

The Soviet Union and India: the Khrushchev era and its aftermath until 1966, by Andreas Hilger

I

After Stalin's death, it took the leaders who succeeded him several years to re-orient their international policy. Relations with India constituted one aspect of the Kremlin's prolonged post-Stalin struggle for power and for a re-launch of foreign policy that was ideologically appropriate as well as internationally promising. [1] In this context, Khrushchev's celebrated tour of India, Burma, and Afghanistan during the winter months of 1955/1956 represented an affirmation of the first secretary's project of claiming and nurturing a broad, "anti-imperialist" zone of peace consisting of Socialist and non-Socialist "peace-loving" countries. [2] Given India's prominent role in the emerging non-aligned movement, Moscow inevitably regarded New Delhi as a link to emerging international forces that were to be prevented from embarking on an anti-Soviet course; heated discussions during the Bandung Conference in 1955 about different – that is, capitalist as well as Communist – "manifestations of colonialism" had sharpened Soviet sensitivity to unpredictable, nonconformist positions of "young" national states. [3]

Moscow's perception of chances and opportunities notwithstanding, the "Third World" community was marked by increasing discrepancies. The Soviet Union, eager to capitalize on the world wide decolonization process, was compelled to adapt its theories and practice to different developments in Asian, African, and Latin American countries, as well as to uneasy South-South relations. Apart from the insurmountable Indo-Pakistani conflict over Kashmir (discussed below), the USSR was confronted with unwelcome choices in the cases of Afro-Asian differences about Congo (since 1960) or Indian disapproval of Indonesian campaigns against Malaysia (since 1963). [4] In general, such frictions could only overshadow promises of Afro-Asian solidarity or non-aligned cooperation. Moscow preferred a follow-up to the Belgrade conference over a follow-up to the Bandung Conference in order to avoid radical positions which it expected from the latter. This demonstrated the contradictions of the Soviet approach toward the Third World and forced the USSR to navigate the intersecting quandaries of bilateral, multilateral, East-South, and West-East relations. [5] Incidentally, multilateral relations within the framework of the UN posed analogous problems. In 1955, an optimistic USSR leadership, though ultimately unsuccessful, had discussed ways to install India as a sixth veto power in the UN Security Council. [6] Five years later, the limits of East-South cooperation in international organizations were again revealed in the Congo crisis and in the evasive reaction of Third World countries to Khrushchev's ill-advised proposal for the reorganization of the UN secretary-general's office into a "troika". [7] Later debates about the financing of UN activities and structures again reflected underlying political disagreements. [8]

The problem of handling the complex reality of Third World developments and interests was enhanced by the USSR's own multidimensional international agenda. The relatively un-coordinated combination of strategic deliberations, Cold War categorizations, and ideologically informed assessments and long-term outlooks on the part of the USSR could not but burden Soviet relations with India as well. In this context, Soviet aspirations to activate real or alleged Indo-Socialist agreement about a wide range of international topics – from disarmament or decolonization to the German question – runs like a red thread

through Soviet pronouncements [9]. Although the Kremlin consciously ignored Indian fundamental criticism of central aspects of Soviet reality, such discrepancies thwarted Moscow's aspirations. The exchange of opinions between Nehru and Khrushchev about the role of domestic Communist parties in Asia and the application of the sacrosanct principle of non-interference in India's internal affairs was one early example of communication at cross-purposes, as was Nehru's categorical rejection of the violent undercurrents of Soviet Socialism. [10] While both aspects point to problematic implications of Soviet class concepts as the basis for international relations between the Eastern bloc and non-Socialist countries (see section IV), Soviet positions concerning the Kashmir conflict reflected differences between regional and Cold War concerns as well as repercussions of the fragile composition of the Socialist bloc. Taken together, the multifaceted nature of Indo-Soviet relations reveals inconsistencies, fragmentation, and contradictions of Soviet activities in the Third World.

II

As in other parts of the world, the embedding of primarily regional quarrels in the setting of the East-West conflict led to a complex interconnection of local – in this case, South Asian – interests and international Soviet concerns. The resulting overlapping, intermingling, and reciprocal influences of politics could create unexpected constellations, oscillating between ambitious schemes and ambiguous, cloudy perspectives, all the while risking entangling the USSR inextricably in alien, hardly understood, uncontrollable arguments.

Khrushchev's unqualified support for India's Kashmir stance in 1955 appears to be one of his relatively spontaneous and autonomous, yet calculated, decisions. [11] At first glance, Khrushchev's unsolicited declaration continued the belated Stalinist support for the "free and unconstrained" decision of the "people of Kashmir themselves" (in favor of India), as expressed in January 1952 by Jakov A. Malik, the Soviet representative in the UN Security Council. [12] But whereas Malik confined himself to denunciations of Anglo-US "annexationist, imperialist" plans under the cloak of UN assistance, Khrushchev used the opportunity to blame Pakistan's foreign policy in abrasive terms and to make abundantly clear his aversion to Karachi's membership in Western-sponsored defense alliances. His anti-Pakistani outburst complemented Moscow's developing fondness for Nehru's non-aligned positions, which in several cases diverged from US approaches to international issues. [13] At the same time, Anastas Mikoyan, traveling from Karachi to New Delhi in 1956, was eager to convey to the Indian government the genuineness of Pakistani anxieties about India's intentions. While Mikoyan stressed the enormous importance of bilateral rapprochement, [14] Moscow's demonstrative partiality for India in vital questions of the South Asian hot spot impeded any substantial reconciliation between the two former British territories. Moscow's approaches remained influenced by its specific mixture of ideological predispositions and strategic considerations.

