IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY
ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATION INSTITUTE
DEPARTMENT CIVILIZATION STUDIES

MA THESIS

‘THE EAST IS A DELICATE MATTER’ OR SOVIET ORIENTALISM IN FILMS ABOUT CENTRAL ASIA 1955-1970

ELVIRA KULIEVA

JUNE 2018

ONAY SAYFASI

Bu tez tarafımızca okunmuş olup kapsam ve nitelik açısından, Medeniyet Araştırmaları alanında Yüksek Lisans Derecesini alabilmek için yeterli olduğuna karar verilmiştir.

Tez Jürisi Üyeleri:

(Unvanı Adı ve Soyadı)	KANAATİ	İMZA
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Nagihan HALİLOĞLU (Tez Danışmanı)	_____	_____
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi İbrahim Vehbi BAYSAN	_____	_____
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Zeynep Kevser ŞEREFOĞLU DANIŞ	_____	_____

Bu tezin İbn Haldun Üniversitesi Medeniyetler İttifaki Enstitüsü tarafından konulan tüm standartlara uygun şekilde yazıldığı teyit edilmiştir.

Tarih Mühür/İmza

AKADEMİK DÜRÜSTLÜK BEYANI

Bu tezin yazılmasında bilimsel ahlâk kurallarına uyulduğu, başkalarının eserlerinden yararlanılması durumunda bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunulduğu, kullanılan verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapılmadığı, tezin herhangi bir kısmının bu üniversiteye veya başka bir üniversitedeki başka bir tez çalışması olarak sunulmadığını beyan ederim.

Adı Soyadı: ELVIRA KULIEVA
İmza:

ABSTRACT

‘THE EAST IS A DELICATE MATTER’ OR SOVIET ORIENTALISM IN FILMS ABOUT CENTRAL ASIA 1955-1970

KULIEVA, ELVIRA
M.A. in Civilization Studies
Thesis Advisor: Dr. Nagihan HALİLOĞLU
June 2018, 89 pages

From the day modernity was instilled with the invention of motion picture, cinema has become a crucial instrument in the construction of identity and the development of the common sense of belonging.

The issue of the Soviet representation of its own Orient, namely central Asia and its inhabitants via the ‘most important art’ as was emphasized by Vladimir Lenin, till this day has been significantly neglected within academia as a valuable source of research. The ‘movies for the masses’ which were made in the Soviet *vostok* (east/orient) or about it, through the complexity of ideas, together make up the Soviet Orientalist films' canon.

This MA thesis sheds a new light on the discussions concerning Soviet Orientalism through the discursive analysis of the four different Soviet films that were produced during 1955-1970 visualizing central Asia. Also, my MA thesis demonstrates the continuity and connection of orientalist discourse in various types of Russia statehoods by providing the overview of the relationship between the Russian and its ‘oriental’ neighbors.

Through an analysis of the discursive technics that were implemented in these cultural productions that aimed to visualize Central Asia from a ‘Soviet’ Weltanschauung, I aim to analyze how these tools were utilized to reconcile the Muslim heritage of certain Soviet territories with the presence of socialism. One wonders how the Soviet anti-imperialist rhetoric visualized in the context of the civilizatory mission? How exactly was the establishment of the Soviet authority depicted in films produced for a central-Asian audience allowing it to influence perceptions in the periphery of the Soviet? As such, this thesis will make a contribution to understanding the relationship between power and

representation paradoxically manifested in the cinema productions of the Soviet towards central Asia during 1955-1970.

Keywords: Central Asia, Films, Orientalism, Frontier Orientalism, Identity, Muslims.

ÖZ

‘DOĞU HASSAS BİR KONUDUR’: FİLİMLERDE SOVYET ŞARKİYATÇILIĞI
(1955-1970)

KULIEVA, ELVIRA
Medeniyet Araştırmaları Yüksek Lisans Programı
Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Nagihan
HALİLOĞLU Temmuz 2018, 89 sayfa

Modernite sinemanın icadıyla beslendiğinden beri, sinema kimlik inşasında ve ortak aidiyet hissinin gelişiminde elzem bir araç haline gelmiştir.

Sovyet’in kendi Şark’ını temsil etme meselesi, yani Vladimir Lenin’in vurgusuyla ‘en önemli sanat’ aracılığıyla orta Asya ve yerlilerinin temsili, bugüne dek akademik dünyada önemli bir araştırma konusu olarak büyük ölçüde ihmal edilmiştir. Sovyet *vostok’*unda (doğu/şark) veya onunla alakalı yapılan ‘kitleler için filmler’, fikirlerin karmaşasıyla birlikte Sovyet Oryantalist filmlerinin esasını teşkil eder.

Bu yüksek lisans tezi, orta Asya’yı görselleştiren 1955-1970 yılları arasında yapılmış dört farklı Sovyet filmlerinin söylemsel analizi yoluyla Sovyet Oryantalizmiyle alakalı tartışmalara ışık tutmayı amaçlar. Tezim, aynı zamanda da Rusya ve Rusya’nın ‘şarki’ komşularıyla olan ilişkisine genel bir bakış sağlayarak farklı tür Rusya devletlerindeki oryantalist söylemin devamlılığını ve bağlantılığını ortaya koyar.

Bu çalışmada, Orta Asya’yı bir ‘Sovyet’ Dünya Görüşü açısından görselleştirmeyi amaçlayan bu kültürel prodüksiyonlarda uygulanmış söylemsel tekniklerin analiz edilmesi yoluyla, bu araçların bazı Sovyet topraklarındaki Müslüman mirasıyla sosyalizm varlığını uzlaştırmada nasıl kullanıldığını incelemeyi amaçlıyorum. Sovyet anti-emperyalist söyleminin medenileştirme misyonu bağlamında nasıl görselleştirildiği merak konusudur. Orta Asyalı bir izleyici kitlesi için üretilmiş filmlerde gösterilen Sovyet

otoritesinin inşası, Sovyet'in çevresindeki algıları değiştirmeye tam olarak nasıl bir katkıda bulunuştur? Böylelikle, bu tez 1955-1970 yılları arasında orta Asya ile alakalı yapılmış Sovyet filmlerinde paradoksal bir biçimde ortaya konan güç ve temsil arasındaki ilişkiyi anlamaya yardımcı olacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Orta Asya, Filmler, Şarkiyatçılık, Sınır Şarkiyatçılığı, Kimlik, Musulmanlar

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In their various manifestations, Russian and Soviet forms of orientalism have inspired scholars of different academic fields around the world for the better part of the last three decades. The growing body of literature that analyzes the relationship between Russia and its geopolitical neighbors, which are referred as *vostochnie* (oriental) in various historical periods, laid the foundation for numerous studies discussing Russian orientalism. Recent years were marked by the publication of several outstanding monographs and collections of articles covering Russian orientalism. However, the issue of Soviet representation of its Orient or *vostochnie* neighbors (through the "most important art," as was emphasized by Lenin), is a relatively unexplored research topic. The aim of this dissertation is to identify the manner in which the inhabitants of Central Asia have been depicted in Soviet films. This visualization is significant because it equally affected on the identity formations of Central Asians, as well as Russians' perceptions of the region and its inhabitants. Thus, I will demonstrate how visual representation was connected to policy making, identity formation, and ideology. My thesis aims to make a contribution to the understanding of Soviet cinema as it relates to the Central Asian region, in order to demonstrate how Central Asia and its predominantly Muslim inhabitants were represented.

During the Soviet period, cinema about the East or "Orient" was the main medium for the dissemination of the state's ideological, political, and economic beliefs, where contradictory were united anti-imperialist and civilizatory mission discourses were united. The "movies for the masses" which were made in the Soviet *vostok* (East/Orient) or about it, through the complexity of ideas, together make up the Soviet Orientalist film canon which is the subject of this study. My aim here is to shed new light on the debates on Soviet cinema by examining the films through the lenses of Orientalism. The distinctive feature of Soviet films (in comparison with Hollywood films, for example) is their dominant and prominent display of universalist Marxist messages. Marxist messaging is unavoidably present in the great majority of Soviet films. It introduces new angles of representation of "Oriental people" in Soviet Oriental films, where the depiction is based not only the asymmetrical relationship between colonizers and the colonized, but also the cross-asymmetry inside the Soviet orient itself.

I did not discuss the Soviet technical aspects which have its own particularities compared to films produced in other countries, because it is beyond my focus here. Also, the limitation of this study is that it is unable to encompass the entire body of Soviet cinema. I have chosen for this thesis one region of the Soviet Orient, namely Central Asia. However, the history of the Russian or Soviet Orient is deeply interconnected, and in order to better understand the presence of Orientalism within Central Asian films, I will provide a synopsis of Russian/Soviet Orientalism in a broader context. Furthermore, I do not perceive the Soviet cinematographic discourse as monolithic. In different periods of the Soviet era, films were determined by political factors and had their own features in accordance with the state's agenda. But the issue of representation of the "Other" is a theme which was quite fixed and static throughout the USSR. In order to specify the films of my selection, I chose them from the particular time period between 1955 and 1970, which is unofficially known in Soviet historiography as the period of "Thaw and Stagnation." I see this time frame as having been the most effective in terms of the dissemination of Orientalist representations of Central Asia, and in reaching a mass audience through films. This period is also less researched compared to the Stalinist period, in terms of Orientalist themes in films. Moreover, it is important to understand the aforementioned historical context because films are as much about the period in which they were made as they are about the events they depict.[1]

The period of my choice includes in itself a large number of films in different genres. In order to meet the format of this dissertation and tackle the distinctive issues of Soviet Orientalism, I chose one film from each genre considered popular in the post-Stalinist Soviet Union, the Khrushchev Thaw, and the era of Stagnation. The approach to films through genres reveals an important angle for the films' perception, because the genres:

> far from being merely 'stylistic' devices, […] genres create effects of reality and truth, authority and plausibility, which are central to the different ways the world is understood in the writing of history or of philosophy or of science, or in painting, or in everyday talk. […] genre is a set of cues guiding our reading of texts or films. Genre is one of the ways in which texts seek to control the uncertainty of

[1]Newsinger, J., "Review of the Past and Present: National Identity and the British Historical Film By James Chapman" in Scope: An Online Journal of Film Studies 8 (June, 2007), *nottingham.ac.uk* https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/scope/issues/2007/june-issue-08.aspx#BookReviews (accessed June, 2018).

> communication, and it may do so by building in figures of itself, models of how it should be read. […] genre forms are so crucially transmitted, and where we learn to think with and through them as we learn our culture.[2]

Thus, genres have the capacity to influence the reader or spectator's perception. In my film selections, the various genres bear specific meanings by themselves. For instance, in shaping the historical genre, the film is not merely offering a representation of the past, but also a representation of a specifically constructed national past which was important for shaping the minds and attitudes of Central Asian people.

The modern usage of the term "Orientalism" is almost impossible to imagine without mentioning the figure of Edward Said and his seminal book of the same name. Due to the specificity of Russia's relationship with its own Orient, Said's theoretical frames demand the consideration of regional particularities. Said's *Orientalism* became the handbook for scholars approaching the geographical area known as the so-called Orient as a way to avoid stereotypical thinking. The umbrella of Said's Orient generally included the huge areas of the Middle East and North Africa, and all areas colonized by Great Britain, France and even the United States. However, Said ignored Central Asia. Despite the fact that Said's book is one of the main inspirations for my work, the case of Soviet Orientalism has its peculiarities in comparison with the Western imperial imagination of the Orient—in response to which *Orientalism* was created. Therefore, Said's perspective is relevant to the Soviet case only to a certain, limited extent.

I propose to view Soviet Orientalism through a theory developed by Andre Gingrich, who elaborated upon Said's *Orientalism* and developed the concept of Frontier Orientalism." I use the concept of Frontier Orientalism' as a framework to conceptualize Russian or Soviet Orientalism in its various manifestations, and to analyze the films I have chosen for this thesis. This study utilizes interpretative and comparative discourse analysis by paying particular attention to visuality, through which I examine the power discourse of the Soviet state in Oriental films and answer the following questions: What are the main stereotype-images of Central Asians as represented in Soviet films? How were these images constructed, and through which social markers were these images attributed to Central Asians? Finally, where do the distinctive features of Soviet Orientalism lie in films?

[2] Frow, John, *Genre* (Routledge, 2006), pp. 2;4-5.

My thesis is composed of three themed chapters and a conclusion. Chapter One is dedicated to the literature review and methodology where I begin with Said's *Orientalism.* I engage readers with Said because I perceive his ideas as foundational to the identification of unequal relationships, where the dominant powers use knowledge to their advantage. I also make readers familiar with the perception of Said's book in modern Russia, which can partly explain why the representation of the "Other" has occupied researchers focusing on Central Asia with a significant delay. I provide the most proponent debates related to the Saidian theory and its suitability for the general Russian context, namely, two main approaches; universalist and particularist, and the position which lays somewhere in the middle. Then, I turn to the concept of Frontier Orientalism' developed by Gingrich, which I see as the appropriate framework for understanding Russia and its relationship with its Oriental neighbors.

Chapter Two, on Russian Orientalism, consists of three sections where I give a brief overview on Russian Orientalism through a historical perspective, focusing particularly on the Russian imperial-Tsarist time. I will argue that the transition of Orientalist discourse from the imperial to the Soviet era affected the representation of the Soviet Orient. The first section begins with the discussion of the Russian geographical position between Europe and Asia as a source of ambiguity in Russian self-consciousness. This ambiguity became a source for clashes and debates within Russian intellectual circles about Russian self-perception as well as the attitude towards its neighbors both in Europe and Asia. Debates about the "Russian way" emerged on the specific legacy of Moscovy and its idea of "Third Rome," where the Christian Orthodoxy played a crucial role. Furthermore, the debates developed during a period of clashes with the Ottomans, the conquest of the Caucasus, and later Central Asia. These multiple factors affected the characters of different personalities who were involved in Oriental studies, and whom I discuss in the second section on Russian Orientalism as an academic discipline.

Russian Orientalists could be "Oriental" by their origin, they could be more attached to Western European values, they could be more missionaries than academics, or they could combine these and other factors which influenced their scholarship and their way of perception of the Orient. In turn, the perception affects the ways of representation, and my next section discusses the most prominent examples of the way the Russian Orient was depicted through Russian oriental literature, Oriental paintings and music. My examples demonstrate the strong connection between the representation of the Orient and the Russian military enterprise there. However,

even though the military aspect was the important factor for drawing the distinction between *us* and *them*, Russian Oriental representation did not employ a linear mode of negativity, through such categories as contempt or disdain, when classifying the "Other." In many ways, this representation was a mosaic of patterns which emerged in the imperial period, and later (with significant modification) re-appeared in the Soviet period.

Chapter Three covers my primary theme, namely, Soviet Orientalism in films made in and about Central Asia. It consists of seven sections. The first section examines the central Asian region in the Soviet period. I argue that, despite the fact that the new Soviet ideology opposed itself to the imperial Russian past and Western imperialism/colonialism in general, it nevertheless approached the Orient with a sense of superiority—with an inherited Orientalist vision. The Soviets stated a common equality between citizens of all republics, where the inner political discourse was based on the notion of a "brotherhood of nations." In this way, Central Asians were deprived of their own subjectivity, even within the created position where the Orient seemingly "spoke for itself." Their voice was represented by local people in the state bureaucracy as well as in the art-industry. However, the people were carefully selected through the policy of *korenizatsiya,* which I consider in Chapter Three, and also in film analysis. The next section discusses cinema as an instrument of the state, which realized the important role of "the main art of modernity," and used it in the service of its interests. The state control and censorship of academia and all forms of arts, especially cinema, created the sense of full interconnectedness, and films became the effective medium for the Soviet propaganda.

A further section provides an overview of Central Asian Soviet cinematography with examples from different periods. It is important to see the Soviet period in broader context (with consideration to time-based differences) because even though many of the orientalist patterns which I discuss in my films' analysis repeat themselves throughout the Soviet era, the nuances of representation dictated by the state's political agenda are crucial in identifying the language of these films in relation to the official discourse.

The remaining four sections contain close readings of the films. The first film, *Krushenie Emirata* (The Fall of the Emirate, 1955) represents the popular historic-revolutionary genre and depicts the Soviet representation of a historical event which took place in 1920. Namely, it was the last period of the Emirate of Buhara, before its final collapse. The film represents Muslim authority as "passive," based on the conventional Orientalist position, and reduces the emir to

a puppet in the hands of Western enemies of the Bolsheviks. In this film, Soviet ideology was alien to the majority of Muslims in central Asia, and in order to strengthen Soviet influence, the Bolshevik government realized the need for an alliance with local representatives—through whom they could influence the population and spread Soviet ideology. The film shows this collaboration and resistance by the depiction of "good" and "bad" Orientals, whom I interpret through Frontier Orientalism as a deliberately exaggerated dichotomy.

Furthermore, in my analysis, I demonstrate the variety of historical misinterpretations in the film. These misinterpretations went in accordance with the state policy of that time, whereby in 1940s, Central Asian nations had their histories "approved" by the overarching Soviet authority,[3] which in turn provided them visual representation in "movies for the masses." I see *Krushenie Emirata (The Fall of the Emirate,* 1955) as a perfect example demonstrating the mixture of Soviet cinematic discourses, where power uses knowledge for its advantage. By pointing out the inconsistencies with the historical facts, I show how the Soviet filmmakers shaped a historical narrative. by analyzing the particularities of their interpretation.

The second film, *Nasreddin v Hodzhente (Nasreddin in Hhujand*, 1959) is a folk tale which represents the example of Soviet ideological education in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, and is intended for young audiences. The two main heroes of the film are the famous figure, Hodja Nasreddin, and the thief of Baghdad. In this Soviet film, the image of Hodja Nasreddin acquires an exaggerated sense of social justice through the values and "spirit" of Marxism-Leninism. The film is full of classic Orientalist patterns, such as the way Oriental women and rulers are represented (which I discuss in more detail later). The specific focus in *Nasreddin v Hodzhente (Nasreddin in Hhujand*, 1959) is the injustice and oppression of the ruling class towards potters and blacksmiths, which constitute the working class in the folktale's Oriental society.

[3] The detail research about so-called 'oriental projects' had been done by Alfrid Bustanov in his monograph 'SOVIET ORIENTALISM AND THE CREATION OF CENTRAL ASIAN NATIONS' The oriental projects which were done by Soviet orientalists were directed by political demand and were later used as the main sources for the official historical narratives, especially in the new Soviet meta-histories of the individual Soviet republics of Central Asia. See: Bustanov, Alfrid K., *Soviet Orientalism and the Creation of Central Asian Nations* (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), p.1.

Not only were the workers exploited, but their daughters were also objects of exploitation in the cruelest way. The daughters of working class people are sexually exploited by merchants ("bourgeoisie") and rulers alike. Through the cunning good deeds which Hodja Nasreddin performs in the city (with his loyal assistant, the thief of Baghdad), the image of the city, step by step, achieves justice. An important feature to note in *Nasreddin v Hodzhente (Nasreddin in Hhujand*, 1959) is the use of national figures, who basically imply that "the good Oriental man" existed, even within "backwards" societies. Thus, it gives the perception that without the "white Russian man," it is possible to achieve justice.

My third film analysis is on *Pervyi Uchitel* (The First Teacher, 1965) which was done in the genre of Soviet drama. The film portrays the tragic events happening in the village of Kyrgyz (*ail*) with the advent of their "first teacher." The main protagonist, local Duishen who participated in the civil war and fully embraced Soviet values, comes to the village and tries to promote the Soviet ideology by opening the first school for local children where we see him teach nothing but the Soviet line about who "good" and "bad" people are.[4] This Soviet film implies that, despite the fact that Duishen shows sincere intentions and firmly believes in Marxism-Leninism as the only correct and rational way of life, he continues to be "Oriental" in his actions (it is his nature). His "Oriental" behavior is full of irrationality and even aggression. The film is based on the novel of famous Kyrgyz writer Chingiz Aytmatov, and despite the fact that the film mainly follows the book's story line, from the hands of the Russian film director Andrei Konchalovsky, *Pervyi Uchitel* acquires Orientalist views in its representation. Andrei Konchalovsky created the film about the Orient and the Oriental man who, despite getting into the ideological skin of his masters, still remained to be an awkward Oriental.

[4] In 2012, a DVD project called 'Kyrgyz Chudo [Kyrgyz Miracle] was created in which contained the collection of the 'top 10 Kyrgyz films of the Soviet period', including *Pervyi Uchitel* (The First Teacher). It was a collaboration between the fond of the Development of Cinematography of Kyrgyzstan together with the National Film Studio Kyrgyzfilm ''Okeyev'', with the support of the Dutch Hivos Foundation, and the Department of Cinematography under the Ministry of Culture of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Anglo-Kyrgyz Society, ''Kyrgyz El'', ''Oi Art.'' [Фонд «Фонд Развития кинематографа» Кыргызстана совместно с Национальной киностудией «Кыргызфильм» имени Т.Океева, при поддержке голландского Фонда Хивос, Департамента кинематографии при Министерстве культуры КР, Anglo-Kyrgyz Society, «Кыргыз эл» и продюсерской компании Ой Арт, осуществили подлинно актуальный проект - создание DVD альбома лучших 10 кыргызских фильмов советского периода. http://www.kyrgyzcinema.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=887&Itemid=4&lang=ru]

The fourth film, *Beloe Solnce Pustini* (*White Sun of the Desert*, 1970), is made in a specific Eastern Soviet genre and portrays the time of the establishment of the Soviet authority in Central Asia. The genre emerged in accordance with the canons of American Westerns. The combination of Soviet irony with Oriental exoticism made the film highly popular during its time, and is the reason why it is still well-known in the post-Soviet era. As was noted by Edward Said, a simple set of oppositions form the reductionist approach of the Orientalist canon. A demobilized soldier, Fyodor Sukhov, is:

> rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion and distrust, and so forth. Orientals are none of these things.[5]

In this film, the images of Oriental people are constructed in opposition to the "white Russian man"—who in this case is the main character, Sukhov. *Beloe Solnce Pustini* (*White Sun of the Desert*, 1970*)* shows that among all local representatives, only Sukhov is capable of bringing justice and peace.

In my film analysis, I identify parallels to specific policies of the Soviet state in different historical periods. This approach helps me place these films in context. For example, *Beloe Solnce Pustini* (*White Sun of the Desert*, 1970*)* speaks not only about the time period, but also about the context in which it was produced. Moreover, despite the fact that the Soviet period is now gone (particularly in post-Soviet countries), the film is still popular, and it inspires new interpretations which are relevant for the present time. Some of them justify the continuation of the "imperial" interests of modern Russia within the so-called Orient. In addition to the film analysis, I include the example of the modern interpretation of the values which the protagonist of *Beloe Solnce Pustini* (*White Sun of the Desert*, 1970*)* bears. It brings an additional outlook for understanding Russian Orientalism, where *Beloe Solnce Pustini* (*White Sun of the Desert*, 1970*)* as a discursive field opens a new angle for the stereotyped perception of the East. This perception justifies the imperial expansionist policy even in the era of the nation state, and demonstrates the continuity of the Orientalist canon from the USSR to the modern Russian Federation.

