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8. The Soviet Home Front and Cultural Exchanges with the Republic

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Although Soviet cultural interventions in the Spanish Republic experienced a decline in the second half of 1937, very nearly the opposite phenomenon was occurring at the same time in the Soviet Union itself, where Spanish Republican culture was being deployed in the service of solidarity and humanitarian aid. Before undertaking a comparison of Moscow's cultural policy as it was implemented in the Republican zone and on the Soviet home front, it is first necessary to examine the extent of Spanish cultural influences in the USSR both before and after the beginning of the civil war.

The discussion in the previous chapter of VOKS's initial contacts with Spanish citizens indicated that, before the civil war, Moscow had never placed a high priority on acquiring Spanish cultural information or materials. One of the curious paradoxes of VOKS's relations with its Iberian correspondents was that there was remarkably little cultural exchange occurring in the activities directed by an organization calling itself the Society for Cultural Exchange with Foreign Countries. From the late 1920s until the summer of 1936, VOKS was interested in disseminating Soviet propaganda in Spain, acquainting the Soviet regime with political currents on the Iberian Peninsula, and assembling a cadre of trusted Spanish collaborators who would assist them in these endeavors. VOKS was not eager to amass or catalogue any materials unrelated to these ends; consequently, attempts by individual Spaniards to effect a *bona fide* exchange—whether through sending Spanish cultural products to Moscow, or writing broadly informative letters to the agency on matters not directly related to the Soviet Union's standing and reputation in the Republic—were nearly always rebuffed. So single-minded was VOKS in pursuing its propaganda goals that the only materials it solicited from Spain, or received with any enthusiasm, were the locally published newspaper inserts, journal articles, pamphlets, or books on Soviet topics that confirmed the success of the agency's attempts to penetrate the region. For VOKS, the two-way street of "cultural exchange" seemed oddly circular, and amounted to the dispatch of Soviet propaganda to Spanish correspondents, who were expected to demonstrate—through forwarded clippings—that the same materials had been put into circulation in the Republican press.

This arrangement underwent a marked transformation with the coming of the Spanish Civil War. As observed above, the Soviet leadership had seized on the conflict as a diplomatic and propaganda opportunity even before the Kremlin was firmly committed to military intervention. By the first week of August 1936, the Politburo was directing a major solidarity campaign that would eventually involve a large portion of the population. Several weeks later, the first of two major Soviet diplomatic entourages departed for Loyalist Spain. At the same time, the Kremlin initiated a campaign of cultural awareness that sought to make Spain as familiar to Soviet citizens as their own neighboring republics. In short, VOKS's earlier reticence regarding the value of importing Spanish cultural products was abruptly abandoned, and the Soviets engaged in a strikingly comprehensive embrace of all things Spanish.

I. Soviet filmmakers in Spain

The earliest sign of the Kremlin's new policy regarding the domestic propaganda value of the Spanish Republic was in the area of cinema. ¹ On 17 August 1936, a month after the Nationalist uprising, the Central Committee voted to dispatch two filmmakers to Spain, allocating \$5,000 for the mission. The men chosen for the assignment were Roman Karmen and his assistant, Boris Makaseev. ² Karmen, at the time thirty years old and a graduate of the Moscow film school, would later win fame for his documentaries of World War II. In his memoirs, Karmen claims that, after having witnessed the large pro-

Republican demonstrations in Moscow on 3 August, he sent Stalin a personal letter in which he stressed the importance of the Spanish war to the Soviet people and offered to go to Spain as a cinematographer. On 15 August, Karmen's superiors at the state film school informed him that the Central Committee was about to approve his assignment to Madrid. ³

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Karmen and Makaseev's heady baptism in war cinematography is indicative of the high value the Kremlin placed on the potential for cinematic exploitation of the Spanish war. The Politburo ordered the State Cinema Board (GUKF) and the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID) to ensure that the two filmmakers departed for Spain on 18 August; that is, the day following the initial approval to fund them. ⁴ In the event, the pair left for Madrid a day late. ⁵ Traveling by air to Paris, their plane made a brief stop in Berlin, passing over the Olympic stadium where the 1936 Games were in progress. From the French capital, they continued overland, and arrived on the northern border of the Republican zone on 23 August, where they immediately started filming. ⁶ Two days later, they sent the first 600 meters of film back to Moscow, which arrived on 3 September. ⁷ According to *Pravda*, on 4 September, one day after the film arrived in the capital, the first newsreels of the Spanish war were screened in select Moscow theaters. ⁸ By 7 September, the first Soviet newsreel from the Spanish war, entitled *K sobytiiam v Ispanii*, or *Events in Spain* ("Sobre los sucesos de España"), was being shown in many large Soviet cities. ⁹

