

Why did cultural diplomacy hold such strong appeal for Stalin's successors? Part of the answer to this question derives from the nature of the cultural instrument as an
image-making tool as well as from its capacity for persuasion. What are the prospects for this instrument in a complex region such as the Middle East which is rife with intense nationalism, with traditionalism, and with Islamic self-consciousness?

Purpose of the Study

"Cultural diplomacy" in this study is used interchangeably with "cultural exchange," "cultural instrument," "cultural policy," "cultural relation," "cultural tool," or "cultural weapon." Though slightly different in meanings, these terms are used synonymously.

The "Middle East" as used in this study refers to Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, South Yemen, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and Yemen. It excludes Cyprus, a European state, and Israel, often considered a non-Third World state. Iran, although part of the Middle East, is not an Arab nation. Terms used interchangeably with the "Middle East" in this study include "Arab nations," "Arab states," "Arab countries," "the Arab world," or simply "the Arabs."

However, the focus in this study is on Egypt and Syria, key Arab nations with which the Soviets managed to maintain close links.

Data on Soviet cultural relations with the Middle East up to the 1970s (Appendix A) show that of the 15 Middle
East countries with which the Soviets maintained relations, there were three where the volume of Soviet cultural activities were considered extensive, five where those activities were rated moderate, and seven where they were considered occasional. The three states where Soviet cultural activities were rated extensive include Egypt, Syria, and Algeria. Of the three states, the first two are considered representative and have been selected for study. Algeria is excluded from the study because Soviet cultural activities there, though extensive, did not, in their lopsided student exchange concentration (see McLane, p. 17), provide enough range and variety for meaningful examination.

Egypt qualifies for inclusion in the study for it is the political center of the Arab world. In fact, some major landmarks of Soviet-Egyptian relations such as the 1955 arms agreement are also considered landmarks of Soviet-Arab relations (McLane, p. 30). Furthermore, Egypt and Syria are an interesting pair for study for three reasons. First, the two Arab countries maintain close ties. Second, they often have united in their antagonism to Israel. Third, from 1958 to September, 1961, the two states constituted the now defunct political union known as the United Arab Republic (UAR).
The period 1955 through 1971 is singled out for examination in the study because it was a period of intense activity in Soviet-Arab relations. The year 1955 marked the beginning of active Soviet Middle East involvement in the postwar era. Soviet-Arab rapprochement was still strong by 1971 when the Soviet-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed. The cordial relations between the two countries nose-dived in July, 1971, when Egypt's Sadat expelled Soviet personnel in his country, leading Egypt in a volte-face to the West. Some students of Soviet Middle East policy consider 1970, the year of Nasser's death, as the turning point in Soviet-Arab relations. However, the shift in the Egyptian realignment from the Soviet Union to the West did not take place until after 1971.

The purpose of this study finally is to evaluate the contribution made by the cultural tool toward the achievement of Soviet objectives in Egypt and Syria. This goal will be preceded by two major steps: (1) Determination of Soviet objectives in the two countries under study and (2) Elicitation of the important elements of Soviet cultural diplomacy in the two countries. Evaluation of Soviet cultural diplomacy in this study is limited and restricted to the government-to-government level; it does not extend to the party-to-party level.
Method of Data Collection and Problems

This study utilizes primary and secondary sources including books, periodicals, and public documents. Access to some of these sources was made possible through the assistance of the staff of the North Texas State University Interlibrary Loan Services. A substantial part of the data for the study was drawn from government documents including those published by the Central Intelligence Agency and the United States Information Agency.

The problem of limited access to data exerted its impact on this study in a number of ways. Some sections or subsections have received less space and treatment than should have been assigned to them. Gaps are present in some tables. There are inferences where more specific information might have been called for. The limited access to data problems reminds one of a remark 16 years ago by one scholar to the effect that Soviet policy is "largely an exercise in reconstructing the plausible" (Legvold, 1970, p. 347). Discussion and analysis in the study have not been divided equally between Egypt and Syria. Egypt is the political center of the Arab world and has enjoyed more intensive intercourse with the Soviet Union than Syria has. For the period in question, more data exist on Soviet-Egyptian relations than with Syria.
Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter I specifies the goal of the research and the manner in which that goal will be fulfilled. Chapter II examines Soviet objectives in the Middle East with particular reference to Egypt and Syria. Some underlying themes of Soviet cultural diplomacy in the Arab countries are also spotlighted. Chapter III identifies the important elements of the Soviet cultural instrument in the two Arab states under examination. Chapter IV evaluates the contribution made by the cultural tool toward the attainment of Soviet objectives in Egypt and Syria while Chapter V, Conclusion, assesses the impact of the cultural tool on overall Soviet Middle East policy.
CHAPTER REFERENCES


CHAPTER II

THE EVOLUTION OF SOVIET CULTURAL POLICY IN EGYPT AND SYRIA

Review of the Literature

The first published work on cultural diplomacy in the postwar period (1947) was by McMurry and Lee. Two other books by Northrop and Snyder were published in 1952 and 1953. Much of the work on cultural diplomacy published before 1955 contributes little to the topic.

A large portion of the publications on cultural diplomacy appeared in the 1960s. There are two types of such publications:

1. Those which dealt primarily with United States foreign policy and dwelt on Soviet cultural activity where they did so at all, from the perspective of the US-USSR superpower rivalry. These works include, but are not restricted to, Blum (1963), Thomson and Laves (1963), Frankel (1966), and Braisted (1968). These publications like those which appeared before 1955 contribute little to this study.

2. Works by Western scholars on Soviet cultural relations with other countries including the developing countries. Among these works were
Frederick Barghoorn's book published in 1960 is the first significant work on Soviet cultural diplomacy by a Western scholar. Barghoorn (p. 10) defined cultural diplomacy as "the manipulation of cultural materials and personnel for propaganda purposes." The 10-chapter book, however, dealt largely with Soviet cultural exchanges with the West and devoted only a chapter to Soviet cultural activities in the developing areas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The book's main concern was the techniques of Soviet cultural diplomacy. These techniques, Barghoorn stated, were first a "complex amalgam of propaganda, deception, and sometimes mutually profitable transactions with non-Soviet states." Second, seen from a "non-communist point of view," they were an aberration in "intercultural" relations (Barghoorn, p. v; see also Liska, 1962, p. 533). It is still possible then that the budding Soviet cultural effort in the developing regions, including the Middle East, was yet to grow to a level deserving of more prominent treatment or attention.

Coombs' book substantively contributes to Soviet cultural diplomacy more than its title would suggest. Coombs traced the expansion of Soviet cultural enterprise in the developing countries as well as the developed to the
adoption of Soviet leader Khrushchev's "peaceful coexistence" line. An important aspect of the Soviet cultural enterprise, the author added, was the great Soviet emphasis at home "on the learning of foreign languages by the Soviet people, not merely by specialists but by 'the masses' as well" (Coombs, p. 91). One idea shared by Barghoorn and Coombs was that, by expanding its cultural effort, the Soviet leadership was taking a great political risk which threatened to introduce changes in Soviet external relations as well as within a Soviet society which had remained firmly closed under Stalin.

Dawisha's important contribution to the literature on Soviet cultural diplomacy lies in her distinction between cultural diplomacy and "low-level" propaganda. Dawisha defined cultural diplomacy as the "selection by a government of aspects of the social system within which it operates for transmission to a foreign population with the official acquiescence of the recipient government and for the purpose of creating a commonwealth of shared images and goals between the two countries" (Dawisha, 1975, p. 418). Propaganda, on the other hand, is the deliberate attempt by the government of a state to influence the values and opinions of the population of another state through the tools of communication so that the behavior of the population influenced will coincide with the behavior
desired by the government employing this tool (Dawisha, 1975, p. 418; Dawisha, 1976, pp. 162-163; Holsti, 1967, chap. 9).

The cultural instrument is distinguishable from propaganda in this important respect: Whereas in propaganda the government of state A transmits the message directly to the population of state B, in the case of cultural diplomacy the communication flows from government A to population B through the government of B (Figure 1). The crucial difference between the two concepts is that (1) unlike propaganda, the cultural instrument allows the recipient government the opportunity to alter or modify or reject the message, and (2) the cultural instrument comprises those activities which the recipient government considers supportive in its effort to create a "commonwealth of shared attitudes and goals" between the two countries.