Therefore, Soviet attempts to reconcile the antagonistic neighbors after the second Indo-Pakistani war in 1965 are partly to be understood as a defensive move against anticipated Western "interference" in South Asia and served as an instrument to thwart dreaded US capitalization on Western mediation in favor of "imperialistic aims". [15] Nevertheless, in October 1965, Pakistani Foreign Minister Zulfikar Bhutto even promised to leave the regional pact systems of SEATO and CENTO if the Soviet Union would provide for a "worthy resolution" of the Kashmir problem. [16] It is difficult to determine the domestic Pakistani

background or the sincerity of that offer. Nevertheless, Bhutto's bargaining was in line with the Pakistani obsession with India at that time, as well as with Bhutto's own experiments with "equidistance" between the superpowers. What is more, a deal along the lines proposed by the relatively independent-minded minister would not have infringed upon the temporary congruence between exuberant anti-Indian emotions in Pakistan and Bhutto's private career plans. [17] The USSR did not test the seriousness of Bhutto's offer during the conference, nor did the agreement reached between India and Pakistan in the Tashkent Declaration of January 1966 give rise to a lasting neighborly friendship between the two countries. Positive appraisals by Soviet sources of Alexei Kosygin's efforts had to brush aside in an eloquent manner the built-in breaking points of the Tashkent Declaration and proved to be as overoptimistic as they were short-lived. [18] Given the declared priorities of Pakistan, the Soviet unwillingness to alienate India cannot be explained solely by the East-West conflict; Karachi's increasingly cordial relations with China must also be taken into account.

III

The disintegration of the Socialist camp created additional challenges to Khrushchev's Third World initiatives in general and to the USSR's relations with India in particular. Although, for instance, official Indian reactions to the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 were restrained, Nehru was clearly distressed by Moscow's violent reactions; [19] incidentally, the pattern of reserved condemnation was to be repeated by Indira Gandhi during the Prague Spring in 1968. [20] Nevertheless, the Eastern European theater proved to be of only secondary importance for Indian foreign affairs. Delhi seemed to concede to the war-torn Soviet Union a special standing in its immediate European neighborhood. In contrast, China's policy affected more substantial Indian interests, and the importance attached to China by both Delhi and Moscow (for different reasons) created an additional force that contributed new dynamics and a new logic to the regional constellations.

The twisted history of Sino-Indian relations since 1947/1949 equally mirrored complex interrelations of post-colonial and Cold War trajectories. The much celebrated Indo-Chinese Panch Shila was as much in accordance with Nehru's hopes for Asian common advancement as with Beijing's (temporary) preference for a friendly neighborhood; in the mid-1950s, both governments stressed their requirement for favorable conditions to promote economic development and national consolidation. [21] Obviously, the deterioration of bilateral relations owed much to Mao's resurgent power and the sensational effect of his ideological force. At the same time, it revealed inconsistencies, superficial analysis, and inertia of colonial claims in Delhi's policy towards China. [22]

In Moscow, the Sino-Indian honeymoon after the Korean armistice had nourished Soviet hopes for a reliable and influential position in Asia. Khrushchev's foreign-policy analysis in 1956, though less outspoken than that conducted by Lenin in 1923, at least alluded to the special international power of populous big powers in Asia such as India and China. [23] India for its part did not constitute the ultimate cause of Sino-Soviet estrangement. In fact, sharp differences between the two leading Communist powers concerning ideological maxims, as well as external strategies and tactics, inevitably came to manifest themselves in diverging relations with the "bourgeois", non-aligned Nehru government. In return, differences about appropriate attitudes towards India exacerbated the inter-Communist conflict by adding new dimensions of territory, loyalty, and war to simmering debates about the "right" path to a Socialist future. [24] Faced with a bewildering entanglement of

ideological, strategic, and national conflicts, Khrushchev seems to have lost his bearings in (South) Asian relations and proved unable to reconcile diverging demands for Moscow's role in world Communism on the one hand and for the implementation of peaceful coexistence on the other. After bloody Sino-Indian border incidents in autumn of 1959, Khrushchev's discussions with Nehru revealed the lack of a comprehensive Soviet line that could hold together parallel Soviet approaches in different frameworks: "The difficulty is that we think that you and China both are friendly and peace-loving countries. [...] We would not like our relations with either of our two friends to cool off. It is possible for two wise men to agree among themselves. If the third man appears on the scene, he will only make matters worse, no matter how intelligent or stupid he may be. Even if the two sides requested mediation, it will be very difficult for a third person to mediate. You and China are right in not asking for mediation. Our warmest wishes are that this conflict may come to an end as soon as possible and in a manner which will be to the satisfaction of all concerned. [...] All we want is that India and China should re-establish their old friendship." [25] In 1962, as the Sino-Indian conflict turned into a full-fledged war, Khrushchev in his talks with the Indian ambassador to Moscow, T. N. Kaul, again underlined the "particular unpleasant situation" of the USSR during fighting "between our ally and our friend", and he continued to stress the necessity of negotiation and a peaceful solution. [26] In addition, the Soviet leader used the opportunity to caution the Indian government about domestic repercussions of the war: "You have to bear the fact in mind that reactionary forces want to prolong this conflict in order to change India's policy, both internal and external. They cannot, however, openly propagate that and hence they try to heat up chauvinistic intoxication." Apart from evoking political-ideological conspiracy theories, Khrushchev took pains to argue against a possible reorientation of Indian economic policy "to militarisation and military production. It will throw India far back, create unjustifiable difficulties for the country. Militarisation always brings a heavy burden on the people and this is particularly true for India, for which militarisation would be a veritable scourge." [27]