[5] Said, Edward W., *Orientalism* (Vintage Books, 2004), p.49.

CHAPTER ONE

Literature Review and Methodology

1.1 Edward Said's *Orientalism* and Its Critique

In 1978, Edward Said's seminal work, *Orientalism,* was published. This book turned over academic scholarship about the Middle East and challenged the general tropes found in Middle Eastern and Islamic studies (and related subjects in Western academia). Said's main thesis is proving and demonstrating that Oriental studies as an academic discipline serves imperial aims, and justifies expansionist politics of Western imperial powers on colonial subjects. It is this relationship—between the imperial power and its subjects—that will be pertinent to my discussion of Soviet cinema, as later chapters will show. Said also analyzed the representation of the Other as it is implied in popular culture, where the image of the Oriental man naturally contained such characteristics as wild, aggressive, dirty and sexually intemperate.

According to Said, the Orientalist discourse emerges from the mythical and artificial dichotomy of the Occident and the Orient. They are completely opposite to each other; while the Occident is active, rational and developed, the Orient is passive, irrational and atavistic.[6] The Oriental Other in the imagination of the colonizers is ontologically opposite to the civilized West. By "West," Said predominantly meant the British and French imperial examples and the United States as an heir of old empires—which repeats their model of the institutional relationship between empire and the scholarly class[7]. Thus, Western powers do not simply take over new territories, but also bring with them a civilizing mission, aiming to "humanize" their colonial subjects.

[6] Hsu-Ming, Teo '*Orientalism: An Overview*.' *Australian Humanities Review* 54 (2013), pp. 1-20.

[7] *ibid*

Drawing primarily on the methodology of the French philosopher Michael Foucault, Said showed how knowledge about the Orient can be used as a successful tool in the service of dominant powers. The word "discourse," according to Foucault, is a practice which forms the objects of which they are spoken.[8] Discourse is culturally produced, connected, or directly determined by political goals. Discourse can manifest itself in texts, speeches, or various kinds of visual art. It is basically a knowledge which claims its truth and affects peoples' opinions and attitudes. By putting a stamp of truth on certain knowledge, we empower it and give this knowledge an authority which is able to control society even without using actual force. Foucault names such a force the "disciplinary power."

Knowledge about the Orient, shaped in Western countries, was never neutral towards so-called Oriental territories and people. Most importantly, this knowledge, generalized by Said as Orientalism, became the "way of thinking"—the "disciplinary power"—in the West about the Orient as well as in the Orient about itself.[9] Neither of the terms, Orient or Occident, strictly define a geographical set of territories, but rather identify the discursive construct of self-definition: "all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic."[10] The formation of self-identity is always a construction based on opposition to the Other. Said notes that

> the development and maintenance of every culture requires the existence of another, different and competing alter ego. The construction of identity […] involves the construction of opposites and 'others' whose actuality is always subject the continues interpretation and reinterpretation of their difference from us[11]

The classical explanations of the goals of Orientalism are justifications of the expansionist polity during the time of colonial imperialism. Saidian *Orientalism* also drew upon a number of criticisms[12], in particular from the American historian and anthropologist James Clifford.

---

[8] Foucault, Michel, *The Archeology of knowledge* (London: Tavistock, 1972), p.49.

[9] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 3.

[10] Said, Edward W., *Culture and Imperialism (*New York: Vintage Books, 1993), p.XXV.

[11] Said, *Orientalism,* pp.331-332.

[12] For a detailed discussion of Orientalism and its critique See: '*Orientalism Twenty Years On*' in the special issue of *The American Historical Review* 105 (2000).

Clifford's argument against *Orientalism* is based on fact that Said approaches his thesis as a monolithic discourse, and therefore generalizes its subjects by categorizing them in one compartment all as "Orientalists." However, these experts of the Orient lived in a different historical contexts, each of them had a specific cultural milieu, and their personal opinions were constructed by individual ways which has to be taken into account.[13] Particularly, in relation to Russian case, numerous examples of Orientalists not only did not fit into the Saidian generalization, but they problematize the differentiation between Orient/Occident in their scholarship because many of them had Oriental origins but worked from positions of the so-called Occident.

Other critics drew attention to some Orientalists who were active opponents of imperialism and colonialism, and their concern was not restricted just to the fascination with the Orient as an idealized place.[14] Robert Irwin and Roger Owen drew their argument based particularly on the fact that Said excluded German Orientalism from his perspective, as well as Italian and Austro-Hungarian perspectives, by focusing exclusively on British, French and later also American imperial experiences. The German school was significantly influential in 19th century and especially influenced the development of Russian Orientalism.[15]

The most emphatic critic of Edward Said, Bernard Lewis, added to the previous critiques and also emphasized the omission of the Russian case in Said's survey. Lewis' main point was the idea that Said selectively chose only those authors who fit his argument of imperialistic approach towards the Orient, avoiding those who did not.[16] For Lewis, the Saidian focus on the Middle East as the main, nebulous Orient was the essential disagreement.[17] In addition, critics did not forget to mention that Said is actually Palestinian by origin and therefore cannot avoid partiality and biases, as his life coincided with the ongoing political instability in his native

---

[13] Clifford, James, *On Orientalism: In The predicament of culture: twentieth-century ethnography, literature, and art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), p.22.

[14] Vries, Hent De "Orientalism" in Encyclopedia of Religion, ed. Lindsay Jones (USA: Macmillan Reference. 2005), p.6883.

[15] For more see: Owen, R. "The mysterious orient" *Monthly Review*, Vol. 31. No. 4 (1979); Irwin R., *For Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and Their Enemies* (London: Penguin, 2003).

[16] See: Hsu-Ming, *Orientalism, pp.*1-20.

[17] Lewis, Bernard "The Question of Orientalism" in *Islam and the West* (London, 1993) pp. 1-20.

land. On the contrary, another camp of criticism came from the so-called Orient, where Said, as a Western academician who studied, worked, and lived predominantly in western countries, cannot be taken as "one's own" and represent the aspirations of Arabs by criticizing Orientalism.[18]

Nevertheless, despite any possible criticism, Said's book became "one of the most influential scholarly books published in English in the humanities in the last quarter of the twentieth century"[19]. *Orientalism* became a powerful inspirational impetus for the great variety of researchers around the world and across fields. It shaped the framework of post-colonial studies in academia, which helps to identify the power relations between Empire and its colonial subjects, as well as explain how these relations form a world-view and how peoples and cultures are represented in it [20]. Accordingly, I find it necessary to engage in more detail with Said's *Orientalism* before I launch into my discussion about Russian Orientalism.

1.2 The Perception of Edward Said in Russia

The fate of Said's *Orientalism* in Russia cannot be considered as fortunate. In contrast to the European and American success of the book, it has only been translated to Russian and published after 18 years from the date of its first publication. This fact corresponds with the image of Russia being "the empire of the periphery"[21] (as Boris Kagarlitsky named it). While the immense wave of publications inspired by *Orientalism* continues to this day around the world, in the Russian field of social sciences it did not gain a similar response. The reasons for such attitude lie firstly in the fact that Said by himself excluded the Russian case from his analysis. Since the issues raised in his book were not directly connected to Russia, it therefore came with a significant delay. Secondly, because of historical circumstances such as the

[18] Washbrook, D. A. "*Orients and Occidents: Colonial Discourse Theory and the Historiography of the British Empire*" in Robin Winks, ed., *Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. V: Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[19] Lockman, Zachary, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), p.190.

[20] Моррисон, Александр «Мы не англичане…» *Восток Свыше* ВЫПУСК XXXVIII № 3 июль–сентябрь, ТАШКЕНТ (2015), pp.69-79 [Alexander Morrison "My Ne Anglichane..." Vostok Svyshe, N. XXXVIII, 3 July-September (2015), pp.69-79].

[21] Kagarlitsky, Boris, *Empire of the Periphery: Russia and the World System* (Pluto Press, 2008).

ideological isolation and detachment of the Soviet social sciences from Western academic trends, Russia found itself in a position of general lag.

Often, the position of being unaware of the global academic trend creates a situation of misunderstanding, which became the primary feature of Russian academia. For instance, V. Bobrovnikov and Sayed Javad Miri gave an interesting perspective of their observation on the reaction of Tatar professors during the VIII Congress of Russian Orientalists in 2012. The presentation about Orientalism, as not only an academic discipline but also the language of ideology of subjection constructed by European colonizers towards Orient, caused serious polemicism, misunderstanding, and rejection.[22] This is quite an unusual reaction, especially from the so-called subaltern region and scholars of Tatar by origin. I think that could happen because the Russian word for Oriental studies/Orientalism is *vostokovedenie* and it is devoid from negative connotations (the field was not challenged as much given that it emerged after Said's book in Western academia). Bobrovnikov and Miri emphasized that many scholars in Russia still cannot realize the fact that the Russian empire was a colonial power for its Muslim possessions.[23] The same could also be said about the Soviet era, as the Soviet motto of "the brotherhood of nations" obscures the unequal relationship, where Oriental republics where deprived from their own subjectivity.

The Russian translation of *Orientalism*, done by A.V. Govorunov, was criticized greatly and received censure for its low quality. The afterword of the Russian edition was written by a journalist, K.A. Krylov, whose reading of Said is characterized in an emphatically nationalistic vein. Krylov saw in Said an ally against Western hegemony, pathetically declaring the importance of liberating Russia from the values and misleading landmarks imposed on her from the outside[24]. Thus, Russian academia considered themselves to be at the receiving end of Orientalist discourse, rather than producing their own Orientalist discourse.

[22] Bobrovnikov V.O., Miri S.J., *Orientalizm vs Orientalistika* (Sadra, 2016), pp.7-15 [Бобровников Мири Ориентализм vs. Ориенталистика Введение].

[23] Ibid

[24] Bobrovnikov V.O., Pochemu my marginaly? *ab imperio* N2 pp.325-344 [Владимир БОБРОВНИКОВ ПОЧЕМУ МЫ МАРГИНАЛЫ?]

The long isolation of Soviet social-sciences left Russian academia behind the curtain while significant changes in the historiographical practice took place. Particularly, I refer to the linguistic turn, the absence of which (to a certain degree) can explain the unfortunate fate of *Orientalism* in Russia where the Marxist-positivist approach in a social-science continued to prevail even after the fall of Soviet Union. This approach refused to see *Orientalism* beyond the frames of positivism, while Said did not try to uncover the "essential Oriental features" but focused on the discourse of colonizers, many of his Russian readers saw it in a very narrow way as a kind of support to Arabs' slandered identity or even interpreted it as a book supporting anti-Americanism.[25] Such perceptions undeniably affected the way the Saidian notion of Orientalism was used in knowledge production among the post-Soviet milieu, and it also raised debates of whether or not it is appropriate to apply Said's *Orientalism* in the Russian context.

1.3 Debates on the Suitability of Said's *Orientalism* for the Russian Context

Russian political and geographical ambiguity became a source of fruitful scholarly debates about the relevancy of Said's *Orientalism*, and therefore the possibility of applying the post-colonial critique of imperialism in the Russian case. The debate is exemplified in the scientific journal *Kritika* between two scholars dedicated to the study of Russia and central Asia—Adeeb Khalid and Nathaniel Knight. They demonstrated two different positions, where Khalid supported a universalist approach toward the way power uses knowledge to advance itself. Khalid supported his position by some particular examples, but nevertheless, for him Said is more like an inspiration than a model constructor[26]. Knight, on the other hand, based his position on Russia's distinctiveness and therefore ruminates about the feasibility of using Said's

[25] Bobrovnikov V.O. "Orientalism ne dogma, a rukovodstvo k deistviu" in Bobrovnikov V.O., Miri S.J., *Orientalizm vs Orientalistika* [Бобровников Ориентализм vs. Ориенталистика Ориентализм не догма а руководство к действию].

[26] Todorova, Mariia Nikolaeva. "Does Russian Orientalism Have a Russian Soul? A Contribution to the Debate between Nathaniel Knight and Adeeb Khalid." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 1, no. 4, 2000, pp. 717–727.

framework.[27] These two polar positions caused subsequent responses and more nuanced and detailed critiques of the Russian case as both the subject and object of Orientalism.[28]

As a contribution to the Khalid/Knight debates, Maria Todorova also provided a valuable contribution regarding the problems of historiography. She made a point on how a specific terminology can actually marginalize various concepts and notions. Even if some concepts and notions of non-European societies have an equivalent or analogue in Europe, many scholars prefer to name them in an exaggerated way and uniquely, which in turn made them incompatible with Europeans. Therefore, coming back to Khalid and Knight, there is a dilemma: either generalize and have a problem of cultural hegemony, or refuse to and have a certain limitedness which excludes the possibility of comparative research. Todorova assures that if Russia continues to be ambivalent and unstable in her relationship with European and world institutions, the aforementioned dilemma will stay.

In relation to Khalid, she added that a simple understanding of the artificiality of the categories Occident/Orient does not serve to relieve the reality of their influence. But Said is definitely relevant for Russia because *Orientalism* helps not only to disclose how power and knowledge can interact in a colonial/imperial context, but also helps to see Russian ambiguity as it could be the subject and object of Orientalism at once.[29] Concerning the danger of seeing *Orientalism* as a universal model, Todorova points out that it is important to read Said carefully, because he by himself distinguished between scholars and even named those who produce "reliable knowledge."

1.4 Andre Gingrich and the Concept of Frontier Orientalism

In order to pay attention to countries which were excluded from Edward Said's *Orientalism* and take into account their features and particularities, Austrian anthropologist Andre Gingrich

---

[27] Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 1(4): 717–27, Fall 2000.; Knight, Nathaniel, "Grigor'ev in Orenburg, 1851-1862: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire?" Slavic Review, 59, No. 1 (Spring, 2000).

[28] Todorova, Mariia Nikolaeva. "Does Russian Orientalism Have a Russian Soul? A Contribution to the Debate between Nathaniel Knight and Adeeb Khalid." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 1, no. 4, 2000, pp. 717–727.

[29] Ibid.

introduced the concept of Frontier Orientalism. In his article *Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim world in public and popular cultures of Central Europe*, Gingrich gives the classification of European countries in their broad context with the relationship with the Muslim world. Gingrich classifies European countries in sufficient detail, but here I will only briefly summarize his division (excluding the subgroups) since they are not included in my focus.

The division consists of four main groups. The first group includes countries with explicit colonial rule in Muslim lands, which were the main focus of Said's *Orientalism* (countries like Britain and France). The second group are the countries which constitute and manifest Gingrich's concept of Frontier Orientalism, which he describes as: "unlike the first group these countries had not been classical colonial rulers of important Muslim territories overseas. But unlike the third group, it did not entirely lack colonial interaction with the Muslim world."[30] These are countries like Spain, Austria, Hungary and to a certain extent he presumes to include Russia as well in his classification. However, Gingrich does not elaborate the Russian case, but further, I will provide examples which demonstrate how a view on Russia through Frontier Orientalism makes Gingrich's concept applicable. The third group are countries which for one or two reasons never had any noteworthy colonial influence, like Scandinavian countries or mini-states like San-Marino or Monaco.[31] The fourth group are those Southeastern European countries with traditional Muslim populations as the outcome of an inverse colonial past, as Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria and others.[32]

Gingrich based his analysis on the Austrian case, and I see parallels which can be drawn in comparison with Russia. Gingrich has proposed the concept of Frontier Orientalism as the concept allowing us to explain the phenomenon of countries where Orientalism is deeply embedded inside their own culture. The similarities between Austrian and Russian cases at particular historical periods can be seen through the emerged differentiation between our "good Muslims" and "bad Muslims", where in Austrian case "good" were Bosnians and "bad" were Ottomans. In the Russian case during Tsarist times, the same parallel can be seen between loyal

[30] Gingrich, Andre "Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim world in public and popular cultures of Central Europe" in *Mediterranean Ethnological Summer* School, Piran, Slovenia by Bojan Baskar, Borut Brumen (2002), p.101.

[31] Ibid, p.101.

[32] Ibid.

Tatars and competitive Ottomans. Later, in the Soviet case, these Oriental frontiers were incorporated inside with the aim of building the omnipresent "proper Soviet identity" for its inhabitants, where Russians became a connecting force. Gingrich explains this Good/Bad Muslim dichotomy in this way:

> 'the Bad Muslim refers to early modernity; he is associated with a direct threat to 'our' physical and cultural existence. Consequently, according to this mythological interpretation, defending ourselves and pushing this dangerous threat back was a vital precondition for our own rise to power, wealth, and modernity. The Good Muslim Oriental, on the other hand, refers to late colonialism. Here the Muslim is no longer a dangerous rival but is transformed into a loyal subject. Good Oriental exist on this, our side of the frontier. He stood by us, as our brave and courageous servant, when our achievements were threatened by other dangerous foes. these several elements are mythologically linked: repulsing the threat of the dangerous rivals is seen as a necessary precondition to controlling some remnant of his domain later on. And it is only by quasi-colonial control that thesis former enemies can be turned into good Muslim servants. A frontier Oriental who is not controlled is a dangerous rival, only a humiliated and dominated Oriental may become a loyal ally.'[33]

The specific type of policy towards 'Good' and 'Bad' Muslims manifested in a variety of folklore which Gingrich defines as "a relatively coherent set of metaphors and myths that reside in folk and public culture."[34] Gingrich uses the Austrian example to show how the meta-narrative of Frontier Orientalism is about overcoming the Bad Muslim, "which is a precondition to the glorious achievement not only of modernity but of identity, while relying on a controlled Good Muslim in the struggle against other threats is necessary to maintain it"[35]. In Russian imperial and later Soviet instances, the incorporation of own good 'Muslims' led to a unique type of self-image by absorbing the 'Orient' in itself and the representation of the 'Orient' in a

---

[33] Gingrich, Andre, *Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim world in public and popular cultures of Central Europe Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School*, Piran, Slovenia 1998 by Bojan Baskar, Borut Brumen, Published 2002.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

very unusual way, which I will show in the second chapter in my film analysis comparing with the countries from the first group of Gingrich's classification.

While the first group is mainly Orientalism in representation of elitist culture, he gives the examples of Flaubert's *Salambo*, Kipling's *Jungle Book*, and Conrad's *Lord Jim*, Frontier Orientalism (the second group) combines the elitist and folk culture as tales, village chronicles, rural toponyms and so on, which places such countries in a distinct position as these constituents cannot be found in all parts of Europe and Northern America.

Also, the focus of Frontier Orientalism' are Muslims as a main 'Other', who are geographically close and with whom the second group countries have a direct military encounter.[36]

> Frontier Orientalism is thus a relatively coherent set of metamorphose and myths that reside in folk and public culture. It places the home country and its population along an adjacent territorial and military borderline which is imbued with timeless mission. The Good and the Bad Muslim Oriental serve as contrasting devices and key mythohystorical metaphors to explain current issues by means of that frontier mission.[37]

The military encounters with the Muslim world left behind on the countries a thickly textured element of folk and elite culture based on historical confrontation against and colonial dominance over Islam.'[38] Combining folk and elite culture, frontier orientalism, celebrates decisive historical encounters either against Muslims or together with Muslims, but serving national purposes.[39] Gingrich, in his later article, continues to develop the concept of Frontier Orientalism for contemporary times. According to him, frontier orientalism provides a specific regional mythological repository that is activated for today's use and takes shape of such phenomena as neo-nationalism, with dehumanized image of the migrants.[40]

---

[36] Ibid, pp.119-120

[37] Ibid, p.119.

[38] Ibid, p.121.

[39] Ibid, p.123.

[40] Gingrich, Andre. "The Nearby Frontier: Structural Analyses of Myths of Orientalism." *Diogenes*, vol. 60, no. 2, 2013, pp. 60–66; 64-65.

The military encounters with Muslims happened in each manifestation of Russian statehood, from the early beginning with the raids of the Turkic pre-Islamic nomads like the Polovtsi and Pechenegs to the Mongol yoke, the victory over which has become a formative part of the Russian identity. The Tsarist time with its clashes with Ottomans, and the Soviet time with its suppression of the *Basmachi* movement. Each of these Russian periods had its own specifics and distinctive features, which I will discuss with particular attention to the Soviet representation.

By seeing the limitations of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in terms of his lack of consideration for the representation of the 'Orient' in Russian, German, Habsburg, and other perspectives, Gingrich's concept of Frontier Orientalism becomes a complimentary frame to study Russian Orientalism in general and Soviet Orientalism in particular.

CHAPTER TWO

Russian Orientalism

2.1 Russian Eurasian Geography as a Source of Constant Uncertainty in Self-Identification

The space between conventional Europe and Asia is a source of continuous ambiguity not only geographically speaking, but also in the self-consciousness of Russia towards the dichotomous split between East and West. Russian statehood had different names during different periods, from Kievan Rus and Moskovy to the Russian empire, USSR, and modern Russia. The Russian tradition of opposing itself to the West in different epochs was often accompanied by the use and application of European ideas and models.

The expansionist policy of Western neighbors to the so-called Orient, namely the Middle East and South Asia, bears resemblance to the Russian Tsarist imperial rival ambitions to conquer their own Orient[41]. However, the background of Russian expansion to their own Orient was during the pre-Petrine time, namely at the time of the capture of Kazan by Ivan the Terrible in 1552. Before that, Kievan Rus and Moskovy, without taking into account the period of the Golden Horde, was a Christian, Slavic state.[42]The capture of Kazan was followed by the capture of the Astrakhan Khanate, both of which were formed as a result of the collapse of the Golden Horde. They were Muslims, who spoke in a different language and had their own state structure and elites. Many historians point precisely to these Russian conquests as the beginning of Russian imperialism which paved the way for future Russia's further expansion to the

[41] Russia's own Orient is the formulation which was used by Vera Tolz in her book of the same name. See: Tolz, Vera. *Russia's Own Orient: The Politics of Identity and Oriental Studies in the Late Imperial and Early Soviet Periods* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

[42] Kumar, K., *Visions of Empire: How Five Imperial Regimes Shaped the World* (Princeton University Press, 2017), p.220.

predominantly Muslim lands.[43] Regarding Europe, Moskovy in general had antipathy and Europeans were considered at the same level negativity as Tatars and Turks.[44]

Schimmelpenninck van der Oye emphasizes Peter I's personality as a turning point for Russia. Peter forced the a cultural orientation toward Western Europe as an exemplary, which also came with the need for imperial expansion in a competitive manner.[45] Petrine decrees and reforms were met strong resistance from Russian elites. One example is the decree on wearing a Western dress at court. For Russian elites, it was perceived as a humiliating decree; such an act for them was normal only for *basurmans*—the negative and accusatory term referring to Muslims. (*basurmans* could wear German garment, but not "us").[46] Nevertheless, Petrine reforms succeed in terms of creating the new state ideology where Russia became not only the state of Orthodox Christians, but now sincerely recognized the one meaning of the European continent, which is based on the unconditional superiority of European civilization (this includes the Russian Empire). In the post-Petrine years, the Russian elite embraced the European way of life and and bore the same values.