The distinction between cultural diplomacy and propaganda relevant as it is may not be qualified for these reasons. First, it contradicts or at least detracts from the well-known position of the realist school of international relations that the behaviors of states are not altruistically-oriented and motivated (see Crabb, Jr., 1968, p. 26). Second, if states in their interaction with one another are motivated primarily by national interest considerations, they might not adjudge it out of place to
introduce occasional propaganda if that would help to fulfill their national interests.

Those who see some practical need in contrasting cultural diplomacy with propaganda might resist these arguments. They might counter, in the words of Keohane (1984, p. 105), that governments value a "reputation for reliability;" that they worry about establishing "bad precedents" because they fear "their own rule-violations will provide rule-violations by others, even if no specific penalty is imposed on themselves;" in other words, that excessive propaganda under the guise of "cultural relations" ultimately will work against the nation employing it rather than help to build its reputation for reliability.

However, even Dawisha admits that an activity defined by one government as "supportive cultural relations" might,
in fact, be defined by another government as "subversive propaganda" (Dawisha, p. 418). If what constitutes cultural diplomacy, as it appears, depends on the eyes of the government that beholds or perceives it, little use is served in distinguishing cultural diplomacy from propaganda. Dawisha's distinction between cultural diplomacy and propaganda may be too subtle. The Barghoorn definition of cultural diplomacy lacking such distinction appears more useful. Therefore, no distinction is made in this study between cultural diplomacy and propaganda.

Western literature on cultural diplomacy is still sparse. A study by Michael Flack in 1971 showed that "over the 27 years ending in mid-1971, the percentage of books dealing with international educational and cultural relations has in general tended to decrease" (Flack, 1972-73, p. 13). Fifteen years after the Flack study, the situation, alas, has changed very little.

Soviet Objectives in Egypt and Syria

There are two possible ways of studying Soviet objectives in Egypt and Syria. One such approach is to view Soviet objectives in the two countries as synonymous with its objectives in the Middle East. The argument then would be advanced that Egypt and Syria fit into an overall Soviet design for the Middle East. The second approach emphasizes the ideographic, that is, discovering and
specifying Soviet discrete policies for each of the two countries to the extent such discrete policies appear to exist. Since in this study the focus is on Soviet objectives common to the two countries under examination, the first approach, rather than the second, is more appropriate. There are two points to be borne in mind concerning Soviet objectives in the Middle East. First, the Soviets do not usually make their intentions in that region clear, and their objectives in the region often have to be inferred from Soviet behavior. Second, and related to the first point, such inferences on the Soviet Union's behavior are difficult to draw because of occasional Soviet red herring across the issue of their aims in the Middle East (see Pravda, Dec. 22, 1963; Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 15, no. 51, p. 11; Report to the 21st Congress of the CPSU, cited in CDSP, vol. 28, no. 8, p. 3), though it is also possible that the Soviets, especially at the early period of their involvement in the Middle East, were yet to formulate specific goals for the region (McLane, p. 9).

Soviet objectives in the Middle East could be divided into two broad categories: (1) Objectives speculated by Western scholarship to have affected Soviet-Middle East "calculations" but otherwise relate more to Soviet global strategies, and (2) Objectives specific to the Middle East.
Objectives classified under the first category include the development of Soviet naval power in the Mediterranean, the so-called Soviet naval "build-ups" in the Mediterranean and access to Middle East oil (see McLane, pp. 11-14). These objectives, however, do not form part of the focus in this study.

The principal goal of Soviet foreign policy, as outlined in the text of the Program of the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU (1961, p. 53) is to ensure peaceful conditions for the construction of a communist society in the USSR and the development of a world system of socialism and, together with all peace-loving nations, to preserve mankind from a world war of extermination.

The contribution of Soviet cultural policy toward this principal goal of the Soviet foreign policy is

To promote international exchanges, between all countries, of national achievements in the realm of material and spiritual culture, conducted on the basis of full equality and mutual advantage, and in the interests of strengthening peace and friendship between peoples, developing national cultures and
enriching the world's cultural heritage (Mojaev, 1965, p. 82).

In more ordinary language, the objective of Soviet cultural diplomacy from the official Soviet viewpoint is to promote peace, and to cultivate "friendship and mutual understanding between peoples" (Mojaev, p. 82). These objectives, together with the principal goal of Soviet foreign policy already stated, applied to the Middle East, particularly Egypt, Syria, and Iraq (See Mojaev, p. 83).

Soviet objectives specific to the Middle East, as Western scholarship views them, are threefold: (1) Neutralizing Western influence in the Middle East region; (2) Enhancing the legitimacy of the Soviet state as a great power, and (3) Supervising Arab transition to socialism.

The important objective of Soviet early involvement in the Middle East was to defuse the Baghdad Pact being formed at the Soviet southern borders; it was an initial objective borne out of Soviet security interests. After the break-up of the Baghdad Pact in 1958, following the withdrawal of Iraq from the security alliance system which bore its name, Soviet activity in the Middle East was aimed at undermining Western presence and influence, reducing Western influence in the region by, among other means, checking any upsurge of Western influence (McLane, p. 11), and replacing Western
influence in the region with Soviet influence (McLaurin, 1975, p. 43).

The second reason for the involvement of the Soviets in the Middle East was to enhance the legitimacy of the Soviet Union. By 1955 when the Soviets made their first overtures to the Arabs, the Soviet Union already had achieved superpower status. Along with the United States, it was recognized accordingly in the international system, but unlike the United States, the USSR was less globally accepted. The outcast status affected Soviet operations in the world system in two ways. First, it stymied or undermined its effective participation in international organizations such as the United Nations. Second, outside East Europe, communist East and Southeast Asia, governments friendly with the Soviet Union ran the risk of being overthrown (McLaurin, p. 10). To overcome its status, the Soviet Union in the mid-1950s sought to establish relations with as many countries in the Third World as possible. Naturally, the Soviet Union began with the Middle East, its closest neighbor. The quest for increased legitimacy provides some explanation for persistent Soviet overtures to such Arab countries as Saudi Arabia which had consistently shown little interest in the Soviet Union.

The third objective of Soviet involvement into Arab affairs in its vague form was to render service to
international communism by advancing socialism among Arab states and encouraging the installation within these Arab nations of a Soviet-type sociopolitical and economic system. The Soviets have not always felt very confident about their chances of achieving this ultimate goal in an area like the Middle East torn by nationalism, religiosity, and traditionalism. Soviet leaders in their speeches have sometimes voiced that quandary (see, for example, Khrushchev's interview with James Reston, *New York Times*, Oct. 10, 1957), but none of these forces prevented them from trying. If the cultural or environmental conditions in the Arab world affected this third objective, it was in the priority rating the Soviet regime assigned to it; it rated low in Soviet Middle East objectives and was considered a "long-term" rather than a short-term objective (Dawisha, p. 421, McLane, p. 11).

Underlying Themes of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy

An important characteristic of the cultural instrument is that it flows to a target population through the government of that target population. Two implications emerge full-blown from this point: (1) Cultural diplomacy is utilisable as an instrument of a state's foreign policy only with the concurrence of the recipient government. Such concurrence is possible in an atmosphere of friendship and an acknowledged harmony of values and goals (Dawisha, 1976, p. 175). (2) A recipient government can
foil an attempt to instill values contrary to the predominant belief system of its population.

Three basic themes of Soviet cultural diplomacy in the Arab world, including Egypt and Syria were (1) revival of Arab culture, (2) reassertion of Islamic self-consciousness, and (3) reproof of Western "cultural imperialism." These themes which are explicated were a beachhead in that they facilitated the introduction of Soviet cultural activities to the Arabs. It may be true that the Soviet objective of reducing Western influence in the Arab world coincided with the anti-Western aspirations of the leaders of Egypt and Syria within the period under review, but there were also many areas where Soviet cultural values were in disharmony with the Arabs' values, and in which Arab governments could have used the opportunity provided by the cultural tool to foil an attempt to implant values contrary to the prevalent beliefs of their populations. Consequently, the main themes used in Soviet cultural relations were designed to reinforce existing attitudes among Arab citizenry or to develop new attitudes.

One of the three basic themes of Soviet cultural diplomacy in the Arab countries was the revival of Arab cultures. There are two dimensions to this theme. On the one hand, the Soviets proclaimed their respect for the
cultures of Arab countries and pledged their commitment to help the Arab nations revive those cultures, and, on the other hand, they flaunted before their Arab audience the cultural achievements made possible under socialism.