The main purpose of Khrushchev's line of argument was not to cover up Soviet hesitations to deliver MiG-21 fighter aircraft promised to India while the fighting continued – the corresponding Indo-Soviet agreement from August 1962 had stipulated December as the earliest delivery date. [28] On the contrary, Khrushchev's explanations once again indicate the way in which the ideological predispositions of the Soviet leadership profoundly shaped their understanding of international developments. Obviously, the Kremlin tended to integrate assessments of domestic (and international) class relations into its interpretation of foreign policy decision making in India. [29] At the same time, continuous Indian debates about the foundations of the country's economic policy – the comparative weight of the public and private sectors, agricultural and industrial strategies, the importance of foreign capital and trade – implied challenges to Soviet foreign economic activities that constituted the main aspect of Moscow's peaceful competition with capitalism.

IV

In this broader context, Khrushchev's design can be regarded as an example of his attempt to secure "the victory of Socialism all over the world by most minor costs and victims". [30] With a clear understanding of the dangers of a thermonuclear inferno and determined to avoid global war, [31] Khrushchev combined the two concepts of "peaceful coexistence" and "economic competition" to demonstrate to the world the advantages of Socialism and to enhance the prestige for the Socialist camp. Against this background, India's external

open-mindedness, together with its existing associations with the Soviet Union, allowed for intensive economic cooperation between Delhi and Moscow. [32]

As in preceding years, Moscow's intensified economic undertakings after 1953 – expansion of trade, technical and economic aid, and support for development planning – had to serve different aims. Stalin's reticent external economic relations with non-Socialist countries had focused on safeguarding the economic independence and might of the USSR against all conceivable "imperialist" encroachments, and on exploiting possible frictions within the Western alliances. [33] Khrushchev's preference for peaceful competition extended and differentiated functions of foreign aid and trade. Apart from intensification of Soviet national endeavors, Moscow re-mobilized Comecon structures and means to launch new initiatives. [34] In general, the concerted re-start continued to pay attention to traditional tasks. Still, fostering economic relations with – as a rule, capitalist – Third World countries was welcomed as a chance to attenuate Western "economic discrimination" against the Socialist brotherhood while simultaneously bridging Socialist supply gaps. [35] At the same time, Khrushchev and his supporters within the framework of East-West conflict formulated even more far-reaching assignments. "If we want to commence more serious competition with the U.S., we have to support several countries," Mikoyan explained the deeper motivations for extended economic aid in 1955 to reluctant conservatives in the Politburo. [36] Foreign economic relations and classic diplomacy were expected to complement each other in order to weaken established South-West bonds.

Finally, Khrushchev expected Socialist economies to influence internal socio-economic and political development processes in the newly independent countries. Moscow was confident as to the attractiveness and superiority of the Socialist model – in its Soviet interpretation – but aimed to support and accelerate appropriate rearrangements; if necessary, Soviet Third World economic relations were to protect the "historically inevitable" processes from capitalist counterattacks. [37] To a certain extent, Soviet blueprints paralleled Indian state projects that, under the heading of "modernization", tried to cope with an array of post-colonial challenges of state- and nation-building. Battling the devastating poverty in the country was just one of the most crucial demands. In the Asian context, the rival Chinese Socialist model concerning the fastest and most efficient path to development loomed large in Indian government circles. [38]

In practice – apart from Moscow's considerateness for Indian self-esteem [39] – the complex constellation of India's and the Soviet Union's respective short- or long-term intentions led to selective Soviet support for public enterprises in India, especially in the heavy industrial sector. Here, Moscow took responsibility for the establishment of plants and factories, the Bhilai steel plant being the earliest and most famous example. In addition, extension of trade relations – with the Soviet side delivering an assortment of machinery – contributed to the necessary mechanization of agriculture. From the Soviet point of view, it could serve as a basis for future, "advanced" forms of production. Finally, Soviet experts participated in the preparation of indigenous development plans.