Given the great distances separating the two countries, coupled with the obvious technical obstacles associated with any cinematography during armed conflict—to say nothing of the expensive and labor-intensive work of processing and distribution—the Soviets' rapid mobilization in the area of cinema is by any measure impressive. In the span of three weeks, the Soviet regime had successfully incorporated edited film footage of the Spanish war into the unrelenting domestic campaigns of solidarity in favor of the Republic. Moreover, the breakneck pace of the first newsreel's production was maintained for several months, and new episodes continued to be produced for the better part of a year. Karmen and Makaseev would stay in Republican Spain for eleven months, where they shot footage for twenty newsreels, ¹⁰ several feature-length documentaries, including *Madrid Defends Itself* (1936), ¹¹ *Madrid v ogne* ("Madrid en Llamas," or "Madrid in Flames"; 1937), and the feature-length *Ispaniia* ("Spain"; 1938). ¹²

Though newsreels of the war in Spain were created by countless filmmakers and distributed worldwide, the twenty-part series *K sobytiiam v Ispanii* was perhaps the most ambitious of its kind. In terms of the logistics of its production, the consistent quality of the images captured, and its wide distribution in the distant Soviet republics, the series may be considered a watershed achievement in the development of propaganda newsreels, unequalled anywhere until the appearance of *Why We Fight*, the World War II American-made Movietone series, and Soviet documentary coverage of the Eastern Front. ¹³

The two Russian filmmakers assigned to Spain first crossed the French border in the third week of August in Irún and immediately started filming. From that point, their series follows the main events of the war, introducing the audience to the principal actors in the drama unfolding before them. Unlike some of the other eyewitness accounts of the war, such as Orwell's geographically specific *Homage to Catalonia*, the Russian newsreel version takes viewers across much of the map of Loyalist Spain, revealing the Republic's varied terrain and complex socio-political milieu. From Irún, the viewer is taken to the northern front, where rebel troops commanded by General Mola have met spontaneously-organized Loyalist militias; next comes the attack on the Basque port of San Sebastián, from which we move rapidly across northern Spain to Catalonia, where the first International Brigades are being formed. The autumn siege of the Alcázar de Toledo, one of the best known episodes from 1936, is given considerable attention, as is the central epic of the war, the Battle of Madrid. From the Spanish capital, the filmmakers followed the government to their new base in Valencia, then backtracked and headed south

to observe the Battle of Guadalajara. Along the way, Karmen and Makaseev took time out to teach the Soviet viewer about Spanish customs: in an extended sequence in the third installment, for example, a bullfight in Barcelona is depicted and explained.

Elsewhere, the filmmakers introduced the audience to Republican officials, popular heroes, and unnamed fighters, men and women alike. Dolores Ibárruri and José Díaz make appearances in an early episodes; Enrique Lister speaks to the camera in the fourteenth. Interestingly, some of the coverage does nothing to advance Soviet ideological agenda: Buenaventura Durruti, the famous anarchist, is given some good exposure in a sequence shot shortly before his death. We also meet the filmmakers themselves, who took turns capturing each other on camera, often in the company of their Republican subjects.

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Viewing the series today, with an awareness of the standard post-war narratives of the war, and of Soviet propaganda generally, one is struck by a conspicuous lack of emphasis on the Stalinist regime itself, and its position on the Spanish war. While it may be expected that the fact of Soviet military aid to the Republic would be concealed from Soviet audiences, one is nonetheless surprised to see only one reference to Soviet humanitarian aid delivered to Spain (in episode eight), and virtually no gratuitous celebrations of Stalin, the Soviet leadership, the Revolution, or the Russian Civil War. The hammer and sickle, for example, do not appear in the series until the fifth episode, and then only briefly. Only scant attention is drawn to the dissemination of Soviet propaganda and culture in Spain, and this is never belabored, but instead is often ignored over the course of several installments. The viewer is told at one point of the formation of a "Karl Marx" International Brigade battalion, yet the heavy Comintern influence on the International Brigades is fully concealed. Moreover, on reviewing the abandoned material preserved separately from the twenty-episode series, it is evident that some powerful pro-Soviet propaganda was ignored. For example, a meeting of Loyalist women taking place against a backdrop of posters for the Soviet film *Chapaev* was left on the cutting room floor. ¹⁴ If Spain was ever Sovietized, as observers on both sides have often claimed, it is not apparent in this Soviet-made newsreel series.

