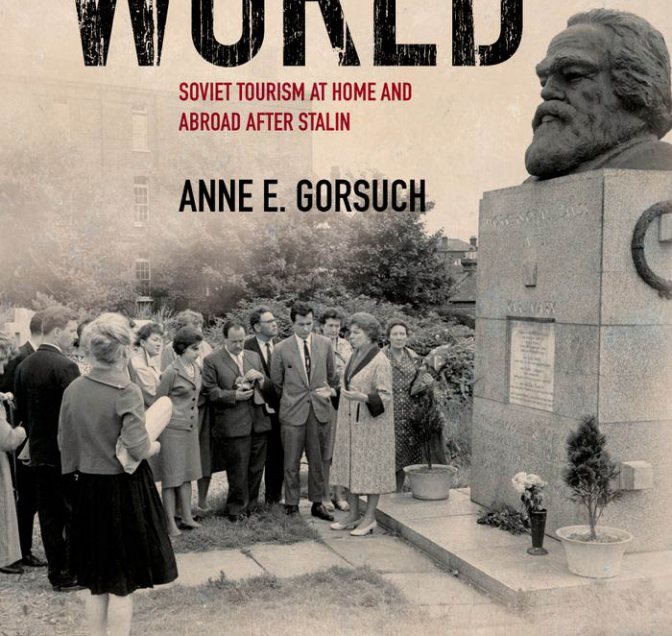


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ALL THIS IS YOUR WORLD

SOVIET TOURISM AT HOME AND
ABROAD AFTER STALIN

ANNE E. GORSUCH



OXFORD STUDIES IN
MODERN EUROPEAN HISTORY

General Editors

SIMON DIXON, MARK MAZOWER,

and

JAMES RETALLACK

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All This is Your World

*Soviet Tourism at Home
and Abroad after Stalin*

ANNE E. GORSUCH

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

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Published in the United States
by Oxford University Press Inc., New York

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First published 2011

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Data available

Typeset by SPI Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India
Printed in Great Britain
on acid-free paper by
MPG Books Group, Bodmin and King's Lynn

ISBN 978-0-19-960994-9

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

For Hal, Ellie, and Hannah, as always.

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Acknowledgments

I am very grateful for the company of so many colleagues, friends, and family members on the journey of researching and writing this book. Like all trips, this one has been greatly enriched by my traveling companions. I could not have done it without you.

In Russia, I offer my appreciation to library and archival staff, especially to Galina Mikhailovna Tokareva of the Komsomol Archive (RGASPI) for her professionalism, endless cups of tea, and willingness to tell me about her own experiences as a traveler. So too to Valeria Emmanuilovna Kunina who showed me photos and told me stories of her early trips abroad. Andrei Golubov generously shared transcripts from his own research on Soviet tourists to Finland. Elena Malysheva has been a close and supportive friend for over twenty years, beginning when I was a graduate student living at MGU and continuing now through two books about the history of her homeland. In Estonia, Andres Kurg and Eva Näripea took me around Tallinn and shared their knowledge and curiosity about Estonia in the 1950s and 1960s. Their interests in architecture and film greatly influenced my own thinking about these topics. The Estonian Film Archive (Eesti Filmiarhiiv) kindly provided permission to reproduce photos from their collection.

Colleagues and friends in England provided a first home away from home for this project during an early sabbatical and many have continued to be among my strongest bulwarks of intellectual support ever since. I am very grateful to Bob Allen, Wendy Bracewell, Mary Buckley, Simon Dixon, Juliane Fürst, Julian Graffey, Barbara Heldt, Polly Jones, Catriona Kelly, Stephen Lovell, Hilary Pilkington, Gerry Smith, and especially, Susan Reid. Harold Shukman and Gerry Smith kindly allowed me to interview them about their experiences guiding groups of Soviet tourists around England. Barbara Folscher has been an inspiring example of writerly commitment and a generous friend.

Closer to home, I am grateful for the warm support of Susan Solomon (be in it North American cities or Paris), and the enthusiasm of Bob Edelman. My work life in Vancouver has been greatly enriched by my thoughtful and intellectually generous colleagues at the University of British Columbia. Two who have played a particular part in this intellectual journey are Bill French and Tina Loo. Thank you too to Alexei Kojevnikov for tracking down Soviet films. Caroline Grover, Nina Kreiger, and Victor Zatsepine provided invaluable research assistance. Jocelyn Smith cheerfully and professionally provided great assistance with the bibliography. Canada's Social Science and Humanities Research Council provided financial support. I acknowledge the kind permission of the Larry Zim

World's Fair Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution for the images they provided.

My friends Kathryn Gretsinger, Deb Hollett, Susan Rome, and Liz Scully warmly celebrated my book writing efforts in the midst of our wide-ranging discussions about novels, non-fiction, and life. Carolyn Heller, Alan Albert, and Melanie and Pietro Abela have been curious about and very supportive of my project in the midst of their own book writing and other creative efforts. My parents, Bev and Jack Gorsuch, and my sister Meg Hopkins, have been a very important part of this journey.

Of all people, apart from my family, the one to whom I owe the greatest debt of gratitude is Diane Koenker. Diane has been fellow traveler extraordinaire, sharing enthusiasm as well as archival materials. Diane has been willing to endlessly discuss questions of tourism (of both import and minutia) via e-mail, via skype, and in person over coffee and good food in cafes and restaurants across the globe. I am deeply grateful for her companionship.