To sum up, according to Soviet calculations, successful Socialist aid projects in both economic and ideologically central sections of India's economy, combined with the impressive economic performance of Socialist China, complemented by a presumed force of attraction of the Indian Communist Party (CPI) and completed by the supposedly irresistible historical process towards socialism, would put India on the "path of Socialist development", thus contributing to Communist victory in the global competition between

Communism and capitalism. [40] Or, in the words of Frol Kozlov, the secretary of the Communist Party's Central Committee (CC) and a member of the CC Presidium, who in 1960 demarcated Soviet "farsighted policy" from current Chinese aggressiveness: "We have to consolidate our influence on those [neutral] countries, to undermine the positions of Imperialism, to stimulate the national liberation movement, and to use all resources and possibilities in favor of the formation of the most advantageous conditions for the maturation of a Socialist revolution there." [41] Incidentally, Soviet offers of cooperation in the field of education fit into this general pattern as well. [42]

Ideologically elaborated, ambitious rationalizations notwithstanding, the reality of Indo-Soviet economic relations revealed inner contradictions and overload that could be concealed, but not resolved, by Marxist-Leninist mantras. [43] A case in point is the limited influence of Soviet experts on Indian development planning itself. The final report of the high-ranking Soviet delegation that participated in the elaboration of India's trend-setting second five-year plan deplored, above all, Indian disregard for real agrarian reforms as well as official neglect of Soviet-style "mass mobilization" for the state-sponsored development project. [44] Nevertheless, Khrushchev's USSR invested substantial resources in India's public sector, which included the aforementioned Bhilai plant. Although this ambitious project disclosed in detail the weakness of Soviet and Indian planned economies, Moscow and Delhi authorities seemed to be satisfied with its final performance. [45] Nevertheless, this perceived success could not disguise the general inconsistencies of the Kremlin's approach.

Soviet support for core projects of India's development of heavy industry followed time-tested patterns of Soviet industrial politics. In the 1930s, Stalin's project to build a steel mill at Magnitogorsk came to encapsulate the comprehensive economic and social importance of planned key projects. [46] Magnitogorsk symbolized hasty industrialization, building of Socialism, and the Stalinist cultural revolution. After 1945, Soviet support for the establishment of heavy industries in new emerging Socialist fraternal countries in Europe and Asia constituted one of the integral aspects of carving out a Socialist camp, and corresponding broader socio-ideological underpinnings were present in the minds of Khrushchev's men in Bhilai as well. [47] This transfer of means and designs to India overlooked the simple fact that projects like Bhilai could not unfold their theoretically inherent Socialist dynamic under Indian conditions. In India, society and government – ultimately imbued with non-Soviet values and procedures – simply did not provide the necessary environment for Socialist chain reactions. It is clear that Socialist structures in the Soviet Union were not established by initiating self-sustaining sequences, and it never came to Stalin's mind to rely exclusively or mainly upon peaceful, non-oppressive means to construct his new order. In this way, Khrushchev's over-optimistic confidence in the evolutionary restructuring of India's socio-political landscape may serve as an additional indicator for indirect connections between the limitations of de-Stalinization and later failures.

Although the Khrushchev administration registered the political-ideological ineffectiveness of its silent endeavors to transform India, it never undertook a thorough re-evaluation of systemic fallacies. Instead, Moscow kept blaming "pro-American" or "reactionary" influences for Soviet miscalculations. [48]

Equally, Soviet trade offensives did not live up to complex, contradictory targets. As mentioned above, Soviet trade policy was expected to support Socialist economic

programs and to enhance the USSR's and Comecon's general economic power, as well as their consumption possibilities, while on the Indian market, Soviet products had to compete with capitalist rivals and Indian protectionism. Exports of agricultural machinery, one of the most prestigious and important sectors of Soviet trade relations with India, exemplify the inherent problems of overstated but isolated tasks. At the beginning of the 1960s, the USSR faced protective Indian import limitations for several kinds of machinery, including specified agricultural ones. Consequently, Moscow had to write off important trade sectors and was compelled to bury any collateral hopes for indirect influence on central aspects of Indian economic policy. This incompatibility between Indian development plans and Soviet trade policy foreboded new constellations within the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, where "Southern" allegations or demands lumped together capitalist and Socialist representatives of the "North". [49] Systemic shortcomings were made worse by Soviet failure to substantiate its continuous claims regarding the alleged economic superiority of Socialism by hard facts. The quality, terms of delivery and reliability of Soviet exports often left a lot to be desired; due to unsatisfactory production, the Soviet Ministry for Foreign Trade was even forced to suspend the export of selected machinery in 1961. [50] The intertwined problems culminated again a few years later when Soviet machinery, in an unprecedented instance of one Socialist state crowding out another from the market, lost shares in the shrinking Indian market to Czechoslovak competitors. [51]

Not surprisingly, therefore, the economic overload of Soviet activities in the Third World made itself felt in internal Soviet discussions; initial indications of critical voices among the population were collected as early as 1957. [52] The higher echelons of the Soviet economic and planning administrations increasingly – although strictly in internal communications – questioned concrete, countable advantages of Khrushchev's foreign economics, as well as evidence of its long-term political promises. [53] In this context, it is worth underlining that Soviet professional observers knew exactly that its Western rivals had more resources for aid and trade at their disposal; in addition, they did not cherish illusions of Soviet Socialist development in India. [54] Nevertheless, such insights were not translated into substantial changes of Khrushchev's main course of action.