Of course, the Kremlin had obvious reasons to avoid giving the public impression of a Republic under the sway of the Soviet regime. As noted elsewhere in this work, in the areas of diplomacy and military intervention, Moscow sought to downplay or completely conceal the extent of its influence. Yet, surprisingly, the newsreel series goes one step beyond disguising Soviet activities on the ground in Spain; *K sobytiim v Ispanii* often presents a version of the Spanish struggle that is sharply at odds with the Soviet Union's broader ideological orientation in 1936-37. Thus it is more than a little shocking to see some reels in the series giving prominence and respectability to Spanish anarchists, while in another a caption refers approvingly to "Barcelona: center of revolutionary Catalonia" (this despite the Soviet advisors' well-deserved reputation as fierce enemies of popular revolution in the Catalan capital).

The meticulously planned logistics of the Kremlin's newsreel operation, as well as its ambitious production schedule, are deserving of special mention. As noted above, from the moment of their assignment and throughout their twelve-month sojourn in the Republic, the Soviet filmmakers were generously supported and funded through the Kremlin's direct intervention. ¹⁵ The two cameramen were also assisted by Russian journalist Mikhail Kol'tsov, who served as the script and caption writer. In Moscow, the *K sobytiim* project was overseen by a team of fourteen technicians and film editors.

Though the first segment had no sound, most subsequent installments included musical and voiceover soundtracks. The use of music in the films, the selection of which was overseen by D. Blok, is at times quite effective. Spanish music is occasionally included, though more often the viewer hears Russian music on Spanish themes, such as the *Capriccio Espagnol* of Rimsky-Korsakov, with which a number of the segments begin. Some of the experiments

with the soundtrack are bold indeed; the seventh newsreel, for example, ends with a song in Russian, the lyrics displayed on-screen so that the audience may sing along, karaoke-style.

The production schedule of *K sobytiiam*, meanwhile, says much about the evolving position of the Spanish war on the Kremlin's domestic agenda. The Soviet leadership waited just one month after the start of the war to mobilize its cinematographers in support of the already initiated solidarity and propaganda campaigns. In the following months, the pace of newsreel production was unrelenting. The first newsreel was shot in the last week of August, premiering in early September. Over the next two months, until the end of October, seven additional segments were produced and exhibited. From November 1936 to January 1937, the Soviets shot another eight newsreels. Thereafter, however, production fell off rapidly. No new segments were shot or premiered in February, and between March and July 1937, only four additional episodes were made. As with Soviet military aid, which peaked in late 1936/early 1937, and declined sharply in the summer of 1937, newsreel production ended suddenly in July of that year.

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The Soviet documentaries of the Spanish war were intended for exhibition not only in the domestic market but internationally as well. In theory, the films were to become an integral part of Comintern-directed international campaigns of solidarity. Here as elsewhere, however, decrees did not always ensure prompt action. At the ECCI session of 20 September 1937—fully a year after Karmen's work had premiered on Moscow screens—Dimitrii Manuilskii stressed the importance of employing Soviet-made films of the war to promote solidarity abroad. In an admonishment that singled out film, Manuilskii declared, "we are far from making use of all our possibilities."¹⁶ Yet the statement evidently failed to produce the desired result. Nearly a year later, in the session of 28 August 1938, the ECCI issued a directive mandating the "greater use of the press and of all other means of agitation and propaganda, particularly the cinema." Again, the Comintern specified the newsreel series completed by Karmen and his assistant thirteen months before.¹⁷

Though it would be difficult to evaluate the extent to which the Soviet and Comintern leadership considered the cinematic component of the propaganda effort a failure, the tone of these internal reports would indicate a sharp variance between the plans laid out by the Kremlin in summer 1936 and their eventual realization over the course of the war. The reasons for this apparent lack of success are not difficult to surmise. Even as Manuilskii was insisting that efforts on the cinematic front be redoubled, the Kremlin's priorities were rapidly shifting. Although shot footage would be used and reused in a number of high-quality and widely-praised releases, most notably Esther Shub's 1938 *Ispaniia*, Stalin withdrew his filmmakers from Spain in July 1937 and would send no more for the balance of the war. Roman Karmen, along with a portion of the once generous military aid furnished by the USSR to the Republic, had been sent on to China.¹⁸