I am most thankful to the three people to whom I dedicate this book. My husband, Hal, and our daughters, Hannah and Ellie, have warmly encouraged my efforts and gamely spent dinners thinking of book titles. Best of all, they have involved me in their own rewarding, full, and joyful lives and made my life so much the better as a result.

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Introduction: Crossing Borders

In August 1955, *Pravda* proudly displayed on its front page a picture of smiling Leningrad tourists, suitcases in hand, leaving for the first Soviet tourist trip abroad, to Poland.¹ It was not only *Pravda* that paid attention. "Tourism is apparently beginning to be a two-way business at last for Soviet citizens," marveled *The Times* of London.² The ability to travel signaled a shift away from the ideological rigidity and unalloyed fear of the other under Stalin toward the comparative openness of the Khrushchev era. Stalin had promoted a defensive and largely static notion of Soviet identity, a construction requiring constant vigilance through propaganda, violence, and closed borders. Soviet vacationers were told that it was only within the boundaries of the Soviet Union that they could be confident of a warm welcome. Beginning in the Khrushchev era, Soviet citizens were newly encouraged to imagine themselves exploring the medieval towers of Tallinn's Old Town, relaxing on the Romanian Black Sea coast, even climbing the Eiffel Tower. By the mid-1960s, hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens traveled abroad as tourists each year. "Dance and then leap into your saddles," Victor encouraged his younger brother Dimka in Vasilii Aksenov's 1961 novel, *A Ticket to the Stars*: "Dive into the depths of the sea, climb mountains, fear nothing, all this is your world."³ *All This is Your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin* explores the meaning and experience of travel and encounter in late socialism. It examines the gradual integration of the Soviet Union into global processes of cultural exchange in which the Soviet Union increasingly, if anxiously, participated in the national and transnational circulation of people, as well as of ideas and items.

Tourist travel by Soviet citizens was part of a larger, well-documented, opening to the wider world in the Khrushchev era. The Moscow International Youth Festival, the Brussels World's Fair, and the American National Exhibition in Moscow are the best-known examples of an unprecedented exchange of art,

¹ "Sovetskieskie turisty vyekhali v Pol'shu," *Pravda* (August 13, 1955), 1; The National Archives, London, Foreign Office, FO 371 116783 (Report from the British Embassy, Moscow, 1955).

² "Russian Tourists Again: First Party Leaves for Poland," *The Times* (17 August 1955): 7.

³ Vasilii Aksenov, *A Ticket to the Stars* (New York, 1963), 18.

music, material items, and people.⁴ Foreign tourists were welcomed to the Soviet Union in record numbers, roughly one million foreigners visiting the Soviet Union between 1957 and 1965.⁵ Khrushchev, who according to his biographer “loved to travel,” was the Soviet Union’s most famous international traveler and advocate for embodied nationalism.⁶ His first trip abroad was to Poland with the Red Army in 1939, but reflecting the importance of the West, he later described Geneva, followed by Britain in 1956, as his “first official trip[s] abroad.”⁷ His voyages included, among others, trips to China, Indonesia, and Burma, to Afghanistan and India, to Britain, France and Switzerland, and, most famously, to the United States in 1959. Khrushchev traveled for political purpose as the head of the Soviet Union, but also as tourist, drinking champagne in France, eating hot dogs in the United States, and taking in the sights everywhere. Khrushchev sometimes traveled with his wife and children, whose itineraries were even more touristic than his: in France they visited Fontainebleau and went shopping at the Galeries Lafayette. So too in the United States, where Khrushchev’s daughters told their American hosts that what they would most like to do while in New York would be “to see a big store.”⁸ “Can we use the letter “T” to describe all of the leaders of the Soviet Union?” one Soviet joke asked in the mid-1950s. “We can: Lenin –Titan, Stalin – Tyrant, Khrushchev and Bulganin – Two Tourists.”⁹

All This is Your World is situated at the intersection of a number of topics: the history of a post-Stalin Soviet Union; the history of tourism and mobility; the

⁴ David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford, 2003); Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York, 1997); Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park, 2003); Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge, 2009); “‘Loose Girls’ on the Loose: Sex, Propaganda, and the 1957 Youth Festival” in *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, ed. Melanie Ilic, Susan E. Reid, and Lynne Attwood (New York, 2004); Pia Koivunen, “The 1957 Moscow Youth Festival: Propagating a New, Peaceful Image of the Soviet Union,” in *Soviet State and Society under Nikita Khrushchev*, ed. Melanie Ilic and Jeremy Smith (London, 2009); Susan E. Reid, “Who Will Beat Whom? Soviet Popular Reception of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959,” *Kritika* 9, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 855–904; Eleonory Gilburd, “Picasso in Thaw Culture,” *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 47, no. 1–2 (January–June 2006): 65–108.

⁵ Shawn Salmon, “Marketing Socialism: Inturist in the Late 1950s and Early 1960s” in *Turizim: The Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism*, ed. Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker (Ithaca, 2006), 190.

⁶ William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and his Era* (New York: Norton, 2003), 408.

⁷ Taubman, *Khrushchev*, 355.

⁸ Henry Cabot Lodge, confidential memorandum about Khrushchev’s trip to the US, 1959, Office of Soviet Union Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter NARA), RG 59, Box 4, File 3.4; Mrs. Llewellyn D. Thompson’s confidential memorandum about Khrushchev’s trip to the US, 1959, Office of Soviet Union Affairs, NARA, RG 59, Box 4, File 3.4; “M. ‘K.’ recevra treize caisses de champagne,” *Le Monde* 4723 (29 March 1960), 2; “Massée devant et à l’intérieur des Galeries Lafayette,” *Le Monde* 4721 (26 March 1960), 4; “Mme de Gaulle a fait visiter Fontainebleau,” *Le Monde* 4728 (3–4 April 1960), 2.

