

**Comparing the Aid Diplomacy
of the People's Republic of China and
the Soviet Union in Africa, 1959-1971**

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of the Sino-Soviet Split, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China began leveraging their disparate resources and expertise to achieve their different aims in Africa, independently adopting distinct approaches to what this thesis calls aid diplomacy. This is defined as the provision of any kind of material, technical, military, or cultural assistance intended to achieve a given diplomatic aim or otherwise further a country's foreign policy. The thesis compares Chinese and Soviet engagement with Africa during the first full decade of decolonisation, the 1960s. By anchoring that comparison on the two socialist countries' aid diplomacy, the thesis explores differences in their official ideologies, questions surrounding their competing national interests, disparities in their capacities as foreign policy actors and aid providers, and the divergence in their revolutionary strategies during the 1960s. The thesis will reflect on why scholarship examining the Soviet Union's actions in Africa focuses on matters of strategy and pragmatism, whereas works which examine the competition of the two powers and on Mao-era China's efforts in isolation highlight ideology. It further seeks to incorporate the agency and initiative of African political leaders, underscoring how two providers both faced a steep learning curve in the pursuit of their discrete policies in Africa. In so doing, it sheds new light on the Sino-Soviet Split and contributes to scholarship which sidesteps the conventional East-West axis of Cold War history. In addition, the thesis analyses how Chinese and Soviet interpretations of Marxism-Leninism and their respective strategies were experienced on the ground in Africa, opening up another perspective to the field of comparative communism and thus complicating previous narratives about the Soviet Union's and China's engagements with Africa and the wider developing world during this foundational era.

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Introduction

Starting in the late 1950s, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China began leveraging their resources to achieve the aims of their foreign policies in Africa, independently adopting distinct approaches to what this thesis calls aid diplomacy. This is defined broadly as the extension of any kind of material, technical, military, or cultural provision intended to achieve a given diplomatic aim or otherwise further a country's foreign policy. Concretely, such offers of assistance included humanitarian aid, various forms of economic and technical assistance, arms transfers and military training, and certain kinds of cultural engagement.¹ Conceptually, such aid was undergirded by different interpretations

¹ Some may question why military aid is discussed, as the literature on aid and development often treats it as a separate matter, but it will be further borne out in this thesis that, for both countries, military provision constituted an important aspect of 'aid diplomacy'. What is key is that, as succinctly put by Myles A. Wickstead, 'aid' in the broadest sense simply denotes 'a particular sort of relationship—the strong supporting the weak; the rich supporting the poor; the “haves” supporting the “have nots”'. It will be noted below that the Soviet Union and China both reject precisely this moralistic relationship, at least on paper. Nevertheless, while humanitarian aid and 'official development assistance' now represent the most widely recognised categories of 'aid', these are not the only manifestations of this relationship, and the norms surrounding them have their own history. In the context of the Cold War, when the norms now governing aid provision were not yet established, states—not least the Soviet Union—had a strategic interest in fostering 'aid dependency', now considered to be the primary liability of aid provision. In the terminology of the time, this would have been characterised by policy makers in Moscow as using aid to 'deepen cooperation' and reinforce states of a 'socialist orientation'. Initially, the provision of arms was seen by proponents of non-capitalist development in the Soviet Union as potentially counterproductive to the mission of assisting in a peaceful transition to socialism in the developing world. By the end of the 1960s, discussed in chapter 6, Moscow began to see military assistance as an effective means of fostering this kind of 'dependency'. Furthermore, as will be most evident in chapter 4, for China, military assistance was intimately bound up with the question of economic self-reliance in the face of protracted struggle against a superior enemy. While the different kinds of provision were undertaken by different bodies in the Chinese government, the failure of one side was often blamed on issues faced by the other. It is partially for this reason that literature exploring China's role in the Vietnam War and elsewhere treats military and economic assistance as an indivisible pair.

For a history of the norms and practices surrounding aid from the Cold War to the present, see Myles A. Wickstead, *Aid and Development: A Brief Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

For a summary of Soviet and Bloc economic assistance for the purposes of 'deepening cooperation' with the developing world during the Cold War, see Colin W. Lawson, 'Soviet Economic Aid to Africa', *African Affairs* 87, no. 349 (1988): 501-18.

For explorations of Soviet policy makers' changing attitudes towards military aid as a tool for advancing Soviet aims in Africa in the late 1960s, see: Щербиков Николай Георгиевич, «Африка грёз и действительности» - попытки

of Marxism-Leninism, distinct world revolutionary strategies, disparate capacities for providing aid, and conflicting national interests. The aid diplomacy of the two countries had enormous impacts on Africa in the Cold War and beyond. Between 1956, when the two countries made their debuts in Africa, and 1971, the year of the Twenty-Fourth Party Congress in the Soviet Union and the year when the PRC took China's seat in the United Nations, the two countries offered a combined total of approximately one billion dollars each for a wide variety of projects in Africa.² Their military personnel and armaments became involved in more than a half dozen armed conflicts, and their economic experts, advisors, and technicians, who numbered in the tens of thousands, participated in hundreds of projects ranging from efforts as small as the construction of match factories or journalistic training for small news publications, to projects as large as the Aswan High Dam or the Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) Railway.

In her exploration of how aid as a foreign policy tool is shaped by both domestic politics and international relations, the late dean emerita of the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Carol Lancaster, writes, 'Though we now take aid – especially aid for development – for granted, a moment's thought will remind us that aid is not only a relatively new phenomenon but, in historical terms, a rather puzzling one as well.'³ With the coincidence of the era of structural adjustment and the 'New Cold War' (1979-1985), the

советской африканистики соединить теорию и практику в 1960-е гг.', «История» 9, Выпуск 5 (2018); Мазов Сергей Васильевич, 'Советско-нигерийские отношения накануне и в начале гражданской войны в Нигерии, 1966-1967 гг. (по материалам российских архивов)', «История» 11, Выпуск 8 (2020).

Examples of such literature on China's support for Vietnam include: Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Xiao Shao and Zhang Xiaoming, 'Reassessment of Beijing's Economic and Military Aid to Hanoi's War, 1964-75' *Cold War History* 19 (2019): 549-567.

² The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA), Foreign and Colonial Office (FCO), 65-900, 'Worldwide Disbursement of Chinese Aid', 23 November 1971. National Archives and Records Administration at College Park (NARA II), Record Group 59 (RG59), Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, Soviet and Chinese Communist Relations with Africa, no date (sometime between 1970 and 1971). For reference, \$2 billion in 1971 would be worth approximately \$14 billion today, enough to fund the United Nations general budget for four to five years.

³ Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 3.

modern phenomenon of aid became a fundamental part of the neoliberal world order, such that any history of the contemporary world must confront this issue. Why two Marxist-Leninist states like the Soviet Union and China engaged in foreign aid provision, a phenomenon that we conventionally associate with neoliberal capitalism, especially at such a remarkable scale, is even more puzzling. Dependency theorists and world system analysts (the latter of whom are now finding themselves the scholars *du jour* in Beijing, as it seeks explanations for its growing aid and investment around the contemporary world) view aid as a tool of imperialism and neo-colonialism which locks the Global South into permanent underdevelopment in the same way as charity was, for Marx, a fetter on the independence of the proletariat.⁴ Such perspectives are not dissimilar from how Moscow and Beijing viewed Western foreign aid in the early Cold War. Informed by V. I. Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, both viewed the West's bilateral aid and the Western multilateral development institutions which emerged from Bretton Woods as implements of monopoly capital and methods of eroding the fragile sovereignty of post-colonial nations. They characterised such aid as fraudulent and placed it in scare quotes («ПОМОЩЬ») or referred to it as 'so-called aid' (所谓援助).⁵

The fact that China and the Soviet Union held this perspective and nonetheless utilised aid diplomacy to achieve their aims compels us to pick up the red flag once again and investigate an all too often ignored communist contribution to the history of a key aspect of the modern world. This poses adjacent questions that have largely been explored in the context of Cold War history. Histories of Soviet engagement with Africa often set out to

⁴ See James Cockcroft, Andre Gunder Frank, and Dale Johnson, *Dependence and Underdevelopment* (New York: Anchor Books, 1972) and Teresa Hayter and Catharine Watson, *Aid: Rhetoric and Reality* (London: Pluto Press, 1985).

⁵ «Техническая помощь слаборазвитым странам», «Правда» (*Pravda*), № 232, 20 August 1954. '中国给予非洲人民的援助最真诚', «人民日报» ('The Aid Which China Gives to Africa is the Most Sincere', *The People's Daily*), 15 February 1967.

answer the questions of why the Soviet Union engaged with Africa in the first place; why it largely withdrew after Nikita Khrushchev's removal in 1964; and why it returned via the Horn of Africa in the 1970s and found itself embroiled in the Ogaden War.⁶ In the realm of economic history, others have measured Soviet engagement with Africa and elsewhere against that of the West, or have set out to disprove the belief that the Soviet Union was somehow hermetically sealed from the outside world and processes of globalisation by acknowledging its efforts at facilitating trade and cooperation between itself and the post-colonial world.⁷ Accounts of Chinese engagement with Africa have often been included in the exploration of its 'economic statecraft', characterised by investigations of aspects of its strategic effort to pursue a variety of foreign and domestic policy goals, notably to escape sanctions and garner international prestige and domestic legitimacy.⁸ Still others have set out to provide crucial background to contemporary debates about China's role in Africa today, with an eye to understanding the policies which have enabled the growth of its influence in the developing world, or to debunking persistent myths about its donor practices.⁹

Some of these inquiries have explored Chinese and Soviet engagement with Africa separately, while others have viewed the engagements of the two countries as either in competition with one another or with the USA. For scholars who are focused on Cold War rivalries, ideology tends to take centre stage as a mode of explanation. Jeremy Friedman's

⁶ See S. V. Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956-1964* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010) and Radoslav Jordanov, *The Soviet Union and the Horn of Africa during the Cold War: Between Ideology and Pragmatism* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2016).

⁷ See Oscar Sanchez-Sibony, *Red Globalization: The Political Economy of the Soviet Cold War from Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

⁸ See Shu Guang Zhang, *Beijing's Economic Statecraft during the Cold War, 1949-1991* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2014).

⁹ See John F. Copper, *China's Foreign Aid and Investment Diplomacy, Volume I: Nature, Scope, and Origins* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Shadow Cold War underscores the question of anti-imperialist legitimacy in the competition between Moscow and Beijing for influence in the Third World.¹⁰ In a similar vein, Gregg Brazinsky's *Winning the Third World* characterises China's quest for status in the Third World as an 'article of faith' in the Mao era, when the Chinese Communist Party's ideology cast China as the rightful leader of the developing world against US imperialism.¹¹ Scholarship seeking to explain China's aid to Africa on its own terms also tends to highlight ideology. The chapter dedicated to the Mao era in Deborah Brautigam's *The Dragon's Gift* represents China's aid to Africa as being an irrational extension of the fervent anti-imperialism which defined the period and which was subsequently replaced by a streamlined and more pragmatic model in the Deng era. According to Brautigam, this impractical and idealistic effort by Mao-era China to support anti-imperialist causes laid the foundations of Sino-African relations today.¹² From a somewhat different angle, Jamie Monson's *Africa's Freedom Railway* explores the on-the-ground experience and memory of Chinese aid in the construction of TAZARA, acknowledging how the behaviour of Chinese experts and advisors compared favourably with that of other aid providers, suggesting that their established practices embodied Beijing's anti-imperialist ideals.¹³

Thanks, perhaps, to a turn away from the 'totalitarian thesis', scholarship seeking to answer key questions about Soviet engagement with Africa on its own terms has tended to favour realpolitik interpretations.¹⁴ S. V. Mazov's *Distant Front in the Cold War* concludes that

¹⁰ Jeremy Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 221-2.

¹¹ Gregg Brazinsky, *Winning the Third World: Sino-American Rivalry during the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 348.

¹² Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift*, 41-2, 309.

¹³ Jamie Monson, *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 2009), 149-51.

¹⁴ David Priestland, 'Marx and the Kremlin: Writing on Marxism-Leninism and Soviet Politics After the Fall of Communism', *Journal of Political Ideologies* 5, no. 3 (2000): 377-90.

in the first half of the 1960s, in the pursuit of its foreign policy in West Africa and the Congo, the Soviet Union was forced to balance ideological objectives against its limited capacity to project power, as well as against its existential need to avoid military conflict with the USA.¹⁵ Additionally, Lise Namikas' *Battleground Africa* succinctly describes Soviet efforts in the Congo Crisis (1960-1965) as being 'the politics of the possible'.¹⁶ In his *The Soviet Union and the Horn of Africa*, Radoslav Yordanov fuses questions of ideology and pragmatism with the issue of grand strategy to explain the debacle of Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa.¹⁷

This thesis will reflect on why works focusing on the competition of the two powers and on Mao-era China's efforts in isolation highlight ideology, whereas works examining the Soviet Union's actions in Africa focus on matters of strategy and pragmatism. But it focuses primarily on the many unresolved questions surrounding the aid diplomacy of China and the Soviet Union in Africa during the 1960s. There has yet to be a dedicated investigation and side-by-side comparison of the two states' engagement with Africa following decolonisation. By anchoring that comparison on their aid diplomacy, this thesis explores differences in the two countries' official ideologies, but in tandem with questions concerning their competing national interests, the disparities in their capacities as foreign policy actors, and the divergence in their revolutionary strategies. It will shed new light on the Sino-Soviet Split, sidestepping the conventional East-West axis of Cold War history. In addition, the thesis will analyse how Chinese and Soviet interpretations of Marxism-Leninism and their respective strategies were experienced by African counties on the ground and, in so doing, seeks to open up another perspective to the field of comparative communism, complicating

¹⁵ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 258.

¹⁶ Lise Namikas, *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013), 223-4.