V

Therefore, anti-Khrushchev conspirators in October 1964 had also compiled charges concerning foreign economics. Nevertheless, their argument did not go beyond the scope of deep-seated fundamental convictions and Cold War considerations, and thus did not aim at changing basic principles and ideological preconditions of Soviet economic aid. Instead, the would-be new leadership confined itself to sharp criticism of Khrushchev's individual failings in fulfillment of Soviet internationalist obligations. On the other hand, demands for stricter adherence to pragmatic cost-benefits calculations continued the experiment of squaring the circle. [55] Although task forces from the party, from the ministries dealing with the economy, and from the scientific community immediately set about verifying all accusations against Khrushchev, [56] his successors also proved unable to resolve traditional problems. "Today, we give everybody a little bit and therefore we are not able to endure 'competition' with the imperialist enemies," reads a draft memo by Brezhnev in 1968. "Perhaps we have to define zones of the most important interests and have to focus on ensuring these interests. When we are talking about developing countries, this approach would allow to entrench ourselves in intersections of the Third

World and mould these countries into attractive models for other developing countries.”
[57]

In this way, the post-Khrushchev leadership continued with attempts to integrate dynamics of post-colonial Third World developments into its ideological and strategic world outlook, and it also retained its preference for class-based analyses in the specific case of Indian foreign-policy decision making. Constant changes, re-arrangements, and differentiations within the Third World and the decreasing coherence of the Second World enhanced the multifaceted complexity of Soviet international relations, with the Soviet part becoming less active, and decisions being increasingly made in an ad-hoc fashion. Apart from the full-blown challenges of international economic debates, Brezhnev and his colleagues would have to cope with growing tensions in Vietnam and elsewhere. In this way, they would have to reconcile their foreign policy towards India with additional problems raised by a condensing global environment, and India's leading circles would continue to adjust Soviet initiatives according to Indian domestic and foreign-policy agendas. [58]

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[1] The complex interconnection of ideology, domestic power politics, and external strategy is discussed at length by Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary* (New York: WW Norton 2006); Vladislav M. Zubok, *A Failed Empire. The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 94ff.; Geoffrey Roberts, *A Chance for Peace? The Soviet Campaign to End the Cold War, 1953-1955* (CWIHP Working Paper no. 57, 2008); Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002); William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: WW Norton, 2003); Jukka Renkama, *Ideology and Challenges of Political Liberalisation in the USSR, 1957-1961: Otto Kuusinen's "Reform Platform", the State Concept, and the Path to the 3rd CPSU Programme* (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2006).

[2] Report Khrushchev to Twentieth Party Congress of the CPSU, 14 February 1956 in XX s-ezd Kommunističeskoi partii Sovetskogo Sojuza 14-25 fevralja 1956 goda. Stenografičeskij otčet, Moscow 1956, 1:21ff. See also, [Report on the Visit of Indian President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan to the Soviet Union](#), 23 September 1964, PA AA, MfAA, A 166, Bl. 296-301, Berlin. A detailed account of Soviet assessments of the national liberation movement is given in S. Neil MacFarlane, *Superpower Rivalry and Third World Radicalism: The Idea of National Liberation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985); Jerry F. Hough, *The Struggle for the Third World: Soviet Debates and American Options* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 1986). Soviet relations with the non-aligned movement in general are documented in Richard L. Jackson, *The Non-Aligned, the UN, and the Superpowers* (New York: Praeger, 1983).

[3] Roeslan Abdulgani, *The Bandung Connection: The Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung in 1955* (Singapore: Gunung Agung, 1981), 101-120.

- [4] Ragna Boden, *Die Grenzen der Weltmacht. Sowjetische Indonesienpolitik von Stalin bis Brežnev* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006), 219-224.
- [5] [Note on a Meeting Between the GDR's Moscow Embassy, Political Dept. and the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, South Asia Dept.](#), 23 December 1963, PA AA, MfAA, A 13978, Bl. 391-393, Berlin; [Report Assessing the Outcomes of the Cairo Conference](#), 2 November 1964, PA AA, MfAA, A 17440, Bl. 62-67, Berlin; [Report on the Visit of the Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh to the USSR](#), 3 December 1964, PA AA, MfAA, C 640/70, Bl. 95-97, Berlin; [Draft Directive for Soviet Delegation to the Asian-African Conference](#), 17 June 1965, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 480/Ll. 145-161, 165-167, Moscow.
- [6] [Report on Nehru's Visit to the Soviet Union](#), 1955, BArch-SAPMO, NY 4090/474, Bl. 185-196, Berlin.
- [7] The aims and motives of Khrushchev's troika proposal are discussed in Oleg Grinevskij, *Tauwetter. Entspannung, Krisen und neue Auszeit* (Berlin: Siedler, 1996), 468ff.; Conversation Khrushchev-Galeb, Ambassador OAR, 9 October 1961, in V. V. Naumkin, ed., *Bližnevostočnyj konflikt 1957-1967. Iz dokumentov Archiv Vnešnej politiki rossijskoj Federacii, Vol. 2* (Moscow: Meždunarodnyj fond "Demokratija", 2003), 365ff.; Ilya V. Gaiduk, "The Soviet Union and the Decolonized World", speech delivered at the 15th session of the UN General Assembly, in Andreas Hilger, ed., *Dekolonisation und Kalter Krieg* (München 2009 – forthcoming).
- [8] [Report on the United Nations](#), 2 March 1965, PA AA, MfAA, A 169, Bl. 51-57, Berlin.
- [9] [Report on Khrushchev and Bulganin's Visit to Asia](#), 11 January 1956, BArch-SAPMO, DY 30/3634, Bl. 1-10, Berlin; [Draft Note in Preparation of a Soviet Delegation to India](#), 15 December 1959, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 301/Ll. 241-258, Moscow; [Note a Conversation Between Khrushchev and Nehru](#), 22 September 1961, PA AA, MfAA, A 765, Bl. 85-90, Berlin.
- [10] For differences about the Indian Communist Party's aims and means, see Summary of Talk Nehru-Khrushchev, 12 December 1955, in *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Second Series: Vol. 31* (18 November 1955-31 January 1956), (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 2002), 340-345; [Report on Khrushchev and Bulganin's Visit to Asia](#), 11 January 1956, BArch-SAPMO, DY 30/3634, Bl. 1-10, Berlin. More principal issues were touched upon in Pavel Yudin's polemic in 1958, quoted in Jyotsna Bakshi, *Russia and India: From Ideology to Geopolitics, 1947-1998* (Delhi: Dev Publications, 1999), 12f.
- [11] Speech Khrushchev at a reception given by the Prime Minister of Kashmir, 10 December 1955 (extracts), in R. K. Jain, ed., *Soviet South Asian Relations 1947-1978* (London: M Robertson, 1979), 1:16-20.
- [12] Statement, 17 January 1952 (extracts), in *ibid.*, 1:4-6.
- [13] [Report on the Visit of the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to the Soviet Union](#), 1955, BArch-SAPMO, NY 4090/474, Bl. 185-196, Berlin. [Soviet Briefing Paper on Relations with India](#), 28 May 1955, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 28/D. 344/Ll. 128-132, Moscow. [Meeting Between Bulganin and Nehru](#), 8 June 1955, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 116/Ll. 73-84, Moscow. U.S. relations with South Asia are analyzed by Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The*