⁹ With thanks to personal correspondence from Amandine Ragamey, the author of *Prolétaires de tous pays, excusez-moi! Dérision et politique dans le monde soviétique* (Paris, 2007).

cultural history of international relations, specifically the Cold War. Although rooted in Soviet history, the project is transnational, offering an enriched perspective on our view of the continent as a whole by exploring the Soviet Union's relationship with both Eastern and Western Europe through, in this case, the experience of Soviet tourists. The book begins with a domestic tour of the Soviet Union in late Stalinism, moving outwards in concentric circles to explore travel to the inner abroad of Estonia, to the near-abroad of Eastern Europe, and to the capitalist West. It returns home again with a discussion of Soviet films about foreign travel. I focus on the Khrushchev era as the key period of post-Stalinist transition to what Andrei Yurchak has called "late socialism."¹⁰ Because most travel, by its very nature, crosses boundaries, tourism is an excellent vantage point from which to examine Soviet understandings and anxieties about what it meant to be Soviet after Stalin. Because tourism is by nature a fantasy-generating process, it is also a good entry into state-sponsored utopianism and its limitations.¹¹ A history of Soviet tourism in the 1950s and 1960s enables us to explore questions and contradictions fundamental to our understanding of late socialism. Could de-Stalinization be instituted without challenging the very legitimacy of socialism? What experiences or expressions of "difference" were now permitted, and which were regulated or forbidden? What was the significance of new opportunities for cultural exchange and transnational encounter on Soviet identity both individual and national? What, in sum, did it mean to be "Soviet" in a country no longer defined as Stalinist?

Khrushchev's de-Stalinizing Soviet Union has long been described as a period of "Thaw," a term taken from Ilya Ehrenberg's 1954 novella of that name and used as a metaphor to describe Khrushchev-era challenges to Stalinist authority, greater tolerance of diversity and difference, and cultural internationalism. Ehrenberg himself was more ambiguous about the concept of Thaw. For Ehrenberg, Nancy Condee has argued, the idea of a Thaw implied "the notion of instability, and impermanence, incompleteness, of temperature fluctuations in nature, when it is hard to foresee what turn the weather will take," a conception that Khrushchev, not surprisingly, objected to.¹² Recent work on the Khrushchev era has tended to emphasize this aspect of the Thaw, some focusing on the limits of Khrushchev-era reforms, some emphasizing the continuing, even expanding, intervention of the state into private affairs, and some questioning the uniqueness of the era's liberalizing tendencies, situating the roots of reform in late Stalinism and/or extending them well past Khrushchev's ouster into the

¹⁰ Andrei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, 2006).

¹¹ On vacationing as "an arena in which fantasy has become an important social practice" see Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley, 1999, 2002), 7.

¹² Nancy Condee, "Cultural Codes of the Thaw," in *Nikita Khrushchev*, ed. William Taubman, Sergei Khrushchev, and Abbott Gleason (New Haven, 2000), 69.

Brezhnev period.¹³ A history of international encounter allows for possibilities sympathetic to the notion of the Thaw both as optimistic opening and as anxiously authoritarian. Soviet citizens were newly treated, if unevenly and within definite limits, as responsible and reliable, as individuals confident in their Soviet identity and trustworthy to send abroad. These very changes permitted, however, behaviors and beliefs which threatened to outrun a sometimes apprehensive regime.¹⁴

A history of Soviet tourism also helps us consider the place of the 1950s and 1960s in the longer sweep of Soviet history, and in comparison to other national and international projects of modernization, consumption, and empire building. Socialist *turizm* as a tool of self-improvement and socialist state-building did not begin with the Khrushchev era. Domestic tourism as a Soviet project for building knowledge, strengthening the body, and encouraging patriotism began in the 1920s. Even international tourism was not a product of de-Stalinization alone. The Soviet international tourist agency, Intourist, was founded in 1929, and the possibility of permitting limited Soviet tourist travel abroad was openly discussed in the press in the late 1920s, if firmly rejected.¹⁵ If this book looks backwards to the connections between the period of the New Economic Policy and the Khrushchev era, however, it also looks forward, seeking to understand how the 1950s and early 1960s helped establish the nature of the Soviet state and its relationship to Soviet society in late socialism. Travel abroad did not end with Khrushchev's ouster in 1964; the number of Soviet citizens traveling