¹⁷ Yordanov, *The Soviet Union and the Horn of Africa*, 253.

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previous narratives about the Soviet Union's and China's engagements with Africa during this foundational era, by bringing to the analysis other actors with which the two powers were forced to contend. First, however, it is important to start with the common roots of both countries' aid diplomacy.

The Juncture of the Birth of the Afro-Asian Movement and De-Stalinisation

Joseph Stalin's less than celebratory views on the colonial world are the crucial point of departure for comparing Soviet and Chinese aid diplomacy in Africa. In 1953, just two years before the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, Stalin died of a massive stroke. In the wake of his death, from 1953 to 1956, Soviet foreign policy was among the battlegrounds on which Nikita Khrushchev fought for the consolidation of his authority. Khrushchev recalls, '(Stalin) said we were mere babes, sucklings, puppies.... Only Molotov had been initiated into the mysteries of contacts with representatives of capitalist countries'.¹⁸ While Khrushchev untangled these mysteries, the post-Stalin leadership began strengthening connections with the colonial and postcolonial world. The relations of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with communist parties in the Islamic world were among the first to be strengthened, and bilateral relations with the countries in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia were slowly restored during the 1950s. Already in the last years of Stalin, a debate got underway about the possibility of a 'non-capitalist path of development' for 'revolutionary democratic' regimes in the post-colonial world. In 1954, this shaped policy discussions about the feasibility of using Soviet assistance to promote industrial development

¹⁸ Nikita Khrushchev and Sergei Khrushchev (ed.), *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev. Volume 3: Statesman (1953-1964)* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 725.

in India.¹⁹ Moscow's connections with Africa were established more slowly, sometimes mediated by Western European communist parties and trade unions.²⁰ February 1956, however, when Khrushchev decried Stalin's personality cult in a closed session of the Twentieth Party Congress, was the real turning point with respect to foreign aid. In the 'secret speech', he made a pointed remark about subordinating foreign policy to the party rather than a single leader, jeering at the Stalinist practice of tasking 'sextets' and 'septets' with formulating policy instead of placing the party bureaucracy in command.²¹ From there, momentous changes became possible. The aim of mitigating the Soviet Union's exclusion from the Afro-Asian Movement, born just a year before the secret speech, played a particular role in shaping the Soviet Union's new foreign policy and revolutionary strategy. The public report on the Twentieth Party Congress, while only hinting at the momentous shift in internal politics that went on in the closed session, made clear that aid would be a factor in the new foreign policy, as Khrushchev announced:

The new period in world history which Lenin predicted has arrived.... The winning of political freedom by the peoples of the former colonies and semi-colonies is the first and most important pre-requisite of their full independence, that is, of the achievement of economic independence.... These countries, although they do not belong to the socialist world system, can draw on its achievements to build up an independent national economy and to raise the living standards of their peoples. Today they need not go begging for up-to-date equipment from their former oppressors. They can get it in socialist countries without assuming any political or military commitments.²²

¹⁹ David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 58-61, 79-81.

²⁰ For instance, Khrushchev recalls that it was through French Communist Party leader, Maurice Thorez that Moscow first connected with Guinea. Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 878.

²¹ Nikita Khrushchev, 'Speech to 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U.', Nikita Khrushchev Reference Archive, marxists.org, web retrieved 29 April 2022.

²² N .S. Khrushchov (sic), *Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the Twentieth Party Congress* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956), 26-7.

This was not, as it has been cited elsewhere, part of the secret speech, but part of the public proceedings of the Party Congress. The public nature of the announcement may have influenced leaders of developing countries to view the Soviet Union as an alternative to the World Bank. Indeed, this was the intent of the announcement. Like all reports

Odd Arne Westad trenchantly characterises the post-Stalin leadership's enthusiasm for rendering foreign aid to the former colonies as arising from Khrushchev's 'fear... that Stalin's policies had nearly made the Soviet Union miss the train in the new and historical departure away from colonial empires and toward the establishment of independent states.'²³ An opportunity for the Soviet Union to take a more active role in post-colonial nation building through development aid presented itself almost immediately after the Twentieth Party Congress in the shape of the Suez Canal Crisis in October 1956.

The PRC had experienced what Hua-Yu Li calls the 'intense Stalinization of the communist world', and Stalinism had duly shaped China's foreign policy.²⁴ As explained by Niu Jun, the origins of Chinese Communist Party foreign policy not only predate the establishment of the PRC state but are also 'naturally related' to the 'ideology and discourse system' of Leninism and Stalinism.²⁵ The perspective of the 'great teacher' (伟大的导师) on foreign policy, especially as elaborated in the *Foundations of Leninism*, remained a key point of reference for the CCP leadership through the 1950s and beyond.²⁶ Marina Rudyak has emphasised the conception of *minsheng* (民生, the third of Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles, namely, the people's wellbeing), as being central to informing the CCP's conception of national development and foreign aid.²⁷ In addition, the CCP's own experience

to party congresses made by CPSU first secretaries, it can be found in the Soviet press: 'Доклад Первого секретаря ЦК КПСС товарища Н. С. Хрущева', *Pravda*, № 46, 15 February 1956.

²³ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 68.

²⁴ Hua-Yu Li, 'Instilling Stalinism in Chinese Party Members: Absorbing Stalin's *Short Course* in the 1950s', in *China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949-Present*, eds. Thomas P. Bernstein and Hua-Yu Li (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), 114.

²⁵ Niu Jun, *The Cold War and the Origin of Diplomacy of People's Republic of China* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 26. For the pre-1949 development of Chinese foreign policy, see Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World: The Origin and Development of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy* (Norwalk, CT: EastBridge, 2005).

²⁶ 毛泽东, '最伟大的友谊' (Mao Zedong, 'The Greatest Friendship'), *The People's Daily*, 9 March 1953.

²⁷ Marina Rudyak, *Becoming a Donor: National Role Conception, Reform Dynamics and Learning in China's Foreign Aid System* (PhD diss., Universität Heidelberg, 2020), 41.

of receiving Comintern assistance also shaped its approach to foreign aid in the Mao era. Critical, however, was the CCP's continuance of support for what it perceived to be Stalin's anti-imperialist and Leninist approach. Khrushchev's secret speech did not significantly change the CCP's view of foreign aid as serving the interests of national liberation in the colonial world and anti-imperialism more generally. Zhou Enlai, who was then Foreign Minister as well as Premier, made regular reference to Stalin in his reflections on Chinese policy on a wide variety of issues. In terms of foreign policy, what was key was that in Stalin's best years, in Zhou's estimation, 'he supported more revolution, not less' (他也是支持革命的多, 不许革命的少).²⁸

As vividly illustrated by Shen Zhihua, the Soviet Union's material assistance to China in the 1950s had enduring impacts on its economic development, politics, and society, a fact which has often been neglected since Reform and Opening in 1978.²⁹ This led Mao to insist again and again that, having received such assistance from the Soviet Union, it was China's 'duty' (义务, also translated as 'obligation' or 'responsibility') to render similar aid to national liberation forces around the world.³⁰ As will be seen, he also exhorted recipients of Chinese aid to deliver their own aid and continue the world revolution. In 1967, two days after watching the premier of the revolutionary opera, *On the Docks*, Mao told Zambian president, Kenneth Kaunda, 'The countries which became independent first have a duty to help newly

²⁸ 《周恩来年谱：1898—1976》（北京：中央文献出版社，2007）（*Zhou Enlai Chronicle: 1898-1976* [hereafter, ZELNP] [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2007]), 892.