In conclusion, let us note that it is one of the stranger paradoxes of the USSR in the late 1930s that, in this era known for purges, mass arrests, and terror, the Kremlin managed to assemble and fund a trio as talented as Karmen-Makaseev-Kol'tsov; supplied, developed, and edited over 18,000 meters of raw film stock from a distance of 3500 kilometers; and oversaw the production of a series of documentaries that, more than perhaps any other artistic or propaganda creation of the era, encapsulated the cause of the Republic and presented Loyalist Spain in a charitable, even irresistible light. Though the *K sobytiiam* series was never fully deployed in support of the Republic's cause, and remains today largely forgotten in a neglected film archive outside Moscow, it undoubtedly paved the way for a far more concentrated documentary effort during the Second World War, a struggle in which the Soviets employed thousands of cameramen, shot 3 1/2 million meters of film, and debuted a fresh newsreel every three days for the entirety of the conflict.¹⁹

II. Spanish Culture in the USSR

The cinema was far from the only cultural product associated with Spain or the Spanish war to be disseminated in the Soviet Union itself. Between August 1936 and the end of the Spanish war, a wide array of imported cultural materials familiarized Soviet citizens not only with the ongoing military struggle on the Iberian Peninsula, but with Spanish geography, customs, literature, graphic arts, music, and even language. Moreover, the responsibility fell again to VOKS, the Moscow organization that took the lead role in disseminating Soviet cultural and agit-prop materials in the Republic, to facilitate the spread of Spanish cultural resources in the USSR.

The method VOKS employed to promote the importation of Republican materials was identical to that used in exporting Soviet propaganda to the Republic. Soviet organizations contacted VOKS with specific requests for various Spanish products: literature, musical recordings, posters, etc. VOKS then communicated these requests either to their individual and organizational allies in the Republic, or to the Soviet diplomatic missions in Madrid (later Valencia) or Barcelona. The materials were assembled in the Republic and sent through diplomatic channels to VOKS, which then distributed them on the Soviet end.

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Quite often, the arrangement between VOKS and its Republican correspondents took the form of a straightforward exchange of goods. Nowhere is this more evident than in AERCU secretary Manuel Sánchez Arcas's visit to Moscow in June 1937. Arcas's private conference with VOKS concluded with the Spaniard agreeing to implement the Soviet agency's general plan for the observance of the twentieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution in the Republic. At the same time, Arcas promised to begin forwarding large quantities of cultural materials to VOKS, which would then be divided among various Soviet organizations. In the case of the Arcas exchange, the agencies receiving materials from Spain included the Museum of Western Painting, which requested reproductions of contemporary Spanish art for eventual display in an exposition on this theme; the House of the Artist, which requested a collection of drawings by Spanish children, to be included in an exhibit already open on children's drawings from all over the world; the Film Institute of Russia, which desired recordings of popular Spanish songs, military marches, children's music, local dances, and other music from Spain; and the Literary Museum, which requested that a collection of Spanish books be sent. [20](#)

Requests such as these are frequently present in much of VOKS's correspondence with its Republican allies during the last months of 1936 and the whole of 1937. A perusal of just a handful of the files in the VOKS archive provides an immediate sense of the significant dimensions of the traffic in cultural products flowing from the Republic to the USSR. Delo 842, for example, is a 165-page file documenting the receipt of Spanish goods by several dozen Soviet organizations. The Lenin Library received many hundreds of individual Spanish titles, including grammars, works of modern and classical literature, textbooks, children's books, histories, and published works of war propaganda. [21](#) Other institutions receiving Spanish books included the Museum of Children's Books, the Literary Museum, the Central House of the Red Army, and the Central House of Art. [22](#) In addition, the Union of Composers received Spanish musical scores and recordings; [23](#) the Union of Architects requested and was given Spanish journals devoted to architecture; [24](#) the economic council Gosplan received recent economic histories of Spain; [25](#) Soviet publishing houses were sent a variety of Spanish books, pamphlets and journals; [26](#) the Moscow Area Union of Artists were given several dozen posters for an upcoming exhibit on Spanish graphic art; [27](#) and the Anti-Religious Museum received literature on the role of the Church in early modern and modern Spain. [28](#) Finally, the Museum of the Revolution received regular shipments of every conceivable kind of Republican cultural product, all of which were assembled in a major exposition on the events in Spain. [29](#) Indeed, the Museum of the Revolution's exposition on Spain is still available to scholars in the drafty and crumbling Tverskaia edifice, the wide variety of its contents a testament to the intensity of the Kremlin's erstwhile mania for all things Spanish. [30](#)