The later Russian conquests of the Caucasus, the Crimean Khanate, and Central Asia can be understood apart from economic incentives through the desire of strengthening the state as a Western empire in possession of its own colonies. The Russian Empire did not have clear sea boundaries and therefore the metropolis and its colonies merged into one land mass. Such a situation demanded the creation of a socially constructed demarcation, and it became an important intellectual exercise for imperial geographers. Since during Petrine and all imperial times these boundaries were modified and reformulated many times, the main line was put in

[43] For instance, Hosking, Geoffrey. *Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917* (Harvard University Press, 1997); Longworth, Philip "Russia's Empires: Their Rise and Fall - From Prehistory to Putin (John Murray, 2006).

[44] Bassin, Mark "Rossia mezhdu Evropoi i Aziei: Ideologicheskoe konstruirovanie geograficheskogo prostranstva," in *Rossiyskaya imperia v zarubezhnoy istoriografii Raboty poslednikh let Antologia* (Novoe izdatelstvo, 2005), p.281.

[45] Oye, David Schimmelpenninck van der, *Russian Orientalism* (2010).

[46] Bassin, Mark, Ibid, p.281.

the Ural, and it became the geographical point for the division between the Russian European metropolis from its Asian possessions.[47]

From a Western European perspective, Russia is, in a sense, still was a part of the "Oriental world," and the Oriental possessions gave to Russia a sense of belonging to the West and a way to exercise its own imperial authority. In the words of the famous Russian writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky, the conquests in Central Asia gave Russians the coveted sense of superiority that it could not get in Europe: "In Europe, we were hangers-on and slaves, whereas to Asia we shall go as masters."[48]

However, the ambiguity of self-consciousness, conditional to geography and religion, did not disappear and continued to reveal itself in each epoch continually. During the Russian Tsarist period, the intellectual clashes between Westernizers (advocates of European kinship) and Slavophiles (those who believed that Russia must follow its own path) affirmed that many Russian thinkers have viewed the Oriental Other as "part of Russia's exotic self."[49] The poet-philosopher Fyodor Tyutchev from the Slavophile circle wrote in 1848-49 his famous poem, Russian Geography, encompassing all possible desires and aspirations of the Russian empire:

> Moscow and the city of Peter, and the city of Constantin -
> These are the sacred capitals of Russian tsardom…
> But where is its end? and where are its borders
> To the North, to the East, to the South, and towards sunset?
> They will be revealed by the fates to the future time …
> Seven internal seas, and seven great rivers! …
> From the Nile to the Neva,
> From the Elbe river to China -
> From the Volga to the Euphrates,

[47] Mark Bassin gives overview about geographical division of European and Asian parts of Russian empire. For more see: Bassin, Mark, Ibid.

[48] Fyodor Dostoevsky, 'Dnevnik Pisatelya III Geok -Tepe – Chto takoe dlya nas Aziya?' *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, (St Petersburg, 1896), Vol.XXI, 513-23.

[49] Oye, Russian Orientalism.; Merrill, J. "Brothers and others- brotherhood, the Caucasus, and national identity in post-Soviet films" *Studies in Russian Soviet Cinema*, 6:1, p.95.

From the Ganges to the Danube…
This is Russian tsar dom…
and it will not disappear with the ages
As the HolySpirit foresaw and Daniel foretold.[50]

However, the question of religious faith is crucial for drawing the cultural boundaries between Russia and its possessions. Therefore, even though for Western neighbors Russia was more Oriental than European, for Russia its long-term orientation to the Orient basically meant it was the heir of Byzantium, and followed its religious tradition of the Christian Orthodox Church, where Moscow was proclaimed a "Third Rome"[51]. "Third Rome" ideology became a politically powerful form of messianism which was based on seeing Muslims as infidels and invaders. The construction of a Russian national narrative is essentially based on the liberation from the Mongol yoke—Muslim Golden Horde. Thus, in Tsarist times, neither Westernizers with their praise of European civilization, nor the Slavophile discourse with its opposition to the Western Europe, should be seen as Oriental-friendly.

Russia was a strange empire inside, where apart from controlling its Oriental Other, it had generations of its own peasants who were effectively enslaved under serfdom, and who were aliens for their masters:

> reduced to commodities which were sold on the market, subjected to corporal punishment and feudal duties, peasants were ascribed fantastic features which justified their pain, such as natural kindness, a communitarian spirit, and, in the most extreme formulation of Dostoevsky, love of suffering. [52]

[50] Tyutchev, Fyodor Ivanovich. "Тютчев Федор Иванович Собрание стихотворений." the translation can be found here: Thompson, Aaron Michael, *Poetry of the Slavophiles: Tracing Slavophile Philosophy Through 19th-Century Poetics*, MA Thesis (The University of Arizona., 2015), p.31.

[51] Kumar, *The Visions of Empire*, p.217

[52] Etkind, Alexander "Orientalism reversed: Russian literature in the times of empires" *Modern Intellectual History*, 4 (2007), pp.618; 626.

Thus, the Russian Tsarist era embraced multiple dimensions combining Orientalism as a very elitist phenomenon, directed, on the one hand, on Russians themselves, and on the other hand on its neighbors where each of these dimensions were anti-Muslim in nature.

The theme of Russian imperialism, its expansionist character, and its concomitant imperial rivalries attracted many historians. Numerous studies have attempted to investigate the differences and similarities between Russian and Western imperialism, especially after the fall of the USSR when it became possible to access state archives. However, there is no consensus on Russian imperialism and, as has been noted by Alexander Morrison, this problem in historiography is dominant among both Russian and Western scholars. In the Russian academic context, it is often possible to see the total negation of any similarity of the Russian empire with the British and French, while Western historians usually focus on the policy of assimilation as the special and unique path for Russian imperialism which did not engaged with the sense of race superiority.[53]

The usual comparison of Russia, for example with the British Empire, at first glance indicates the absence of a clear boundary between the metropolis and the colonies, as they are present for the latter by the sea borders. The race question in the case of the French and British empires was important for the achievement of high administrative positions, as for Tsarist Russia it was rather the question of faith, where the conversion to Christian Orthodoxy was usually the required condition.[54]

The question of political expansion, ambitions, and self-perception in the state vision connected with the large presence of Germans among the top Russian elite. And also the German roots of the Russian rulers which undeniably strengthened the perception of Russia as a Western Empire. These western roots of Russian ruling class emphasized the cultural distinction of the dichotomy between Occident which is Russian as an empire and Orient which is her conquered possessions. Apart from German influence, Russian elite were the part of Enlightenment project, which by itself cannot be separated from French intellectual dominance. Thus, seeing themselves as a part of the Enlightenment project, Russian hight society ascribed to themselves a sense of political and cultural exclusivity and, ultimately, superiority. However, it is precisely

[53] Morrison, Alexander "My Ne Anglichane..." *Vostok Svyshe*, N. XXXVIII, 3 July-September (2015), pp.69-79.

[54] Kumar, *The Visions of Empire*.

this "enlightened superiority" which allowed them to make a transitional shift in the official policy towards the Muslim Other.

Compared with the time of Moskovy during the Tsarist time, the policy towards Muslims had changed and absorbed a much more neutral connotation, particularly after the reign of Empress Catherine II. The empress carefully distinguished between the constant rival Ottomans and Russian own Muslim subjects. Ottomans ruled despotically from her perception and apart from their many destructions they had destroyed the Russian source of political and religious legitimacy namely Byzantium.

The shift in policy towards Muslims inside the empire is important as it shows the significant change in Russian inner policy and the emergence of a discourse about "traditional Islam," which can be understood through 'Good' and 'Bad' Muslims. While the earlier history of Russian rulers had a hostile and violent treatment (like, for instance, the forcible baptism of Tatars), Catherine II began to tame Muslims by official recognition with the establishment of her decree mentioning the "toleration of all confessions."[55] She also established the Mohammedan Spiritual Assemblies, and in fact imposed a centralized system through which it was possible to control, regulate, and intervene in Muslim social life.[56]

The constant clashes with Ottomans were seen as a threat that could lose the loyalty of own Muslims towards the preference to coreligionists and Ottoman caliph. Also, the constantly increasing Muslim population within the empire's immediate boundaries adjacent to the neighboring Islamic polities such as the Ottoman and Persian empires, Afghanistan, and the Chinese Xinjiang urged Russian rulers to find ways to treat Islam and Muslims as other than a threat to its own authority. But how do we understand this political shift, known as toleration? According to Michael Khodarkovsky, before the April 17, 1905, Toleration Law, Russia's tolerance was of a distinctly premodern type, offering protection from massacre and expulsion

[55] The decree was entitled "On the Toleration of All Confessions and on the Prohibition of Hierarchs from Entering into Affairs concerning Other Confessions and the Construction of Prayer Houses according to Their Law, Leaving All of That to Secular Authorities." *PSZ*, vol. 19, no. 13,996 (June 17, 1773), pp.775–776.

[56] Kumar, The Visions of Empire.

but not against official and popular discrimination against its second-class subjects, who, most of the time, remained a target of one or another assimilating agenda.[57]

Thus, this type of recognition, aiming to pacify and tame Muslims, was getting together with various practices such as Russification, through such institutions as the Missionary Division at the Kazan Theological Academy, which accomplished the influential job by homogenizing non-orthodox minorities like Muslims, Buddhists, Old Believers, and the Chuvash-Cheremis.[58] The huge heterogeneity of the Tsarist colonial population cannot be perceived through the same lens and requires clarification. I will focus on the clearest example of Russian colonial rule—its policy in central Asia—as a center of my thesis.

Alexander Morrison rightly observed the importance of the distinction between the Russian Tsarist polity towards Muslims of the Volga-Ural region, and Muslims of Central Asia, including the Steppe region and Caucasus. He criticized the persistent interpretation of scholarly works that the Tsarist authority towards Muslims of the Volga-Ural region is typical to other Muslim subjects. For instance, the aforementioned policy did not include new Muslim possessions of Russia. Central Asian, Steppe, and Caucasus Muslims were under military rule and were deprived of such preferences like the possibility of local self-governance (*zemstvo*) and local juries of courts and other civic structures.[59]

The reason for such court exclusion was the common perception of these predominantly Muslim regions being 'wild' and 'backward'. If Russian self-consciousness was ambiguous in opposition to Western Europe, in Central Asia Russians felt themselves as true Europeans. Russian settlers in northern Kazakhstan who came from European parts of Russia forcefully displaced the local population of Kazakh people from fertile areas to drier areas for farming.[60]

The authority's attitude towards Islam was changing in accordance with various external and internal factors, and the Caucasian Sufi resistance accompanied with it the growth of baptized

[57] Khodarkovsky, Michael "Review of For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia by Robert D. Crews" *The American Historical Review*, Volume 112, Issue 5 (2007), pp.1491–1493.

[58] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

[59] Morrison, *My Ne Anglichane*.

[60] Kumar, *The Visions of Empire*.

Tatars, who came back to Islam in the middle of the 19th century and created conditions where Muslims were seen as 'fanatics' unable to integrate in civilized society.[61] These realities allowed Morrison to conclude that it is justifiable to use post-colonial frameworks for Russian imperialism towards Central Asia. However, as Said's approach had been criticized for its reductionism for seeing Orientalism as the monolithic discourse towards Western powers, the same can be said about Russian Orientalism. It is, therefore, important to see Russian Orientalism in a complex way—with a plurality of approaches and positions towards Orient.

2.2 Russian Imperial Orientalism as an Academic Discipline

The Russian imperial time, starting with Peter the Great, was inspired by the European Enlightenment and Peter's enthusiasm and curiosity towards gaining knowledge created the conditions for the beginning of the development of the Russian Orientalism as an academic science. But in the case of any empire (and Russia is not an exception, of course), curiosity and pure interest in knowledge are often directly accompanied with imperial aims for the expansion and also the rivalry of colonial appetites. It served missionary purposes as well as for training state officials, to deal with Muslim minorities living according to their religious imperative, and to be able to understand the reasons for periodic discontent.

The rise of Russian Orientalism as an academic discipline also had interesting peculiarities compared with its Western corollary. One of the most distinguished features was the presence of academics with their own 'Oriental' origin—one of the most prominent among them was a Christian convert and Persian by origin, Mirza Aleksandr Kasimovich Kazem-Bek. He is also known as the father of the Kazan school for his distinguished academic achievements in the field of Oriental studies. Unusual is the fact that the Russian Oriental studies became known and recognized via Kazem-Bek in a such a place as Kazan which is, by itself, the conquered Muslim/Tatar land. Orientalism as an academic discipline was present in different places of Imperial Russia, but the Kazan case—because of its geography and employees—complicated the distinction Said made between self or Other, and between Orient or Occident.[62]

[61] Morrison, *My Ne Anglichane*.

[62] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

The rise of Saint-Petersburg as the main center of Russian Oriental studies was connected with Count Sergei Semenovich Uvarov, the educational minister at the court of Nicholas I. Of course, his interest in the Orient was primarily dictated by state political ambitions, but in addition, his interest was dictated by state political ambitions, and was also strongly followed and popular in Europe at that time. It was the trend declared by the Indian and Egyptian ancient scientific and cultural legacies, where India and Egypt were seen as the cradles of civilization and the sources of 'unfailing wisdom' which should be studied.[63] Uvarov was fascinated with Orient and the establishment of Saint-Petersburg—the capital of Imperial Russia, as the center of the Orientalism. This demonstrated how important and ambitious Russian Oriental aspirations were.

The employment of native speakers who were teaching a variety of Oriental languages continued in Saint-Petersburg, echoing the Kazan tradition. Apart from Turkic, Arabic, and Persian languages, the curriculum was enriched by language courses from Sanskrit to Afghani, and it was a demonstration of two of Uvarov's primary interests: scientific and political. As a political tool it was used by Russia for the demonstration of its imperial ambitions, and it implied the Russian intention to intimidate Britain by indirect reminding it that there are only the Afghan mountains between British South Eastern possessions and the Russian imperial border. The extended language curriculum aimed to show that Russian expansionistic appetites can be strengthened if the political relationship between two empires continued to be vulnerable and unsustained. The political tension went so far that in 1801 Paul I dispatched 20,000 Cossacks towards the British Indian possessions. The plan had not been realized because of the Tsar's assassination, but the idea of the 'Great Game', the competition between British and Russian empires for India was firmly entrenched on the margins of history.[64]

The variety of strategic aims as well as pure intellectual purposes led Russian academia towards the acquisition of knowledge about the Orient inside Russia's own domain, and beyond its vast borders. If Uvarov was the idealogical source for the establishment of Saint-Petersburg as a center of Russian Oriental studies, one of its most interesting leading scholars was the Arabist and Orientalist, Osip Senkovski. Apart from Senkovski's academic works and achievements,

[63] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

[64] Morrison, Alexander "Introduction: Killing the Cotton Canard and Getting Rid of the Great Game: Rewriting the Russian Conquest of Central Asia, 1814–1895," *Central Asian Survey* 33, no. 2 (2014).

he was also known for his Oriental literature where he embodied his vision of the Orient as opposite to Western culture—the 'separate planet' consisting of all sorts of exaggerated Oriental clichés[65]. I will return to Senkovski's oeuvre, and the theme of Russian Oriental literature in general, below.

The Russian imperial era had variety of different Orientalist scholars, such as those who fit into Saidian theory and those who did not. Some of them, like N.P. Ostroumov, could represent the classical image of a scholar-Orientalist who skillfully used his knowledge of Oriental languages, local culture, and Islamic faith to influence the local population in the interests of Tsarist Russia, also combining it with missionary purposes. Another example is V.V. Grigoriev, who does not fit into the Saidian discourse of Orientalism. Grigoriev served in the Kazakh steppe and had well-established relationships with local Kazakh people, but failed in cooperating with Russian military governors. Thus he could not be blamed as an Orientalist in a negative sense. Vera Tolz, in her book *Russia's Own Orient: The Politics of Identity and Oriental Studies in the Late Imperial and Early Soviet Periods*, focuses on one group of Russian Orientalists which she deliberately calls "Orientologists" to avoid intentional negative connotations, namely Rozen's school which included such names as Vasilii Bartold, Nikolai Marr, Sergei Oldenburg and Fedor Shcherbatskoi. She calls to distinguish between the Kazan Theological Academy and Oriental Faculty of Saint-Petersburg University, to which Rozen's school belonged. While at the Kazan Teological Academy obsolete polemical treatises of missionaries were often used, scholars of Rozen's school in many senses anticipated many European scientific tendencies. Even though they stayed inside the frameworks of positivism, Rozen's school sincerely believed in the possibility of objective research which would help to 'overcome stereotypes about the stagnant, backward, and silent Orient, which still dominated the perceptions of those 'experts' to whose opinions the Russian government preferred to listen'.[66] At the same time Rozen's school considered Europeans (Russians as well) superior to oriental people but this superiority was in terms of education and science, not based on racial and cultural prejudices. They also rejected the dichotomy of East/West as a fully Western imagination.[67] At the same time, they saw the particular connection between the 'pure'

[65] Senkovskii, Osip, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 6:74-75; vol. 7:41.

[66] Tolz, V., *Russia's Own Orient* (Oxford University Press, 2011), p.79.

[67] Ibid, p.54.

knowledge about eastern and southern nations and the advantage of this knowledge for Russian empire.

2.3 Russian Imperial Representation: Oriental Literature, Oriental Painting and Music

In this brief section, I will cover the most renowned Russian representations of the Orient of the Tsarist period from literature, painting, and music which were characterized by a mixture of Oriental and Occidental tropes, and manifest the frontier character of Russian Orientalism, in order to assess within what kind of an archive the Soviets made their films about as it pertains to their own Orient.

Regarding Russian Oriental literature, I want to come back to the aforementioned Tsarist Orientalist, Osip Senkovski, as he also had a literary disclosure of the image of the Orient for Russian intelligentsia which, in some ways, even made an impact on Pushkin and Lermontov.[68] However, Russian literature embraced the Orient not in a linear and negative way, the political recognition of the Muslim faith opened the door for the creation of positive Oriental images which began to appear in poetry and prose more often (even in a praised way), admitting the ancient wisdom which is somehow naturally embedded in the Orient. This was a trend in the 18th century in Europe, and Russian elites, being the people with a similar mindset, were led by the empress (or as were shown earlier by Uvarov) to follow the way of Western modernity.[69] This common trend influenced Orientalism as academic science and as a way of representation—in some ways very different, and in other ways repeating all the clichés about the Orient which were common in Europe.

Russian military enterprises against Persia and the Ottoman Empire, as well as the lingering suppression of the Caucasus, confronted, amazed, and inspired the Russian cultural elite. Such popularly admired Russian authors as Aleksandr Pushkin stayed in unofficial temporal exile in the Caucasus, and Mikhail Lermontov had a military serving there. Both of them used the Caucasus[70] as a source of inspiration for their literary masterpieces, such as *The Captive of the Caucasus* and *A Hero of Our Time.*

[68] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

[69] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

[70] The Russian notion of Orient [Vostok] is similarly to English combine in itself East and South.

Leo Tolstoy also did not stay away from the common trend of using the Caucasus. Being so keenly fascinated by the personality of Haji Murat, he wrote the novel in the same name name based on the usage of the archival sources. Not only were the Caucasus and its people romanticized in Russian literature, but by the Islamic faith as well. For instance, the impression which Pushkin received after reading the French translation of holy Muslim text, the Quran, led him to write a cycle of lyrics titled *Imitations of the Koran*. They are philosophical lyrics united by the idea of genuine faith, and the place of human beings in this world and the delusions of the human mind. Pushkin used the method of narration from the third person, appeals to the Prophet, reinterpreting the Quranic suras, and prophetic life. Despite such an admirable attitude towards the Muslim faith of the conquered Caucuses population, this position was commonly combined with supportive enthusiasm for extending Russian imperial domination.[71]

The discussion of Russian literary Orientalism cannot be complete without mentioning the specific genre which emerged in 18th century, which is usually associated with the philosophy of the Enlightenment and rationalism. This genre manifested in Russian literature in the form of "Oriental tales" and was adopted by many Russian authors, such as M. Kheraskov, I. Krylov, F. Glinka, P. Lvov, A. Benitsky, N. Novikov, N. Karamzin, and A. Izmailov, who mostly appeared beginning in 1750 and continued to the beginning of 19th century. Despite the entertaining context of exotic Muslim images, Oriental tales had philosophical and satirical meanings through which political connotations and critiques can often be traced. In fact, this applies not "distant" exotic countries, but the Russian autocracy itself. These tales enabled authors to display their aspiration for freedom, expressing the spirit of the Enlightenment in opposition to the absolute power of the Russian monarchy. Clear parallels could be drawn between an authoritarian Oriental ruler with his court and ignorant people, and the political milieu in Imperial Russia during that time.[72] The usage of the 'Orient' as a tool for criticizing one's own authority demonstrates again the specific place of Russia as a mixture of geographical and discursive margins trying to define itself either in opposition to or merging with the 'Orient'.

[71] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

[72] Kubacheva V.N. Vostochnaya povest v russkoi literature 18 nachalo 19 veka [В. Н. Кубачева «Восточная» повесть в русской литературе XVIII—НАЧАЛА X I X ВЕКА].

Russian Oriental paintings are strongly associated with the figure of Vasiliy Vereshchagin. His life-long art performance allows us to draw parallels between Russia's own Orient and the art of its Western imperial neighbors. It is possible for us to say that Vereshchagin had borrowed his view of the Orient from French art, given that he had studied with the known French artist, Léon Gérôme, who worked extensively within the Oriental genre. Indeed, the works of Gérôme strongly manifest the patterns described in Said's *Orientalism*. Vereshchagin visited the Caucasus and worked a lot in Central Asia, spending a generous amount of time with Russian military forces there. Vereshchagin's art worked to justify Russia's imperial missions, showing all those Orientalist imprints embedded in the Orient as cruelty, despotism, sloth, and of course slavery which was revealed predominantly in images of small boys as sexual objects in Vereshchagin's case. He depicted opium dens, beggar guilds, prisons, and *bachas*.[73] The Russian 'civilizing' mission in Central Asia, according to Vereshchagin's own explanation, was the main aim of his art. He simply put aside ethnography or cultural explorations, explicitly clarified the aim of his art as "to describe the barbarism with which until now the entire way of life and order of central Asia has been saturated."[74] Vereshchagin's famous *Turkestan cycle* was shown in a London exhibition glorifying Russia's expansion as cultural and as a civilizing mission. Vereshchagin himself drew an explicit parallel with British colonial expansion in his preface to the exhibition, combining both empires under the name of European civilization: "The central Asian population's barbarism is so glaring, its economic and social condition so degraded, that the sooner European civilization penetrates into the land, whether from one side or the other, the better."[75]

It is important to note here that the visual representation of the Central Asian population in Vereshchagin paintings almost completely excluded the representation of Oriental women. While his paintings in many aspects fall in line with 'classic' Orientalist paintings, the exclusion of women can be explained through frontier concept of Orientalism. As Gingrich put it:

> The folk and elite images of frontier orientalist unanimously agree that 'their' Oriental is almost an exclusively male person … frontier orientalism, for better or worse, leaves Oriental women almost completely out of the picture. It has no

[73] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

[74] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

[75] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

> repertoire of standard European, male erotic fantasies about Muslim women, for instance, as typical of colonial orientalism.[76]

The period when Vereshchagin was working in Central Asia coincided with the Russian military mission there, so this direct confrontation can affirm and explain the exclusion of women from his paintings. Apart from this view on Central Asians as a representation of 'barbarism', Vereshchagin was not a pure supporter of Russian military achievement there. He was also known for his anti-militarist paintings depicting the horrors of wars where, despite the national differences of "civilizers" and "civilized," Vereshchagin pointed out the equal human essence of both sides.