²⁹ 沈志华，《苏联专家在中国（1948-1960）》（北京：社会科学文献出版社，2015）（Shen Zhihua, *Soviet Experts and Advisors in China [1948-1960]* [Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2015]), 404.

³⁰ See 秦程节，‘毛泽东对外援助思想与实践’，《党的文献》（Qin Chengjie, ‘Mao Zedong's Thought and Practice in Foreign Aid’, *Literature of the Chinese Communist Party*) 2016(6): 50-58.

independent countries.³¹ For him, there was to be a continual process of mutual assistance, lasting until the imperialist camp was utterly defeated. He explained this 'general principle' again to Kim Il-sung in 1970, saying,

We are those who make revolution: We are continuing revolution at home, and internationally we hope to overthrow imperialism. Is this not Marxist-Leninism? We victorious parties, we victorious countries, should help revolutionaries around the world to overthrow their exploiters. This is a general principle.³²

It is significant that both Zhou and Mao continually referred to foreign aid in strategic terms. In a conversation with an Algerian ambassador years before Ernesto Che Guevara's 1966 cry for 'Two, three, many Vietnams!', Zhou elaborated the rationale behind China's Marxist-Leninist brand of aid most clearly:

If there were just a few more Congos in Africa, a few more Vietnams in Asia, a few more Cubas in Latin America, then America would have to spread ten fingers to ten different places.... If we can make America extend its ten fingers to ten different places, then we can chop them off one by one.... If their fingers become two fists, then things will become difficult.³³

In celebrating Gamal Abdel Nasser's decision to nationalise the Suez Canal in 1956, Mao put this logic even more succinctly: 'With you, things are easier for us.'³⁴

Despite the clear difference in ideological and strategic perspectives on how to engage with the post-colonial world, in the late 1950s, the Sino-Soviet dispute had not yet become intractable, and the two parties were of accord on various issues, two of which stand out. The first was preventing Yugoslavia from gaining the upper hand in a competition for new

³¹ 《毛泽东年谱：1949-1976》，第六卷（北京：中央文献出版社，2013）（*Chronicle of Mao Zedong: 1949-1976* [hereafter, MZDNP], vol. 6 [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2013]), 94.

³² MZDNP, vol. 6, 344.

³³ Wilson Center Digital Archive (WCDA), 中华人民共和国外交部档案馆 (People's Republic of China Foreign Ministry Archives, PRC-FMA), 106-01448-02, 'Memorandum of Conversation from the Meeting between Premier Zhou Enlai and the Algerian Ambassador to China Mohamed Yala', 6 August 1964.

³⁴ '中国人民支持埃及收回苏伊士运河', 《毛泽东外交文选》（北京：中央文献出版社，1994）（'The Chinese People Support Egypt Reclaiming the Suez Canal', *Selected Diplomatic Works of Mao Zedong* [hereafter, MZDWJWX] [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1994]), 248.

allies. A consistent concern of Khrushchev in the late 1950s was Yugoslavia's diplomatic progress in the developing world and its central role in the nascent Non-Aligned Movement. Yugoslavia's path, like China's, potentially offered a model for the colonial and post-colonial worlds, if only because it demonstrated that different socialisms aside from the rigidly defined 'scientific socialism' of the Soviet Union were possible. Following Stalin's death, therefore, Moscow quickly assumed a competitive stance in the countries where Yugoslavia's engagement was growing, and it promoted trade with these countries where previously there had been little to none, such as India and Egypt. Already in 1954, as Khrushchev notes in his memoir, Tito sailed to New Delhi, becoming 'the first of all the leaders of the socialist camp in Europe to blaze a trail to India'.³⁵ Soon after that, Moscow also took an interest in North Africa.³⁶ Meanwhile, PRC leaders cursed under their breath throughout the 1960s that African leaders were 'secret Titoists' and that this explained their unreliability.³⁷

Second, although the potential for rivalry between the Soviet Union and China over the fate of the post-colonial world was already evident, during the 1950s both powers still envisioned a role for the other in the struggle to determine that fate. After his removal, Khrushchev mourned that it had not been possible for China and the Soviet Union to cooperate in the developing world, recalling:

We considered it expedient to carry out a kind of 'division of labor' in relation to the Communist parties of the non-socialist countries. Since the CCP had won victory in China, we proposed that it would be best if it established closer relations with the fraternal Communist parties of Asia and Africa. Besides, in its level of industrial development and in the standard of living of its people, China was closer to the conditions faced by the people in such countries as India, Pakistan, and Indonesia....

³⁵ Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 724.

³⁶ Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 825.

³⁷ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-01476-06, 'Record of Second Conversation of Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Chen Yi with Foreign Minister Pak Seong-cheol', 11 November 1965.

We wanted it left to us, the Soviet party, to strengthen ties with the Western Communist parties, above all in Europe and the United States.³⁸

This 'division of labor' had been first considered in 1949, when Liu Shaoqi travelled to Moscow to consult with Stalin about signing a new Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty and a visit by Mao. While there, Liu raised the idea of a revolutionary division of labour. Having achieved victory in China, the CCP would take upon itself the responsibility of making revolution in Asia and the rest of the colonised world, while the CPSU would remain the centre of the international proletarian movement and keep its sights trained on the developed West.³⁹ Stalin saw no harm in accepting this arrangement, and after negotiating a new Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship in principle, he waited for Mao to prove that China had indeed taken on this internationalist responsibility in Korea, which it duly did.⁴⁰ China again acted on its 'international obligation and mission' in throwing itself into aiding Ho Chi Minh and the Pathet Lao.⁴¹ Both of these efforts served as direct precedents for China's aid in Africa, where humanitarian, economic, and military assistance were treated as interrelated aspects of China's revolutionary foreign policy. During his tour of Africa in 1963-1964 discussed in chapter 2, Zhou celebrated that over thirty African nations had won their independence and were supporting the heroic struggle of those who remained oppressed by

³⁸ Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 424.

³⁹ Shi Zhe and Chen Jian (translator), 'With Mao and Stalin: The Reminiscences of Mao's Interpreter, Part II: Liu Shaoqi in Moscow', *Chinese Historians* 6, no. 1 (1993): 67-90. Also in 师哲, 《在历史巨人身边: 师哲回忆录》(北京: 中央文献出版社, 1991) (Shi Zhe, *At the Side of Historical Giants: Memoirs of Shi Zhe* [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1991]).