The overall effect of the regular importation of Spanish cultural products was the rapid transformation of Spain's place in the Soviet popular imagination. The predominance in the Soviet market of newsreel footage from the different fronts of the civil war gave Soviet filmgoers a palpable sense of what the Spanish struggle looked and sounded like.



If *Mundo Obrero* is to be believed, the exposure to the visual qualities of the war left a discernable imprint on Soviet youth, many of whom by January 1937 delighted in a form of make-believe roughhousing known as playing "Spanish militiamen."³¹ There were adult versions of this phenomenon as well. A popular theater piece in late 1936 and early 1937 was A. N. Afinogenov's *Salut, Ispaniia!*, which depicted the fortunes in the war of a band of anarchist volunteers.³² The play toured the larger cities in the USSR, and for a time was evidently quite popular.³³ The piece prominently featured as a character Dolores Ibárruri, a role that was played by the Soviet actress Kseniia Sukhovskaia; the play's popularity quickly catapulted the Spanish orator to considerable fame in the USSR.³⁴

The Soviet cultural preoccupation with Republican Spain was hardly limited to the theater. In most areas of the arts, significant interest was generated on Spanish topics, and resulted in a small avalanche of new poetry, musical compositions, poster art, portraiture, sculpture, and both fiction and non-fiction literature.³⁵ According to coverage in *Izvestiia*, from the end of 1936 until as late as January 1939, Soviet publishing houses produced a number of new novels on Spain, dozens of translations of recent Spanish literature, including the complete works of Unamuno, an anthology of translated Spanish poetry, and many non-fiction surveys of Spanish history and natural history, geography, and literary sketches of the Republic's political leaders.³⁶ Although it is perhaps an exaggeration, it is nonetheless worth noting that one Republican source claimed that, by December 1936, the map of Spain was available in the USSR in fifty different editions.³⁷ Nor did the Soviet sporting world escape the impact of the Spanish mania. In the summer of 1937, a Republican football team toured the USSR, playing exhibition matches with a variety of Soviet teams, attracting large crowds and, in general, increasing the already widespread interest in the Loyalist cause.³⁸

Indicative of the heightened literary interest in Spanish *belles lettres* was the April 1938 inauguration of a new Spanish section in Moscow's International Library. The library's addition was made possible through VOKS's continued efforts to import literary materials from Republican Spain. According to one unpublished official source, the new section comprised some 1,500 Spanish books, all recently received through the standard VOKS-directed cultural exchange.³⁹ The opening ceremony was a gala event, attended by many of the key figures in Republican-Soviet relations, including two of the Soviet journalists who covered the civil war, Kol'tsov and Ehrenburg, as well as invited guests from VOKS, the commissariats, the Comintern, and the expatriate Spanish community in the Soviet capital, not least of which was the staff of the Republic's embassy, then numbering just two.⁴⁰

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To sum up, this section has revealed a great paradox in the Soviet Union's cultural policy in the Republic: just as general Republican interest in Soviet culture was peaking in the fall of 1937, at the time of the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution, the Soviets had already begun abandoning the cultural struggle and rapidly scaling back their propaganda activities in Spain. Simultaneously, the Soviets increased the dissemination of Spanish cultural products within the USSR itself. This development was intended by the Soviet leadership to give the Spanish struggle the widest possible exposure in the domestic arena, and is clearly linked to the solidarity campaigns in support of Republican Spain. VOKS's perceptible shift from vigorously promoting Soviet propaganda in Spain during the years 1930-37 to the sudden preference for primarily importing Spanish cultural products for use in Soviet domestic propaganda is in a real sense an admission of the failure of what at the time ranked as the Kremlin's most ambitious overseas agit-prop operation. Despite the high degree of prestige that the provision of Russian arms had earned the Soviets in the Republic, Moscow was ill equipped to fully convert Spain into a massive agit-prop stage as

earlier planned and decreed. Yet a cultural campaign mounted in the USSR, using the Spanish war as its main subject, proved a far more manageable undertaking and, from the point of view of the leadership, provided a better return on investment. When seen against the broader backdrop of the general Soviet attitude towards the civil war, the pattern exhibited in Soviet agit-prop policy vis-à-vis Spain closely parallels developments in other facets of Soviet involvement, including the provision of military aid to the Republic, which is the subject of the next section.