The Tsarist military achievements were also supported by Russian musical composers who praised the conquests by writing compositions, among them some famous ones like Aleksandr Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia,* Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Slava (Glory),* and Mussorgsky's *Torzhestvenniy marsh na vzyatie Karsa (Solemn march on the capture of Kars).* Central Asian motives appeared in the music of Aleksandr Aliab'ev and flourished with Mikhail Glinka, whose works became the hallmark of Russian classical music. Glinka's operas combined Russian folks elements, Turkish, Arabic, and Caucasian dances, and Persian chorus.[77] Some Russian composers, like Mily Balakirev, even refused to study in the St. Petersburg Conservatory because the musical education there was supposed to be entirely Western. Balakirev, like other musicians, received the inspiration from Russian writers who used Oriental musical images in their works, for instance his symphonic poem, *Tamaracor*, responds to Lermontov's ballad of the same name.

This cultural mix, which manifested in the Russian music of the Tsarist period, is Russian self-imagination as a country "in between"—somehow not subjugated to the Orient but also not blended with it. The 'Russian seasons' organized by Sergey Dyagilev, the famous propagator of Russian culture, included opera and ballet and were shown around Europe during 1908-29, from Paris to Monte-Carlo. The 'Russian seasons' somehow became a cultural triumph and started the fashion trend known as *a'la russe*, but the Russianness of the ballet's names paradoxically speak for themselves: 'Scheherazade', 'Polovtsian Dances' and other, the opera's

[76] Gingrich, *Frontier Myths of Orientalism*, p.120.

[77] Oye, *Russian Orientalism*.

costumes, motives and outlines, all were demonstrating Russian uniqueness, otherness and mysterious Oriental attractiveness.

CHAPTER THREE

Soviet Orientalism in Films

3.1 Central Asia in the Soviet Period

After the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, the USSR turned up in almost the same territorial borders of the ex-Tsarist empire. Despite the fact that the Bolsheviks were opposed to the 'great Russian chauvinism' of the Tsarist time and to world empires in general, the USSR became the new empire, although with different Marxist ideology, but in which many imperial attributes remained.

The existence of Orientalist discourse is bounded by the position of colonial domination, and comes as an outcome of it. However, the USSR was not a 'classical colonial' empire with clear cultural borders between the metropolis and its colonies. Also, the important argument and justification to not see the USSR as a colonial empire towards the Orient, was the fact that during the consolidation of Soviet authority in Central Asia, a significant part of the local population supported the Bolsheviks and fought on their side. Thus, local collaborators gave Bolsheviks a particular legitimacy, which the Tsarist empire did not have, given that it was seen as the external conqueror of the region.[78]

There are 'classical' colonial approaches to the civilizing mission of the Orient. For instance, these include the British case of seeing the Oriental Other as essentially inferior, or the French approach to treat the Other as equals but only if the Other fully absorb French culture and its values. The Soviet case was different from these two approaches as well as from the Tsarist era where racial ideology played a much less important role compared to religious divisions.[79] Soviets aimed to create a new identity which affected all people inside the border of the USSR, despite their ethnic origin or religious background (Bolshevism was used as the common

[78] Abashin, Sergey "Byl li SSSR kolonialnoi imperiei" [the lecture was given by Sergey Abashin at European University in St Peterburg in 13.06.2017 Абашин, Сергей Был ли СССР колониальной империей? https://eu.spb.ru/news/17896-moskva-byl-li-sssr-kolonialnoj-imperiej].

[79] Morrison, Alexander, "Peasant Settlers and the 'Civilising Mission' in Russian Turkestan, 1865–1917," The *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 43:3, pp.387-417.

denominator between all possible differences).[80] Furthermore, it was a global project that had to be spread around the world, yet the Orient was never perceived as equal. The difficulties which the Bolsheviks found in Western Europe and the failure of the Marxist revolutions there made them turn to the *Vostok* (The Orient) as the instrument to attack Western imperialism. Trotskii in August 1919 suggested that the Bolsheviks, with their limited military capacities, might have more success in the Orient than in Europe, and that they should even consider an attack on British India.[81] The global Orient for the Bolsheviks was the tool, and was considered to be a temporal aim through which it would be possible, according to them, to destabilize Western Europe. Thus, the idea of a revolutionary Orient was a Soviet version of the 'Great Game', in which the Orient was a silent receptor but not the real actor.

The idea of the Soviet Orient and global Orient in the hands of the Bolsheviks implied many Orientalist methods and approaches. To be anti-imperialist in their populist agenda implied being very critical of the type of knowledge the West produced about the Orient. Soviet orientalist scholarship was extremely politicized and went in accordance with state discourse. In the early period of the Soviet state, there emerged different public events, semi-scientific/semi-propaganda organizations, and journals dedicated to the Orient which combined the anti-'bourgeois' and anti-imperialist attitude to both Western and Russian imperial Orientalism. The global goal of such events, like the Congress of the Peoples of the East' in Baku in 1920, was to spread the message that Bolshevik Russia was fighting for the liberation of the Orient, and that the Oriental nations should unite with Russia to start liberation struggles and revolutions against Western colonial powers.[82]

The politicized nature of Soviet Orientalism anticipated the future critique of Western Oriental studies, and deliberately made the Orient a 'speaker'. However, since early periods, the 'voices of the Orient' were carefully selected, and most of what was said was predetermined by party[83], not to mention later periods of even more strict censorship. 'Moscow is the Mecca for all enslaved peoples' was the famous phrase of a staunch Marxist, Mikhail P. Pavlovich (1871-

[80] Etkind, *Orientalism reversed*, p.623.

[81] Kemper, Michael, "Red Orientalism- Mikhail Pavlovich and Marxist Oriental Studies in Early Soviet Russia." *Die Welt des Islams*, Vol. 50, Issue 3/4, A Muslim Interwar Soviet Union (2010), p.446.

[82] Ibid, p.447.

[83] Ibid, p.449.

1927), the establisher of a number of Soviet Orientalist organizations and directly involved in academic scholarship, policy making and film production.[84] The strong Soviet opposition to Tsarist time and Western Europe, along with its 'careful' liberation of the Orient should be seen as the Soviet 'civilizing mission' where the call to Moscow instead of Mecca implies Moscow was the place in which the ultimate form of European civilization became manifest.

The symbolic equality between the Soviet republics, where Russia (RSFSR) was just one of the fifteen other, was metaphorically described by Yuri Slezkine in *The USSR as communal apartment.*[85] In this 'friendship of nations', Russia and Russians had a special role as the leading nation of the Marxist world-revolution. Russians did not have specific national institutions as the other 'titular' nations of USSR had, such as its own national TV, 'national' communist party, 'national' academy of science, and so on. As Russians' national identity was already developed and dominant, such institutions were simply irrelevant.[86] Russians were, as Krishan Kumar puts, everywhere and nowhere.[87]

Despite the fact that the newly formed 'titular' nations were actively encouraged to participate and actually were involved in the ruling administrative positions of the Soviet bureaucracy (as the policy of *korenizaciya* demanded), Russians were always dominant in policy-making. The key-decisions were done exclusively in Moscow, and it deprived the regions from their own subjectivity. Accordingly, the absence of own subjectivity combined with exploitation manifested in a monocultural agriculture imposed on the region, which are the main marks indicating a colonial relationship, and which shaped the policy towards Central Asia.

In the endeavor to create a *homo Sovieticus*—proper Soviet man—the Soviet culture was imposed through Russians among all other nations, and the Soviet state was again a 'Russian empire' in its new reincarnation, even if they did not name it as such.[88] Stalin's famous motto of 'socialist in content, national in form' presupposed to be not only for USSR but as the

[84] Ibid, p.457.

[85] Slezkine, Y., The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism. *Slavic Review*, 53:2 (1994), p.414-452.

[86] Kumar, *The Visions of Empire*.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

worldly-applicable formula for the world revolution of the proletariat. The paradox turned out to be that the countries of the victorious proletariat were actually those who did not have a proletariat; it was especially valid for Central Asia. The official discourse spread the position that:

> the Orient does not have to pass through a period of capitalism: The East could achieve emancipation, industrialization and social progress without going through the horrors of the capitalist socio-economic formation. This meant that Oriental revolutions in the East do not need to be based on the proletariat (which was almost non-existent in most countries, as was conceded) but should be carried out by peasants.[89]

In order to help the 'backward' regions of the Soviet state to catch up with "advanced" central Russia, it was important to bring them at first in line with the trends of Western modernity, such as national self-identity and a sense of belonging to the working class. These steps were seen as a process of building the proletariat culture in the USSR with the utopian goal of socialist victory on a world scale. Yuri Slezkine described it as 'the world's first state of workers and peasants was the world's first state to institutionalize ethno-territorial federalism, classify all citizens according to their biological nationalities and formally prescribe preferential treatment of certain defined populations'[90]

Here, it is relevant to come back to Vera Tolz 'Russia's Own Orient'. Tolz focused on the orientologists of Rozen's school which emerged in the Tsarist period, and whose field-works included various oriental nations and their national specific features. The Orientologists of Rozen's school were bound together with such European modern trends about national-identity and nation-building. Thus, they saw nation-building as the important step in human progressive development.

In the context of the Tsarist Empire, Russia discerned nation-building of the people from various imperial regions not as a problem which can lead to separatism, but as 'an antidote to

[89] Kemper, *Red Orientalism*, p. 447.

[90] Kumar, *The Visions of Empire*.

political nationalist movements'.[91] Orientalist scholars lived and worked in both periods, the Tsarist and early Soviet as well. One of the main points of Tolz's book is the idea of a continuity in nation-building policy in two epochs, because the premises for the emergence of the Central Asian Soviet republics were laid before the revolution, and Rozen's school is one of the examples of how Orientologists worked in the creation of national narratives.

Another important theme Tolz raised in her book is that the scholars of Rozen's school since the First World War were very critical of Western-European Oriental scholarship because they saw that it was determined specifically to serve imperialism and be applied in ways that harm colonial societies.[92] Later, with the October Revolution, and with close contacts and cooperation with the Bolsheviks, this rhetoric is greatly enhanced and takes a clear anti-Western tone.[93] It is appropriate to mention the figure of Anwar Abdel-Malik, the Egyptian Marxist and author of *Orientalism in Crisis.* Toltz claims that Said was under the influence of Abdel-Malik, who had studied in the USSR. Abdel-Malik, however, claimed there was a great difference between the Western and Soviet Oriental studies. According to Tolz, Abdel-Malik's opinion evolved due to his familiarity with the works of Rozen's school, particularly with the works of Sergei Oldenburg. The scholars of Rozen's school, on the one hand, were really critical of Western Orientalism, and on the other hand were trying to find a place for themselves in the new Soviet reality.[94]

> … Ol'denburg also announced the development of a new type of scholarship of the 'East' in the Soviet Union. This new approach was allegedly free from West European prejudices against the 'East' and from the corrupting influences of imperialism. Even so, it was not free from politics. On the contrary, the new Soviet Oriental Studies, in Ol'denburg's words, were ready 'to serve as the basis for [building] a new life' in the eastern and southern republics of the USSR by focusing on contemporary and overtly political issues.

[91] Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient*, p. 43.

[92] Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient*, p.82.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid, p.83.

> To accept the validity and the logic of Ol'denburg's arguments, one had to believe that Soviet policies towards the eastern and southern republics had nothing to do with imperialism and were entirely beneficial for the recipients. One person who did accept Ol'denburg's assertions about the profound difference between Soviet Oriental Studies and those in the 'West', and of the 'moral superiority' of the former over the latter, was Anwar Abdel-Malek, who in his 'Orientalism in Crisis' borrowed directly from Ol'denburg's work.Said, who was strongly influenced by Abdel-Malek's work, took these assertions at face value. In this way, claims first advanced by Russian intellectuals about a major difference between Russian imperial expansion and the creation of the British and French empires informed Said's work. Said then, to a certain extent, evoked this difference to justify his exclusion of Russian Oriental Studies from his critique of European Orientalism.[95]

The works of Vasilii Bartold, Nikolai Marr, Sergei Oldenburg and Fyodor Shcherbatskoi were influential and commonly used during the early days of the USSR, even though their cooperation with Bolsheviks was short-lived and by the end of 1920s, they were under political repression and persecution which came under much of pre-revolutionary Russian academia.[96] Nevertheless, the works of Tsarist and later Soviet Orientalist scholars laid the foundation for Central Asian academic scholarship about the self, which in turn greatly affected the region's development under the Soviet umbrella in terms of nation-building and self-identity. The establishment of Soviet rule was accompanied by large-scale radical modernization affecting the people of Central Asia in both public and private spheres. In contrast with Tsarist policy, Soviet modernization aimed to lead to a common denominator for all Soviet people by creating the new identity of a proletariat and a common body of governance, with administrations divided by nationality and institutions.

The state used a specific type of policy which American historian Terry Martin called affirmative action. The Soviet state was, arguably, the first multinational state which answered the development of national consciousness for various ethnic groups, especially those named as 'backward', through systematic assistance. This strategy aimed to control the process of

[95] Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient*, p. 83.

[96] Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient*.

Tsarist decolonization by saving the territory of the empire.[97] The Soviet ideological structures constantly worked on ways of how to raise a proper identity of the 'new Soviet man', which would be above national differences. The Soviet authority supported four 'forms' of national manifestations, namely: national territories, languages, elites, and cultures.[98] This process was called *korenizatsiya* (indigenization) and was meant to incorporate the local people to the regional soviet apparatus of bureaucracy. The local people having authority would propagate the Soviet ideology among the Central Asian population and make a contrast between the Tsarist imperial period (i.e. the locals will not be seen as those who impose power from the outside).[99] Thus, Soviet propaganda became a systematic discourse achieved with the incorporation of local national elites under the supranational form of Soviet unity.

3.2 Cinema, The Tool of Propaganda

Cinema became the new flourishing technical instrument for propagating the Soviet ideological discourse, constructing the historical memory and non-violent education and re-education of people.

The Oriental territories which attracted the variety of art-makers in Tsarist times were coming to the new screening era of film-production, with the full support of the new government. The movies portrayed different territories of the vast USSR and usually contained heroes with different cultural markers, but all of whom bore identical values characterizing the same 'Soviet man'. One of the particular goals of Soviet film-production was the question of representation of different Soviet nationalities in such a way that it would be different from the imperial past. This important role of cinema was emphasized by Lenin in his famous phrases 'Of all the arts, cinema is the most important'[100] and 'We need to pay special attention to organize movie theaters in the villages and in the East, where it will seem new and where it will be particularly

[97] Martin, T., *The Affirmative Action Empire* (Cornell University, 2011).

[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Sarkisova, Oksana, *Screening Soviet Nationalities: Kulturfilms from the Far North to Central Asia* (London & NewYork: I. B. Tauris, 2017).

successful.'[101] Soviet cinema became a medium for the effective politico-cultural propaganda which aimed to persuade the masses in the political and moral legitimacy of the new regime.

The Bolsheviks saw cinema as a technological tool which fully corresponds with the industrial modernity with which they wanted to be associated.[102] By establishing the state monopoly over all the forms of art, including cinema, the state exercised the power of influence on the minds of its subjects, especially on the predominantly illiterate peasants of Central Asia. The advent of Western modernity through cinema can be traced to a symbolic event that happened on 1 July 1925, when officials converted the Ishankul mosque in Tashkent to a film studio named 'Shark Yulduzi', thus creating the first film-studio in Central Asia.[103] Soviet cinema embracing this new perspective on history, politics, and hygiene went hand in hand with state-building and state control.[104]

3.3 Central Asian Soviet Cinematography

I provide below an overview of Central Asian Soviet cinematography based on Michael Rouland's chronological introduction of *Cinema in Central Asia: Rewriting Cultural Histories,* which will cover the main theme and stages of Soviet Oriental films until the Perestroika period.

The early period of 1920s after the Bolshevik Revolution and the end of the civil war can be generalized as the ethnographic era when there were predominantly two main trends. The first trend of Oriental films was the demonstration of the Central Asian exoticism through adventure films. They focused on the Revolution which was fascinating for the other part of the Soviet state, as it gave the sense of virtually traveling by showing the greatness of the Marxist message which reached many remote areas of the USSR.[105] For locals, it gave a sense of belonging to the common cause of the revolution, and the examples of these genres are *Iz Pod Svodov*

[101] Gak, Aleksandr, *Samoe vazhnoe iz vsekh iskusstv: Lenin o kino* (Moscow, 1963), p.42.

[102] Michael Russell, *Soviet Montage Cinema as Propaganda and Political Rhetoric, Doctor of Philosophy* (The University of Edinburgh, 2009), p.16.

[103] Rouland, M. "Historical Introduction" in *Cinema in Central Asia: Rewriting Cultural Histories*, edited by Michael Rouland, Gulnara Abikeyeva and Birgit Beumers, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), p. 25.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Sarkisova, *Screening Soviet Nationalities*.

Mecheti (Behind the Vaults of Mosque, 1928), and the whole genre of *kulturfims* - the educational films about remote areas with an emphasis on backwardness such as *Sol' Svanetii* (*The Salt for Svanetia, 1924*) and *Turksib (Turksib,1929).*

The second trend was to educate the local population by screening their 'obsolete' past, such as traditions and religions, in a way where they are made to feel ashamed of it and ideologically would choose the Soviet future. Both of these trends have continued to be on screen throughout the Soviet history, but in the early stages they were the most obvious and ideologically vivid. The examples of them could be *Minaret Smerti* (*The Minaret of Death*, 1925), *Musulmanka* (*The Muslim Woman,* 1925), and *Vtoraya Zhena* (The Second Wife, 1927).[106]
The second period of the 1930s was marked by the emergence of local film producers and directors who came back from studying in the metropolitan centers like Moscow and Leningrad and began to actively participate in the Central Asian cinema venture. However, they mainly occupied secondary positions while Russians played key roles in the cinema industry.[107] The main topics were the redistribution of land, international relationships, and class struggle in traditional societies. Also, plenty of films were dedicated to the issue of Muslim women "de-veiling." In some of these films, de-veiling was the main theme, while in others it was just briefly touched upon. In general, however, the great majority of Soviet Oriental films were directly or indirectly involved in the issue of the emancipation of Central Asian women, which in the Soviet interpretation, was directly associated with de-veiling. Among the examples of the films of this period are *Doch Svyatogo* (*The Daughter of a Saint*, 1931), *Dzhut (Dzhut,* 1931*),* and *Emigrant (The Emigrant,* 1935*).* The emancipation of the Central Asian women as equal subjects who have equal rights to study and equal responsibilities to work became one of the main themes of the party; it showed in cinema-representation most acutely during the 1930s and continued to be present throughout the whole Soviet period.

Simultaneously, the cinematic style of "social realism" begins to emerge sharply, illuminating the lifestyle of the Central Asian working class and poor people. The theme of sacrifice in the name of the revolution has manifested in an almost religious vain, reinforcing the new cults for the Oriental inhabitants. The contrasting visual representation of the great social and industrial transformation, and the achievements of the first and second Five-Year plans with the archaic

[106] Rouland, M., *Cinema in Central Asia*.

[107] Rouland, Cinema in Central Asia, p.11.

past, was becoming evidence of the coming utopian classless future for the Soviet oriental frontiers. The theme of revolution became present in each period and represents the anchor which connects the relationship of the Soviet metropolis and its Orient.

All of the above-mentioned topics were present in the film-studios of every Central Asian republic, but, in addition to this, each of them had a special focus on national particularities. For instance, in Uzbekistan, it was cotton, in Kyrgyzstan livestock, in Turkmenistan oil, and so on.[108]

The important historical context of the 1940s in the history of the development of the Central Asian cinema and its Orientalist perspective is the context of the Second World War which designated Russian culture as the leading one, thus bringing everything back to the starting point. Also, due to the state of war, the main central film-studios moved to Central Asia on the one hand by placing local cadres at the level of assistants, and also by giving them the opportunity to work with the top cadres who temporarily came from Leningrad and Moscow. If Bolsheviks avoided the promotion of Russian culture earlier, contrasting themselves with the Russian imperial past of which they were ashamed (and emphasizing the notion of 'great Russian chauvinism'), now the context of the war would bring everything back to its original place. Thus, the theme of Russian culture as an example for the backward republics of Central Asia began to dominate the next 20 years in the USSR.[*109*]

Post-war periods known as the Thaw under the rule of N. Khrushchev and the Stagnation under L. Brezhnev became a transition time to fully-fledged national cinematography. These next post-war periods were characterized by the increased appearance of local cadres, the technical quality, and strengthening of distinctive features of frontier Orientalism (such as forging the image of a 'good' and a 'bad' subject, i.e. "Sovetisized" and "traditional"). Although the films became more local, the Soviet message mostly remained intact.

The Thaw, starting in the early 1950s, continued until the end of the 1960s and was also marked by the general decline of a Stalinist totalitarianism which was the hallmark of early Soviet cinema. Albeit, in Soviet Oriental films, all the main themes remain the same, their

[108] Rouland, Cinema in Central Asia, pp.22-50.

[*109*] Rouland, *Cinema in Central Asia*, p.32.

performances acquired a freer form of representation. For example, the appearance of explicit erotica became possible, which I will analyze in the example of *Perviy Uchitel* (*The First Teacher*, 1965).

Another important characteristic of the Thaw was the increasing frequency of the usage of national heroes in Oriental films in which they had no "backwards" traits. On the contrary, they are 'almost Soviet people', thus creating the historical justification by honing the image of the 'constructive path to the present'[110], this trend was demonstrated in a number films; among them are famous folklore hero Nasreddin or triumphant movie about Turkic poet and Sufi philosopher, statesman of Timurid Khorasan Alisher Navoi (*Alisher Navoi*, 1947), Uzbek poet *Furkat* (*Furkat*, 1959), Islamic philosopher and physician Avicenna (*Avicenna*, 1956) and others. As an example of this type of Frontier Orientalism, I analyze *Nasreddin in Khujand, or the Enchanted Prince*, 1959, where the patterns of good and bad Orientals were used for young viewers.

Also, the 1950s were characterized by the common thematic extension of the usage of national stories under the framework and style of social realism. A huge range of films represented this trend; among them are *Nash Dorogoy Doktor* (*Our Dear Doctor*, 1957), *Ego Vremya Pridet* (*His Time Will Come*, 1957), and *Krushenie Emirata (The Collapse of The Emirate*, 1955). They will be analyzed in detail below.