Liu Shaoqi also argued that China's revolution provided a model for how revolution could be achieved in other colonial or semi-colonial countries. Liu Dingyi later repeated this in 1951, offering an 'implicit challenge' to the CPSU's leadership role in the world revolution. John K. Cooley, *East Wind Over Africa: Red China's African Offensive* (New York: Walker and Company, 1965), 9-10.

⁴⁰ Shen Zhihua, 'Revisiting Stalin's and Mao's Motivations in the Korean War', Sources and Methods: A blog of the History and Public Policy Program, Wilson Center, web retrieved 23 April 2022.

⁴¹ Qiang, *China and the Vietnam Wars*, 17.

settler colonialism and imperialism, firmly declaring that ‘The whole of the African continent is one great revolutionary situation’ (整个非洲大陆是一片大好的革命形势).⁴²

It is in the context of this established role that Beijing reached out to the wider colonial and postcolonial world through Bandung. Already in 1954, at the Geneva Conference intended to settle the conflicts in Korea and Vietnam, Zhou Enlai’s diplomacy had garnered considerable prestige for China, particularly in the post-colonial world, as a result of China’s willingness to confront the USA at a bargaining table. Soon after Geneva, an innovation of Sino-Indian Diplomacy, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, or Panchsheel, were enshrined in the charter of the Afro-Asian Movement born at the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference. At the same time, according to David Priestland, ‘debates at Bandung also underlined how far Stalin’s communism was tarred with the imperialist brush, opening the way for the Chinese and the Yugoslavs to challenge the USSR as the true and legitimate leader of global communism.’⁴³ Zhou’s diplomatic accomplishments established an independent foreign policy orientation for China. In Chen Jian’s words, ‘Beijing’s presence at Geneva and Bandung and its endorsement of the Five Principles revealed the PRC’s continuous challenge to the Western powers, and, potentially, also to the Soviet Union by introducing a whole set of new norms and codes of behaviour in international relations.’⁴⁴ Immediately after Bandung, the Chinese Foreign Ministry prepared a report declaring, ‘We should fully take advantage of the favorable conditions and policy to develop friendly

⁴² ‘周恩来总理热情颂扬非洲大好革命形势’, 《解放军报》 (‘Premier Zhou Enlai Warmly Praised the Great Revolutionary Situation in Africa’, *PLA Daily*), 6 February 1964.

⁴³ David Priestland, *The Red Flag: Communism and the Making of the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), 375.

⁴⁴ Chen Jian, ‘China, the Third World, and the Cold War’, in *The Cold War in the Third World*, ed. Robert J. McMahon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 89.

relations between China and the other Asian-African countries.⁴⁵ This was to be done through establishing diplomatic and civic exchange relations, through consolidating economic and cultural relations, improving propaganda work, and developing China's capacity for studying and understanding the Afro-Asian world.

Following Khrushchev's advertisement of the Soviet Union's largesse at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, just a year after Bandung, Soviet engagement with the post-colonial world intensified. As pointed out by Sara Lorenzini, the reason behind Soviet aid was not merely 'compensation for a past of colonial plundering'.⁴⁶ It was instead structured by an idealised vision of what Andreas Hilger calls the 'socialist perpetual motion machine'. While it was undeniably important to expand the military strength of the socialist camp and back anti-imperialist struggles with force of arms, decolonisation and socialist development were conceived of as reinforcing one another. Industrialisation and economic improvements were envisioned as being able to awaken the masses and facilitate a peaceful transition to socialism.⁴⁷ By the end of the 1950s, a theory of non-capitalist development, grounded in a reappraisal of Lenin's 1920 debate with M. N. Roy, was used to argue that since the Soviet Union had now achieved socialism, it could assist the pre-capitalist world in achieving development without the need to pass through a capitalist stage, thereby circumventing their absorption into the capitalist camp while at the same time defusing the potential for global conflict.⁴⁸ In the early 1960s, Central Asia was used to exhibit to foreign dignitaries the fruits of socialist development in a formerly colonial region, exemplifying

⁴⁵ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 107-00065-01, 'Cable from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, "Draft Proposal to Strengthen and Develop Friendly Relations with Asian-African Countries after the Asian-African Conference"', 12 July 1955.

⁴⁶ Sara Lorenzini, 'The Socialist Camp and the Challenge of Economic Modernization in the Third World', in *The Cambridge History of Communism*, eds. Silvio Pons and S. A. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 341

⁴⁷ Andreas Hilger, 'Communism, Decolonization and the Third World', *The Cambridge History of Communism*, 324.

⁴⁸ Advocates of non-capitalist development seized on specific paragraphs from Lenin's reports to the Second Congress of the Communist International. For instance, see V. I. Lenin, 'Report of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions, July 26', *Collected Works*, volume 31, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1966), 244.

how non-capitalist development was possible with Soviet resources and guidance, especially in the fields of economic planning and statistical work.⁴⁹

Mao's China put forward no such model of development, ultimately decrying the *sanhe luxian* (三和路线, or the foreign policies of peaceful coexistence, peaceful competition, and peaceful transition) as a product of Khrushchev's revisionism. While the CCP used every opportunity to illustrate to foreign delegations the fruits of its authority, and while Chinese leaders informally advised African leaders on what principles to apply in their quest for economic development, they also unswervingly insisted that these leaders should find their own path and learn from China's mistakes as well as – if not more than – its successes. Mao resolutely opposed imposing a Chinese model on foreign environments, a point he stressed to Luo Guibo during his deployment as a military and political advisor in 1950s Vietnam. Mao mused that if China had anything to teach the post-colonial world, it was through negative example:

Helping others well means not doing so according to subjective desires but according to the situation on the ground. They (Chinese experts and advisors abroad) should be honest and prudent. They should speak less of how we surmounted our numerous difficulties (过五关斩六将) and more about the difficulties (走麦城) themselves, as we have also experienced failures.⁵⁰

Similarly, in 1965, when Nasser asked for a 'book' on the transition from capitalism to socialism, Zhou told him,

⁴⁹ For an exploration of how this dynamic allowed Central Asian elites to 'renegotiate their republics' economic and cultural role within the union, see Artemy Kalinovsky, *Laboratory of Socialist Development: Cold War Politics and Decolonization in Soviet Tajikistan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018).

⁵⁰ 罗贵波, '无产阶级国际主义的光辉典范', 《缅怀毛泽东》 (北京: 中央文献出版社, 1993) (Luo Guibo, 'The Shining Example of Proletarian Internationalism', *Cherished Memories of Mao Zedong* [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1993]).

The book cannot be written by others. You must write it yourselves, according to the needs of your own people for food to eat and clothes to wear.... A book? You don't need others to write it. It would be better for the President himself to write one.⁵¹

Instead of requiring adherence to a specific model, PRC leaders advocated for militant struggle undergirded by self-reliance (自力更生), which they stressed could only be achieved by working according to concrete, local conditions.