¹³ For some examples of work which address these and other questions related to the Thaw, see Priscilla Johnson and Leopold Labedz, ed. *Khrushchev and the Arts: The Politics of Soviet Culture, 1962–1964* (Cambridge, 1965); Elena Zubkova, *Russia after the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945–1957*, trans. Hugh Ragsdale (Armonk, 1998); Julie Hessler, "A Postwar Perestroika? Towards a History of Private Enterprise in the USSR," *Slavic Review* 57, no. 3 (Fall 1998): 516–42; Robert D. English, *Russian and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals, and the End of the Cold War* (New York, 2000); Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999* (Ithaca, 2002); Susan E. Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev," *Slavic Review* 61, no. 2 (2002): 211–52; Iurii Aksiutin, *Khrushchevskaiia 'ottepel' i obshchestvennye nastroyeniia v SSSR v 1953–1964 gg* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004); Polly Jones, ed. *The Dilemmas of De-Stalinization. Negotiating Cultural and Social Change in the Khrushchev Era* (London and New York, 2006); *Repenser le Dégel: versions du socialisme, influences internationales et société soviétique*, a special issue of *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 47, no. 1–2 (January–June 2006); Juliane Fürst, ed. *Late Stalinist Russia: Society between reconstruction and reinvention* (London, 2006); Stephen V. Bittner, *The Many Lives of Khrushchev's Thaw: Experience and Memory in Moscow's Arbat* (Ithaca, 2008); Ilic and Smith, ed. *Soviet State and Society*; Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*; Miriam Dobson, *Khrushchev's Cold Summer: Gulag Returnees, Crime and the Fate of Reform after Stalin* (Ithaca, 2009); Juliane Fürst, *Stalin's Last Generation: Soviet Post-War Youth and the Emergence of Mature Socialism* (Oxford, 2010).

¹⁴ Khrushchev's was not the first Russian Thaw to enable travel abroad. Alexander II's reforms 100 years earlier included easing foreign travel restrictions put in place by Nicolas I. Susan Layton, "The Divisive Modern Russian Tourist Abroad: Representations of Self and Other in the Early Reform Era," *Slavic Review* 68, no. 4 (Winter 2009), 855.

¹⁵ With thanks to Diane P. Koenker, "The Proletarian Tourist in the 1930s: with the masses or away from them?" unpublished paper.

internationally continued to increase annually. In 1970, more than 1.8 million Soviet citizens traveled abroad. In 1985, this figure had risen to 4.5 million.¹⁶

The significant growth of international tourism (echoed by an even more impressive rise in domestic travel¹⁷) resembles the meteoric increase in tourism throughout much of the world in the postwar period. A recuperating economy encouraged people, middle-class but also increasingly working-class, to travel via bus tour from Northern Europe to sunny beaches on the Adriatic, on double-decker train cars with panorama windows throughout the United States, and on Pan Am's new eight-hour transatlantic flights between New York and Paris.¹⁸ Pan Am's 1960 annual report proudly concluded that, with its new worldwide routes to Europe and Africa, South America, Australia, and the Middle East, "the free world has become a neighborhood."¹⁹ As this suggests, tourism was closely tied to a rising commitment to cultural internationalism.²⁰ Travel was "fundamental to the internationalism of the postwar years," Richard Ivan Jobs has argued. "[R]econstruction projects, exchange programs, and hostel networks were organized in Western Europe to facilitate travel by the young for the purpose of promoting international understanding and cooperation among populations who had been engaged in brutal and repeated warfare." Europeans, Jobs argues, "were now encouraged to travel abroad, to visit other nations and meet and interact with other nationalities."²¹ This book adds the communist world to this equation. *All This is Your World* integrates and compares tourist experiences under socialism and capitalism, considering both the similarities—a commitment to modernity, mobility, internationalism, state building, and consumption—and the fundamental differences.²²

¹⁶ The exact numbers vary according to source, but are roughly commensurate. Randolph M. Siverson, Alexander J. Groth, and Marc Blumberg, "Soviet Tourism and Détente," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 13, no. 4 (Winter 1980): 364; *Turist*, no. 10 (1975): 29; V.I. Azar, *Ordnykh trudiasbchikhsia SSSR* (Moscow, 1972), 41; G.P. Dolzhenko, *Istoriia turizma v dorevoliutsionnoi Rossii i SSSR* (Rostov, 1988), 154.

¹⁷ See Diane P. Koenker, "Whose Right to Rest? Contesting the Family Vacation in the Postwar Soviet Union," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51 (2009): 409–11.

¹⁸ Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley, 1999, 2002), 41, 170–71; George E. Burns, "The Jet Age Arrives," www.panam.org/default1.asp.

¹⁹ Burns, "The Jet Age Arrives."

²⁰ For a history of cultural internationalism, see Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, 1997) and *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, 2002).

²¹ Richard Ivan Jobs, "Youth Movements: Travel, Protest, and Europe in 1968," *American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (April 2009): 376–404. A first influential book on tourism and politics was Colin Michael Hall, *Tourism and Politics: Policy, Power and Place* (Chichester, 1994).

²² On socialist tourism in Russia and the USSR, see Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, ed. *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism* (Ithaca, 2006); Diane P. Koenker, "Travel to Work, Travel to Play: On Russian Tourism, Travel, and Leisure," *Slavic Review* 62.4 (2003): 657–65; Koenker, "Whose Right to Rest?," On the history of Intourist see Shawn Connelly Salmon, "To the Land of the Future: A History of Intourist and Travel to the Soviet Union 1929–1991," (PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2008) and V.E. Bardasarian et al, *Sovetskoe zazerkal'e: Inostannyi turizm v SSSR v 1930–1980 gg* (Moscow, 2007).