An example of the former dimension was the speech by Soviet Foreign Minister Dmitri Shepilov in Cairo on June 18, 1956, in which he declared that "the Soviet people are eager to help the Arabs in the revival of their national culture with its thousands of years of tradition" (Pravda, June 19, 1956). An example of the latter was a publication by Soviet writers O. M. Gorbatov and L. Ya. Cherkassky in 1973 which stated that Soviet cooperation with countries in the Middle East and Africa in the enterprise of art and culture is based on the one hand on the intensively dynamic process of the rejuvenation and continuing development of the ancient and original cultures of the Arab and African people and on the other hand on the conspicuous achievements of Soviet art which has received international acknowledgement as one of the most important sections of world culture (Gorbatov and Cherkassky, 1973; cited in Dawisha, 1975, p. 423).
Egypt and Syria, like many Arab countries then, were undergoing a cultural reawakening characterized by increased emphasis on the inherent rich qualities of Arab culture and Islamic civilization. The Soviet role, therefore, was to reinforce Arab self-consciousness of their cultural and political freedom from a colonial past.

A second major theme of Soviet cultural diplomacy in the Middle East was the reassertion of Islamic self-awareness. The Soviets employed this theme in two ways. First, they professed their respect for the religion of the Arabs and their belief in the right of all peoples, including Arabs, to practice their religions. Second, and related to the first, the Soviet leadership made little effort to discourage the Muslim populations of Egypt and Syria as well as other Arab countries from their belief in Islam. There is diaphanously present in this theme a desperate Soviet effort to present an image in conformance with the dominant values of the Arab populations. The new more liberal Soviet attitude to religiosity veils an age-old conflict between Islam and Communism as well as between the Soviet leadership and Islamism; the Soviet government rarely has encouraged uninterrupted religious freedom in the USSR.

The third basic theme of Soviet cultural diplomacy in the Arab world was the reproof of Western "cultural
imperialism" by Soviet leaders and scholars. The Soviet Union invoked this theme in a bifurcated manner: (1) By crediting itself for not imposing or intending to impose its culture on other countries and (2) By charging the West for the "offense" of dominating other cultures ("cultural imperialism"), for an alleged lack of appreciation for the "ancient cultures of the East," and for seeking to replace "cherished folk traditions" with "cosmopolitanism" or the "decadence of Hollywood" (see Barghoorn, 1950, p. 193; Dawisha, p. 424).

It is not difficult to see that this theme of the Soviet cultural instrument takes deep root in the cultural rivalry between the Soviet Union and the West led by the United States. One variation on this third theme included the so-called "perceived affinity of shared experiences and aspirations" by which Soviet-Russia identified and projected itself as a country which in its history, culture, and national longings shared so much in common with the Arabs (Dawisha, p. 424).

Summary

Divergent viewpoints exist on what policy objectives the Soviet state aimed to achieve through its cultural activities in the Middle East. While the Soviets claim that their goal is the promotion of global peace, friendship, and mutual understanding, Western sources point
to the less than altruistic motivations which have been identified in this chapter.

To ascertain the objectives of Soviet cultural policies in the Arab world, then, it might be necessary to take another look at the already quoted principal goal of Soviet policy with other countries as Kremlin leaders avowed it at the 1962 Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU. The Program adopted at that Congress bespoke a Soviet commitment to world peace, but it also made reference to the "development of a world system of socialism." The Soviet pronouncement, in fact, implied that peace in the world was necessary to the extent that it facilitated the job of (1) constructing communism in the USSR and (2) establishing a "world system of socialism." Building communism in the USSR and establishing a world socialist system are not too far apart from the three specific Soviet objectives in the Middle East to which Western scholarship points. For example, the desire to establish a world system of socialism goes a long way to help us understand Soviet objectives to foster Arab transition to socialism. Incremental steps such as the neutralization of Western influence in the Middle East and the Soviet quest for greater legitimacy serve to facilitate movement toward the Soviet ultimate goal. The Soviet ultimate goal in the Middle East, if it had been attained, would, of course,
have advanced Soviet national interest since it would have promoted the construction of communism in the Soviet Union.
CHAPTER REFERENCES


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*Pravda*, 19 June 1956.


CHAPTER III

ELEMENTS OF SOVIET CULTURAL POLICY
IN EGYPT AND SYRIA

This chapter outlines and describes the important programs of Soviet cultural policy in the Arab nations of Egypt and Syria. This goal involves two steps: (1) Description of the key institutions entrusted with the coordination of the overall Soviet cultural effort, and (2) Identification and description of five important programs of Soviet cultural policy in Egypt and Syria. The five major programs include education, exchange of persons, tourism, the performing arts, and printed media and films.

Official Marxist-Leninist ideology identifies two organically linked aspects of culture, namely, the material and the spiritual (Great Soviet Encyclopedia, 1976, p. 299). Material culture comprises such tangible elements as the instruments of labor, dwellings, household items, communication, and transportation. Spiritual culture, on the other hand, belongs to the "sphere of consciousness and intellectual production." It includes "knowledge, morality, upbringing and education, law, philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, science, art, literature, mythology, and religion" (GSE, 1976, p. 299). Soviet cultural policy falls within the latter. Activities associated with Soviet
cultural relations include science, education, literature, the graphic arts, music, public health, sports, tourism, and disaster relief (see USIA, 1974, p. 59).

Soviet cultural policy in the Middle East comprised a large number of these enumerated elements. For example, according to McLane (p. 34), by 1980 Soviet-Egyptian cultural links had assumed such proportions that wide cultural cooperation in all areas was taken for granted. There was accordingly nothing remarkable in the Russians' large and expensive program--probably the largest and most expensive in the Third World; the program would have been remarkable only if it had been less than it was.

Furthermore, Soviet cultural relations with Egypt kept abreast of relations in other areas. Apart from such traditional elements as education, trade union exchange and entertainment, there were also more arcane aspects involved. For example, Soviet space technicians in 1960 worked with Egyptian technicians in the construction of a satellite tracking station, and Soviet scientists joined with their Egyptian counterparts in photographing Mars, or vice versa (McLane, p. 34).

Barghoorn's view of the Soviet cultural instrument in the Middle East is even more inclusive for it encompasses exchange of artists, athletes, students, assistance in the
development of medical services, and "impressive technical and economic aid projects such as the Aswan High Dam" (Barghoorn, 1969, p. 156). The Barghoorn package raises the question as to where the line should be drawn in delimiting elements of the cultural instrument.

Coordination of the Soviet Cultural Enterprise

Two key institutions charged with responsibility for the overall coordination of Soviet cultural exchanges are the State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, and the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries. These two bodies replaced or succeeded VOKS, the Soviet All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries established in 1925. From the time of its founding until the 1950s, VOKS, in accordance with the wishes of the Soviet regime, filled varied roles: As an "auxiliary" organ of the Third International or Comintern; as a tool for mobilizing "representatives of the working intelligentsia" who in times of travail would stand in defense of the Soviet state by, for example, creating a "ring of trust, sympathy and friendship around the USSR through which all plans of intervention will be unable to penetrate;" as a communication tool informing foreign intellectuals and workers of the "heroism" of the Soviet Union (See Barghoorn, 1960, p. 17; Coombs, p. 88).
The State Committee for Cultural Relations was established in May, 1957, under the chairmanship of Georgi Zhukov, a former deputy editor of the Soviet party newspaper, Pravda. The Committee was assigned the responsibility of (1) negotiating and concluding cultural treaties with foreign countries and (2) maintaining cultural centers in foreign countries. Tied directly to the Soviet Council of Ministers and with its chairman accorded ministerial status, the State Committee performed these duties until 1967 when the functions were transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Coombs, pp. 88-9).

The Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries was formed in February, 1958. One branch, the Soviet Society for Friendship and Cultural Relations with the Countries of the Arab East, was established in March, 1958, under the leadership of Soviet Deputy Minister of Culture S. V. Kaftanov. The Union of Soviet Societies, together with its many branches scattered throughout the Soviet Union and the Arab world, organizes and coordinates a wide range of cultural activities, including lectures, exhibits and exchanges. Other organizations engaged in the promotion of Soviet cultural objectives in the Arab countries included the Committee of Youth Organizations of the USSR, the Soviet Committee to Preserve Peace, the Soviet Committee of
Solidarity of the Countries of Asia and Africa, and Friendship Societies. Some of these organizations are mentioned more specifically in this study under the programs they oversee.