Niu Jun, whose work has definitively described the Cold War foreign policy of the Mao era, shows that the question of this 'international obligation' (国际义务) to aid liberation movements around the world was also intimately bound up with the CCP's revolutionary strategy. Soon after the 1962 Seven Thousand Cadre Conference held in the wake of the disastrous Great Leap Forward, even suggesting a reduction of aid expenditure became tantamount to betraying Mao himself. In 1962, in recognition of the dire circumstances faced by the PRC, Liu Shaoqi delivered a report to an enlarged working meeting and dared to demand a comprehensive reassessment of Chinese foreign policy. In an addendum, Liu stated:

Comrade Mao Zedong says, in order to fulfil our nation's international obligation, the primary task is to correctly carry out work at home. After correctly carrying out our work at home, we can contribute even more to the peoples of the world, we can more ably support the world revolutionary movement, and we can more effectively continue the struggle against revisionism. For this reason, our primary attention should be placed on domestic concerns.⁵²

Behind this ostensible endorsement of the Chairman's line, Liu's call temporarily to set aside foreign aid in favour of domestic development was quickly deemed to be heresy. Raised alongside a proposal to seek some level of rapprochement with the USA, the Soviet Union, and 'reactionary' powers like India, Liu's heresy became known as the *sanhe yishao* (三和一少,

⁵¹ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-01476-06, 11 November 1965.

⁵² 刘少奇, '在扩大的中央工作会议上的讲话', 《建国以来重要文献选编》, 第十五册 (北京: 中央文献出版社, 1997) (Liu Shaoqi, 'Speech at the Enlarged Central Working Conference', *Compilation of Important Documents Since the Founding of the People's Republic of China*, vol. 15 [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1997]), 86.

or the three conciliations and one reduction). It was worse even than the *sanhe luxian*, for it putatively abandoned the international duty to aid national liberation struggles. By the end of 1962, the *sanhe yishao* deviation led to a crackdown on one of its strongest proponents, Wang Jiaxiang, a former member of the Twenty-Eight Bolsheviks. Niu Jun argues that this crackdown presaged a dramatic leftward turn in PRC foreign policy, while Wang Dong argues that it instead ensured a continuation of the CCP's world revolutionary strategy.⁵³ Following the Seven Thousand Cadre Conference, the volume of Chinese assistance to Africa grew rapidly. At the same time, Mao became increasingly concerned that a secret revisionist line of 'little Khrushchevs' existed in the party which sought to implement the *sanhe yishao*, telling a Japanese delegation in 1964 that these 'comrades' represented the 'dark side' (黑暗的一面) of the Chinese struggle.⁵⁴

Another major difference concerned the nature of the relationship that Moscow and Beijing maintained with the outside world. Certainly, neither state was as isolated from the rest of the world as is commonly imagined. As explored by Shu Guang Zhang, China in the 1950s sought simultaneously to escape Washington-led diplomatic isolation and to mitigate economic dependency on the Moscow-dominated socialist camp. Gaining allies among the newly independent countries in the late 1950s and 1960s was an extension of this effort and thus a top priority for the PRC in its use of aid as 'a diplomatic weapon'.⁵⁵ As he shows, the architects of the dual-pronged quest to escape encirclement by the USA and avoid dependency on the Soviet Union, were men such as Minister of Foreign Trade, Ye Jizhuang, and Minister of Finance, Li Xiannian. They became instrumental in formulating China's aid

⁵³ Niu Jun, '1962: The Eve of the Left Turn in China's Foreign Policy', Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) Working Paper No. 48 (2005): 35-6. Wang Dong, *From Enmity to Rapprochement: Grand Strategy, Power Politics, and U.S.-China Relations, 1961-1974* (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2007), 12.

⁵⁴ MZDNP, vol. 5, 338. Wang, *From Enmity to Rapprochement*, 256.

⁵⁵ Zhang, *Beijing's Economic Statecraft during the Cold War*, 133.

diplomacy and for them the connection between trade and aid was crucial. As noted by a number of scholars and journalists observing China's earliest engagements with Africa at this time, and as underlined by David H. Shinn and Joshua Eisenman, commerce almost invariably preceded diplomatic recognition and aid.⁵⁶ In addition, in contrast to the Soviet Union, the PRC was not represented in multilateral development institutions and could not coordinate with a bloc of allies in the provision of its aid, which meant that it was comparatively isolated.

As will be explored in chapter 1, Soviet economic cooperation agreements were invariably tied to trade, designed to enable countries in receipt of Soviet loans to repay their debts with currency and commodities. Unlike the PRC, however, the Soviet Union was represented in the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, was a member of the United Nations, and faced no challenge to its status as the sole authority over its sovereign territory. Throughout the Cold War, therefore, a dynamic of Soviet aid diplomacy was determined by its role in multilateral aid and development bodies. The Soviet Union was a substantial contributor to UN aid bodies, especially for humanitarian aid.⁵⁷ Moscow was also an early contributor to what would become the Special Fund and later the UN Development Programme.⁵⁸ Moscow's contributions were always dwarfed by those of the USA and its partners. Moreover, this disparity was evident in the number of students from around the world who availed themselves of the Special Fund to study in the Soviet Union. With the establishment of the Special Fund in 1958, the CPSU undertook two measures to ameliorate

⁵⁶ David H. Shinn and Joshua Eisenman, *China and Africa: A Century of Engagement* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 18. Also see: Cooley, *East Wind Over Africa*; Alaba Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa, 1958-71* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974); and Bruce Larkin, *China and Africa, 1949-1970: The Foreign Policy of the People's Republic of China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

⁵⁷ Российский государственный архив новейшей истории (RGANI), фонд (f.) 5, опись (o.) 30, дело (d.) 272, листы (ll.) 153-7, 3 December 1958.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 170-184.

its underrepresentation in the international multilateral bodies and to address its problems competing in the realm of education. Firstly, linguistic and cultural education of Soviet specialists drawn from the various ministries and departments of Soviet republics was improved.⁵⁹ This drew on Soviet 'orientalists' from the Academy of Sciences, many of whom went on to play an important role in the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and regional conferences (the International Conference of Africanists, for example). Secondly, this allowed the Soviet Union to build a reserve of specialists who could be placed in underdeveloped countries via the Special Fund. This strengthened Soviet influence over the Special Fund and its personnel were directed to relate the 'vast experience' of the Soviet Union in the field of economic planning and statistics to representatives of the underdeveloped world.⁶⁰ Both of these measures thereby expanded capacity to provide technical assistance and educational opportunities to Africa, not least through the People's Friendship University founded in February 1960 (renamed Patrice Lumumba University in 1961 after his assassination). Taken together, these steps allowed the Soviet Union to compete with the West over the nature of multilateral development aid.