DOMESTIC *TURIZM*

For American tourists traveling by cruiseship to Alaska, or British tourists enjoying the sun in Spain, tourism is a leisure activity involving travel away from home and work for the sake of pleasure, relaxation, education, and consumption.²³ The Russian term *turizm* has a different flavor, emphasizing the purposeful and the physical, and often referring to walking, hiking, biking, and camping. A set of four forty-kopeck stamps issued in 1959 showed young men (and one young woman) canoeing, rock climbing, cross-country skiing, and reading a map. A second series of stamps showed places of natural beauty, including mountains, lakes, and seashores.²⁴ *Turizm* was self-improving and socially constructive: building knowledge, restoring and strengthening the body, encouraging patriotism. "The Soviet vacation did not provide an escape from the mobilization of citizens toward a common goal," Diane Koenker has argued. "From its beginning it was a continuation of that mobilization using an alternate setting."²⁵ An emphasis on the purposefully civic rather than the idly pleasurable, was not exclusively Soviet. In mid-nineteenth century Russia, Susan Layton demonstrates, writers and journalists across the political spectrum agreed that Russian travel to Western Europe should yield educative, moral, and civic benefits, a belief that distinguished them from their compatriots among the English traveling elite, for example.²⁶ In the USSR, this was held to be true of

On tourism in socialist China, see Pál Nyíri, *Scenic Spots: Chinese Tourism, the State, and Cultural Authority* (Seattle, 1996); Suggestively, Yugoslavia, with its unique place between east and west, is the subject of much of the recent work on socialist tourism. See *Yugoslavia's Sunny Side: A History of Tourism in Socialism (1950s–1980s)*, ed. Hannes Grandits and Karin Taylor (Budapest, 2010); Wendy Bracewell, "Adventures in the Marketplace: Yugoslav Travel Writing and Tourism in the 1950s–1960s," in Gorsuch and Koenker, *Turizm*; Patrick Hyder Patterson, "Dangerous Liaisons: Soviet-Bloc Tourists and the Yugoslav Good Life in the 1960s & 1970s," in *The Business of Tourism: Place, Faith and History*, ed. Philip Scranton and Janet F. Davidson, (Philadelphia, 2006), 186–212; Igor Tchoukarine, "Politiques et représentations d'une mise en tourisme: le tourisme international en Yougoslavie de 1945 à la fin des années 1960" (PhD dissertation, École des hautes études en sciences sociales, June 2010).

²³ Amongst scholars, tourism has rarely been so simply defined and there is a large literature exploring distinctions (or not) between tourism, travel, and most recently, vacationing. On the distinction sometimes made between the "mass" tourist and the "sophisticated" and superior traveler, see James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800–1918* (Oxford, 1993). Jean-Didier Urbain introduced the question of tourism's relationship to the "vacation." Jean-Didier Urbain, *Sur la plage: Moeurs et coutumes balnéaires* (Paris, 1994). See also Löfgren, *On Holiday*.

²⁴ H.E. Harris, ed. *Statesman Deluxe Stamp Album*, 1968 (no publisher, no page number).

²⁵ Koenker, "Whose Right to Rest?," 1.

²⁶ Layton, "The Divisive Modern Russian," 870. On tourism in Imperial Russia also see Louise McReynolds, "The Prerevolutionary Russian Tourist: Commercialization in the Nineteenth Century," and Susan Layton, "Russian Military Tourism: The Crisis of the Crimean War period," both in Gorsuch and Koenker, *Turizm*; Sara Dickenson, *Breaking Ground: Travel and National Culture in Russia from Peter I to the Era of Pushkin* (Amsterdam, 2006); Christopher Ely,



Figure 1 Enjoying the outdoors. With permission from the Estonian Film Archive.

domestic and international travel, and it was made an official project. Some tourist excursions were nature-based, such as the day hike of sixty young people to a picnic site on the Moscow River in 1952, but others were explicitly ideological.²⁷ In the early 1950s, travelers earned the badge of “USSR Tourist” for traveling to Gori, Baku, and Tbilisi in a touristic re-renactment of the childhood and early revolutionary life of Stalin.²⁸ Often, the two were combined—the student group that enjoyed the “picturesque” beauty of the Moscow River also stopped in the pouring rain to listen “with attention” to a lecture relating to nearby Borodino.²⁹ Tourists were also supposed to be of assistance to local people along the way. This same group took a break from their hike to help peasants with their mowing. *Turizm* was a form of mass action through *doing*, similar to other forms of active mass participation such as “collectivizing the

“The Origins of Russian Scenery: Volga River Tourism and Russian Landscape Aesthetics,” *Slavic Review* 62, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 666–82.

²⁷ Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (hereafter GARF), f. 9520, op. 1, d. 252, ll. 2–4 (Tourist journals, 1952).

²⁸ *Trud* (29 February 1952), 4/ *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (hereafter CDSP) 4:9 (12 April 1952).

²⁹ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 252, ll. 2–3

countryside and industrializing the periphery, doing mass calisthenics, [and] writing poetry in workers' clubs."³⁰

The purposeful physicality of proletarian tourism distinguished it from a vacation for the purposes of healing "rest" (*otdykh*). Soviet citizens in need of healing or relaxation traveled to a health spa (*kurort*) or rest home (*dom otdykha*). The visitor to a *kurort* enjoyed a three- to four-week stay for treatment and relaxation. Health professionals were available to design diet, exercise, and mineral water regimes specific to the needs of a particular client such as "milk days" for those with cardiovascular problems, and "apple days" for colitis and dysentery.³¹ Rest homes were vacation rest houses, often in natural settings, that provided meals and simple lodging. They were condemned by at least one observer as places of slothful indulgence in which a "young, healthy man whose organism craves physical activity . . . falls into the hothouse environment of a *dom otdykha* where he spends idiotic . . . numbing hours of fattening and obesity, putting on weight."³² Other recreational opportunities included sports and sunbathing, as well as cultural entertainment in the evening—amateur concerts, film, dancing. Despite the supposed difference between *turizm* and *otdykh*, however, the boundary between the two was porous, increasingly so by the 1960s and 1970s. Trips to health spas, and certainly to rest homes, were often closer to what we might consider a vacation than a hospital sojourn.³³ Although health spas were intended for those sent under doctors' orders, well-connected people sometimes managed to maneuver the system so as to enjoy a month's holiday in the relative luxury of the Black Sea.³⁴

³⁰ James von Geldern, "The centre and the periphery: cultural and social geography in the mass culture of the 1930s," in *New Directions in Soviet History*, ed. Stephen White (Cambridge, 1992), 71.