The important roles played by the above organizations in Soviet Arab cultural policy is to some extent made evident by the fact that a large part of the Soviet cultural "good" in Egypt and Syria, as in other Middle East countries, was covered by such formal agreements as General Cultural Agreements, Information or Press Exchange Agreements, Film Exchange Agreements, Tourism Agreements, and Friendship and Cooperation Agreements. These formal agreements often formed the basis for subsequent Soviet cultural engagements in the affected Arab countries. The first such agreement entered into by the Soviet Union with any Arab country was with Syria. The agreement, signed August 20, 1956, provided for the exchange of "experiences and achievements in literature, art, science, higher education, popular education, physical culture, sports," among other fields (Pravda, August 22, 1956). The first formal Soviet cultural agreement with Egypt did not take place until November, 1959, (Appendix A); it must be presumed that the extensive Soviet cultural relations with Egypt before 1959 were covered by informal agreements.
Important Programs of Soviet Cultural Policies

Education

Three main activities involved in Soviet educational assistance to the Arab world were the training of Arab students in Soviet educational institutions, posting of Soviet scientists and scholars to Arab nations, and the building of technical centers in the Arab countries. The first activity of Soviet educational assistance to the Arab world was the training of Arab students in Soviet educational institutions. Two portions of the 1961 Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) are cited by Soviet scholars and Western authorities as the legal basis for Soviet educational exchanges. One of these portions of the Party Program encouraged state and public organizations in the USSR to expand cultural ties "in the interests of the mutual exchange of science and culture, mutual understanding, and friendships among peoples." The second portion called for aid to the developing countries as the Party's "international duty to help peoples moving along the path of gaining and strengthening national independence, and to help all peoples struggling for the complete destruction of the colonial system" (USIA, 1974, p. 77).

Three techniques of Soviet recruitment of students from the Arab countries are as follows: (1) Recruitment
covered by bilateral cultural agreements with Arab governments, (2) Scholarship awards by Soviet embassies and Arab Communist Parties, and (3) Scholarship awards by such Soviet organizations as the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, the Union of Soviet Friendship Societies, and the Soviet Committee of the Countries of Asia and Africa, among others.

The Soviet training of students focused on the education of technical personnel and the education of high-level management manpower. The Soviets apparently paid greater attention to the provision of skilled technical manpower to the Arab countries than they did to the training of high-level Arab management personnel, given the Arabs' pressing need for qualified technical personnel. The Arabs' greater need for technical manpower also dictated the nature of training provided to Arab students in the Soviet Union. That training often was structured to prepare the students to work on projects in their countries being carried out with Soviet aid. For instance, students from Egypt were trained to work in seaports and fish factories built with Soviet aid while Syrian students were trained to service the Euphrates Dam (USIA, p. 77). The Soviet emphasis on the training of technical personnel therefore dovetailed with the Arabs' need for this type of manpower.
As regards the education of high-level management personnel, Egypt and Syrian students, like other foreign Third World students, attended and graduated from the over 300 Soviet institutions of higher learning, including the University of Friendship of the Peoples in Moscow.

Patrice Lumumba University, as the University of Friendship is more popularly called, which plays a crucial role in Soviet educational exchange with Third World countries, including the nations of the Middle East, was founded in 1960 by the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with Asian and African Countries, the Union of Soviet Societies of Friendship and Culture, and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. The first contingent of 184 students from the university completed studies in 1965. Addressing these first graduates, Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin expressed the hope that they would be "front-rankers in the struggle for the national revival of their countries, and for the social progress of their peoples" (Barghoorn, 1969, p. 166). In 1971, of 3,500 students enrolled in Patrice Lumumba University, 660 were from Arab nations (Rubinstein, 1971, pp. 65-66). The University of Friendship is not more important than the many other institutions in the Soviet Union attended by Third World students, but it is a solid singular symbol of Soviet educational assistance to developing countries.
A large percentage of Arab students in the Soviet Union studied engineering, science, education, and labor. Soviet specialists long had lamented the lack of competent Arab personnel in these fields as "one of the most pernicious legacies of long colonialist rule" (Rymalov, p. 58). Tables 1 and 2 trace the growth of the Soviet education program between 1959 and 1970.

**Table 1**

**Egyptian Students Abroad**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>1,217</td>
<td>1,059</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>1,015</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. of students in home univs.

92,421 107,789 145,651 177,123 179,100 197,055 n.a.

Note. n.a. = not available.


Soviet educational assistance to Arab nations also involved the posting of Soviet scientists and scholars in Arab nations. In 1971, over 800 Soviet teachers and other specialists were teaching in 90 schools in 20 developing
Table 2
Syrian Students Abroad

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. of students in home univs.
10,126 18,739 31,372 32,653 31,938 37,540 n.a.

Note. n.a. = not available.


countries, including Arab states. Seventy percent of these teachers and specialists possessed advanced degrees and were professors or assistant professors (dotsenty). They assisted in restructuring on "democratic foundations" the local system of education in the countries of their postings as well as in developing textbooks, teaching plans and programs, scientific research and cadres (USIA, p. 79).

Table 3 indicates the number of Soviet personnel sent to Egypt and Syria as part of a formal cultural agreement (i.e., on a government-to-government basis). A large portion of these personnel were in education. Except for
Table 3

Soviet Personnel Posted to Two Arab Nations as Part of Formal Cultural Agreement, 1955-1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the author with data gathered from Dawisha (1975, p. 434).

Iraq, official statistics on the number of Soviet citizens working at any one period in the Arab countries are unavailable. Yearly breakdown of the figures in Table 3 is impossible. These figures, it must be noted, excluded the by far greater number of Soviet economic and military advisors whose political activities and interactions with Arab citizenry contribute an important effect seeking to create a commonwealth of shared attitudes and goals but, who, nonetheless, are classified as part of the economic and military instrument rather than the cultural.

The third main activity of Soviet educational assistance to Arab countries is the Soviet participation in the building of schools and technical centers in these countries. Because of Arabia's pressing need for qualified technical manpower, this activity was perhaps the most significant Soviet initiative in the educational assistance
field. As of February, 1964, 23 technical centers built with and supported by Soviet aid were opened in Egypt with over 5,500 students (U.S. Advisory Commission on International, Educational and Cultural Affairs, 1965, p. 39). Another technical center opened in May the same year trained 1,000 workers annually in 16 specialties and was considered the largest of its kind in Africa (U.S. Advisory Commission, p. 39). On the whole, over 80 technical centers in the Middle East were built with Soviet assistance, and as of 1971, over 4,000 Syrians and about 75,000 Egyptians were products of these institutions (Dawisha, 1975, p. 434). Soviet educational institutions develop course outlines, textbooks and other facilities for schools and technical centers sited in the Arab countries as well as other Third World nations. For example, in 1965, Soviet publishers produced more than 900,000 copies of textbooks in foreign languages for export to many foreign countries (USIA, p. 79). Technical centers in the Arab countries built with Soviet assistance have contributed more or less directly to Arab economic development; they have been almost completely responsible for meeting the pressing Arab need for skilled technical manpower.

This aspect of the Soviet education program is closely related to the activity of the training of Arab students in Soviet educational institutions discussed previously. The crucial difference is that in the former case the training
had been conducted in the Arab countries concerned while in the latter the training took place in the Soviet Union. The two complemented each other.

Responsibility for the overall administration of the Soviet education program is shared by two key institutions. The Section for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in liaison with the Ministry of Education, is charged with the duty of negotiating bilateral agreements for educational exchanges within the Soviet Union. The Directorate for Educating Students, Graduate Students, and Probationers of Foreign Countries of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education, on the other hand, is responsible for (1) the international administration of the Soviet educational program and (2) the "management" of foreign students in the USSR.

Exchange of Persons

The Soviet Exchange of Persons Program covers a wide range of mutual interest groups. Some of the more popular exchanges were those between artists, musicians, professionals (e.g., lawyers, educators, and journalists), scientists, religious leaders, trade union delegates and sports teams. Those exchanges covered by formal bilateral cultural agreements were usually coordinated by the Section for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Depending on the categories
of persons to be exchanged, organizations such as the Academy of Sciences, the Union of Soviet Friendship Societies, the All-Union Council of Trade Unions, or a relevant ministry of the government may also be involved.