Unlike China, the Soviet Union could also coordinate with the socialist bloc in its aid diplomacy with Africa and the rest of the developing world. In 1958, Moscow sought to increase the degree of coordination between the people's democracies and the constituent republics of the Soviet Union in providing aid to Africa.⁶¹ Recognising that the economic ties between the underdeveloped world and China, Czechoslovakia, Romania, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria had grown significantly over the course of the 1950s, the Soviet Union attempted to rationalise these patterns through

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 171.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 183-5.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, I, 185.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa international planning and specialisation, especially in transport infrastructure, state agriculture, resource exploration, and the energy sector.⁶² Czechoslovakia, the GDR, and Poland assisted in the construction of agricultural processing plants, cement plants, ceramic factories, and textile enterprises. Romania collaborated with the Soviet Union to conduct oil and gas exploration. Hungary exported its much sought-after Ikarus buses and assisted in the setting up of electric plants as well as factories for producing the parts needed in energy infrastructure and transportation.⁶³ Taken together, the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc made a concerted effort to furnish the developing world with all the accoutrements of socialist modernity.

Despite the immense effort put into this intra-bloc coordination, the Soviet Union failed to put forward a coherent alternative to the World Bank, an institution which came to predominate in the world of development aid.⁶⁴ Because of this, like China in the 1960s, Soviet aid diplomacy with Africa was primarily a bilateral affair premised on state-to-state relations. Nonetheless, the fact remains that Chinese aid diplomacy in Africa was *exclusively* bilateral until the end of the Mao era, whereas the Soviet Union repeatedly attempted to coordinate its aid efforts both within the socialist camp and within the international multilateral bodies. This allowed it to make its development aid a comprehensive alternative to that of the West, something which the PRC could not offer in the 1960s.⁶⁵

A final contrast between Soviet and Chinese aid diplomacy concerned the global orientation of each power. The PRC identified itself as part of the colonised world, while the

⁶² *Ibid.*, ll. 172-175.

⁶³ RGANI, f. 5, o. 30, d. 305, l. 122, 7 September 1959.

⁶⁴ See Sara Lorenzini, 'Comecon and the South in the Years of *Détente*: A study on East-South Economic Relations', *European Review of History* 21, no. 2 (2014): 183-99.

⁶⁵ In the compendia of Chinese treaties, there is, of course, often a 'Multilateral' (多变) section. What I mean here by Chinese aid exclusively being bilateral is that its provision was unidirectional. Certain agreements, like the agreement governing TAZARA, were technically multilateral. Nonetheless, the provision was one-way.

Soviet Union presented itself as the bridge between imperial Europe and the colonised world. The Soviet Union was primarily focused on the 'West' and saw itself as part of western civilization. 'Semi-colonial' China's focus was on its immediate neighbours and its rhetorical emphasis was on the problems it shared with the colonial world. This positionality allowed it to set itself apart from the Soviet Union. While in the late 1950s the Soviet Union appealed to African leaders in terms of the concrete aid it could provide as the world's premier socialist state, Chinese figures like Guo Moruo and Chu Tunan 'spoke of the common cultural heritage of the non-whites' and contended that they 'shared the heritage of ancient culture that had been broken and ruined by the West's imperialism.'⁶⁶ When Beijing was celebrating the tenth anniversary of the declaration of the People's Republic in 1959, Mao Zedong said, 'I have time for guests from *Yà Fēi Lā* (亚非拉, Asia-Africa-Latin America), but not for guests from the West.'⁶⁷

This Mao-era perspective had a profound influence on PRC foreign policy. While the Soviet Union conceived of the post-colonial world as an assemblage of potential allies to be brought on board in the peaceful competition with the imperialist and capitalist West, the PRC considered the post-colonial world to be a force in its own right. Around the same time as Liu and Stalin agreed on a revolutionary division of labour, Mao began to elaborate what would eventually become his theory of three worlds. Due to the special nature of the Chinese revolution and the widening Sino-Soviet rift, he progressively shifted China out of

⁶⁶ Cooley, *East Wind Over Africa*, 16. For an analysis of China's attempt to construct an Afro-Asian universality in opposition of Western cultural hegemony and how this attempt became explicitly anti-Soviet along nationalist rather than socialist-realist lines in the wake of the Sino-Soviet Split, see Pieter Vanhove, '“A world to Win”: China, the Afro-Asian Writer's Bureau, and the Reinvention of World Literature', *Critical Asian Studies* 51, no. 9 (2019): 1-22.

⁶⁷ '耿彪副部长发言', 1961年, 江苏省档, 档号 JS312-122 ('Vice Minister Geng Biao Speaks', 1961, Jiangsu Provincial Archives, Archive Number JS312-122). As quoted in 蒋华杰, '国际冷战、革命外交与对外援助: 中国对非援助政策形成的再考虑 (1956-1965)', 《外交评论》 30, (Jiang Huajie, 'International Cold War, Revolutionary Foreign Policy and Foreign Aid: A Reassessment of the Formation of China's Policy of Aid to Africa [1956-1965]', *Foreign Affairs Review*), no. 5 (2016): 81-108.

the Soviet-led socialist camp and into, first, the 'intermediate zone' and, finally, the 'Third World'. The process of this conceptual transformation corresponded to key events in China's history and its relations with the Soviet Union. In 1945, in a conversation with Anna Louise Strong, Mao said that the Soviet Union and the USA were separated by a 'vast zone' (辽阔的地带) wherein there were many capitalist, semi-colonial, and colonial countries which the USA would need to 'subjugate' before it could directly confront the Soviet Union.⁶⁸ In 1954, when Mao met with a delegation from the British Labour Party, China was still with the Soviet Union on the other side of what he had begun to call the 'intermediate zone' (中间地带).⁶⁹ In early 1962, just five years after he publicly questioned the rightness of the policy of 'leaning to one side' (一边倒) in the wake of Khrushchev's secret speech, Mao reflected on how there were contradictions between the USA and those parts of the intermediate zone closest to it.⁷⁰ By this logic, contradictions also existed between the Soviet Union and its satellites. As the Sino-Soviet Split reached its apogee in 1963-1964, China's leading role in the Third World was declared when Mao pronounced that there were two intermediate zones: the first was composed of the 'vast economically backward countries' (广大经济落后的国家) of Asia, Africa, and Latin America; the second was composed of the economically developed countries of the world, all of which resisted, to varying degrees, the coercion of both Washington and Moscow.⁷¹ In 1974, in a conversation with Kaunda, Mao defined the latter

⁶⁸ '和美国记者安娜·路易斯·斯特朗的谈话' (Conversation with American Journalist Anna Louise Strong), MZDWJWX, 59.

⁶⁹ '中英中美关系问题' (Problems in Sino-British and Sino-American Relations), MZDWJWX, 159.

For an account of the Chinese Communist Party's long-term identification with the intermediate zone rather than the Soviet-led socialist camp, see 杨奎松, 《“中间地带”的革命》(太原: 山西人民出版社, 2010) (Yang Kuisong, *Intermediate Zone' Revolution* [Taiyuan: Shanxi People's Publishers, 2010]).

⁷⁰ '中间地带国家的性质各不相同' (The Countries of the Intermediate Zone Are Different from One Another), MZDWJWX, 485-7.