The cinematography in Central Asia during the 1960s was marked by the maturity of commercial and aesthetic success. This period is usually called a flourishing time for Central Asian cinematography because plenty of films in all kinds of genres emerged, and variations were produced, such as the historical adventures, comedies, and dramas. Among the different themes spread during that time, the theme of conflict between generations (traditionalists vs. modernists) was particularly strong in this period. Especially important is the fact that, in comparison with the earlier Soviet periods in which the representations of modernized Central Asians bore an image of transition (i.e. not as the fully-fledged Sovitesized subject), in this period they are represented as the fully formed new *Soviet* Orientals.

[110] Rouland, *Cinema in Central Asia*, p.33.

The USSR under L. Brezhnev was known in historiography as the stagnation, however, in the Central Asian cinema of that time, it was characterized by the straightening of national consciousness and the desire of the local film directors to avoid Russian and Soviet influence. During the stagnation in Central Asian cinema emerged many attempts to touch thorny issues such as the difficulty of Soviet multi-ethnicity and alcoholism inside Soviet officialdom.[111] The films that raised these problems could not be mass films and definitely cannot be called a trend in the USSR. However, even the very possibility of touching upon such thorny issues was an important step towards the epoch preceding the Perestroika, and the fall of the USSR. The examples of such films could be *Derevo Dzhamala* (*Jamal's Tree*, 1980) and *Ulan* (1977). These types of films are not the focus of this thesis.

3.4 The Enemies of Revolution. The Collapse of Bukharian Emirate

The film produced by *Mosfilm* (Moscow film studio) and *Tashkentskaya Kinostudiya* (Tashkent Film Studio) in 1955 represents a historical-revolutionary genre[112] and is an excellent example of cinematic discourse with an Orientalist pattern. I chose this film as the example of early Khrushchev period where the Oriental images are precisely sharpened by state purposes. The producers, as well as the actors, are composed of Russians and Uzbeks, and it is a late example of a continuation of the *korenizatsiya* model not only in state bureaucracy, but in the Soviet art industry as well. The word *korenizatsiya* literally means 'taking roots' and it refers to Sovietization having its roots within the local communities. The cooperation between *Mosfilm* and *Tashkentskaya Kinostudiya*, a mixture of producers and actors complicates and restrains the accusation of an idea of Orient from the Saidian perspective as constructed from the alien Western view. Vladimir Basov and Latif Fayziev are producers, where Fayziev is also the member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, thus, a trustworthy and a local at the same time.

The voiceover at the beginning of the film starts with the explanation of the Red army's state of affairs by the 1920s. The voice is very dynamic, accompanied by energetic orchestral music,

[111] Rouland, *Cinema in Central Asia*, pp.41-42.

[112] A brief overview on Soviet films in historical-revolutionary genre gave Prusin, Alexander V. & Scott C. Zeman Taming Russia's Wild East: The Central Asian historical-revolutionary film as Soviet Orientalism, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* (2003), pp.23:3, 259-270.

and quickly changing video sequences. Then, the voiceover begins to list the main foes of the Bolsheviks, including the Bukhara, who are the focus of this film. The description was coupled with a measured voice and slow music, and a video showing deserts and large buildings with domes and minarets. A viewer sees the striking contrast between the absence of people in the Bukharian spaces on the one hand, and the Red army with running soldiers on the other. This distinctness aimed to demonstrate the static and unchangeable character of the Emirate. The voiceover concludes the description by words that time itself stopped at the borders of the Emirate …'. Coming back to Said's analysis of the Orientalist discourse and its worldwide visual art manifestations in movies, the collapse of Bukharian emirate at this point demonstrates the same patterns of the Western representation of an Orient as static and passive. This opposition is a false mirror of the constructed Occidental Self, where such static representation of Bukhara helps to build an imaginary contrast of the Bolsheviks and backwards Other.

The scene of the tenth anniversary of the Bukharian Emir's ascension to the throne begins with exotic and sensual women-dancers unsuccessfully trying to entertain the oversaturated Emir. They were kicked out with whips as one of many other entertainments pursuing to satisfy the Oriental ruler. The depiction of the Bukharian Emir is not different from Hollywood analogies, like the sultan in *Aladdin* (1992), as both of them are childish, naïve, and easily manipulated. The Soviet image of the underlined Muslim ruler goes in accordance with Western Orientalist film production. The East as it was found by Bolsheviks is a backward place which lives as it is described by voice-overs in feudalism, so there is a lack of rights and is dominated by oppression. The Emirate of Bukhara was a part of the Russian Empire and had the status of a so-called protectorate. In the eyes of Bolsheviks, it was a state of the past, a relic that should be overcome on the road to universal communist happiness. Thus, Bukhara is a nest of enemies for ordinary people. Even though Bolsheviks are representing the West, they are neither masters of domination, nor exploiters over the Orient, but rather are assistants and liberators.[113]

[113] Appeal by the Council of People's Commissars, Published in: Dekrety Sovetskoi vlasti (Moscow, 1957), p. 113-115 Gazeta vremennogo Rabochego i Krestianskogo Pravitel'stva #17, 7 December (24 November) 1917 Sobraniie uzakonenii RSFSR, 1917, No. 6, Addendum 2 [Воззвание за подписью наркома по национальным делам Джугашвили-Сталина и председателя СНК В.Ульянова-Ленина с призывом поддержать борьбу за освобождение трудящихся].

The emir is surrounded by the representatives of the 'circle of overthrown monarchs' who are sending their congratulations to him due to the anniversary of his absolute rule. For the Soviet viewer, these congratulations from the Ottoman sultan, surviving distant relatives of the Russian tsar, and the last German Emperor Wilhelm II represent an already past stage. These rulers had lost their authority, thus the existence of Emirate is just a question of time and Emirate inevitably will fail as it was the case for many of the emir's guests.

Some guests, however were powerful enemies of the revolution, such as was Wolford, a delegate of the American Singer Corporation and a bright example of the Soviet interpretation of American capitalism. Thus, there is a combination of pre-established Orientalist patterns with Soviet anti-colonial rhetoric, where the Bukharian Emir, despite his difference with the Western representatives, was put on the same layer as the Soviet enemies. *Krushenie Emirata* demonstrates a mixture of discourses; the scene of the emir's anniversary is a hybrid of Soviet representation of feudalism/capitalism/Orientalism, where the connection of these three modes manifests the frontier nature of Russia itself.

Secretly, the emir receives a guest, the British spy—Colonel Paley dressed in Sufi rags. He gives the emir information about the Red Army, and also organizes raids on Soviet trains in the name of 'religious fanatics'. Paley is so powerful that he can even organize the association of the main Soviet revolutions as Frunze and Kuibyshev, although unsuccessfully because the movies show them as almost saints protected from all kinds of nefarious conspiracies and intrigues. Wolford is no less powerful, he has a connection among the Soviet bureaucracy from the lower local layers and until even Trotskii. All of his contacts, therefore, are those hidden enemies of the Soviet system infected with capitalist and bourgeois values, which are just for the time being not discovered and not eliminated yet.

Paley and Wolford are two types of Occidental representatives in the *Krushenie Emirata.* The Soviet interpretation of them as the capitalistic enemies of a new world shows a paradoxical example of orientalizing the occidental images and decorating them with templates of cunning, craftiness and perfidy. The Singer delegate from the United States aimed to rob the poor peasants by monopolizing all Bukhara's cotton, while Paley in his turn is the image of British imperialism who ceaselessly puts his nose everywhere. *Krushenie Emirata* is one of the first movies in the USSR that clearly show the Soviet conspiracy theory of the of British and

American opposition—the discourse of two competitive rivalries as 'Rothschild vs. Rockefeller' are constantly trying to achieve world dominance.

The idea of the rival role of the British Empire in the Central Asian region known as 'The Great game' strengthened and densely entered into Central Asian historiography during the Soviet period. The concept of 'The Great game' became a cognitive map through which Central Asian history was seen no less than three generations. *Krushenie Emirata* continues this historiographical tradition of seeing the region exclusively as a scene of the clash of great powers in the 19th century, belittling the region's own value, its internal process, and the interests of its inhabitants. Thus, the Orientalist representation of the Emirate of Bukhara as a static chess board of the great powers, is the screen manifestation of the concept of 'The Great game', which is misleading and highly controversial.[114]

In this film, the goals of Paley and Wolford are similar: they and all other foreign delegates, including Russian White forces, are convincing the Emir to attack the Soviet Tashkent. According to Seymour Becker, the history of that period is full of inaccurate and highly exaggerated rumors about the Emir's international networks,[115] and historical-revolutionary films (especially *Krushenie Emirata)* of the time are a perfect example of creating the negative image of the Emirate of Bukhara as a part of Soviet propaganda.

A total opposition to the participants of that 'rotten' anniversary gathering of loafers is the scene of the train with revolutionary Soviet hero - Mikhail Frunze. The train by itself is a harbinger of modernity compared with Central Asian horse riders. The train accompanying Soviets is a frequent metaphor used in Soviet films, and Marx himself once linked revolutions to the 'locomotives of world history'.[116]

---

[114] Morrison, A. "Beyond the 'Great Game': The Russian origins of the second Anglo–Afghan War" *Modern Asian Studies*, 51:3 (2017), pp.686-735.

[115] Becker, Seymour, Russia's Protectorates in *Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924* (Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 214.

[116] Honarpisheh, Farbob, "The Oriental 'Other' in Soviet Cinema, 1929-34" *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, Volume 14, 2005 - Issue 2 (22 Oct 2010).

Frunze is not wasting his time on idleness, he is working hard and the first scene of him in the train on its own represents the dynamics of Soviet civilization - revolutionary, rational, and secular, while on the opposite side the previous scene was of the Emirate of Bukhara - counter-revolutionary, superstitious, and religious.[117] The usage of a train in Soviet films goes together with the same usage of a train in American Westerns, where the Soviet harbinger of modernity was attacked by 'wild' *basmachi* movement and in Westerns by American 'wild Orientals' - Native Americans. The same pattern later appeared in the classic Oriental film, *Lawrence of Arabia (1962).* In that film, 'wild Orientals' were Arab beduins, but their attack was directed to the Ottoman railway.

The Emir is shown as one who has no positive project; he does not want any changes in his archaic society, and despite the fact that he is enchanted with Western materialistic values, the imperialistic West is needed merely for the preservation of his exploitative rule. He is 'archaic past' and the imperialist West is also the past - for that they are united with each other. Frunze's face is bright and serious, he and Kuibyshev are thinking about the poor people and the distribution of land among them. They are ready to teach, build and care about Central Asian people, and it is not the dynamic of master/slave dialectic. The image they give is one of parental concern and care. In fact, however, the dogmatic character of the Bolsheviks ideology does not give any opportunity for Bukharian peasants to be 'developed' on their own. The acceptance of Sovietization is the only way for them to be 'elevated', thus they are the masters despite the *korenizaciya* or such affirmative actions as the support of national cultural institutions. This is clearly shown in the scene of the speech by Khankulov at *PartActiv.* Comrade Khankulov is the local communist and he represents a negative character. His visual appearance demonstrates an important combination as he is wearing a national hat (*takke*) with a Soviet suit, the combination and union of local cultural features with the Soviet's. These special types of appropriate national elements are emphasized as acceptable and appropriate national identities and particularities which aim to demonstrate that there is no problem with differing nationalities in Soviet ideology. Interestingly, some particular garments were recognized by Soviets as bearing cultural connotations, while others bore religious ones. Therefore, for example, for men, *takke* became just a national element, but *paranja* became a part of the harsh movement against 'feudal' customs since 1927. *Krusheniye Emirata* partially

[117] Sunderland, Willard, *Taming Russia's Wild East the Central Asian historical revolutionary film as Soviet Orientalism* (Cornell University Press, May 26, 2004), p.260.

touches on the theme of the female veil in the scene where a local woman mentioned the Samarkand, and where under Soviet authority, women do not want to wear paranja anymore (one of the heroines happily takes out her veil).

Coming back to Khankulov, he suggests that for the full liquidation of the political and religious partisan movements of the local population in Central Asia, known as *basmachestvo,* against the Soviet authority, Russian comrades have to leave Turkestan as they view it to be an alien power. For that suggestion, he was booed and criticized, and Frunze even wrote his name in his notebook with listed enemies as a distrustful and suspicious person. Thus, even though Khankulov is from the local elite, is a communist, and holds a respectful position in the Soviet bureaucracy, he cannot speak from his national interests, and his position does not give him the ability to solve any local problems on his own. Whatever he speaks should satisfy the Russian Soviet authority, in this case Frunze and Kuibyshev. He represents a 'symbolical ethnicity' and should be depoliticized through ostentatious respect for him.[118] Soviets supported nationalities with their culture on the one hand, but on the other, this sort of support did not allow any significant national characteristics as religious, legal, or ideological to be part of the nation's customs.[119] The figure of Khankulov is a perfect example of the Oriental other who is allowed to exist only to the extent that he is convenient to the Soviets and acts in accordance with them.

The opposite figure to Khankulov is the young local Shurali Yakubov. In the film he is represented as a real communist and he is against Khankulov's idea that the departure of Russians is the appropriate solution for taming counter-revolutionary *basmachi* movement, because 'we were struggling together with Russians and should continue together as well'. Shurali is trustworthy because of his total devotion to Russians. Why is he devoted to them? Because he overcame 'oriental despotism'. He says: 'Before… I was scared by the emir, mullas, *bay*, but now, as a part of a communist party, there is nothing to be afraid anymore'. Khankulov and Shurali are shown in contrast to each other for the purpose of the justification of Soviet history. The representatives of the local elites like Khankulov were used by the Soviet authority at the beginning for the need to have an access to the population, but Russians did not trust them, while the next young generation of local communists as Shurali are those who will be totally submissive and their national interest manifested only in that traditional hat which

[118] Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*.

[119] Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, pp. 24-25.

Shurali continues to wear as a part of tamed national identity. The representation of Khankulov in this negative manner aimed to justify the purges and repressions inside the communist party towards the local elites of 20s and 30s, as they were commonly accused of promoting nationalism, deviating from the ideas of 'world communism', and so on. Those real 'Khankulovs' who got such accusations, in the beginning, were removed from the position and were later shot.

The practice of Islam is limited to unsympathetic characters. Islam is shown either as a justification of the aims of oppressors, or as a backwards relic. Religious rituals are performed by the emir whose army burns villages, tortures women, and beats old men "in the name of God." The emir's tax collectors are oppressing poor peasants by constant usage of religious rhetoric: 'how many bags of grain has Allah sent to you', 'give for the maintenance of the army of Islam; maintenance of mosques'. By taking the last bread from people, religion is shown as a hostile instrument for unjust oppression and extortion.

The quintessence of the image of religion as preventing people from moving into progressive modernity is shown in the scene of Bukhara's capture by the Soviet Army. In the decisive moments when soldiers needed the emir's attention and assistance for resistance to the Soviet capture, the Muslim ruler did not answer the soldiers, because he was busy with his religious duty - performing *namaz*.

In this film, the meanings of religion as a backward relic is a theme known in historiography as *perezhitki*.[120]*Perezhitki* are an amalgam of different practices which were seen as the attributes of backwardness, and thus had to be eradicated from the society, bringing peripheral societies such as in Central Asia closer to the developed Russian 'metropolis'.

Among other things, I want to draw a special attention to the representation of jadidism as a movement shown in *Krushenie Emirata* through the figure of Jadid Esembay. Esembay is the local unsympathetic character, who is cunningly and slyly playing his own game and seeking power as an end in itself. He is very well dressed, compared to ordinary people, and the film shows that for pursuing his own aims he does not have any principle of honor and dignity. When Esembay wants to marry a girl who does not like him, he capitalizes on the debt of the girl's parents in order to marry her (marriage, in exchange for their debts being settled). Despite

[120]Abashin Sergey Sovetskiy *"Kishlak: Mezhdu kolonializmom i modernizaciei"* Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie[Абашин, С. Советский кишлак: Между колониализмом и модернизацией / Сергей Николаевич Абашин. -М.: Новое литературное обозрение, 2015].

his ostentatious religiosity, he lies and deceives. He even works for the American Singer who wants to rob his own people. Esembay uses the Quran to justify suffering and oppressions of people because 'the future life is better for you than this life'. When peasants admirably say that the Soviet regime is better than the emir's authority because the Bolsheviks give water for free, Esembay scares them by claiming the water is given only for those who convert to Christianity. Again, the film represents religion as an obscurant force where only oppressors can live in prosperity and joy at the expense of the paupers' suffering. In the historiographical tradition, Jadidism is often seen as the 'Islamic modernism' associated with commitment to the reformation of religion ('renewal'), secular education, and active participation in politics. The movement grew in popularity during the Tsarist time as the appearance of Russians in Central Asia affected Muslims enormously. They saw new beautiful houses, unusual clothing, educated people in many areas, and new technologies. Muslims saw the contrast between the conquerors and the conquered and they understood the need for change which could help them reach the same level. Because Jadids had a complex and strained relationship with the emir, given that he was not willing to begin the radical changes and reforms, the Bolshevik revolution became for Jadids the opportunity for their own religious, educational, and cultural projects. So, in many aspects, their goals overlapped with the Bolsheviks, and Jadids were used as a connecting link between the locals and Bolsheviks. It is also worth noting that many Jadids joined the communist party.

In *Krushenie Emirata* the role of Jadid Esembay is approximately at the same level of negativity as Khankulov; while Esembay is poisoned by religion, Khankulov is by nationalism. None of them could fit the image of the proper Soviet man, and for none of them was history merciful. Esembay had been thrown to the abyss as many of his historical prototypes were, arrested, and executed by firing squad.

Krushenie Emirata as a historical-revolutionary film aimed not only to give a visual pleasure but educate people by giving them the appropriate interpretation of history. The behavior of the Soviet revolutionary heroes is shown in such a manner that none of the negative qualities can suit Frunze and Kuibyshev. They cannot be manipulated, they are honest and emotionally restrained, a lie is not compatible with their personalities. The film shows that they even cannot attack first - they keep the defense when the easily manipulated emir under the pressure of his 'imperialist' circle finally gives approval to attack the Soviet Tashkent.

In fact, according to the American historian, Seymour Becker, the real prototype of "emir" in *Krushenie Emirata* is emir Said Mir Mohammed Alim Khan, who saw little difference between 'white' and 'red'—for him all of them were Russians, and he probably hoped to be able to do business with whichever group finally came out on top in Russia (unless he could escape from Russia's orbit entirely, which was highly desirable but never seemed likely to prove feasible).[121] Regarding the role of the British in the emir's attack on Tashkent, *Krushenie Emirata* shows colonel Paley as the one who actually forced the emir to attack by proving the inevitable success of the operation. Seymour Becker is based on historical data such as the correspondence between British Major General Wilfrid Malleson, commander of the Transcaspian expeditionary forces, and the representatives of Bukhara's Emirate, his analysis shows on the contrary, that British representative was urging the emir not to provoke Soviet Tashkent.[122] While the Soviet press like *Zhizn Natsionalnostei* pointed out, since Bukhara had no industrial proletariat to provide leadership for the peasant masses, who themselves lacked class consciousness, the only chance for overthrowing the emir was "the development of the international revolution"—in other words, the intervention of Russia's workers and peasants in the persons of their champions, the Red Army. [123] Besides the press materials, the top Soviet administration of *Politburo* as well as local revolutionary heroes like Frunze, all actively planned the intervention on Bukhara.[124] However, the film not only misinterprets the history but avoids showing the key point of the Soviet intervention which made it distinctive from the 'imperialist' powers they like to criticize. Namely, as the issue of intervention was simply a question of time, Frunze informed the highest Soviet administration that as waiting the awakening of local masses against Muslim authority will take too much time because locals are too backward and possess a lack of class consciousness, there is a need to use locals.

According to the Soviets' perception of the Asian masses as backward and seeing the world not in the paradigm of class struggle but in the meanings of Muslims/infidels, where Russians are second, locals will not support the Soviet Army of 'liberation'. Realizing this fact, the Bolsheviks actively used the 'Muslim element' in their forces, as emigrants, deserters, Jadids, and Young Bukharians—in short, all those who were in opposition to the emir but at the same

[121] Becker, *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia*.

[122] Becker, *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia*, p.215

[123] Ibid, p.218.

[124] Ibid. 227.

time Muslims at last.[125] This fuzzy intervention confused and bewildered the population and thus complicated the perception of a totally alien attack.

The character of the Soviet state consisted of many contradictions and paradoxes since the beginning. For instance, despite its allegedly “liberating" nature from the Tsarist hegemony, the Emirate of Bukhara had conditional autonomy which completely disappeared after the 1920s. *Krushenie Emirata* shows very pronouncedly and negatively the presence of international agents and the ability of the emir to conduct such international affairs as trade. This ability during the Soviet time disappeared because the socialist economy required control of all goods and people, and the drive for industrialization and autarky could neither tolerate the escape of capital or labour, nor unregulated trade.[126] The Soviets worked hard on separating the sacred socialist world from the profanity of capitalism,[127] which finally led to ironclad borders with total control signifying not just the state's borders, but the borders of civilizations.

Krushenie Emirata is a vivid example of the Soviet representation of the Orient. It points out two different worlds - the first is old and hopeless and the second is the world of future progress and justice which according to the narrative, is achievable not only for white Russian men, but can be fruitfully applied in any part of the world to preserve cultural distinctiveness. However, the Soviet Orient will not be able to reach the utopian future without big Russian brothers who will purposely decide the appropriate history, culture and whatever is good or bad for their Asian brothers who are slowly “catching up.”

3.5 Nasreddin v Hodzhente a Folk Tale as Preparation for an Adult Life

The existence of Hodja Nasreddin as an anecdotal figure of oral tradition in Central Asia had its continuation in literary collections and a huge body of films. The Soviet Orientalists purposefully chose those stories and anecdotes which mostly went in accordance with state ideology. German Turkologist, Stein Heidi, through deep comparative analysis, points out that Hodja Nasreddin in Central Asia has a more explicit critical attitude to the traditional authorities compared with other geographical spaces where his anecdotes were circulated. The domination

[125] Ibid, pp.227-228.

[126] Shaw, Charles, Friendship under lock and key: The Soviet Central Asian border, 1918–34, *Central Asian Survey*, (2011), pp. 30:3-4, 331-348.

[127] Ibid.

of this trait in his character made Hodja Nasreddin not only a witty tricker and joker but almost a ready-made revolutionary, and therefore, an ideal image for Soviet propaganda in the folk-tale genre. Stein Heidi also emphasized the fact that, of course, it was the editors in Soviet times who preferred to select such kinds of stories for their collections.[128] However, this critical attitude towards traditional authority in the image of Hodja Nasreddin might have also gone together with the taste of recipients at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, which was a time of political change and cultural reforms in Central Asia.[129] Thus, the constancy of Hodja Nasreddin's image in both historical periods—Tsarist and Soviet—also supports the argument of transition between the legacy of the Tsarist empire and its appropriation by the USSR. Hodja Nasreddin and his challenge to traditional authority demonstrates the apparent accordance with distinctive Soviet traits. Yet, the origins of such image and the perception of Hodja Nasreddin as a revolutionary, stem from the Tsarist time.