³¹ GARF, f. 9228, op. 1, d. 302, ll. 64–76, 106–108, 143–45 (Medical reports). In 1937 there were over 60,000 All-Union and republic health resorts of various kinds, d. 3, l. 1 (Report on expansion of *kurorti*).

³² The supposed "hothouse" environment of the rest home (and the sanatorium) may refer to their reputation as places of illicit sexual encounter, fostered in part because husbands and wives so rarely traveled together due to the challenges of obtaining authorized passes for the same location. GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 69, l. 7 (TEU meeting, 1948); Mary M. Leder, *My Life in Soviet Russia: An American Woman Looks Back* (Bloomington, 2001), 121, 132–33; Anna Rotkirch, "Traveling Maidens and Men with Parallel Lives—Journeys as Private Space During Late Socialism," in *Beyond the Limits: The Concept of Space in Russian History and Culture*, ed. Jeremy Smith, *Studia Historica* 62 (Helsinki, 1999); Koenker, "Whose Right to Rest?" 407.

³³ On sanatoria as vacation resorts in the late Imperial period, see Louise McReynolds, *Russia at Play: Leisure Activities at the End of the Tsarist Era* (Ithaca, 2003), 171.

³⁴ Ronald Hingley, *Under Soviet Skins: An Untourist's Report* (London, 1961), 45. In 1919, the new Soviet state published a decree on sanatoria and health resorts that nationalized pre-revolutionary resorts and opened them to a wider public. However, there were still special sanatoria for the cultural and political elite including members of the Academy of Sciences and the Union of Soviet Writers. In the 1970s, the "thirteenth-month" bonus Soviet elites took home was sometimes called "hospital" or "cure" money. S.V. Kurashova, L.G. Gol'dfailya, G.N. Pospelovoi, ed. *Kuroty SSSR* (Moscow, 1962), 10–11; Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, 101;

In contrast to vacations for rest and healing, *turizm* had a toughening quality. The diarist of one extremely rainy hike insisted that “everything went well” and that “nobody paid any attention to [the pouring rain].” Of special note was the “fortitude” of the girls: in Moscow, “all of the girls would have sheltered under newspapers or umbrellas, but here they paid no attention.”³⁵ Goals for *turizm* reflected long-held beliefs about exposure to the elements, and travel itself, as a source of physical and ideological strengthening. In Sergei Aksakov’s 1852 memoir *Years of Childhood*, he attributed his recovery from debilitating illness to “movement,” “air” and the “marvelous effect of travel upon health.”³⁶ Lenin likewise “preached the virtues of clean mountain air and long hikes in the forest.”³⁷ In 1947, O. Arkhangel’skaia, the author of *How to organize a tourist trip*, argued that “fresh air” and movement would “strengthen the nervous system” and lead to “a healthy appetite and sleep.”³⁸ Connections were made between the physical strengthening and know-how provided through active tourism and the “practice of communist construction.” Tourism authority, V.V. Dobkovich, defined active tourism as a form of what he called “health-improving purposefulness” (*ozdorovitel’nyi napravlennost’*).³⁹ He argued that vigorous tourism would “strengthen the nervous system, [and] improve the working of the cardio-vascular system” thus enabling “the Soviet tourist to more successfully do his part in the active construction of a communist society.”⁴⁰ Tourists venturing to the Tien Shan Mountains, to the Caucasus or to the Urals, were said to find “new strength, good spirits and health.”⁴¹ The athleticism of tourism and its association with bodily strengthening, were especially relevant (if not exclusively so) to the prewar and postwar periods, when so many people were either preparing for war or recovering from it.

Turizm was not just a form of *doing*, however. It was also a form of what James von Geldern has called mass action through *seeing*.⁴² Excursions to cultural events, historical museums and collective farms demanded mental concentration rather than physical agility, but were also highly valued forms of touristic behavior. “There is a hush over the place,” John Steinbeck observed about the Lenin Museum in 1947. “People speak in whispers, and the lecturers with their

Mervyn Matthews, *Privilege in the Soviet Union: A Study of Elite Life-Styles under Communism* (London, 1978), 36.

³⁵ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 252, l. 14. Others were more honest about the dampening effects of rain. GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 252, l. 30.

³⁶ Serge Aksakoff, *Years of Childhood*, trans. J.D. Duff (London, 1916), 7–8.

³⁷ John McCannon, *Red Arctic: Polar Exploration and the Myth of the North in the Soviet Union, 1932–1939* (New York, 1998), 83.

³⁸ O. Arkhangel’skaia, *Kak organizovat’ turistskoe puteshestvie* (Moscow, 1947), 4, 6; I.I. Fedenko, *Volga—velikaia russkaia reka* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1946), 35.

³⁹ V.V. Dobkovich, *Turizm v SSSR* (Leningrad, 1954), 10.

⁴⁰ Dobkovich, *Turizm v SSSR*, 11.

⁴¹ *Zdorov’e* 4 (April 1956), 24.