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[14] Conversation Nehru-Mikoyan, 26 March 1956, Nehru Memorial and Museum Library (NMML), Private Papers of Subimal Dutt, Subject Files No. 19, New Delhi, printed in *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Second Series: Vol. 31* (1 February-30 April 1956), (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 2003), 397-401.

[15] [Memo on India-Pakistan Relations to Politburo Members](#), 11 November 1965, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 489/Ll. 45-54, Moscow. Conversation Kosygin-Shastri, 15 May 1965, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, T. N. Kaul Private Papers, Subject File No. 15, 123f., New Delhi.

[16] Ibid.

[17] For the Pakistani context, see Stanley Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan: His life and Times* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) and Altaf Gauhar, *Ayub Khan. Pakistan's First Military Ruler* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[18] [Report on the Proceedings of the Tashkent Conference](#), January 1966, PA AA, MfAA, A 18017, Bl. 13-21, Berlin. [Report on the Visit of Indira Gandhi to the Soviet Union](#), 23 July 1966, PA AA, MfAA, A 1743/76, Bl. 1-9, Berlin. A comprehensive account of the conference is provided by C. S. Jha, *From Bandung to Tashkent. Glimpses of India's Foreign Policy* (Madras: Sangam Books, 1983), 220ff. and C. P. Srivastava, *Lal Bahadur Shastri. A Life of Truth in Politics* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 329ff. A more critical assessment is found, among others, in Shashi Tharoor, *Eine kleine Geschichte Indiens* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2005), 53f.

[19] Nehru to K.P.S. Menon, 28 June 1958, NMML, Private Papers of Subimal Dutt, Subject File No. 20, New Delhi; Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, Vol. 2: 1947-1956* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 291-299.

[20] Andreas Hilger, "Moskau und die Entwicklungsländer," in *Prager Frühling: Das internationale Krisenjahr 1968*, eds. Stefan Karner et al. (Cologne: Böhlau, 2008), 299-315.

[21] Indo-Chinese agreement on trade and intercourse between Tibet region of China and India, 29 April 1954, plus exchange of notes, 29 April 1954, in R. K. Jain, ed., *China South Asian Relations 1947-1980* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1981), 1:61-67.

[22] For further reading, see special issue, "Great-power Rivalries, Tibetan Guerrilla Resistance, and the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, no. 3 (2006).

[23] Report Khrushchev to Twentieth Party Congress CPSU, 14 February 1956, in XX. S-ezd, 24f. Lenin's "Better fewer, but better" (March 1923), is quoted in Julius Braunthal, *Geschichte der Internationale* (Berlin/Bonn: Dietz, 1978), 3:260. See also, [Foreign Ministry Report to Khrushchev](#), 12 November 1955, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 120/Ll. 136-145, Moscow.

[24] For an overview, see Harish Kapur, *The Embattled Triangle: Moscow-Peking-New Delhi* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1973) and Hemen Ray, *Sino-Soviet Conflict Over India* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1986).

[25] Conversation Khrushchev-Nehru, 12 February, 1960, NMML, Subimal Dutt papers, Subject File No. 24, New Delhi and [Draft Note in Preparation of a Soviet Delegation to India](#), 15 December 1959, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 301/Ll. 241-258, Moscow.

[26] Conversation Khrushchev-Kaul, 24 November 1962, NMML, T. N. Kaul papers, Correspondence with J. L. Nehru, New Delhi; [Note on a Conversation Between the GDR's Moscow Embassy, Political Dept. and the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, South Asia Dept.](#), 8 January 1962, PA AA, MfAA, A 765, Bl. 92-94, Berlin; [Note on a Meeting Between the GDR's Moscow Embassy, Political Dept. and the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, South Asia Dept.](#), 23 December 1963, PA AA, MfAA, A 13978, Bl. 391-393, Berlin.