Two points to note about the Soviet exchange of persons programs are (1) the showcase characteristic of the program and (2) the vulnerability to distortion by Soviet authorities. All programs in the Soviet cultural tool inherently are affected by the Soviet desire of drawing the audience to the superiority of the socialist model of development. However, the showcase tendency is greater in the Soviet exchange of persons program because the elements or units involved in the program are more visible and therefore more capable of impressing a foreign audience with Soviet "competence" in the affected fields, and by so doing, promoting pro-Soviet feelings and reactions. For example, the excellence of Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet will be irresistible even to the discriminating audience of an advanced country. It is doubtful, however, whether audience admiration for the outstanding performance of a Soviet group had usually led to favorable disposition toward the Soviet Union, but Soviet leaders apparently were not discouraged.

A second point of note about the exchange of persons program is its vulnerability to manipulated distortion by
Soviet authorities. As mentioned before, all programs in the Soviet cultural machine are subject to distortion by Soviet leadership, but the exchange of persons program, more than any other program, lends itself more easily to such manipulated distortion. The following account by Laqueur (1959, p. 219) on the Soviet exchange of religious delegations makes this point clear:

A group of Soviet Moslem pilgrims stopped over in Cairo in mid-August 1955 on its way to Mecca and declared, in a much-publicized press conference, that religion was completely free in the Soviet Union. A similar pronouncement was made by Christoforos II, Greek Orthodox patriarch of Alexandria, upon his return from the Soviet Union in the same month.

Another example of the distortion to which the Soviet exchange of persons program was subject was an appeal published in the Izvestiya (a Soviet government newspaper) on January 5, 1955, purported to have been made by Soviet Moslems to Moslem leaders in countries with Moslem populations. The appeal, coming as it did on the heels of the Baghdad Pact of 1955, beckoned those Moslem leaders and their followers to do everything in their power to "safeguard peace" by halting the activities of Western
"warmongers" alleged to be hellbent on kindling the "fire of a new bloody war."

A large number of the units and events of the Soviet cultural instrument falls under the exchange of persons program. For example, the exchange of "professional" educators could also be part of the Soviet education program.

Tourism

Tourism to both the Soviet and Arab leadership was a double-edged dilemma: Both governments want to allow it as much as they disallow it. Soviet and Arab governments also regulated this program by placing restrictions on the free movements of foreign citizens within their countries as well as on the visit of their own nationals to foreign countries for a similar reason: The fear of corrupting influences. However, while the Soviet fear is ideologically-generated and rooted (Moody, 1964, pp. 3-13), the Arab fear apparently was dictated by a puritanical religious zealousness that disdained unrestrained association with and contamination by infidels.

Soviet activities in the field of tourism increased following the Twentieth Party Congress; by 1958, the Soviet agency Intourist had already entered into agreements with over 80 countries (Dawisha, 1975, p. 429). In the same year, the Office of International Youth Tourism (Sputnik)
was created. This organization was assigned the responsibility of arranging tours of Soviet youth groups abroad and organizing the visits of youth groups to the USSR. By 1969, Sputnik had entered into cooperation agreements with 300 organizations in 53 countries (USIA, p. 83).

The state-owned corporation Intourist conducts every aspect of tourist activity with the Soviet Union. To conduct its operations abroad, Intourist cooperates with over 400 agencies in foreign nations. The USSR also takes part in various international conferences on tourism conducted by the United Nations and the International Union of Official Tourist Organizations.

Official arrangements for tourism between the Soviet Union and Arab countries were covered either by General Cultural Agreements or made under specific tourism agreements such as those signed between the Soviet Union and Egypt in 1956 and 1967. Because the number of non-Communist visitors to the USSR oftentimes exceeded the number of Soviet citizens visiting abroad, tourism was an important source of revenue for the Soviet economy.

Tourism may be an important program in Soviet-Arab cultural relations but there is as yet little evidence that it assumed reckonable placement in those relations. The Soviet Union and Egypt, for example, provided no data on
the annual inflow and outflow of visitors between their countries; the Syrian report card (Table 4) reflected meager results.

Table 4

Number of Tourists in Syria

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>13,929</td>
<td>14,691</td>
<td>14,379</td>
<td>14,908</td>
<td>17,084</td>
<td>32,563</td>
<td>1,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>8,736</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>4,088</td>
<td>8,248</td>
<td>10,408</td>
<td>18,626</td>
<td>1,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>6,043</td>
<td>3,911</td>
<td>6,502</td>
<td>12,147</td>
<td>15,866</td>
<td>19,993</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>5,792</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>1,896</td>
<td>6,755</td>
<td>11,625</td>
<td>25,247</td>
<td>10,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czecho-lovakia</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>1,790</td>
<td>2,491</td>
<td>3,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>2,493</td>
<td>2,681</td>
<td>3,636</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n.a. = not available.

Source: Dawisha (1975, p. 429).

Performing Artists

During the period under review, the Arab world was the cynosure of attention by many outstanding Soviet ensembles, troupes, and orchestras. There are three features of note regarding the performing arts program of the Soviet cultural instrument: It is one of the most visible programs of Soviet cultural policy; it is heavily centered
on Egypt, and it was largely anchored around the Cairo ballet school.

The Soviet performing arts program enjoys high visibility, which has advantages and disadvantages. One clear advantage of visibility is the capacity to impress a targeted object. Indeed, Soviet performing groups in foreign countries, including the Arab countries, often are outstanding. The Soviet aim always is to convince a target foreign audience of the cultural attainments made possible under socialism and by so doing get the enraptured audience to acknowledge the superiority of the socialist way of life and ultimately to enthrone that superior system in place of the audience's present political and economic system. The anticipated linkages between admiration for a performing group and acceptance of ideology evidently are complex and the outcomes uncertain.

A disadvantage which derived from the visibility of the Soviet performing arts program was its relatively greater vulnerability to manipulation by the Soviet leadership for ideological ends (see the example cited in Barghoorn, 1960, pp. 193-94).

The second point about the Soviet performing arts program is that it was heavily centered or concentrated on Egypt. During the period under review Soviet folklore ensembles and troupes performed in such Arab cities as
Damascus and Baghdad (Dawisha, 1975, p. 427), but Soviet performing arts activity in these areas was scattered, less spectacular and along the periphery when compared to Egypt. There the ballet companies of Leningrad, Novosibirsk and Tashkent, the Bolshoi Ballet, the folkdance troupes of Moldavia, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia, the State Folklore ensemble and a number of other troupes such as the Moscow and Leningrad orchestra, the State puppet theater and State circus performed; the Soviet Union helped found a national folklore ensemble and state circus; the Soviet Union assisted in expanding the Cairo Conservatory of Music (Dawisha, 1975, p. 426); and ex-Soviet First Secretary Khrushchev, in January, 1964, accompanied by a Soviet art ensemble, took part in the ceremonies marking the completion of the first phase of the Aswan High Dam (United States Advisory Commission on International Educational and Cultural Affairs, 1965, p. 39). The Soviet limelight on Egypt is not difficult to guesstimate. The country is the most populous in the Arab world, and its capital, Cairo, was and still remains the center of the Arab world.

Third, the program is anchored in the Cairo ballet school. This school had been acclaimed the most important single Soviet contribution to the development of the performing arts enterprise in Egypt and in the Arab world. Established in 1958 by the Soviets who also staffed it, the school usually is
considered the first of its type in the whole of Africa and the Middle East. Furthermore, some of the best graduates of the school have performed with the Bolshoi in Moscow. Other auspicious developments built quickly on the underlying good represented by the Cairo ballet school: Entry application to the school burgeoned from under 100 in 1958 to over 1,000 by 1970; under the auspices of the school, the first ballet to be choreographed, designed, and composed exclusively by Egyptians made its debut appearance; the troupe had performed in many countries within the Middle East and beyond in such major Soviet cities as Moscow and Leningrad (Dawisha, 1975, p. 426).