Notes:

Note 1: On Lenin's film policies in the immediate wake of the Revolution, see Jay Leyda, *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 121-54. [Back.](#)

Note 2: Politburo Protocol from 17 Aug. 1936. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, del. 980, l. 235. The two filmmakers have left several memoir accounts of their experiences in Spain: Roman Karmen, *No Pasaran!* (Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1972), and Boris Makaseev, "Iz khroniki geroicheskoi respubliki," in *My internatsionalisty: Vospominaniia sovetskikh dobrovol'tsev-uchastnikov natsional'no-revoliutsionnoi voiny v Ispanii*, 2nd ed. (Moscow: Izdat. Politicheskoi Literatury, 1986), 158-64. [Back.](#)

Note 3: Roman Karmen, *No Pasaran!*, 226-27. [Back.](#)

Note 4: RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, del. 980, l. 235. [Back.](#)

Note 5: R. Karmen, *No Pasaran!*, 228. [Back.](#)

Note 6: B. Makaseev, "Iz khroniki geroicheskoi respubliki," 158. [Back.](#)

Note 7: R. Karmen, *No Pasaran!*, 228-29. Curiously, few of the secondary Russian-language studies have addressed the filmmakers' activities in Spain, though the issue is taken up briefly in A. A. Komshukov, "Natsional'no-revoliutsionaia voina ispanskogo naroda i sovietskaia obshchestvennost'," Ph.D. diss. (Kharkhov, 1979), 131. [Back.](#)

Note 8: *Pravda*, 5 Sept. 1936. [Back.](#)

Note 9: *Izvestiia*, 8 Sept. 1936. [Back.](#)

Note 10: *Izvestiia*, 29 July 1937. Karmen's activities were also the subject of occasional articles in the Republican press. See, for example, the extended biographical sketch and interview in *Mundo Obrero*, 8 May 1937. [Back.](#)

Note 11: *Izvestiia*, 12 Dec. 1936. [Back.](#)

Note 12: See *Izvestiia*, 3 Aug. 1938. *Ispaniia*, originally Karmen's project, was ultimately given over to Esther Shub, who is typically given directorial credit. The film's music was composed by a certain Durán, a Spaniard, and based on a scenario by Mikhail Kol'tsov. [Back.](#)

Note 13: Despite the unprecedented scope of *K sobytiiam v Ispanii* and its importance, both as a cinematic document chronicling the civil war and as evidence of the evolution of the Soviet film industry in the late 1930s, the newsreels are rarely mentioned in the secondary literature, be it the historiography of the Spanish Civil War or scholarly studies of Soviet cinema. Neither Thomas's classic study of the war nor Leyda's basic survey of Russian film give even a passing mention to Karmen's achievement. Two recent specialized studies, however, begin to correct, albeit tangentially, the long-running oversight. See Alfonso del Amo and Maria Luisa Ibañez, *Catálogo General del cine de la guerra civil* (Madrid: Editorial de la Filmoteca Española, 1997), 570-582; and Magi Crusells, *Las brigadas internacionales en la pantalla* (Ciudad Real: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2001). [Back.](#)

Note 14: See *Descartes y materiales no utilizados procedentes de las filmaciones realizados para "K sobitiyam v Ispanii,"* (461)-II-4, AEURSS, discussed in del Amo and Ibañez, *Catálogo General*, 583. [Back.](#)

Note 15: A Politburo meeting of 13 Mar. 1937, for example, authorized increased funding for Karmen and Makaseev's living expenses and film costs. Politburo Protocols, RGASPI, f. 17, del. 984, l. 124. [Back.](#)

Note 16: Manuilskii's report to ECCI session of 20 Sept. 1937. RGASPI, f. 495, op. 2, del. 257, ll. 41-61. The cited lines are from l. 59. [Back.](#)