The Soviet Orientalists chose the most appropriate heroes in national histories of 'own Orient' which could fit into the Soviet ideological discourse. It could be a trickster Hodja Nasreddin or medieval enlightener Avicenna, or Persian poet Rudaki—each of them appeared in Soviet cinema.[130] Their histories became the objects of Soviet appropriation and adaptation for a variety of purposes depending on the historical circumstances. This ranges from from the very specific, like Nasreddin's appearance in Uzbek-language Red Army newspapers, in which the joker and his donkey were depicted poking fun of Hitler and the Nazis,[131] to the general and spectacular construction of national narratives in the region. In both cases, the Soviet films became the instrument of its representation.

The Soviet screen versions of the adventures of the famous trans-cultural folk hero of the Islamicate world, Hodja Nasreddin, occupied an important niche in Soviet cinema. During the whole Soviet era, Hodja Nasreddin appeared in ten films, among them two early famous black-and-white ones: *Nasreddin in Bukhara* (1943) and *The Adventures of Nasreddin* (*Pohozhdeniya Nasreddina*, 1946). The last one, *The return of Hodja Nasreddin* (*Vozvraschenie Hodji*

[128] Stein, Heidi, "Turkish Nasreddin Hoca's Appearance as the Uzbek Afandi" *Middle Eastern Literatures* Volume 10 issue 3 (2007), p. 223

[129] Ibid.

[130] See for instance: Avicenna 1956 USSR [Avicenna] Sud'ba poeta 1959 USSR [Desteny of the Poet] Abu Reyhan Beruni 1974 USSR [Abu Reyhan Beruni].

[131] Shaw, *Friendship under lock and key*.

Nasreddina, 1989) was released almost at the end of the Soviet regime. The focus of this analysis is the color film shot in the genre of Oriental folk tale in 1959, *Nasreddin v Hodzhente ili ocharovanny prints* (*Nasreddin in* Khujand*, or the Enchanted Prince). Nasreddin v* Khujand was produced by the local film studio known as Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic *Tajikfilm*, as a collaboration between three film producers: two Armenians, Amo Bek Nazarov and Erasm Karamyan, and one local Tajik, Abdusalom Rakhimov. The film falls into the period of Khrushchev Thaw and has numerous frivolous jokes, which makes film different from the early period of the USSR. Thus, *Nasreddin v Hodzhente* fits into the example of transitional films going beyond Stalinist cliché images, to films with relative freedom of artistic expression. The Orientalism of *Nasreddin v Hodzhente* demands close interpretation, which I attempt below.

The main hero of the film is the famous oriental 'Robin Hood' in a turban known as Hodja Nasreddin, who most probably had a real historical prototype who lived in the Anatolian town of Akşehir in the 13th century.[132] However, his folk-tale and anecdotal image transcends generations and spaces. The countless anecdotic stories about the adventures of Hodja Nasreddin, depending on the cultural environment of the specific areas, acquires its own particularities, making the figure of Hodja Nasreddin like a chameleon who is able to settle into a variety of discursive fields regardless of his origin; he can adopt national features of various peoples.[133]

The image of Soviet Nasreddin in the films are based on the two-part novel of Leonid Solvyov, *Vozmutitel Spokoystviya (Disturber of the Peace,1940)* and *Ocharovanniy Prints (Enchanted Prince, 1954).* Leonid Solovyov was born in the Middle East in Tripoli to a Russian family of an assistant inspector of the North-Syrian schools of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society. Later, young Solovyov and his parents moved to Tsarist Russia, but that first early trail of Oriental imprint remained with him during his life and manifested in his interest in the Russian Orient. Solovyov worked in the Soviet's own Orient, in Central Asia as a correspondent.[134] Despite the fact that his novels were able to fit into the Soviet ideology, Solovyov could not avoid the Stalinist purges, and the second part of the novel about Nasreddin, *Ocharovanniy*

[132] Sabatos, Charles "Nasreddin Hodja's foolish wisdom: Slavic literary adaptations of a Turkish folk hero" *World Literature Studies* 4, vol. 8 (2016), pp. 35- 46.

[133] Stein, *Turkish Nasreddin Hoca's Appearance*.

[134] Sabatos, *Nasreddin Hodja's foolish wisdom*, p.38.

Prints (*The Enchanted Prince*), was written while he was held in a prison camp.[135] Solovyov wrote his novels about Nasreddin, where he combined the collected folk anecdotes which he gathered in Central Asia with his own vision. His Nasreddin differs significantly from the legendary Turkish or Balkan Nasreddin. Thus, in addition to a general complexity of the image of Nasreddin composed from a mixture of knavery and nobility, it acquires new particularities from two angles of influence. In the Soviet films which were based on Solovyov's writings, the first angle comes from the pen of a Russian writer raised in Tsarist times. The second angle of influence comes from the specifics of the Soviet films' representation, which were intended mostly for a young audience.

The Soviet film *Nasreddin v Hodzhente ili ocharovanny prints* based on Solovyov's book acquired a new transformation. Because the target audience of the film is children, it considerably changed the images created by Solovyov. For instance, if in the Solovyov book Hodja Nasreddin was depraved in his relations with women—spending nights with different women —in the film *Nasreddin v Hodzhente* he is a decent and loyal family man. In the Soviet state, the concept of family had undergone various stages: from the early Bolshevik idea of a family as a relic of the 'bourgeois past,' to the very conservative view on the concept of family which is similar to a patriarchal family structure (with socialist modifications). The Soviet discourse freed itself from the view of family as sacred union, but assumed the meaning of a 'union of conscious souls,' which is appropriately fitted to the Soviet ideals of Party/Enlightenment/Progress.[136] Thus, for the educational purposes of Soviet children, the image of Hodja Nasreddin became a sort of exemplary figure, with his perfect family relationship being a focal point.

The film's actions take place in the real city geographically known as Khujand. Through the dialogue it becomes clear that the events are happening during the reign of one of the Bukharian Emirs, however, the exact frame is not specified as it usually happens in fairy-tales. Hodja Nasreddin is portrayed as a handsome and nice-looking man in his prime who is inclined to ward personal and inward reflections. With deep and expressive eyes, he is around thirty-five years old, and is dressed in simple clothes. He enters the city of Khujand, and the viewer quickly

[135] Sabatos, *Nasreddin Hodja's foolish wisdom*, p.39.

[136] Halfin I., *Language and Revolution: Making Modern Political Identities* (USA: Taylor & Francis 2002) pp. 157-182.

catches the sharp contrast between the people in power, the local elite, and ordinary oppressed inhabitants.

Since the beginning, the viewer distinguishes the class structure of the traditional Muslim society of Khujand. The Soviet representation aimed to show a dishonest society built on hypocrisy and lies, where religious connotations were used simply as a decoration for covering the immorality of the power elites who oppress the working class. Thus, the motives of social justice which drive Hodja Nasreddin during the film are quite exaggerated, to the point that children themselves can clearly see the Marxist emancipative pattern in the image of Hodja Nasreddin and correlate him with the icon of the Bolshevik revolution—a wise man and liberator V. Lenin.

Greedy merchants in luxurious garments represent the class of ethically corrupted bourgeoisie. In dealing with them, Hodja Nasreddin uses his famous tricks, which combine the contradictory traits of nobleness and trickery. He always intervenes if he sees any injustice in dealing with poor inhabitants. For instance, a well-known anecdote shown in the film depicts Hodja Nasreddin brokering a deal of buying the aroma of pitas for the sound of coins. He begins with small tricks and gradually Nasreddin's activity increases in the city reaching the apogee, when at the end of the film Hodja Nasreddin with his partner the thief of Baghdad make a prototype of the real Bolshevik revolution in Khujand.

Continuing the theme of the revolution, it is important to pay attention to the second main character in *Nasreddin v Hodzhente* - the thief of Baghdad. He is a young man who represents the image of Joseph Stalin himself, while Hodja Nasreddin is a theoretic wiseman, the thief of Baghdad is a practitioner who is studying and improving himself by the guidance of Hodja Nasreddin and finally tuns from a thief into a righteous man. The thief of Baghdad takes lessons from Hodja. For instance, after the city officials basely took Hodja's money, the thief of Bagdad asked 'what if I have permission to steal your money from them?' Hodja Nasreddin's answer was 'Shame on you, does it really make sense to take permission to take back what is lawfully yours?' Thus, Soviet Hodja Nasreddin spreads and propagates a proverbial 'class consciousness' among the masses which was lacking and which was so important to build and sustain in the Oriental frontiers.

Hodja Nasreddin and the thief of Baghdad together bring justice by exposing lies of the merchants and state officials, usually, almost all whom display some adherence to religion and

use religious phrases. For instance, healers-cheaters begin with the name of Allah before any action takes place, so when a couple of Hodja Nasreddin and the Baghdad thief expose them, they also expose the religious obscurantism in general. The connection between the vices of society and religiosity proceeds as a leitmotif throughout the entirety of the film. The moment showing Hodja Nasreddin's personal attitude towards religion was demonstrated by two types of clothes given to him. The first one old and ragged, and when Nasreddin says: 'in these clothes I will look like a dervish-charlatan', while the second one was beautiful and neat, in which, he says: 'I will look as a respectable mullah'. The Baghdad thief asked Hodja that people say that you were a mullah, to which Hodja responds that these are the words of liars and it is just in order for them to get me in their company. Thus, religiosity is shown either in a dervish who is surely a charlatan, or in 'respectable' mullah - who is a priori a liar. Religiousness therefore has no other expression than negative.

All dreams of merchants are expressed only in material income and carnal pleasures, even their night-dreams are all about enrichment and women. Paradoxically, the presence of religion in society is supposed to promote moral values, but in *Nasreddin v Hodzhente* the whole society (except the working class) is represented as completely immoral. Such representation of the city-people in the film inclines young viewers to desire to be only like the righteous working class and behave as hero-revolutionaries - like Hodja Nasreddin and the thief of Baghdad.

Depending on the way of representation in films, the negative characters in a film could provoke in children a desire to identify themselves with extremely negative characters who are evil, lustful, or very violent, as it may evoke some understanding or even sympathy for them. However, the Soviet fairy and folk tale genre is very precise in the characters' representation and the sexual platitudes are mocked and shown in a very shameful and disgusting manner that they cannot provoke any desire to imitate it. Also, the complexity of the images of two main heroes combined with humor makes them attractable objects of modeling and imitation for children.

Another important and aspect strongly emphasized in *Nasreddin v Hodzhente* is the issue of an Oriental woman as the oppressed subject in a 'traditional' Muslim society. The tragic theme going through the whole film is the story of forty daughters of potters, blacksmiths and copper-makers i.e. oppressed worker class. Their daughters were enslaved for the debts of their fathers in accordance with the order of the Emir of Bukhara. The potters, blacksmiths, and copper-makers are not beggars and not loafers, they are represented as honest hard workers who are

trying to redeem their daughters from merchants who keep the girls as slave-concubines. However, merchants are the rotten bourgeois stratum of this society, they do not want to have the deal with the working class and greedily steal from poor workers. The ideological cohesion between merchants and the ruling class clearly demonstrates the exploitative model applied in this traditional Muslim society, of Khujand towards the working class in general and towards poor women in particular, with which the Soviet ideology categorically disagrees. And therefore, it changes this exploitative model with the help of the main characters Hodja Nasreddin and the Bagdad thief.

The film portrays men controlling women in such a way that they are solely the objects of sexual pleasure. There are no women workers or merchants, and none of them could be a ruling elite in either a direct or indirect manner. Also, the film did not show even one woman who was busy with any type of 'traditional' gender roles, such as cleaning, cooking and so on. The representation of a woman is reduced to the role of a purely sexual object. Women are the prisoners of harems who needed to be liberated by men because they either can dominate on them or liberate them. The patriarchal structure of the 'traditional' Muslim society as shown in *Nasreddin v Hodzhente* is reinforced by the phrases said towards women, which hardly can be associated with a child's vocabulary. For instance, merchants and governmental officials in their discourse concerning women pronounced the epithets bearing the explicit sexual character like 'her hips like a full moon', 'she has legs like a deer', 'slender as a cypress', 'lips like a pomegranate', and so on.

The society of oppressors is fully pervaded with a debauched way of life which is quasi-religious and quasi-legalistic. For instance, the representatives of ruling elites and merchants know about the sins of each other, but they turn a blind eye to them, and they can speak publicly about the 'laws of highest decency' and commit adultery. The women's veil is a theatrical curtain which everyone who obtains power can easily take off; it is simply a decoration which does not mean anything. In contrast to women in the city, there is the righteous image of Hodja Nasreddin's family and the emerging relationship between the thief of Baghdad and one of the young liberated girls. It is important to note that Hodja Nasreddin's wife Guldjan does not wear a veil, and her character is represented as an exemplary wife and mother of six kids.

The film ends with the appearance of the Bukharian prince who has higher status than the ruler of Khujand. However, instead of the real prince, it is the thief of Baghdad who disguised himself as a prince, in accordance with the plan originated by Hodja Nasreddin. The prince gives the

orders to send the ruler to prison, together with the whole court of dignitaries. He also releases all prisoners, and girls who were enslaved, and he destroys all promissory notes of the working class. Hodja sings a song:

The world is created not in a good way,
and we live in accordance with the order of this world:
the emir is blessed at the expense of the poor.
I work days and nights while somebody is just eating and sleeping
Sadly, but the whole world belongs to him
...
while the rich drinks *sharap* - we bitter beverage
tell me friends, who are to blame for this?
The guilty is that one who is evil and rich.[137]

Thus, the last scene shows not simply the happy-end of the fairytale, but also the essence of the revolution which resembles the real Bolshevik revolution, although without blood and suffering. The importance of the images of Hodja Nasreddin and the thief of Baghdad as the Oriental heroes who conducted a fairytale socialist revolution in Khujand reveals the idea that a 'proper soviet man' actually existed in all societies; he transcends generations and territories. Hodja Nasreddin and the Baghdad's thief's 'proper way of life', as well as their inexhaustible potential for combating injustice, superstition, and oppression helped to build the eternal Soviet exemplary hero-prototype which was not represented as exclusively a 'white man's burden' and an alien image for Oriental societies. With the Marxist-Leninist 'revelation', the image of an ideal revolutionary reached its peak in perfection. But essentially the image of Oriental revolutionaries demonstrated in *Nasreddin v Hodzhente* shows that a prototype of a just revolution already existed within local societies.

Nasreddin v Hodzhente shows how the Soviet discourse in the genre of folk tale constructed and reconstructed the images of national Oriental heroes for educational purposes with the focus on children audience. Soviet films' appropriation of national heroes or heroes related to a lager Oriental context, like Hodja Nasreddin and the thief of Baghdad, build and maintain the connections between past and present, and nurture the appropriate qualities for the construction

[137] The translation of the excerpt here is mine.

of a proper Soviet identity. Stalin's motto of Soviet culture as "national in form and socialist in content" developed a special place in which the Muslim 'heroes' 'naturally' integrated inside the socialist discourse.

3.6 A Soviet but Still an Oriental: The First Teacher

The film *Pervyi Uchitel (The First Teacher,* 1965) directed by Russian filmmaker Andrei Konchalovsky is the drama which gained a lot of attention even outside of the Soviet Union. I chose this film to show how the era of Khrushchev's Thaw allowed the films to play even in conditions of strict censorship. Despite the state ideology of "friendship," peoples' perception of the film creates a genuine difference between the Orient and Occident manifested in the image of the protagonist.

Pervyi Uchitel became a silver prize winner of the Venice film festival, The Jussi Award in Finland, and received other prestigious awards. The actress Natalya Arinbasarova who played Altynai's role, won the Volpi Cup for the Best Actress in Venice in 1966, and became the first and only woman from Central Asia who won such a prestigious prize in the cinema industry. *Pervyi Uchitel* was a full-length work of inexperienced graduate students, yet Andrei Konchalovsky completed his professional education at the All-Union State Filmmaking Institute in Moscow with this film.. *Pervyi Uchitel* was made as a cooperative work by *Mosfilm* studio and *Kyrgyzfilm* studio. The young film-director brought a new look on the traditional theme of the Bolshevik revolution and combined it with unaccustomed ways of representation. One of the most extraordinary moments was the nude scene which was very rare in the USSR of that period and especially in a context of Muslim women. The fact that Natalia Arinbasarova won the Volpi Cup for the best actress showed ideological unity on the issue that a Soviet Oriental nude woman definitely deserved the award for being the one who overcame traditional and religious prejudices and took the path of 'naked progress' from the point of view of the commission.

The foundation for the scenario is the book with the same name written by Kyrgyz novelist, Chingiz Aitmatov, about the ideological clash between the traditional way of life and the establishment of the Soviet education in the countryside of Kyrgyzstan. However, as Konchalovsky explains, because of the serious deviations from Aitmatov's work, the film was not a literal screen adaptation of the novel. As the film was based on the local novel full of authentic traditional scenes, it acquired a sense of acceptability among the local population

which was usually achieved through the involvement of local filmmakers. Konchalovsky combined his readings of Aitmatov and his passionate enthusiasm for Japanese style whence he drew the inspiration at the time. Konchalovsky put it this way:

> The dramaturgy was not of the best quality, but I took the story and read it. And then something began to appear to me. At that time, I was very keen on Kurosawa, I began to imagine the samurai drama, Asian faces, snow mountains, passion, hatred, and struggle. So, I rewrote the scenario by myself, then called Friedrich Gorenstein[138], paid him, and he brought in a coming film incandescent air of rage.[139]

In his interview Andrei Konchalovsky also admits that, as a young metropolitan film-director, he saw Kyrgyzstan as an alien country and remembered it with 'the exotic fright, some strange caps and robes, and all were spoken in gibberish language.'[140] Thus, even though the film was based on the book written by a local author, its cinema interpretation acquired the Orientalist's view where the images created by Konchalovsky have the specific and peculiar characteristics of the 'Other'.

Pervyi Uchitel is set in 1923. Duishen, the main protagonist is a young communist who has just comes back to the *ail*[141] from the civil war where he fully embraced Marxism-Leninism and believes absolutely in the rightness of the revolution. As the civil war ended, Duishen sees his mission as spreading the 'true' values of his new religion among the illiterate people of Kyrgyzstan. Duishen himself is semi-literate, but he knows who Lenin is, and he knows that the friends of the new Soviet order are: 'farm laborers and poor people, the world proletariat and the oppressed people of all countries, *chekists* and negroes,' while the enemies are '*bays*, capitalists, millionaires, and mullahs'. With this 'clear knowledge' he comes to the *ail* and, despite the mockery of locals, opens the school in the old stable belonging to the *bai*.

---

[138] Friedrich Gorenstein is a Soviet/Russian author and screenwriter. His works primarily dealt with Stalinism, anti-Semitism, and the philosophical-religious view of a peaceful coexistence between Jews and Christians.

[139] The translation of the excerpt here is mine; Konchalovsky A. *Vozvyshayushiy obman* (M: Kolekciya Sovershenno sekretno. 1999). [Кончаловский, А. Возвышающий обман / А. Кончаловский. - М.: Коллекция «Совершенно секретно», 1999].

[140] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyBy04VzY68

[141] *Ail* is originally a word in Kyrgyz language, and it was used for designation local villages in Kyrgyz SSR.

The events of the film take place within the harsh steppe space of Kyrgyzstan, in the empty landscapes, and the focus on the static nature of the paysage creates the impression of immutability and frozen time. Andrei Konchalovsky deliberately chooses to make a black-and-white film even though colorful films were common in 1965. The black-and-white context gives the feeling of something old and rudimentary, as the way of life of *ail* and its inhabitants. In such conditions, they are not able to think globally, in the way Duishen purports to be able to.

The locals work hard to have enough warmth and food, and the film represents them as people who exclusively care about their own daily routine. When Duishen decides to block the ail's river to create easy access for kids to the school, locals can only think that he is constructing the dam for himself. 'Why should we study?', they ask him, 'it will not add sheep for us'. Such narrow thinking is a particular characteristic which prevents the local people from accepting Duishen's ideas and his motivations seriously. The only ones who have the authority to teach according to the inhabitants of the ail are mullahs, for that they laugh at Duishen, because how can *he* be able to teach at such a young age? However, this incredulity is tempered with the traditional respect for educated people, which is cultivated in Muslim culture, and Duishen's arguments for seeing 'the great achievement of civilization' such as a telephone and his experience as a Red Army fighter finally convince the locals to send their children to the school.

Religion as a specific characteristic for the 'obsolete Oriental societies' somehow plays the contrary role, and the Muslim respect for knowledge gives Duishen the chance to involve children in his school. However, Duishen believes himself to be a herald of a new life, based on rationale and logic, and he sees himself to be the one who rejects sensory and emotional delusions. But he is, on the contrary, represented as even more irrational than others, and his perception of Marxism-Leninism becomes his new religion based on emotional preaching, devoid of love and softness for the children, and this makes him unattractive and repulsive to the village as a whole.

Taking into account the different signs which the audience sees in Duishen's school, it is rather like a 'Soviet *tekke*' than a school. It is organized in the remote outskirts of the village. There is the picture as an icon of the 'great saint' Lenin whom Duishen calls 'the greatest teacher'. The multiple repetition of a word by a chorus '*So-tsi-a-lism*' (Socialism) as a *zikr*, is similar to

the religious practices than the secular educational process. Upon children's question about whether or not all people die, Duishen's answer is yes, but when the question is about Lenin, Duishen cannot rationally accept the possibility of Lenin's death and vehemently attacks a small child only because of his question. Duishen is inconsistent in his words and actions when the old local man compares Lenin with Prophet Muhammad during their conversation and says: 'Mohammed was one and sun was one, therefore there cannot be a second sun'. Duishen answers: 'Leave these hints!, It is your Allah who had only one sun…We will have millions of sun! And it is called electrification!' Therefore, he tries to speak 'rationally', but it does not correspond with the way he behaves when he beats a child, or with the scene where he causes a fire because of Lenin's death. So, the representation of Duishen in archetypal Soviet clothes such as *budenovka* with a red star, his Soviet vocabulary, and values which he tries to promote, do not make him rational, he is still 'Oriental' - irrational, backwards, aggressive, and despotic. The depiction of Duishen corresponds with the concept of mimicry developed by Homi Bhabha, where the Oriental 'is almost the same, but not quite.'[142]

> Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference.[143]

Bhabha used this concept of mimicry for the explanation of the relationship between the colonial subjects and Brits, where the Indians were anglicized as 'brown English men' but maintained their difference. A British historian and Whig politician, Thomas Macaulay, wrote about this class of Indians '…who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, words and intellect.'[144] In Bhabha's explanation, mimicry doesn't have only the negative aspect of imitation of the colonizers' culture and their instrument for discipline and control, but it can be a subversive element of the colonized (i.e. their menace which can finally challenge the

[142] Bhabha, Homi "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse" *Discipleship: A Special Issue on Psychoanalysis* October, Vol. 28 (Spring, 1984), pp. 125-133.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Evans, Stephen "Macaulay's Minute Revisited: Colonial Language Policy in Nineteenth-century India" *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 23:4 (2002), pp.260-281.

domination of colonizers). However, in the case of Duishen, there is no space for this subversive imitation, only complete failure.