The USSR Ministry of Culture is charged with the responsibility for all types of artistic activities in the Soviet Union at both all-union and republic levels. Goskonsert, a section of that Ministry, negotiates the details of the foreign tours of Soviet artists whether individually or as a group. The Soviet Ministry of Culture derives the legal basis for its activity from a decree of the Council of Ministers. Unlike some other programs of the Soviet cultural diplomacy, the performing arts program was characterized by a high level of Soviet-Arab exchange activity. This program is also closely similar and related to the exchange of persons program already analyzed.
Publication and Films

This facet of the Soviet cultural program is divided into four parts: (1) The range of matters covered under the program, (2) The philosophical/ideological justification for the program or elements under it, (3) The nature of exchange involved under the program, and (4) The administration of the program.

The range and diversity of matters covered under the Soviet publication (or printed matters) and films program in Egypt and Syria and in the Middle East as a whole is broad. For example, Soviet publishing materials exported to these Arab countries include the writings of Marx and Lenin, scientific textbooks translated into Arabic and used in many Arab universities, and the works of such Soviet writers as Tolstoi and Gorky, among others. Films exported to the Arab world by the Soviets usually dwelt on the culture of the peoples of Soviet Central Asia and on the economic achievements of the Soviet people.

The philosophical and/or ideological rationale for the export of Soviet films and publications abroad, including Arab countries, is to develop "the ideals of revolutionary humanism, the high ideals of the people," and to combat the "art of the bourgeoisie which corrupts man" (USIA, p. 49).

There are two aspects to the nature of the Soviet publications and films program in the Arab world. In the
realm of Soviet publications, Soviet bilateral cultural agreements usually incorporate portions or clauses calling for cooperation in the press and publishing fields. Article 6 of the Soviet-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed May 27, 1971, for example, had such a provision. Such cooperation, however, often is restricted to the exchange of journalists for limited time spans.

Insofar as films are concerned, foreign films enjoy tremendous popularity within the Soviet Union, whereas many films made for internal Soviet consumption, particularly those which were in disharmony with the local beliefs and values of a foreign population, have been unacceptable abroad. For example, in 1957, Egyptian leader Nasser banned a film version of Soviet writer Maxim Gorky's *The Mother*. Nasser feared the effect on his Egyptian population of the revolutionary propaganda contained in the work (Laqueur, 1959, p. 289). By 1971, however, the Soviets had succeeded in introducing many innovations which improved the quality of their films. Part of these innovations was the introduction of cooperative ventures which included the use of foreign actors in Soviet films and vice-versa. Under this cooperative scheme, a joint Soviet-Egyptian film "People on the Nile" was completed in 1971.
Insofar as its administration is concerned, all publishing activities in the Soviet Union, including the sale and distribution of printed materials, came under the control of the Committee of the Press established in 1963 under the USSR Council of Ministers. In addition, the Committee on the press controlled on a unionwide basis the content and development of Soviet publishing activities to ensure conformity to official line. Besides this function, the Committee is responsible for (1) the quality and timeliness of published matters; (2) directing the activities of publishing establishments at the union, republic, and district levels; (3) conducting competitions to promote excellence in publication; (4) organizing domestic and foreign exhibitions of Soviet literature; (5) coordinating the work of all book trading organizations; and (6) determining the size of the editions to be published. Table 5 is the roster of responsibility for the four agencies involved in the Soviet publishing and film program.

These agencies since 1955 have had close links with Egypt and Syria, among other Arab countries. The USSR Academy of Sciences as well as the Soviet Writers Union maintained close ties with their counterparts in the Arab countries with whom they often exchanged such publications as books, manuscripts, and newsletters even as they
Table 5
Responsibility Roster (Production and Distribution) of the Soviet Publishing and Film Program 1955-1971

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Responsibility Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The International Book Agency (Mezhdunarodnaye Kniga)</td>
<td>Printed Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Novosta</td>
<td>Printed Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. TASS</td>
<td>Printed Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sovexportfil'm</td>
<td>Films</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the author.

prepared joint projects and conferences. Tables 6 and 7 present data on printed media (books, newspapers, and magazines) and films imported by Egypt from the Soviet Union between 1956 and 1970. The tables do not include figures for 1971 which are not available. Incomplete as the data are, they provide a bird's-eye view of the trend and direction of the Soviet cultural effort in the two fields. No statistical information exists concerning the Syrian imports from the Soviet Union under this program.

The cost of Soviet films and printed media is considerably lower than that of the United States and Britain, facilitating their use in a poor country. Furthermore, the Egyptian and Syrian governments were not
**Table 6**

Imports of Printed Matter by Egypt
(books, magazines, and newspapers, in kilos)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>3,497</td>
<td>4,866</td>
<td>11,155</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>109,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>132,499</td>
<td>89,337</td>
<td>55,530</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>44,000</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>110,827</td>
<td>62,454</td>
<td>70,812</td>
<td>69,000</td>
<td>122,000</td>
<td>108,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n.a. = not available.

Source: Dawisha (1975, p. 430).

obliged to make payment for Soviet goods, including films and printed media, in hard currency.

**Summary**

In this chapter, the five major programs of the Soviet cultural policy in Egypt and Syria and in the Arab world in general have been delineated and described. The various Soviet organizations associated with these five programs have also been identified together with their responsibilities. The essence of this third chapter is to provide the basis for assessment in the next chapter of the Soviet cultural effort in the two countries under examination and in the Arab world.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>2,831</td>
<td>1,061</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>2,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>11,775</td>
<td>8,341</td>
<td>5,247</td>
<td>6,857</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>4,345</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>3,255</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n.a. = not available.

Source: Dawisha (1975, p. 429).
CHAPTER REFERENCES


Izvestiya, 5 January 1955.


Pravda, 22 August 1956.


61


CHAPTER IV

THE EFFECT OF THE CULTURAL INSTRUMENT ON SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY IN EGYPT AND SYRIA

The goal in this study was twofold. The first and more narrow aspect was to evaluate the contribution made by the cultural tool toward the attainment of Soviet objectives in the two Arab states of Egypt and Syria from 1955 to 1971. The second and broader dimension was to assess the impact of the cultural tool on overall Soviet Middle East policy. The first part of the goal is tackled in this chapter while the second is covered in Chapter V, Conclusion.

Data on some elements of the Soviet cultural instrument identified in Chapter III such as the exchange of mutual interest groups and performing artists are not easily quantified. Such programs, therefore, do not lend themselves easily to evaluation. Even among those programs which provide some basis for quantitative measurement—and evaluation, there are still problems.

One problem not data-related in the evaluation of the Soviet cultural instrument is the difficulty in precisely assessing the effects of the cultural tool. How does one ascertain that those effects that were attributed to Soviet cultural diplomacy had not, in fact, been contributed by such
other Soviet foreign policy instruments as the economic, political, or military, and vice-versa? How does one evaluate the impact of the Soviet cultural diplomacy in cases where the activities and interactions of Soviet economic and military advisors with Arab citizenry contribute important effects in creating a commonwealth of shared attitudes and goals or the reverse and yet these economic and military advisors are classified as part of the economic and military tools of the Soviet foreign policy rather than the cultural?

These do not entirely preclude evaluation. Many factors may interact to produce a shift in Arab policies and attitudes, but it is also possible at times to identify those situations where the Soviet cultural diplomacy exerted some impact. Early in the study, the cultural instrument was defined as comprising those activities which the recipient government considers supportive in its efforts to achieve a situation of shared attitude and goals between the two countries. In accord with this definition, the contribution of the Soviet cultural instrument will be assessed by (1) identifying where congruence or agreement existed between the Soviets and the Arabs regarding the Soviet objectives in the Middle East and (2) determining to what extent each of the five major elements of the Soviet
cultural instrument in the Arab countries had been responsible for any congruence in any of these objectives.

Neutralizing Western Influence in the Middle East

The Soviets' first objective in the Middle East was to neutralize Western influence in the region. This objective could be seen as comprising the following four steps: (a) Breaking up the Baghdad Pact, (b) Undermining (weakening) Western presence and influence in the region, (c) Reducing Western influence, and (d) Replacing Western influence with Soviet influence. Influence is a difficult concept to study; ergo, in this study, it is defined by and is a function of presence. That is, the larger and more conspicuous the Soviet presence in an affected country, the more influence that is assumed and vice-versa. Influence is not differentiated from power; the two concepts are sometimes synonymous in international relations.