Note 17: ECCI Protocol No. 315, 28 Aug. 1938, and directive, "Practical Tasks in Rendering Systematic Aid to Republican Spain," 7-21. RGASPI, f. 495, op. 18, del. 1252, ll. 7-21. [Back.](#)

Note 18: Jay Leyda, *Kino*, 359. [Back.](#)

Note 19: Peter Kenez, "Films of the Second World War," in *The Red Screen: Politics, Society, Art in Soviet Cinema*, ed. Anna Lawton (London: Routledge, 1992), 151. [Back.](#)

Note 20: VOKS internal memo regarding Arcas's visits to the Moscow organization on 20 and 22 June 1937. GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, l. 94-96. [Back.](#)

Note 21: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, del. 842, ll. 9-10. [Back.](#)

Note 22: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, ll. 6, 14, 74 and 102. [Back.](#)

Note 23: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, l. 110. [Back.](#)

Note 24: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, l. 113. [Back.](#)

Note 25: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, l. 108. [Back.](#)

Note 26: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, ll. 104, 105, 111 and 112. [Back.](#)

Note 27: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, l. 114. [Back.](#)

Note 28: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, l. 106. [Back.](#)

Note 29: GARF, f. 5283, op. 7, del. 1015, l. 134. [Back.](#)

Note 30: The museum, located at number 21 Tverskaia, was founded in 1923 as a propaganda exhibit covering the background and course of the Russian Revolution. Throughout much of the Soviet era, the required visit to Lenin's mausoleum was followed by a stop here, and thus the museum enjoys an ideal location in the center of the city, just a short walk from the Kremlin. In addition to a mass of documentation on Russian events, the museum archive possesses collections that chronicle foreign revolutionary activities. Among the countries prominently represented are Italy, Cuba, Yugoslavia, Hungary and, of course, Spain. The Ispanskaia Kolleksiia, or Spanish Collection, is one of the largest in the archive, and includes newspapers, journals, photographs, phonograph recordings, and manuscripts. The archive also has other holdings related to Spain, among them documents of the Spanish friendship society Amigos de la Union Soviética and the personal files of O.G. Savich, the TASS correspondent in Spain during the Civil War. Access to the museum's archive is problematic, as few researchers still work here. Once admitted, however, the entire Spanish collection is available. [Back.](#)

Note 31: *Mundo Obrero*, 17 Jan. 1937. According to the article, which is accompanied by a photograph of several youngsters horsing around in a game room at GUM, the children picked sides and pretended they were fighting the Spanish Civil War: "Se ponen gorros, construyen barricadas, empuñan fusiles de madera y simulan batallas." [Back.](#)

Note 32: Afinogenov's personal archive is located in the Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva (Russian State Archive of Literature and Art; hereafter, RGALI), and contains a copy of the play, press clippings and reviews, and personal papers of the author. RGALI, f. 2172, op. 1, ed. kh. 62 and 248. [Back.](#)

Note 33: *Izvestiia*, 28 Oct. and 22 Nov. 1936. [Back.](#)

Note 34: Pasionaria's role in the play was the subject of an article written by the Soviet actress portraying her. *Rusia de Hoy*, 3rd epoch, no. 1, (Aug. 1937). [Back.](#)

Note 35: This conclusion is reached in Komshukov, "Natsional'no-revoliutsionaiia," 123-133 and David E. Allen, "The Soviet Union and the Spanish Civil War," Ph.D. diss. (Stanford, 1952), 140-146. A full survey of the many examples of Republican-inspired art and literature that appeared in the Soviet Union during the course of the Spanish Civil War would require far more space than the topic merits in the present study. [Back.](#)

Note 36: *Izvestiia*, 21 Nov. 1936, 2 Aug. 1937, 9 and 10 Jan. 1939. [Back.](#)

Note 37: *Mundo Obrero*, 27 Dec. 1936. [Back.](#)

Note 38: *Mundo Obrero*, 6 July 1937. [Back.](#)

Note 39: Archivo de Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores-Madrid (hereafter, AMAE), Archivo de Barcelona, Apartado I, R.E. 38, carp. 84, informe 10, 687-688. [Back.](#)

Note 40: A description of the event, the role played by the Republic's embassy, and a discussion of the dignitaries in attendance may be read in a letter from chargé d'affaires Polo to Pascua, 24 Apr. 1938. AHN-Madrid. Diversos. M. Pascua, Exp. 10, 3-4, 2. [Back.](#)

[Stalin and the Spanish Civil War](#)