What is deceptive in the Soviet case is the fact that the Russianness was not used as the colonizers' culture, although it was, as a matter of fact. Moreover, Russianness was accused to be reminding the imperial past. The Soviet common culture, special vocabulary, and values were supposed to be the denominators and supra-values for all other cultures, and a 'mimicry' in that context was not obvious and seemed to be the legitimate right which each nation was supposed to perform. However, the film shows that Duishen cannot achieve "Sovietness" in the same way "true" or "authentic" Russians can. *Pervyi Uchitel* is the film which fully corresponds to its time. Even if it didn't intend to demonstrate Duishen as Oriental man in a negative sense, it gained such an effect.

The Soviet historical period known as the Thaw under N. Khrushchev was a period of criticism of Stalin's time and easing of political repressions in the country. It also affected the cinema industry, where Stalin's totalitarianism and pathos in the films began to attenuate. The 'friendship of peoples' was still strong on a political level, but such representation of the Red Army fighter and promoter of Soviet values like Duishen had been impossible in the early periods because of censorship. Thus, Konchalovsky with this relative artistic freedom during the Thaw, embraced the Orientalist view not only toward traditional Muslim society (which was commonly accepted in all Soviet periods), but also towards the "Sovetisized" character of Duishen, challenging, therefore, the very possibility of social and mental transformation of the Oriental subject.

It is impossible to imagine a Soviet film where a Russian man acts similar to the way Duishen behaves, because if it is a Russian man (like Sukhov in *Beloe Solnce Pustini*, for example), he, being in the Oriental lands, would always be like Prometheus—bringing a fire for those who need it. An Oriental man does not fit to this role, the 'fire' that Duishen awkwardly imposes brings pain and suffering to everyone around him. He sets fire in the *ail* and does not allow people to sleep after their hard work, and he does not save the horse which he was entrusted. The most tragic deed in which he was involved was the death of a child, and the broken fate of a young local girl, Altinay.

Altinay is the second main character in *Pervyi Uchitel*, and as is common in mainstream representation of Orientalist films, she is oppressed, submissive, and mostly voiceless. The famous 'naked' scene mentioned previously, where Altinay is washing her body in the cold river, also brings the viewer to the perspective of an active 'male gaze' where the heroine is depicted as the erotic passive object, as it was theorized by Laura Mulvey in her prominent essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema'[145]. It is important to mention, that in the novel written by Chingiz Aitmatov, Altinay is the narrator of the story, the woman who became a Soviet professor and tells the tragic ways of how she achieved what she achieved. The film makes Altinay almost a silent marionette, first in the hands of 'cruel tradition', then in the hands of her beloved.

In addition, the fact that some feelings between Natalia Arinbasarova, who played Altinay's role, and Andrei Konchalovsky emerged during her work in the film, then grew up in a relationship and later ended in a marriage also influenced the her representation in the film. Altinay was depicted in a very sexually objective manner where the focus is based on her Oriental submissive character and sexual attractiveness. In her interview, Arinbasarova told the story of how she was chosen for this film and that Konchalovsky before their meeting, was searching for a young girl around the age of twelve or thirteen while Arinbasarova was seventeen. She clarifies that Konchalovsky's aim was 'to strengthen the negative perception and to show full savagery of Kyrgyz custom of marrying little girls to adult *bays'* to which her heroine has been exposed in the film. However due to a bureaucratic mistake, Arinbasarova was chosen and then approved for the role of 'Altinay'.[146] Thus, her heroine deliberately was tried to be represented as a victim of the traditional, patriarchal structures that subjugate and oppress women. Since the beginning, Altinay was exploited first by her foster family, and then she was forced to marry to a local *bay* as a second wife. She was raped on the first night of her marriage. The film shows an "indigenous" structure, where everything is predictable and goes in the same way generation after generation. Thus, the arrival of Duishen and the emergence of the Soviet school which Altinay began to attend undoubtedly affected and attracted her as it was something new and different from all that she had experienced in the *ail*.

---

[145] Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*. Eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford UP, 1999) pp.833-44.

[146] An interview with Natalia Arinbasarova:

http://www.tvc.ru/channel/brand/id/2324/show/episodes/episode_id/45011/

The film gives the clear perception of the mutual intimate feelings between Altinay and Duishen. She does not recognize his awkwardness. For her, he is a young attractive man with whom she wants to be. However, the 'Soviet religion' in its power of deterrence is not inferior to traditional ones and two young people who obviously desire each other are restrained by the boundaries which Duishen imposed on himself and prevents them to be the 'first liberated couple of the East.'[147]

For the Oriental and "Sovietized" Duishen, she is, of course, attractive, but she is also the object on whom he is able to exercise his power. For Duishen, Altinay is an experiment, in that after all her suffering, he even allowed himself to hit her, and he deliberately brings Altinay back to the *ail*. There, she is sitting on the horse, disgraced and dirty, ragged, beaten, and raped, while all inhabitants insult her even more. It all brings viewers to the culmination scene, while people are insulting her, and Duishen screams 'Look all and remember! She is the first liberated woman of the East! The lie escaped and freedom triumphs!' Duishen is a bad teacher and he admits this fact, but he is also a bad revolutionary, because he failed to inspire people in *ail.* Altinay, loved him and was ready to sacrifice herself not for his revolutionary ideals, but for him and their common future together. However, he refused to go with her to Tashkent and sends her alone 'Go! Study! Work!'.

Konchalovsky foregrounds important symbolical material—objects representing abstract meanings in *Pervyi Uchitel*. The most important one is a poplar tree, which stands alone among the naked landscape. The poplar is a pride for local people, a tree which they cherish and love. They say that 'poplar is like a man, it affectionately rustles its leaves, like a man it understands everything when you come close'. It is important to note that the most kind local man in the *ail* towards Duishen is the old religious man, a certain exception to the Soviet representation of religious people being bad. This local old man is the owner of the poplar tree. He asks Duishen 'Why are you so attached to your school, it only brings disaster to you!' Duishen asks in response 'Why are you so attached to your poplar tree?'. So, the tree is a metaphor for old tradition, which is going to be destroyed by the end of the film.

[147] Coxe, B. Tench " Sonic Hierarchies and the Clash of Discourses in Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky's "First Teacher" *Ulbandus Review* Vol. 7, Empire, Union, Center, Satellite: The Place of Post-Colonial Theory in Slavic/Central and Eastern European/(Post-)Soviet Studies (2003), p.112.

Even if Duishen is a bad teacher and bad revolutionist who is not able to persuade the locals to adopt Marxist-Leninist values, he, nevertheless, has access to Russian masters who are persuasive because of their power and guns. It changes the balance of power in the *ail*, and when Duishen starts to chop down a poplar tree to build a new school, the local old man joins him because he understands that in the inevitable future it is safer to submit than to revolt. *Pervyi Uchitel* ends with the methodical sound of chopping the poplar tree by Duishen and the old local man who joins him. This scene represents the victory of Soviet modernity over the Oriental and traditional way of life. The Kyrgyz traditional villages with their nobles, *bays* and mullas who formerly organized the way of life were 'cut down' similarly to the poplar tree. It was time for Altinays, with their broken fates, to become the beneficiaries of Soviet modernity, leaving the traditional villages for collective Soviet farms.

In Soviet history, the figures of young and passionate activists such as Duishen were spread, and they formed the new ruling institutions of Central Asian republics. Many of them were former poor peasants and farm laborers who were included in the service of the Red Army during the civil war, as those who had nothing to lose. Despite the fact that they were the main protagonists of *Pervyi Uchitel*, they usually had only an elementary level of education, were the genuine 'agents of the Soviet authority,' and their goals were not restricted only by teaching. These 'teachers' spread the political propaganda, led anti-religious struggles and other key-missions of the regime such as *collectivization*[148], and *dekulakization* [149][150]. The prototypes of Duishen became the new local elite replacing the previous religious mullahs and *bays.* Starting from *ails*, teachers later became chairmen of the Soviet collective farms, held high positions under the Communist Party, and also gained access to the formation of 'imaginary communities' and became heralds of tamed national formation under the Soviet umbrella.[151] The figures of Oriental teachers were crucial in the Soviet Central Asian policy and thus *Pervyi*

[148] ***Collectivization*** was a policy of forced consolidation of individual peasant households into collective farms called kolkhozes which was carried out by the Soviet government in the late 1920s - early 1930s.

[149] ***Dekulakization*** was the Soviet campaign of political repressions, including arrests, deportations, and executions of millions of wealthy peasants and their families in the 1929-1954 period of the First five-year plan. To facilitate the expropriations of farmland, the Soviet government portrayed the kulaks as class enemies of the USSR.

[150] Abashin, *Sovetskiy Kishlak: Mezhdu kolonializmom i modernizaciei*, pp.627-659.

[151] Abashin, *Sovetskiy Kishlak: Mezhdu kolonializmom i modernizaciei*, pp.627-659.

Uchitel is a very controversial film which, on the one hand, goes together with dominant Soviet patterns of how the Orient should be represented in comparison to progressive Soviet power, and on the other, it hints at the impossibility of the Oriental man to reach the level of his Russian masters.

3.7 Soviet Eastern; The White Sun of the Desert

This film-analysis is based on the period of the establishment of the Soviet authority in central Asia. However, in *Beloe solnce pustini (White Sub of the Desert, 1970),* in comparison with the aforementioned *Krushenie Emirata* and *Pervyi Uchitel,* there is the notable absence of a certain territorial focus. While the film *Krushenie Emirata* was a project of historical reconstruction on the screen, consisting of a mixture of real historical figures with conspiratorial images bearing certain ideological patterns which are both displayed in accordance with the appropriate interpretation of the historical facts, the film *Beloe solnce pustini (White Sun of the Desert, 1970)* is the demonstration of images carrying certain values which are not restricted to any time and space frames. Despite the fact that the film is set somewhere in Central Asia[152] and has complex historical projections, such as the 'liberation of the women of the East' related to the precise stages in the formation of Soviet power in the region, the film is still very popular and influential, as it shows the example of a perpetual image of a Russian man who possesses a certain set of values and is surrounded by Oriental neighbors. The film falls during the Brezhnev period and affirms Russian superiority on Oriental nationalities. My previous film examples demonstrate the dynamics and complications of Orientalist discourse which develop in accordance with a progression of time; the film *Beloe solnce pustini* completes the Soviet Orientalist canon by creating Oriental images which are in strong need of Russian censorship .

Even though the 'iron curtain' between socialist and capitalist worlds restricted Soviet citizens from the art of the Western bloc, some rare films trickled in despite strict state censorship. These films were usually very successful for the Soviet viewers, and included titles like "The Forbidden Fruit Is Sweet." Thus, in turn, it influenced the Soviet filmmakers and the *Beloe solnce pustini* became an attempt to respond to the request of the public in the USSR to make a film in the genre named 'Easterns' that echoes the style of the American action films known

[152] Pedzhent, as it appeared in the movie, is a fictitious name of the city. Notice also that the mentioning of this city is the only reference of any geographical areas.

as Westerns. The main difference was that the 'unruly natives' were telling stories about their own revolutionary past.[153] This is, once again, an emphasis of the political and cultural campaign of Soviet power, designed to smooth out the contradictions between the central government and the non-Russian population of the USSR in its late manifestation. the policy is known as *korenizaciya* and is aimed to disguise the identification of the uneven power relations inherent in the USSR.

The film *Below solnce pustini* acquired the status of a cult film in the Soviet Union. Many of its citations were used in the daily life of ordinary Soviet people and the film is still known throughout the all post-Soviet space for four generations. The film director was Vladimir Motyl and the scriptwriters were Rustam Ibragimbekov, Valentin Ezhov, and Mark Zakharov. It is important to mention the story of how Ibragimbekov was chosen for this film because it corresponds with the *korenizaciya* policy but in a very unusual way. Rustam Ibragimbekov in his interview told the story that he was invited to this film as an expert on the East, because of his eastern origin. However, Ibragimbekov was from Azerbaijan which is in the Caucasus, not in Central Asia and as he said, being at that time a very young screenwriter and engineering student, he decided not to admit the fact that he had no part in the revolution and never had been in Central Asia. Basically, he admitted the fact that he did not know the historical specificities and cultural features of the region which he had to write a script about. The young screenwriter was invited simply because he was a representative of the vast area of the Soviet Orient and it was enough to have him in the credits of the film. Ibragimbekov says that he 'pretended to be experienced in revolutionary discourse, and an expert in the East', which in fact became for him one of the first works on a film scenario. Ibragimbekov openly admitted this fact that for him the film was a sort of commercial work coincided with his youth and 'had nothing to do with striving for self-expression' or a 'human message'.[154] The importance of *korenizaciya* in the art of film was revealed in the common usage of 'Oriental' names as directors or screenwriters which went through almost all periods of the Soviet Union.

The distinctive feature of the film became its ironic approach to the manifestation of Oriental women as the collective images suffering under the tyrannic Oriental patriarchy, oppression and injustice. Women, will be liberated from the obsolete past with the tender protection and

[153] Rouland, *Cinema in Central Asia: Rewriting Cultural Histories*, p.20.

[154] An interview with Rustam Ibragimbekov

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRCMmqek7sY

help of the white Russian man, named Fyodor Sukhov, also a collective image of a Russian soldier, very honest and simple man, roaming around the dangerous desert somewhere in Central Asia. He is there not because of imperial expansionist goals, but because of the call for justice and soldier's duty to the liberating Red army. For Sukhov, the support of the class struggle during the time of the civil war is the main impetus driving him through the deserts of foreign lands.

The film begins with Sukhov walking through the desert and imagining his darling Russian wife Katerina Matveyevna among central Russian green landscapes, these images are the most precious memories about his real homeland that he is missing, and which is the dearest and most intimate to his heart. Throughout the film, the image of Katerina Matveyevna accompanies Sukhov, to whom he writes his imaginary letters. He is turning back to his home after a long separation because the hour of the 'world liberation' is coming soon, the fights in battle are almost complete, and it is the time to return. Sukhov is blond and his clothes are white, which implies that all of his visual appearance corresponds with his pure heart, thoughts and intentions. He is portrayed in opposition to not only the local bandits-*basmachi*, but also in opposition to the Russian exploitative past in the region, namely to those imperial representatives whose goal it was to cash in on local goods. While they were imperialists, he is the idealist. Sukhov brings peace and justice and he does not perceive these lands as his. Even when he has no duty to stay there anymore, he cannot simply pass by when he sees a local man suffering from a kind of barbaric punishment, buried in the sand up to his neck. His name is Said and he is the local man who finally chooses the side of Sukhov in the battle with *basmachi*. Said is strongly tied to local customs such as blood feud, and he represents the local population which chose the side of Russians as in the example of Sukhov who is shown as a man who not only possesses a power, but also acts with honor, dignity and virtues. The choice was not easy, but it was the choice of consciousness, because Said during the whole film oversees and watches Sukhov, choosing the Russian side. Said, represents the peaceful population of Central Asia, who choose the happy future where not only progress triumphs over backwardness, but good also triumphs over evil.

The Central Asian static character is represented by the ironic image of the Oriental elders sitting during the whole film in the same place. Their immobile peace cannot be disturbed neither by the dynamite on which they are sitting, nor by local bandits appearing in the film.

Beloe Solnce Pustini does not show any local representatives who are in possession of power and at the same time give a positive perception to viewers. Neither 'black' Abdullah nor Dzhavdet can bring a positive future to these lands. Dzhavdet was never even presented to the viewer because there is no need; it is assumed that the viewer feels that only an external force such as Sukhov can make a difference by acting out his civilizational burden. In his *Orientalism,* Edward Said quoted Benjamin Disraeli's *Tancred, '*the East is a career'. in Soviet Orientalism, it is echoed with the famous phrase from Sukhov, 'the East is a delicate matter'. Sukhov says it to the senior soldier in rank - Rakhimov. Rakhimov is obviously a man from the eastern/southern regions and Muslim by origin, who is supposed to know local peculiarities better than Sukhov, however even Rakhimov admitted Sukhov's superiority, asked his help by saying that a Russian 'alone is worth a platoon, if not a company'. Thus, 'the East is a delicate matter' means also a career for Russians, but it demands delicateness of how not to appear imperial, but a liberator.

The strong difference between the two worlds in this film—Russian and Central Asian—is evident through the representation of femininity. The theme of women throughout *Beloe solnce pustini* emerges through two dimensions: the image of Sukhov's Russian wife Katerina Matveyevna and the Oriental women constituting the harem of Black Abdullah. In one of Sukhov's fantasies, Katerina Matveyenva also ends up in the harem, however, because Sukhov embodies in himself rationality, it is only an imagination. When local Gulchatay offered to be his second wife, the first question Sukhov asked was the age of the young girl, which was fifteen (and therefore he was totally against the possibility of entertaining marriage with someone so young, let alone as a second wife). Sukhov explains for Gulchatay that 'we (Russians) are entitled to only one wife'. Sukhov's rhetoric, despite the comic scenes, bears a normative character and the film corresponds with the Soviet policy in Central Asia which abolished polygamy.[155]

[155] "In 1918, the first family code, Civil Registration of Deaths, Births and Marriages, equalized women with men in front of law. The code allowed women to choose their surnames when they got married, gave the same legal rights to illegitimate children as legitimate ones, and eased the divorce process. Polygamy (polygyny), child marriage and bride wealth (bride price or kalym, qalim, qalin, galing) were banned. This code tried to achieve equality between husbands and wives by secularized marriage." Pascall, G. & Manning, N., "Gender and Social Policy: Comparing Welfare States in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union" Journal of European Social Policy, 10:3 (2000), p.250.

Katerina Matveyenva bears not just an image of a Russian woman and wife, she is also the symbol of homeland with a specific Soviet visionary eroticism implicitly demonstrated with her outfit. The way a proper Soviet woman should look like differed through the various periods of USSR film production. In the 1920s-30s, Soviet films propagated the image of heroic and labor anti-erotism in women to the contrast of *femme fatale* of the bourgeois society. Later, however, the proper Soviet woman gained the implicit eroticism in her visual appearance.[156] The image of Katerina Matveyevna is an image of the 'Soviet super woman', as she can be at the same time a labor comrade with a sickle in her hands and can erotically lift up her skirt above the knees in a way that does not leave the audience indifferent. On the contrast, the women of the harem are fully-covered, capricious, accustomed only to follow and not possess subjectivity, except only one young Gulchatay. Gulchatay shows curiosity for knowledge and she is ready for change; she embodies in herself the new generation of Oriental women who are willing to acquire knowledge through Russians, as a source of high culture and progress. Sukhov appeals to Oriental women by asking them to forget their 'accursed past'. Unlike their husband 'black' Abdullah, who is a savage despot and exploiter, Sukhov shows kindness and mercy. Soviet soldiers speak about 'black' Abdullah as a 'beast', 'he doesn't even spare his own people' (i.e. women). For an Oriental man like 'black Abdullah', women of the harem are simply the entourage which could be killed if needed. The sweet tenderness and respect with which Sukhov speaks with Katerina Matveyevna in his imaginary letters is the complete opposite of this Oriental tyrannical patriarchy which is represented by 'black' Abdullah.

Another important dimension that differentiates Oriental from Occidental (and finally among Russians themselves) is the theme of a museum in the middle of the Central Asian desert. The museum, which was located on the way to Sukhov, was apparently founded in Tsarist times - described in the Soviet discourse as the 'shameful' historical period of exploitation, domination and appropriation of the Central Asian region by Russian imperialists. In the dialogue between

---

[156] Terehova, Mariya "Vestimentarnyi erotizm kak instrument konstruirovaniya obraza sovremennitsy v sovetskom kino 1920-1930 " in Konstruiruya "sovetskoe"? Politicheskoye soznaniye , povsednevniye praktiki, noviye identichnosti: materialy vosmoi mezhdunarodnoi konferencii studentov i aspirantov (Izdatelstvo Evropeiskogo universiteta v Sankt Peterburge, 2014) [Терехова Мария, Вестиментарный эротизм как инструмент конструирования образа современницы в советском кино 1920–1930-х годов, Конструируя «советское»? Политическое сознание, повсе дневные практики, новые идентичности : материалы восьмой международной конференции студентов и аспирантов (18–19 апреля 2014 года, Санкт-Петербург). — СПб. : Издательство Европейского университета в Санкт-Петербурге, 2014].

Sukhov and Lebedev, the curator of the museum, Sukhov calls the 'nine liberated women of the Orient' a great treasure which need protection no less than some treasures of the museum. Lebedev represents the past Russian 'shameful imperialism' which apart from exploitation did not value people as it did not involve them enough in the internal affairs of Tsarist eastern possessions. The film shows the injustice and violence towards Oriental women which demands intervention and a 'civilizing mission'. However, the internal affairs of the Muslim subjects are not the main interest of Lebedev, although he is living in Central Asia, he is concerned about some certain 'elite values' such us the museum's preservation. While Soviets, on the contrary, want to completely change the internal structure of life of the local population because, as a liberator, for him the main value is a human (and especially poor Oriental women).

The totalitarian ideology which accompanied the Soviet rule in Central Asia did not give birth to any legitimate local individual other than a Sovietized one. To be legitimate, the Oriental subjects had to be "Sovietized," i.e. think and speak entirely through the Bolshevik ideological language. However, the Soviet system gave a small space for the distinctiveness of oriental nations who are catching up, which was according to official Soviet vocabulary a 'cultural and economic backwardness'.[157] The *White sun of the desert* together with many other Soviet films covering the period of the formation of Soviet authority in the region emphasized the unorganized, uneducated and poor character of Central Asian people. The films' display of Oriental people correlates with the appropriate Soviet terminology and policy towards non-Russian Soviet nationalities. The Soviet government differentiated traditionally between East and West where the difference lay not in a geographic position, but rather in their degree of development. The status of 'cultural backwardness' was assigned towards almost all Soviet nationalities except Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians, Jews, and Germans.[158] Therefore, as it is seen, no one from a Muslim background could gain the status of a 'developed' citizen. The Soviet state is supposed to be universalistic and ideologically free from religious difference and prejudice, but in reality it inherited the Tsarist imperial perception of Muslimness as a sort of distinctive feature of backwardness. For instance, while the Crimean Tatars were much more "Western" geographically than Armenians, they nevertheless were

[157] During the Soviet period, the notion of otstalost or backwardness was accepted among the politicians and bureaucrats as part of their political vocabulary.

[158] Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, p.41.

perceived as Oriental-Eastern and therefore more backward.[159] The 'cultural backwardness' in the Soviet state is a distinctive feature of Russian Orientalism which was shown in movies by demonstrating various types of *perezhitki* (the complex of different practices which were seen as the attributes of backwardness). The nations were taught to see themselves as backward, and therefore in need of a development and, accordingly, being financed The status of 'backwardness' in the early Soviet state became somehow the issue of competition between 'undeveloped' eastern nationalities which were trying to prove the more higher level of a 'backwardness' and gain more financial aid from the center for cultural development.[160] Such political and economic perception of the self laid the foundation since the early Soviet period to speak, write and show, for instance through cinema, the backwardness of the self by *korenizaciya* policy.