⁴² von Geldern, “The centre and the periphery,” 71.

pointers talk in a curious melodic litany.”⁴³ John Urry has drawn our attention to the fundamentally visual nature of the modern tourist experience in an analysis of the “tourist gaze.”⁴⁴ Museums, postcards, photography, the very notion of sightseeing, all confirm the importance of the visual for tourism, something Soviet travel experts also acknowledged. In her guide to travel, Arkhangel’skaia wrote about the way in which the photograph might give “shape to travel.” She insisted that the subject matter of the tourist photograph was to be “figured out before hand so that after the trip the photographs reflect all sides of the trip and the life of the group.”⁴⁵ The importance of seeing sights only increased. By the late 1950s, sightseeing in Moscow and Leningrad, sailing around Europe on the cruiseship *Victory* [*Pobeda*], and looking at the historical monuments of Rome were all enthusiastically defined as *turizm*.⁴⁶

Many tourist activities—helping peasants with their mowing—stretched the boundaries of what we might consider a vacation. This did not mean, however, that pleasure was entirely absent. Indeed, one of the goals of proletarian tourism, in contrast to bourgeois tourism, was to make the pleasures of the Soviet Union’s natural beauty available to everyone.⁴⁷ Still, in the 1920s and 1930s, it was primarily the purposeful that was meant to give pleasure: travelers looking for pleasure could choose excursions to the Black Sea rather than energetic marches over Caucasian mountain passes, but the excursions were primarily meant to improve the tourist’s intellectual and physical capacity. Increasingly, however, the Soviet vacation was about pleasures of shopping, sun, sand, and the sea, in addition to sightseeing and public service, a change to be explored in the chapters that follow.⁴⁸

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

In the spring of 1955, a Soviet Central Committee resolution introduced the possibility of allowing Soviet citizens to cross Soviet borders and experience foreign countries firsthand.⁴⁹ For the moment, according to the resolution,

⁴³ John Steinbeck, *A Russian Journal* (London, 1949), 37.

⁴⁴ Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*.

⁴⁵ Arkhangel’skaia, *Kak organizovat’ turistskoe puteshestvie*, 32.

⁴⁶ G.A. Zelenko, “Chto takoe turizm,” *Turistskie tropy* (Moscow, 1958), 8.

⁴⁷ Diane P. Koenker, “The Proletarian Tourist in the 1930s: Between Mass Excursion and Mass Escape,” in Gorsuch and Koenker, *Turizm*.

⁴⁸ Koenker, “Whose Right to Rest?,” Christian Noack, “Coping with the Tourist: Planned and ‘Wild’ Mass Tourism on the Soviet Black Sea Coast,” in Gorsuch and Koenker, *Turizm*, 281–304.

⁴⁹ Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii (hereafter RGANI), f. 5, op. 30, d. 70, ll. 110–22 (Resolution on foreign tourism in the Soviet Union, 1954); d. 113, l. 32 (Central Committee resolution on international connections, 1955). The April 1955 version closely resembled the resolution from March 1954 about renewing tourism to the Soviet Union by foreigners, except that the 1955 version also included the possibility of Soviet citizens traveling abroad.



Figure 2 Soviet tourists on Capri, 1957. RIA Novosti.

Soviet tourists would travel only to socialist countries, but in “subsequent years” they would also be allowed to travel to capitalist countries. In actual practice, by July, Soviet authorities were already approaching the British travel agency Progressive Tours and soon after Norway, Italy, and Sweden, about developing tourism to and from the Soviet Union.⁵⁰ George Jellicoe, a high-ranking Soviet expert in the British Foreign Office, was skeptical, doubting whether they would have “two-way traffic,” but change was afoot: thirty-eight Soviet tourists visited Sweden for the first time in September 1955.⁵¹ Intourist, established as a travel agency for foreigners traveling to the Soviet Union, now took on the new responsibility (together with other groups as described in the chapters that follow) of organizing trips and regulating access for Soviet citizens wishing to travel abroad. “Some 450 Russian tourists reached Naples today . . . on the first cruise abroad by private Russian citizens since the time of the Tsars,” the *The Times* marveled in June 1956. The tourists “followed the best bourgeois traditions,” touring Pompeii and Amalfi by bus, eating at a well-known restaurant in Naples, and making a “traditional tourist pilgrimage” to Capri.⁵²

⁵⁰ The National Archives, London, Foreign Office, FO 371 116783 (Report from British Embassy in Tel Aviv, 1955); “Exchange of Tourists: More Soviet Visitors Proposed,” *The Times* (13 July 1955): 5.

⁵¹ The National Archives, London, Foreign Office, FO 371 116783 (Record of meeting in Lord Jellicoe’s office, 1955); “Sovetskie turisty vyekhali v shvetsiu,” *Trud* (10 September 1955).

⁵² “Soviet Tourists in Italy: First Cruise Abroad,” *The Times* (13 June 1956): 8. *The Times* was wrong about this; the first cruise abroad, as described below, was in 1930.

Before 1955—apart from diplomats, trade officials, journalists, cultural figures, and the two sets of exemplary workers sent on cruises around Europe in 1930 and 1931—the vast majority of more ordinary Soviet citizens had to be satisfied with reading about the rest of the world in journals and magazines such as *Vokrug sveta* [Around the World] and *Na sushe i na more* [By Land and by Sea].⁵³ In some ways, there was nothing specifically Soviet about this. Many ordinary people in most parts of the world did not travel abroad until the introduction of the package tour and the great explosion of cheap air travel via jet planes in the late 1950s and 1960s. But while the ability of a Frenchman to travel abroad for vacation in 1920 or 1960 was largely dependent on his financial resources, the Soviet citizen had to apply to the government for permission to leave the country for any reason, let alone for vacation travel.⁵⁴ Beginning in 1955, although the application procedure was complex and standards rigorous, many were now newly encouraged to imagine themselves cruising on the Danube River.