[27] Conversation Khrushchev-Kaul, 24 November 1962, NMML, T. N. Kaul papers, Correspondence with J. L. Nehru, New Delhi.

[28] The agreement of August 1962 had stipulated delivery of four fighter jets in December 1962: Sergejchik to Dementev (GKAT, State Committee for Aerotechnics), 6 September 1962, Russian State Archive of Economics (RGAE), Moscow, F. 29/Op. 1/D. 2369/Ll. 114ff., Moscow. Nevertheless, the CC Presidium, to be on the safe side, had ordered on 14 October 1962 to delay deliveries: Minutes in *Prezidium CK KPSS 1954-1964, Vol. 1* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2003), 616f. After having weathered the Cuba Crisis, Khrushchev in his conversation with Kaul re-announced possible deliveries in December (see footnote 26); the first MiGs finally arrived at the beginning of 1963, and on 10 January 1963, Soviet authorities reported delivery of the aircraft: Chochlov to Sergejchik (GIU GKES, Main Engineering Administration of State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations), 10 January 1963, RGAE, F. 298/Op. 1/D. 3828/Ll. 6, Moscow.

[29] [Report on the Visit of Indian President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan to the Soviet Union](#), 23 September 1964, PA AA, MfAA, A 166, Bl. 296-301, Berlin.

[30] Khrushchev's Address to Heads of Governments and Parties of Comecon Members, 6-7 June 1962, BArch-SAPMO, DY 30/3481, Berlin.

[31] See [footnote 1](#).

[32] The best overviews of Indian diplomatic relations are still found in Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, Vol. 2-3* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979, 1984) and Charles H. Heimsath and Surjit Mansingh, *A Diplomatic History of Modern India* (Bombay: Allied, 1971).

[33] Minutes first session of representatives of (future) Comecon, 5 January 1949, RGASPI, F. 82/Op. 2/D. 1072/Ll. 1ff, Moscow; Lavrishchev/Loshchakov to Stalin, report on first Comecon session, 1 July 1949, RGASPI, F. 82/Op. 2/D. 1077/Ll. 31ff., Moscow; Politburo Decision, 11 February 1952, RGASPI, F. 17/Op. 163/D. 1612, Moscow.

[34] [Memo Molotov to CC CPSU](#), 31 December 1955, BArch-SAPMO, DY 30/3473, Bl. 14-30, Berlin.

[35] Decision fifth Comecon session, 24-25 June 1954, BArch-SAPMO, DY 30/J IV 2/2A, No. 363, Bl. 43ff., Berlin; Minister of Foreign Trade Kabanov to Khrushchev, 26 October 1955, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 113/Ll. 70ff., Moscow; Soviet delegation on ninth Comecon session, 26-30 June 1958, BArch, DC 20/13083a, Berlin.

[36] Minutes CC-Presidium No. 175, 16 and 22 December 1955 in: A. A. Fursenko, ed., *Prezidium CK KPSS 1954-1964, Vol. 1: Černovye protokol'nye zapisi zasedanij. Stenogrammy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2003), 71-75. On 16 December, this explanation was aimed at defending economic aid to Afghanistan, while Khrushchev some days later (22 December) could push through aid to India without facing any new resistance.

[37] Summarized in the Soviet contributions at the 18th Comecon session, Khrushchev speech, 25-26 July 1963, BArch-SAPMO, DY 30/3483, Bl. 163ff, Berlin, and Minutes, DY 30/IV A 2/2.021, No. 776, Bl. 12ff., Moscow.

[38] Benjamin Zachariah, *Nehru* (London: Routledge, 2004), 190ff.; Benjamin Zachariah, *Developing India: An Intellectual and Social History, c. 1930-50* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005); John P. Lewis, *India's Political Economy: Governance and Reform* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995); Francine R. Frankel, *India's Political Economy, 1947-1977* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978; enlarged edition Delhi 1995); Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), 61ff., 135ff.

[39] [Draft Report 22nd Soviet Party Congress](#), 19 October 1961, RGANI, F.1/Op. 4/D. 8/Ll. 166, Moscow.

[40] Conversation Kapica (Head of Far Eastern Department MID), with representatives of the East German MfAA, 29 May 1959, PA AA, MfAA, A 151, Bl. 151ff., Berlin; Nikita S. Chruščev, *Vremja, ljudi, vlast'. Vospominanija, Vol. 3* (Moscow: Moskovskije Novosti, 1999), 82f., 101, 358-360, 425f.

[41] [Speech Kozlov to CC CPSU](#), 16 July 1960, RGANI, F.2/Op. 1/D. 484/Ll. 69-84, Moscow. Suslov argued along analogous lines during Soviet-Chinese debates, 6-20 July 1963, BArch-SAPMO, DY 30/3608, Bl. 128f., Berlin.

[42] Decision CC CPSS No. St-166/4-s, 3 November 1960 in A. B. Davidson and S. V. Mazov, eds., *Rossija i Afrika. Dokumenty i materialy, XVIII v. – 1960 g., Vol. 2* (Moscow: IVI RAN, 1999), 324-327.