It is not clear to what extent the Soviet cultural weapon exerted an effect on the forces which led to the breakup of the Baghdad Pact. Such impact did not exist. Arab leaders viewed the formation of the Baghdad alliance design as an attempt by the West to continue its neo-imperialist domination of the Arabs. It was on this ground that Nasser actively resisted the pact, and it was for the same reason that Iraq three years later contributed the coup de grace. The Soviet reaction given voice in the
comment of Soviet leader Khrushchev confirms the limited Soviet contribution to the dissolution of the Baghdad Pact: "No one expected the Baghdad Pact would so soon cease to exist" (Pravda, 23 July 1958).

Attempt will be made now to assess the extent to which the five major elements of the Soviet cultural tool contributed toward the three other dimensions of the Soviet objective of neutralizing Western influence in the Middle East.

Education

The Soviet education program would be seen to have contributed toward the neutralization of Western influence in Egypt and Syria if within the period under examination, a decrease occurred in the number of students from the two countries studying in Western nations. The Soviet bloc need not necessarily benefit from such decrease (i.e., through a rise in the number of students from these Arab countries now going for studies in the Soviet bloc), although such outcome should be expected, unless the two Arab governments, over the period, expanded educational facilities in their countries so that more students now studied in the local universities and other higher educational institutions who should have gone abroad.

Two points should be borne in mind about the Soviet education program prior to evaluation: (1) The Soviets
placed great emphasis on the program; the higher the number of Arab students who study in the Soviet Union or in Soviet bloc countries, the greater the likelihood that some of these students will return home at the end of their studies as potential supporters of Soviet policies; and (2) The expenses for the education and support of Arab students in Soviet higher educational institutions are borne by the Soviet Union (USIA, p. 77), unlike in the Western countries.

The numbers of Egyptian and Syrian students studying in the USSR from 1959 to 1970 increased generally (Tables 1 and 2), but there was also a general increase, rather than decrease, in the number of students from the two Arab countries studying in Western countries. Importantly, the Arab students studying in the USSR constituted a small proportion of the total number of students going abroad—27.3% for Egypt and a slightly higher 48.5% for Syria in 1969, the year in which the number of Arab students from the two countries apparently experienced their highest level of increase in a decade.

The data on Egyptian and Syrian students abroad and on two other dimensions of the Soviet education program indicate that while Western presence and influence were successfully undermined and reduced in the two Arab states, Soviet presence and influence there were not strong enough
to displace and, therefore, did not displace those of the West.

Exchange of Persons

The Soviet exchange of persons program in Egypt and Syria by its wide scope and volume as well as its concomitant visibility contributed a large impact in neutralizing Western presence and influence in the Middle East. However, in many cases, this result was bought at an exorbitant cost such as the encouragement of Islamic self-consciousness among Arab nations. The trade-off in such cases was that the Soviet long-term goal of implanting communism in the Arab countries had to be sacrificed for short-term gain. For example, the Soviet exchange of religious delegations, by nourishing and reinforcing anti-Western feelings among Arabs, helped neutralize Western influence in the Arab nations; on the other hand, it strengthened Arab antagonism to communism as well as jeopardized the Kremlin's age-long practice of curbing Islamism in Soviet Central Asia (Dawisha, 1975, p. 429).

Tourism

The evidence indicates that the Soviets as well as the Arabs made no spirited engagement in tourism. Soviet activity in tourism during the period under review apparently was dictated more by enlarged Soviet involvement
in global politics after the Second World War following its attainment of superpower status than by a deliberate Arab cultural policy. There were no published data on Soviet tourists to Egypt, but Table 4 shows that though Soviet tourists to Syria increased significantly from 1959 to 1970, they remained a relatively small proportion of the total number of foreign visitors to Syria. Moreover, Western tourists to Syria remained more numerous and even such East European countries as Czechoslovakia had more of its nationals visiting Syria than did the USSR. If Soviet cultural effort under the tourism program contributed at all to the objective of neutralizing Western influence in the Arab world, it was too insignificant to displace Western influence in that program in the region.

Performing Artists

The impact of the Soviet performing arts program was not widespread in the Middle East. First, the program focused mainly on Egypt. Second, it was anchored largely around the Cairo ballet school. However, by adding positively to the Soviet presence in the Middle East, the program contributed somewhat in neutralizing Western influence in the region. It is only in this sense that the well-dramatized thank-you trip to Moscow of the Egyptian Director-General of Foreign Relations, Abdel Muneim Tahawi (See Dawisha, 1975, p. 427), ought to be understood.
Publications and Films

As was made evident by the figures, the quantities of Soviet publications and films exported to the Arab world increased phenomenally by 1970. However, the huge quantities of Soviet publications and films exported to the Arab world do not tell all the story; they are inconclusive data or evidence for assessing the impact of the program on the attainment of the Soviets' target of neutralizing Western influence in the Middle East until it is proved (1) that the publications have been read and the films watched and (2) that the target recipient populations underwent some behavioral change as a direct consequence.

It is not easy to prove any of the above. It is therefore not known whether Soviet publications and films displaced those of the West in Egypt and Syria. Soviet films and publications in the Arab world generally have lower price tags than those produced in the West, facilitating their use. Moreover, the Arab governments did not have to worry about paying for these printed media and films by hard currency.

Overall, the outcome of the Soviet attempt to neutralize Western influence in Egypt and Syria via the cultural instrument was mixed. Soviet presence in these countries increased but orientation to pro-Western culture persisted; the Soviets managed to undermine
and reduce Western presence and influence in the areas, but they did not succeed in replacing them with Soviet presence and influence.

Enhancing the Legitimacy of the Soviet State as a Great Power

The second Soviet objective in the Arab world, as had been identified in Chapter II, was to enhance the legitimacy of the Soviet state as a great power. To forward this objective, the Soviet leadership took two steps. First, it sought to establish relations with as many countries as possible in the Third World using any foreign policy tool that would make possible such rapprochement. Second, the Soviet Union began with the Middle East, a region close to it, and, when it experienced setbacks in its Arab policy in the late 1950s following Nasser's persecution of Communists in the United Arab Republic, moved over to Sub-Saharan Africa where it established relations with such Black African countries as Ghana and Mali.

What impact did the major elements of the Soviet cultural diplomacy identified in Chapter III of this paper contribute toward the achievement of this objective? The cultural tool has utility in cases where two or more interacting partners share similar objectives. The Arabs would have shown little interest in the Soviet regime's
desire to increase the legitimacy of its state! However, this second objective apparently depended the least on the cultural tool for its attainment: By the early 1950s the Soviet Union had accomplished its quest for greater legitimacy (McLaurin, 1975, p. 10). In fact, this objective, dependent for its accomplishment as it was on relations with the Middle East as with other Third World regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa was as much a specific Soviet-Middle East objective as it was a Third World, even global, Soviet objective.

Supervising Arab Transition to Socialism

The third Soviet objective in the Arab world was to supervise the transition of Arab countries through socialism. Two steps implicated in this process are as follows: (1) Arab transition to socialism and (2) Acceptance of a Soviet-type socialist sociopolitical and economic arrangement. This ultimate goal did not fit into Arab aims and objectives. The Arabs never wanted to be converted into communists; they preferred to maintain their ties with nationalism, Islamism, and traditionalism (See Heikal, 1978, p. 278). Partly for this reason and partly because the Soviets sometimes sacrificed this long-term goal for short-term benefit, the Soviet cultural tool did not lead to its materialization and socialism was not planted into Egypt or Syria or any other Arab country.
CHAPTER REFERENCES