The figure of the soldier Sukhov as a Russian Prometheus is very important because of his permanency in Russian perception. The four generations of Russians by watching the *White sun of the desert* perceive through Sukhov the Russian mission of intervention in so-called Oriental and global affairs. In the White sun of the desert, Russian Prometheus suffers a loss to himself but brings the 'fire of liberation', he, who according to Rakhimov 'alone is worth a platoon, if not a company', can differentiate between those who are 'friends' and 'foes', even if this differentiation will cost the liquidation of the entire classes at it was shown in recent Soviet history. The mission of spreading the Marxist message and liberation of the oppressed Oriental people of Central Asia was the core justification of intervention to these lands. This seemingly 'noble civilizing mission' in fact resembles the Western Orientalist representation of the Orient because the local masses and their rulers are represented in Soviet Orientalism in a similar way as those who are not able to act on their own. Therefore, the Soviet representation as shown in *Beloe Solnce Pustini* falls into a discursive trap by combining both Orientalist and Occidentalist tropes, where on the one hand 'it liberates,' but on the other hand emphasized the need of the 'white Russian man' to really be able to make decisions for the Oriental masses.

A variety of phrases from *White sun of the desert* are firmly inscribed in the modern Russian language. One of the most famous phrases is pronounced by Vereschagin who was the head of customs during the Tsarist time. With the coming to power of the Bolsheviks, Vereschagin behaves as ideologically indifferent and does not want to take a side in the struggle between the

[159] Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, p.82.

[160] Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, p.184.

local Basmachi and Red Army represented by Sukhov. However, by the end of the film, when Black Abdullah offers to him gold, Vereschagin says: 'I don't take bribes, I am offended for *my* great country' ('ya mzdu ne beru, mne za derzhavu obidno') and begins to help Sukhov in the last fight with *Basmachi*. Thus, the image of Vereschagin expresses the finality of the union of the ideologies where the former White becomes Red. The phrase demonstrates the all-time and cross-cutting Russian missionary vision which continues to resurge and manifest itself even after the fall of Soviet Union.

The official release of the *White sun of the desert* was in 1970. However, even after almost fifty years, the film continues to inspire the creation of songs, parodies and academic articles. Universalistic images of the righteous Russian soldier which nowadays runs through the Russian public discourse justifies the current geopolitical goals of post-Soviet Russia. For instance, in a recent article by Alexander V. Kostrov[161]*The White Sun of Geopolitics* published by Novyy Istoricheskiy Vestnik (RussianStateUniversityforthe Humanities Institutefor Historyand Archives) in 2017, the author traced the image of 'polite people' associated with Russian soldiers, the term became known after the Russian annexation of Crimea. Kostrov defined the 'polite people' as 'bearers of Russian tradition with a relatively soft spreading of military influence'[162]. He argued that the term 'polite people', associated with Russian soldiers in Russian public discourse after the annexation of Crimea, is the perfect term which can be generalized through all Russian history, despite the variety of types of Russian statehoods whether it is Muscovy, Russian empire, USSR, or the modern Russian Federation. This new vision of modern Russian ideology allows me to see and overcome the ideological differences which were laid, for instance, between Kievan Rus and Muskovy, the Russian empire and the USSR, queerly combining in positive mixture such figures as Tsar Nicholas II and Joseph Stalin. Soldiers of their armies formed a single image of a 'polite' Russian soldier in the Oriental frontiers of Russia through generations and times. The reasons for the incessant popularity of *Beloe Solnce Pustini* even in modern times is the durable vision of Russians themselves as a missionary nation which has no territorial borders for the civilizing mission, whether on earth

[161] Alexander V. Kostrov is a Professor of history at Irkutsk State University (Irkutsk, Russia).

[162] Kostrov, Aleksandr "Beloe Solnce Geopolitiki" in *Noviy Istoricheskiy Vestnik*, no. 1:51 (2017), pp.152-165 [Костров Александр Валерьевич. "Белое солнце геополитики" Новый исторический вестник, no. 1 (51), 2017, pp. 152-165].

or in the cosmos, and where the ongoing tradition of showing *Beloe Solnce Pustini* for Russian astronauts before they are launched into space became a conventional practice.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, I connected the theme of the representation of Central Asians in Soviet Oriental films with the notion of Orientalism in a Saidian sense. My four-film analysis demonstrated how Central Asians were visualized combining the stereotyped cultural images of Oriental people with the construction of the new 'proper Soviet identity'. The films of my selection revealed how the different discursive practices of the Soviet films' representation powerfully spread the ideas through the visual narratives in varied genres of cinema. The films as the most effective ideological instrument of that time created the context which justified the Soviet authority and harsh modernization, and it happened in the region which enormously affected the public and private spheres of the local inhabitants.

I used the concept of frontier orientalism developed by Andre Gingrich, to differentiate the specifics of the Russian relationship with its own Orient from the 'classical' Western European notions of Orientalism. The Soviet state created the 'good/bad' Orientals' distinction and incorporated the 'good ones' inside the common governmental structure, but Russians always remained as the leading nation which decided the destiny of other nations inside the common borders. This distinction is manifested in the majority of Soviet Oriental films, particularly in the films of my selection. Furthermore, I showed that Soviet Orientalism being hybrid in nature, combined in itself a colonial domination on the one hand, and anti-colonial populism on the other. This combination complicated the entrenched orientalist patterns described by Edward Said of the binary opposition where the Oriental people are usually backward, irrational, and aggressive.

Also, the important argument going through this dissertation was that despite the fact that Marxism-Leninism was the new inclusive and universalist ideology that replaced the Tsarist imperial vision, it did not reject Russia's imperial ambitions with respect to its neighboring Muslim and "Oriental" nations. Thus, the historical prerequisites of the Tsarist time are important factors which manifested the transition of Russian imperial Orientalism to the Soviet era. Even though the Tsarist imperial period was accused and rejected on the state level, its legacy affected the Soviet policy related to other nations of the USSR, which in turn found its visual representation in the films. For instance, the inherited Orientalist patterns from the Russian imperial time appeared in the Soviet films in the representation of the 'bad Orientals'. They were usually those who did not embrace the Soviet world-view. The images of the 'bad Orientals' are similar to the representation of the Orient in Hollywood films. What differentiates

Soviet Orientalism is the fact that it does not disdain the Oriental man as the one who is completely incompatible with the Western lifestyle. However, Soviet Orientalism incorporates the Oriental man only with selective non-dangerous national features. This type of representation is the representation of the 'good' Orientals who fully "Sovetisized" but still proudly wear the specific elements of national garments (which are the elements of the tamed national identity supported by the state). The universality of the Soviet ideology *de jure* insisted on the entrusted right by following the footsteps of 'the white Russian big brothers'. The Central Asians as the 'younger brothers' would remain true to themselves, and will go to the Marxist utopian paradise together not only as pupils but also as 'equal comrades'. The Soviet Orientalism in cinema as the main 'art of the modernity' has the continuity from the Tsarist time but also surpassed the Tsarist elite art representation of Oriental painting, music, and literature, by going beyond the realm of high art to the realm of the mass-art and thus, embodying the power in itself.

The Soviet civilizing mission, anti-imperial and anti-colonial discourses mixed together was manifested in the cinema in such generic themes as women's emancipation, the conflict between backward religion and progressive education, the images of enlightened persons, the repressive traditional Muslim authority, and the enemies of the Soviet regime such as bandits-*basmachi* and the world capitalists. Even though these themes were common during the whole Soviet period, the ways of representation were changing in accordance to the state's political agenda at any given period. The notion of 'the friendship of nations' which was the motto uniting all the Soviet republics did not let the ethnic disdain be visible on the level of official discourse. However, through the 'close reading' of films I demonstrated that some films, despite the strong censorship, disguised the Orientalist view of Central Asians not only in the representation of the 'bad Orientals,' but also on those who embraced the Soviet world-view.

The Soviet state had a monopoly on cinema and was able to impose an advantageous view for the regime about historical events through films. It could also pretend to be the source of history for ordinary people. It shaped a common sense of belonging to Soviet values, where the images of Orientals constructed in the films mutually affected both Russian and Central Asian audiences, by drawing the boundaries between the good and progressive communist Asians and backward defenders of the old order. The shaping of a young, cultured and civilized image of a Central Asian communist who wants to break the static, corrupted environment of his homeland was achieved by these films and represents the successful stereotypes undeniably formed the culture of the region.

The cultural legacy of the USSR still represents a certain nostalgia for the vast majority of people in the post-Soviet states, especially when we consider such forms of `soviet pop-culture` as films. Over the course of a few generations, Soviet films have become consciously and unconsciously the source for the moral image of the 'proper Soviet man' and played a role in shaping the identity across the Soviet republics. The famous quotes of the Oriental films became a part of the common Soviet and post-Soviet language, thus deeply embedded inside the culture. The anti-imperial message of the Soviet Oriental films put the Soviet and post-Soviet countries in the trapped position that broke the post-colonial trend which captured the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent. The Central Asian experience of being part of the USSR left an enormous trace on the world view of the citizens of the modern independent republics, and the role of cinema as the instrument of disseminating knowledge cannot be underestimated in this regard.

The appropriate Soviet representation of the national Central Asian heroes in the oriental films reconciled the Muslim historical legacy with the ideology of the new regime creating the evolutionary continuity in the development of the proper identity. When today's borders of Central Asian states were vague and unclear, the national narratives with the main historical heroes of the region as Muslim intellectuals and prominent rulers appeared within the works of the Russian imperial and later, Soviet orientalists. Thus, in order to understand how Stalin's motto of the Soviet culture as "national in form and socialist in content" developed a special place in which the Muslim 'heroes' 'naturally' integrated inside the socialist discourse, I see the importance for further exploration not only in the films' representation, but also in the works of imperial and Soviet historians. This angle of inquiry can bring a new perspective which will help to see how the works of Russian Orientalists shaped the historical narratives of today's modern states of Central Asia.

BIBLIOGRAPY

I. Primary Sources

Nasreddin in Hodzhente, or the Enchanted Prince, 1959 USSR [Nasreddin v Hodzhente ili ocharovanny prince] Directors: Ambartsum Bek-Nazarov, Erasm Karamyan;

The Collapse of Bukharian Emirate 1955 USSR [Krushenie emirata], Directors: Vladimir Basov, Latif Fayziev;

The First Teacher 1965 USSR [Purvyi uchitel] Director: Andrei Konchalovsky;

White Sun of the Desert 1970 USSR [Below solnce pustyni], Director: Vladimir Motyl.

II. Secondary Sources

'*Orientalism Twenty Years On*' in the special issue of ***The American Historical Review*** 105 (2000).

Abashin Sergey Sovetskiy "Kishlak: Mezhdu kolonializmom i modernizaciei" ***Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie*** [Абашин, С. Советский кишлак: Между колониализмом и модернизацией / Сергей Николаевич Абашин. — М.: Новое литературное обозрение, 2015].

Abashin, Sergey ***Byl li SSSR kolonialnoi imperiei*** [the lecture was given by Sergey Abashin at European University in St Peterburg in 13.06.2017 Абашин, Сергей БЫЛ ЛИ СССР КОЛОНИАЛЬНОЙ ИМПЕРИЕЙ? https://eu.spb.ru/news/17896-moskva-byl-li-sssr-kolonialnoj-imperiej].

An ***interview*** with Natalia Arinbasarova: http://www.tvc.ru/channel/brand/id/2324/show/episodes/episode_id/45011/

Appeal by the Council of People's Commissars, Published in: Dekrety Sovetskoi vlasti (Moscow, 1957).

Bassin, Mark "Rossia mezhdu Evropoi i Aziei: Ideologicheskoe konstruirovanie geograficheskogo prostranstva," in ***Rossiyskaya imperia v zarubezhnoy istoriografii Raboty poslednikh let Antologia*** (Novoe izdatelstvo, 2005).

Becker, Seymour, ***Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia***: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924 (Harvard University Press, 1968).

Bhabha, Homi "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse" Discipleship: ***A Special Issue on Psychoanalysis October***, Vol. 28 (Spring, 1984), pp. 125-133.

Bobrovnikov V.O. "Orientalism ne dogma, a rukovodstvo k deistviu" in Bobrovnikov V.O., Miri S.J., Orientalizm vs Orientalistika [Бобровников Ориентализм vs. Ориенталистика Ориентализм не догма а руководство к действию].

Bobrovnikov V.O., Miri S.J., ***Orientalizm vs Orientalistika*** (Sadra, 2016), pp.7-15 [Бобровников Мири Ориентализм vs. Ориенталистика Введение].

Bobrovnikov V.O., Pochemu my marginaly? ***ab imperio*** N2 pp.325-344 [Владимир БОБРОВНИКОВ ПОЧЕМУ МЫ МАРГИНАЛЫ?]

Bustanov, Alfrid K., ***Soviet Orientalism and the Creation of Central Asian Nations*** (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015).

Clifford, James, ***On Orientalism: In The predicament of culture: twentieth-century ethnography, literature, and art*** (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).

Coxe, B. Tench " Sonic Hierarchies and the Clash of Discourses in Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky's "First Teacher" ***Ulbandus Review*** Vol. 7, Empire, Union, Center, Satellite: The Place of Post-Colonial Theory in Slavic/Central and Eastern European/(Post-)Soviet Studies (2003), pp. 107-121.

Etkind, Alexander "Orientalism reversed: Russian literature in the times of empires" ***Modern Intellectual History***, 4 (2007), pp 617-628.

Evans, Stephen "Macaulay's Minute Revisited: Colonial Language Policy in Nineteenth-century India" ***Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development***, 23:4 (2002).

Foucault, Michel. ***The Archeology of knowledge*** (London: Tavistock, 1972).

Frow, John, ***Genre*** (Routledge, 2006).

Fyodor Dostoevsky, 'Dnevnik Pisatelya III Geok -Tepe – Chto takoe dlya nas Aziya?' Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii, (St Petersburg, 1896), Vol.XXI, pp. 513-23.

Gak, Aleksandr, ***Samoe vazhnoe iz vsekh iskusstv: Lenin o kino*** (Moscow, 1963).

Gingrich, Andre "Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim world in public and popular cultures of Central Europe" in ***Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School***, Piran, Slovenia by Bojan Baskar, Borut Brumen (2002).

Gingrich, Andre. “The Nearby Frontier: Structural Analyses of Myths of Orientalism.” ***Diogenes***, vol. 60, no. 2, 2013, pp. 60–66; 64-65.

Halfin I., ***Language and Revolution: Making Modern Political Identities*** (USA: Taylor & Francis 2002).

Honarpisheh, Farbob, "The Oriental 'Other' in Soviet Cinema, 1929-34" ***Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies***, Volume 14, 2005 - Issue 2 (22 Oct 2010).

Hosking, Geoffrey. ***Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917*** (Harvard University Press, 1997)

Hosking, Geoffrey. ***Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917*** (Harvard University Press, 1997).

Hsu-Ming, Teo ‘*Orientalism: An Overview*.’ ***Australian Humanities Review*** 54 (2013), pp. 1-20.

Irwin R., ***For Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and Their Enemies*** (London: Penguin, 2003).

Kagarlitsky, Boris, ***Empire of the Periphery: Russia and the World System*** (Pluto Press, 2008).

Kemper, Michael, “Red Orientalism- Mikhail Pavlovich and Marxist Oriental Studies in Early Soviet Russia.” ***Die Welt des Islams***, Vol. 50, Issue 3/4, A Muslim Interwar Soviet Union (2010), pp. 435-476

Khodarkovsky, Michael "Review of *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* by Robert D. Crews" *The* ***American Historical Review***, Volume 112, Issue 5 (2007), pp.1491–1493.

Knight, Nathaniel, “Grigor'ev in Orenburg, 1851-1862: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire?” ***Slavic Review, 59, No. 1*** (Spring, 2000).

Konchalovsky A. *Vozvyshayushiy obman* (M: Kolekciya Sovershenno sekretno. 1999). [Кончаловский, А. Возвышающий обман / А. Кончаловский. - М.: Коллекция «Совершенно секретно», 1999].

Kostrov, Aleksandr "Beloe Solnce Geopolitiki" in ***Noviy Istoricheskiy Vestnik***, no. 1:51 (2017), pp.152-165 [Костров Александр Валерьевич. "Белое солнце геополитики" Новый исторический вестник, no. 1 (51), 2017, pp. 152-165].

Kubacheva V.N. ***Vostochnaya povest v russkoi literature 18 nachalo 19 veka***.

Kumar, K., ***Visions of Empire: How Five Imperial Regimes Shaped the World*** (Princeton University Press, 2017).

Lewis, Bernard "The Question of Orientalism" in ***Islam and the West*** (London, 1993) pp.1-20.

Lockman, Zachary, ***Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*** (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004).

Longworth, Philip, ***Russia's Empires: Their Rise and Fall - From Prehistory to Putin*** (John Murray, 2006).

Merrill, J. "Brothers and others- brotherhood, the Caucasus, and national identity in post-Soviet fil" ***Studies in Russian Soviet Cinema***, 6:1, pp.93-111.

Morrison, A. "Beyond the 'Great Game': The Russian origins of the second Anglo–Afghan War" ***Modern Asian Studies***, 51:3 (2017), pp.686-735.

Morrison, Alexander *"*Introduction*:* Killing the Cotton Canard and Getting Rid of the Great Game*: Rewriting the Russian Conquest of Central Asia, 1814–1895," **Central Asian Survey** 33, no. 2 (*2014*).*

Morrison, Alexander, "Peasant Settlers and the 'Civilising Mission' in Russian Turkestan, 1865–1917," ***The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History***, 43:3, pp.387-417.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." ***Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings***. Eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford UP, 1999) pp.833-44.

Newsinger, J., "Review of the Past and Present: National Identity and the British Historical Film By James Chapman" in Scope: An Online Journal of Film Studies 8 (June, 2007), ***nottingham.ac.uk*** https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/scope/issues/2007/june-issue-08.aspx#BookReviews (accessed June, 2018).

Owen, R. "The mysterious orient" ***Monthly Review***, Vol. 31. No. 4 (1979).

Oye, David Schimmelpenninck van der, ***Russian Orientalism*** (2010).

Pascall, G. & Manning, N., "Gender and Social Policy: Comparing Welfare States in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union" ***Journal of European Social Policy***, 10:3 (2000), p.250.

Prusin, Alexander V. & Scott C. Zeman, "Taming Russia's Wild East: The Central Asian historical-revolutionary film as Soviet Orientalism," ***Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*** (2003), pp.23:3, 259-270.

PSZ, vol. 19, no. 13,996 (June 17, 1773)

Sabatos, Charles "Nasreddin Hodja's foolish wisdom: Slavic literary adaptations of a Turkish folk hero" ***World Literature Studies*** 4, vol. 8 (2016), pp. 35- 46.

Said, Edward W., ***Culture and Imperialism*** *(*New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

Said, Edward W., ***Orientalism*** (Vintage Books, 2004). Another edition: Said, Edward W., ***Orientalism: Western conceptions of the Orient*** (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978; rev. ed. 1995)

Sarkisova, Oksana, ***Screening Soviet Nationalities: Kulturfilms from the Far North to Central Asia*** (London & NewYork: I. B. Tauris, 2017).

Senkovskii, Osip, **Sobranie sochinenii**.

Shaw, Charles, Friendship under lock and key: The Soviet Central Asian border, 1918–34, ***Central Asian Survey*** (2011).

Slezkine, Y., The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism. ***Slavic Review****, 53*:2 (1994), p.414-452.

Stein, Heidi, "Turkish Nasreddin Hoca's Appearance as the Uzbek Afandi" ***Middle Eastern Literatures*** Volume 10 issue 3 (2007).

Sunderland, Willard, ***Taming Russia's Wild East the Central Asian historical revolutionary film as Soviet Orientalism*** (Cornell University Press, May 26, 2004).

Terehova, Mariya "Vestimentarnyi erotizm kak instrument konstruirovaniya obraza sovremennitsy v sovetskom kino 1920-1930 " in ***Konstruiruya "sovetskoe"? Politicheskoye soznaniye, povsednevniye praktiki, noviye identichnosti: materialy vosmoi mezhdunarodnoi konferencii studentov i aspirantov*** (Izdatelstvo Evropeiskogo universiteta v Sankt Peterburge, 2014) [Терехова Мария, Вестиментарный эротизм как инструмент конструирования образа современницы в советском кино 1920–1930-х годов, Конструируя «советское»? Политическое сознание, повсе дневные

практики, новые идентичности: материалы восьмой международной конференции студентов и аспирантов (18–19 апреля 2014 года, Санкт-Петербург). - СПб: Издательство Европейского университета в Санкт-Петербурге, 2014].

Thompson, Aaron Michael, **Poetry of the Slavophiles: Tracing Slavophile Philosophy Through 19th-Century Poetics,** MA Thesis (The University of Arizona., 2015).

Todorova, Mariia Nikolaeva. “Does Russian Orientalism Have a Russian Soul? A Contribution to the Debate between Nathaniel Knight and Adeeb Khalid.” ***Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History***, vol. 1, no. 4, 2000, pp. 717–727.

Tolz, Vera. ***Russia's Own Orient: The Politics of Identity and Oriental Studies in the Late Imperial and Early Soviet Periods*** (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Vries, Hent De "Orientalism " in ***Encyclopedia of Religion***, ed. Lindsay Jones (USA: Macmillan Reference. 2005), pp. 6881-6885.

Washbrook, D. A. "*Orients and Occidents: Colonial Discourse Theory and the Historiography of the British Empire*" in Robin Winks, ed., ***Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. V: Historiography*** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Моррисон, Александр «Мы не англичане…» ***Восток Свыше*** ВЫПУСК XXXVIII № 3 июль–сентябрь, ТАШКЕНТ (2015), pp.69-79 [Alexander Morrison "My Ne Anglichane..." Vostok Svyshe, N. XXXVIII, 3 July-September (2015), pp.69-79].

ELVIRA KULIEVA

PERSONAL INFORMATION Birth Date: 26.03.1990

Address: Güzelyurt Mah. 2070 sk. Blok 3, Daire 82, 34515 Esenyurt/ İstanbul, TURKEY

Phone: +905530124825

E-mail: elvirakulieva26@gmail.com

EDUCATION

ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS INSTITUTE, IBN KHALDUN UNIVERSITY, ISTANBUL
MASTER OF ARTS IN CIVILIZATIONS STUDIES (2016 ONGOING)
Main interests: Central Asian studies; Russian Orientalism, Islamic studies; Political theory

GPA : 3,63

SAINT PETERSBURG UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS
SPECIALIST DEGREE IN ECONOMICS (2007-2013)

LANGUAGES

Russian: native

English: fluent (C1)

Turkish: fluent (C1)

Arabic: beginner (A2)

AWARDS TÜRGEV Study Scholarship for Graduate Studies (2014-2018)

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATES

Ukrainian Center for Islamic Studies, 2017, VI International Youth Summer School of Islamic Studies «Islam in the Modern World: Historical, Cultural, Intellectual Space»

IIIT SUMMER SCHOOL, 2017, BOSNIA «ISLAM IN EUROPE CHALLENGES OF PLURALISM»