Why? The introduction of foreign tourism was closely tied to international politics. Travel, as Shawn Salmon has argued in her history of Intourist, was an “ideologically charged topic at the heart of internal and foreign policy discussions throughout the Cold War.”⁵⁵ In 1946, North Americans and Europeans begin considering international standards for passport and visa processes. The USSR under Stalin rejected any such overtures. The United States was also uncertain, enacting hostile measures of its own by restricting travel abroad by American communists and travel by Americans to communist countries.⁵⁶ Indeed, a tentative conciliatory effort by Malenkov at Stalin’s funeral was stonewalled by a still-fearful United States; he retracted his position in April 1954.⁵⁷ Following Stalin’s death in March 1953, however, there was a steady effort on the part of the new Soviet regime to reestablish and expand international contacts. In April, an Intourist representative told a Danish tourist organization that they were eager to make arrangements for foreign tourists to visit the USSR, reestablishing travel connections cut off before the war.⁵⁸ An October 1953 article in *Komsomolskaia Pravda* included an appeal for more exchanges: “Only those who want to spread enmity and hatred among nations can object to international exchange. . . . with all their hearts, Soviet youth and Soviet students are happy to broaden the

⁵³ On working class travel abroad see Koenker, “The Proletarian Tourist in the 1930s,” 131. On international travel by the Soviet governmental and cultural elite, see Michael David-Fox, “From Illusory ‘Society’ to Intellectual ‘Public’: VOKS, International Travel and Party-Intelligentsia Relations in the Interwar Period,” *Contemporary European History* 11, no. 1 (2002): 7–32.

⁵⁴ David-Fox, “From Illusory ‘Society’ to Intellectual ‘Public,’” 16–22; Mervyn Matthews, *The Passport Society: Controlling Movement in Russia and the USSR* (Boulder, 1993), 22–26, 37.

⁵⁵ Salmon, “To the Land of the Future,” 171.

⁵⁶ Salmon, “To the Land of the Future,” 168–71.

⁵⁷ Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*, 96.

⁵⁸ The National Archives, London, Foreign Office, FO 371 106579 (Report by a representative of the British Trade Council, 1953).

cultural and scientific ties among nations.”⁵⁹ Beginning in 1954, Central Committee files include descriptions of trips by Soviet scientists, artists, and other delegates to foreign countries and instructions to increase foreign tourism from both socialist Eastern Europe and capitalist countries to the Soviet Union.⁶⁰ These efforts were novel enough that reports about the itineraries and activities of visiting artists and delegations were on occasion addressed directly to Khrushchev.⁶¹

The April 1955 resolution permitting Soviet citizens to travel abroad followed expressly from these and other international efforts aimed at normalizing foreign relations, first with Eastern Bloc countries and then with capitalist ones. The establishment of the Warsaw Pact, reconciliation with Yugoslavia’s Tito, and the success of the Austrian State Treaty all occurred in late spring 1955. Tourism to Eastern Europe was meant to encourage friendship and mutual understanding between ordinary citizens in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Bloc countries, and to contribute to the Soviet Union’s ideological and economic appropriation and integration of recently acquired territories, territories considered especially important in the Cold War battle for hearts and minds, as well as geographical spaces. Normalizing relations with Eastern Europe bolstered Soviet confidence going into the Geneva summit conference that brought together the heads of state of the Soviet Union, United States, Britain, and France in July 1955.⁶² Historians have generally criticized the summit as producing few tangible results on fundamental questions such as the future of Germany.⁶³ But the “spirit of Geneva,” with its focus on “tourism, trade, and culture,”⁶⁴ had a profound longer-term effect on international relations. Soviet leaders were emboldened by their ability at the summit to get western leaders to talk with them as equal partners. They were reassured through personal contact and informal talks that, in the words of Khrushchev, “there was not any sort of prewar situation in existence at that time, and our enemies were afraid of us in the same way as we were afraid of them.”⁶⁵ Tourists to capitalist countries would, in this context, travel as envoys for peaceful coexistence between the socialist East and capitalist West, reinforcing the ideological and economic goals of newly normalized relations through personal encounter and political performance. As Khrushchev

⁵⁹ Ye. Burgov, “Seminar in Lund,” *Komsomolskaia pravda* (7 October 1953), 3/ *CDSF* 5, no. 40 (November 18, 1953): 41.

⁶⁰ RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 70, ll. 110–22.

⁶¹ RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 71, ll. 48–49 (Report on visit to Moscow by a French theater troupe).

⁶² On bolstering Soviet confidence, see Vladislav M. Zubok, “Soviet Policy Aims at the Geneva Conference, 1955,” in *Cold War Respite: The Geneva Summit of 1955*, ed. Günter Bischof and Saki Dockrill (Baton Rouge, 2000), 61.

⁶³ Saki Dockrill and Günter Bischof, “Geneva: The Fleeting Opportunity for Détente,” in Bischof and Dockrill, *Cold War Respite*, 3, 19.

⁶⁴ “More East-West Contacts: Tourism and Culture—Soufflé of Geneva Conference,” *The Times* (17 October 1955): 9.

⁶⁵ As cited in Zubok, “Soviet Policy Aims,” 73.