73
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the Soviet cultural effort in Egypt and Syria permits the following conclusions: (1) The Soviet cultural instrument is effective only in the issue-area where the interacting Arab countries shared a similar objective with the Soviets and were resolved to employ the cultural instrument to forward that common goal, and (2) The limited utility of cultural diplomacy as a foreign policy instrument. Head of the Soviet State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, Georgi Zhukov, once acknowledged this limited capacity of the cultural instrument when he wrote that "attempts to exploit international cultural relations for the purpose of forcing upon a partner an ideology which is unacceptable to him" would not succeed (Zhukov, 1959, p. 19). The question then is: If cultural diplomacy possesses such limited utility as the Soviets were willing to profess, why did they employ it at the apparently unprecedentedly massive level they did in the Middle East? As a corollary to this first question, why did the Arabs, especially in the two countries studied, respond so disproportionately to the Soviet cultural initiatives?
The answer to the first question is that Soviet cultural activities in the Middle East largely were borne out of the practical reality of the times. Following on the heels of the Cold War, these activities were dictated by (1) the emergence of the phenomenon of "mass politics" which K. J. Holsti (1967, p. 248) defined as the "widespread involvement of the average citizen or subject in political affairs," (2) the ever growing personal interaction between peoples of different nationalities, and (3) the fact that people as social classes or as interest groups were assuming an increasingly greater role in policymaking and were, by that fact, an appropriate target of persuasion. Other factors which dictated the Soviet high-flown cultural engagement in the Middle East were the limitation of military and nuclear power in modern international relations (see, for example, Holland, ed., 1976, p. 5; Keohane and Nye, 1977) and later the requirements of detente which, in fact, influenced Soviet strategy in the Middle East (McLaurin, Mughisuddin, and Wagner, 1977, p. 21; Spechler, 1978, p. 17). More specifically on detente, the relaxation of tension between the USA and the USSR demanded that the use of military power be deemphasized in a region such as the Middle East where the two superpowers had varying interests to protect. Furthermore, if Soviet leaders have to test the
effectiveness of a relatively new foreign policy tool such as the cultural instrument, there would be few natural laboratories more well-suited than a region like the Middle East close to its borders. The reason for the Arabs' less than commensurate response to the Soviet cultural initiatives will now be considered.

The Egyptian and Syrian leadership responded to Soviet cultural overtures so long as such cultural initiatives led to more permanent benefits such as military and economic assistance from the Soviet Union. The Arabs' pressing need for most of the period covered by this study was military and economic in nature, caused in part by two wars with Israel. These were the 1956 Suez crisis and the Six Day War of 1967. In these wars, but especially in 1967, Egypt and Syria bore the brunt of the burden in manpower as in materiel and other resources (see Stoessinger, 1982, pp. 158-165). The Arab armed struggle with Israel had two related effects on the economies of the affected Arab countries: It channelled much needed Arab resources into military spending to the detriment of nondefense but still pressing sectors of the economies, and it touched off runaway inflation which ruined the economies of these countries.

Initially, the Soviets responded to the Arab military and economic needs. After the Soviet $140 million military
package to Egypt in 1955 (CIA, 1980, p. 28) and the arms supply to Syria in 1956, the Soviets moved in enthusiastically to finance and complete successfully the Aswan Dam project after the refusal of the West to accede to the Egyptian request for assistance on the project. As long as the Soviets responded positively to the Arab need for military and economic assistance, the Soviet cultural activities in these countries flourished and the Arabs reacted favorably to the Soviet cultural initiatives. In the process, the Arab needs and their dependence on the USSR for assistance to satisfy those needs burgeoned rather than abated. First, the "no peace, no war" situation with Israel persisted and Arab leaders ached under the umbrage of their military defeat by Israel in the 1967 war. Second, Soviet economic aid became the major source of economic assistance for some of these Arab countries. For example, Soviet aid was the most important single source of Syrian economic assistance until 1973 when OPEC governments began to extend nearly $1 billion a year to the country for balance-of-payments support (CIA, 1980, p. 31).

As the Arab need for economic and military assistance from the USSR grew, the less forth coming the Soviets appeared to be in meeting those needs. There are two possible reasons for this. One is the reduced growth rate of the Soviet economy which made increased Soviet economic
and military commitment in foreign countries more difficult than before. A second reason is that the Soviets started to rethink their policies in the Middle East, particularly after Nasser's anti-Communist campaign in the late 1950s. This period coincided with the Soviets' growing attention to and activities in such black African countries as Ghana and Mali following the attainment of political independence by these African countries.

Soviet cultural diplomacy in the Middle East had little impact on Soviet overall policy in that region. The more pressing needs of the Arabs during the period under review were military and economic in nature. Because of the Arab conflict with Israel and the desire of Arab leaders, especially in Egypt and Syria to prepare themselves militarily at that period, these needs grew rapidly, outpacing the Soviet capacity for assistance. However, the Soviet alliance with Egypt and Syria had served to persuade these Arab leaders that Western sources of support especially in the area of economic assistance, are more reliable than the Soviet sources. Following this realization but particularly because of Sadat's disenchantment with the Soviets (see Rashdan, 1985), Egypt moved in realignment to the West in 1972.

After gaining a foothold in Egypt and Syria, the Soviets aimed to achieve their long-term objectives in the
areas building on Arab initial cooperation, unknown to them that Arab leaders prefer rapprochement on a short-term basis only (Dawisha and Dawisha, 1982, p. 151). The ability of small nations to dictate in relations with big powers has served to neutralize some of the advantages of great nations in modern international relations. It is an ability which confers virtue on smallness, strength on weakness. It made possible the Soviet humiliation in Egypt in 1972.

The Soviet cultural enterprise in Egypt and Syria may be evaluated as less than successful. However, Soviet cultural diplomacy was less significant than other instruments of Soviet policy in the Middle East; the cultural tool became important to the extent that it succeeded in promoting and sustaining Soviet-Arab relations in the military, political, and economic spheres. Yet such is the agonizing nature of the cultural instrument that one cannot in practice separate and delineate that effect, though one can, as in this study, attempt to do so analytically. The Soviet view of the organic unity between material culture and spiritual culture makes sense: Spiritual culture must be related to the material conditions to which it is inextricably tied.

Soviet policy in the Arab world suffered a severe setback in 1972 when the key Arab state Egypt ended its
extensive relationship with the Soviet Union and turned its face toward the West. Did this also mean that Soviet cultural diplomacy among the Arabs failed? The answer is not a resounding no; it is also not a yes. In the words of Laqueur (1959, p. 292), Soviet-Arab cultural rapprochement was a "misunderstanding." The Arabs did not dispose of their former Western masters only to become beholden to a new master from the East. The Soviets truly were "hailed and loved less for what they bring than for what they destroy." However, the Soviet cultural effort was also not a "complete misunderstanding." In the social and political lives of the Arabs, the Soviet imprint has remained visible. The Soviets did not displace the West in the Middle East, but the monopoly of Western influence in the region was broken.
CHAPTER REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

SOVIET CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH MIDDLE EAST STATES:
LEVEL OF CULTURAL ACTIVITY
Soviet Cultural Relations with Middle East States: Level of Cultural Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Date of First Cultural Agreement</th>
<th>Volume(^1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>February 1961</td>
<td>extensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td></td>
<td>occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>November 1959</td>
<td>extensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>August 1966</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>May 1959</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>October 1967</td>
<td>occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>March 1967</td>
<td>occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>October 1967</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td></td>
<td>occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>October 1966</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Yemen</td>
<td>January 1969</td>
<td>occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>August 1956</td>
<td>extensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>December 1963</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>October 1964</td>
<td>occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>June 1963</td>
<td>occasional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Volume of cultural activity was arrived at by Charles McLane (1973) through the measurement of various types of exchanges.

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN SOVIET-ARAB CULTURAL RELATIONS
### Chronology of Important Events in Soviet-Arab Cultural Relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Syria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>September Soviet cultural center opens in Cairo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>May Tourism Agreement</td>
<td>Cultural Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>May Cultural Protocol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>December Cultural center closed</td>
<td>Cultural center closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Soviet-Arab Friendship Society banned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>November Cultural Agreement for 1960</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>February Cultural Protocol</td>
<td>Cultural Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Protocol for 1962-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Cultural Protocol for 1963-1964</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Center reopens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td></td>
<td>Radio-TV Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Cultural Protocol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>TV Exchange Agreement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Soviet-Egypt Friendship Society formed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural and Scientific Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Tourism Agreement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td></td>
<td>Radio-TV Agreement</td>
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<td>News Exchange Agreement</td>
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<td>1968</td>
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<td>June</td>
<td>Two new Soviet cultural centers opened in Cairo and Alexandria</td>
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<td>1969</td>
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<td>October</td>
<td>Cultural Protocol on Soviet assistance in building technical training centers</td>
<td>Cultural Protocol on training of industrial instructors, labor university at Aswan</td>
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<td>March</td>
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<td>Communications Protocol: direct telephone and radio links</td>
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<td>September</td>
<td>Agreement for scholarships for Soviet Muslims to study in Egypt</td>
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<td>1971</td>
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<td>May</td>
<td>Soviet-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed</td>
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APPENDIX C

MAPS
Map 1. The Soviet Union
Map 2. The Middle East
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