[43] The following discussion is partly based on the detailed account in Andreas Hilger, "Revolutionsideologie, Systemkonkurrenz oder Entwicklungspolitik? Sowjetisch-indische Wirtschaftsbeziehungen in Chruschtschows Kaltem Krieg," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 48 (2008), 389-410.

[44] Report Degtjar (Head of delegation) to CC Secretary Pospelov, 24 May 1955, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 117, Ll. 4ff, Moscow.

[45] Memo Archipov (Chairman GKES) to CC CPSU, 24 April 1959, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 303, Ll. 1ff, Moscow. See Santosh Mehrotra, *India and the Soviet Union: Trade and Technology Transfer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 108ff.

[46] Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 18f., 32 and Erik van Ree, *The Political Thought of Joseph Stalin: A Study in Twentieth-Century Revolutionary Patriotism* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 95ff.

[47] Sheremetev (Minister for Black Iron Metallurgy) to Khrushchev, 5 November 1955, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 118, Ll. 17off, Moscow.

[48] Account GKES for 1962, RGAE, F. 4372/Op. 81/D. 411/Ll. 6ff., Moscow.

[49] John Toye and Richard Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy: Trade, Finance, and Development* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004). The Comecon coordinated its position in 1963 and 1964: RGAE, F. 561/Op. 29/D. 4/Ll. 1ff., Moscow and BArch, DC 20, No. 12073, Berlin.

[50] Borisov (Acting Minister for Foreign Trade) to CC CPSU, 10 August 1961, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 40/D. 155, Ll. 113ff., 17of., Moscow.

[51] Kutyrov (Head of Foreign Trade Organization Traktoreksport) to CC Department for Machine building, May 1965, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 40/D. 236/Ll. 32ff, Moscow.

[52] Memo for Shepilov (MID), 16 January 1957, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 245/Ll. 263ff., Moscow.

[53] [Soviet Briefing Paper on Assistance to Developing Countries](#), 21 August 1961 RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 371/Ll. 227-236, Moscow and Tichonov (Deputy Head Gosplan) to Council of Ministers, January 1964, RGAE, F. 4372/Op. 81/D. 843/Ll. 1ff, Moscow.

[54] Report Nesterenko (Deputy Head of Department for Information MID), 25 December 1959, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 303/Ll. 156ff, Moscow; [Report on Indian Foreign and Domestic Policy](#), June 1964, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 452/Ll. 100-129, Moscow.

[55] Draft report CC Presidium for Plenum, before 14 October 1964, in A. N. Artizov et al., eds., *Nikita Chruščev 1964. Stenogrammy plenuma CK KPSS i drugie dokumenty* (Moscow: Meždunarodnyj fond 2007), 182ff., at 200ff. See also, Paul Du Quenoy, "The role of foreign affairs in the fall of Nikita Khrushchev in October 1964," *The International History Review* 25 (2003): 334-356.

[56] Letter from Gafurov to Brezhnev 93145, 12 March 1966, RGANI, F. 5/Op. 30/D. 489/Ll. 147-153, Moscow and Report Patolichev (Minister for Foreign Trade)/Skachkov (Chairman GKES) et al. to CC CPSU, 17 January 1966, RGAE, F. 4372/Op. 81/D. 1775/Ll. 30ff., Moscow.

[57] Draft Memo Brezhnev to Politburo, 6 July 1968, in *General'nyj sekretar' L. I. Brežnev, 1964-1982*, Special issue *Vestnik Archiva Prezidenta* (Moscow: Germanskij Istoričeskij Inst., 2006), 70-79, quotation p. 76.

[58] For Indo-Soviet discussions of Vietnam, see [Report on the Visit of Shastri to the USSR](#), 27 May 1965, PA AA, MfAA, A 17094, Bl. 66-73, Berlin; Conversation Shastri-Brezhnev, 14 May 1965, NMML, T. N. Kaul Papers, Subject File No. 15, New Delhi; [Report on the Visit of Indira Gandhi to the USSR](#), 23 July 1966, PA AA, MfAA, C 1743/76, Bl. 1-9, Berlin; For non-proliferation issues, see [Report on the Visit of the Indian Foreign Minister \(Swaran Singh\) to the USSR](#), 3 December 1964, PA AA, MfAA, C640/70, Bl. 95-97; [Report on the Visit of Shastri to the USSR](#), 27 May 1965, PA AA, MfAA, A 17094, Bl. 66-73, Berlin.

During Khrushchev's era, many ordinary Soviet families saw their living standards rise. This was in part due to the delayed benefits of rapid industrialisation, but Khrushchev was the first Soviet leader to attempt to address many of the pressing social problems that had developed as a result of the central planning of the Stalinist system (McAuley 1987: p.138). However, its failures included a lack of significant or successful economic reform, a deterioration in relations between the Soviet leadership, East Europe and China and an inconsistent commitment to actually denouncing Stalin's legacy for fear of undermining the legitimacy of the entire Communist system. The Soviet Union had its origins in the Russian Revolution of 1917. Radical leftist revolutionaries overthrew Russia's Czar Nicholas II, ending centuries of Romanov rule. The Bolsheviks established a socialist state in the territory that was once the Russian Empire. Deteriorating relations between the Soviet Union and neighboring China and food shortages across the USSR eroded Khrushchev's legitimacy in the eyes of the Communist party leadership. Members of his own political party removed Khrushchev from office in 1964. Sputnik.