⁷¹ '中间地带有两个' (There Are Two Intermediate Zones), MZDWJWX, 508.

as the ‘Second World’, and the former as ‘the Third’.⁷² It was the task of China and the Third World to unite against the wealthier and more powerful First World, meaning the hegemonistic USA and Soviet Union. Its final elaboration was subsequently absorbed into Deng Xiaoping’s ‘anti-hegemonism’ (反霸权主义). Before the evacuation of the class content of the theory of three worlds and its precedents in the 1970s, however, it served to inform the CCP’s revolutionary foreign policy and its identification of China with the post-colonial world against first the imperialist camp and later both Cold War superpowers.⁷³ In sum, when the Soviet Union and China independently made their debuts in Africa as aid providers in 1956-1959, their strategies and conceptions of what aid and development meant had common roots but also key differences. From the onset of the Sino-Soviet Split, China and the Soviet Union employed foreign aid, broadly defined, to realise different goals and to further their distinct foreign policies in Africa.

Approach and Sources

This thesis is first and foremost a comparative work concerned with the negotiation, implementation, reception, and impact of the two countries’ aid diplomacy against the background of the decolonisation of Africa, the global Cold War, and the Sino-Soviet Split. My initial aim was to think about aid diplomacy in light of the wider debates about the Sino-Soviet Split. While the Sino-Soviet Split is not the central topic of this thesis, the thesis cannot

⁷² ‘关于三个世界划分问题’ (On the Problem of Delineating Between the Three Worlds), MZDWJWX, 600-1.

This conversation most clearly illustrates the marked difference between the *tiers monde*-ist perspective of the Western New Left and post-colonial Non-Aligned Movement with the Third Worldism of the Mao era.

⁷³ This perspectival shift alone has meant that there are those who question whether China even experienced a Cold War 1.0, let alone the contemporary debate about the dawn of a Cold War 2.0. See Covell Meyskens, ‘There Never Was a Cold War China’, Cold War International History Project, blog post, 9 September 2020, web retrieved 29 April 2022.

avoid the scholarly debate about the Split and, in particular, the issue of the salience of ideology. When the Split first emerged, contemporaries identified different causes. For instance, David Floyd's *Mao Against Khrushchev* focused on the two countries' conflicting national interests and the way this conflict manifested itself as a mutual enmity between the personalities of Mao and Khrushchev. Donald Zagoria's *The Sino-Soviet Conflict*, by contrast, focused on the confluence of ideology and domestic politics.⁷⁴ Recent scholarship has offered multicausal explanations, but there has been a general tendency to highlight the importance of ideology, especially what Zagoria called the 1957 'leftward turn' in CCP ideology. Chen Jian's *Mao's China and the Cold War* contends that the Split was largely a result of ideology insofar as it was caused by Mao's quest for domestic mobilisation.⁷⁵ Lorenz Lüthi, Li Danhui, and Xia Yafeng have built on this conclusion. Lüthi agrees with Zagoria and Chen's emphasis on ideology – and Mao's leftism in particular – but also stipulates that Khrushchev's departure from what Mao considered to be the correct political line was the catalysing force.⁷⁶ For Li and Xia, changes in *official* ideology were incidental to what they consider to be Mao's competition for domestic political control, turning the focus again to the question of domestic mobilisation under Maoism.⁷⁷

Whereas the literature on the Split tends to look at two actors responding to each other, my research highlights the disparate abilities of Moscow and Beijing to respond to and reconcile their efforts with the situation that appertained on the ground in 1960s Africa. A

⁷⁴ David Floyd, *Mao Against Khrushchev: A Short History of the Sino-Soviet Conflict* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1964). Donald S. Zagoria, *Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

⁷⁵ Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

⁷⁶ Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). An important strand of his conclusion, that neither side would capitulate to the other for leadership over the socialist movement and that neither side could be satisfied by the overall inequality of the whole relationship, is developed in another way by Sergey Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens: The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, 2009).

⁷⁷ Li Danhui and Xia Yafeng, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split, 1959-1973* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018).

key dimension of the history of Sino-Soviet engagement that is obscured by an exclusive emphasis on bipolar rivalry was the agency and initiative displayed by African political leaders and, less directly, by the African peoples. As will be seen, Africa was not merely a staging ground for proxy struggles between the Cold War superpowers or an arena for the CCP's struggle against the Soviet 'revisionists'. Second, while stressing the persistent role of ideology, my research highlights the difficulties both parties had in navigating the post-colonial politics of non-alignment, and the multifarious ways in which ideological preconceptions led to both powers miscalculating when devising strategies and in delivering foreign aid. In looking at foreign policy through aid diplomacy, one has to attend to a much wider set of geopolitical realities than is generally tackled in the recent literature on the Split. Moreover, what emerges is not only the role of ideology in shaping policy, but also the role of ignorance, and the steep learning curve that each side had to undergo in order to make its policy connect to African realities. The constant danger of policy running aground on the reality of African politics and society is a crucial finding, and my research highlights the narrowness of recent approaches that emphasise the primacy of ideological competition.

In order to compare the aid offered by China and the Soviet Union to Africa in the 1960s, this thesis draws on a variety of sources in English, Chinese, and Russian. They include treaties, agreements, and protocols found in Soviet and Chinese published primary sources as well as various declassified materials relevant to aid, foreign policy, and intelligence found in the archives of China and the Russian Federation. Because much of the two socialist countries' aid provision to Africa was clandestine, the thesis draws on materials published by African governments as well as intelligence reports authored by, or passed to, other actors, including the USA, the UK, and the Republic of China (Taiwan). In addition, a

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key aspect to understanding aid diplomacy and how it is received is to explore how it is portrayed in the media and propaganda of its providers, recipients, and competitors.⁷⁸ For this reason, the thesis explores how Soviet and Chinese media represented their own aid efforts as well as one another's. It also reflects on editorials in African media to add perspective and complicate the narratives put forward by the two aid providers.

Structure of the Thesis

The first chapter compares Beijing's and Moscow's debuts in Africa. It begins with the emergence of the 'Nasserist line' in North Africa from 1956, the moment when both countries were able to connect with the wider anti-imperialist milieu of Africa. Africa grew in importance as decolonization quickened, culminating in 1960, the 'Year of Africa', when seventeen African nations achieved independence. Setting aside their involvement in the Congo Crisis (1960-1965) until chapter 4, it then turns to their aid diplomacy in Western Africa from 1959-1963 because of the special importance of the three Pan-Africanist governments of Ghana, Guinea, and Mali. Specifically, chapter 1 establishes the main differences between the negotiation and implementation of the range of economic cooperation agreements implemented by Moscow and Beijing, leaving the question of military provision and support for guerrilla movements to chapter 4. In so doing, chapter 1 shows the vast asymmetry between the Soviet Union's effort to export socialist development and China's far more modest aid program, which came on the heels of the Great Leap Forward (1958-1961). The chapter reflects on how China's meagre aid was widely perceived

⁷⁸ For an exploration of how Chinese propaganda for foreign consumption portrayed both its own aid and the 'so-called aid' of the USA and others, see Joel Atkinson, 'Aid vs. "Aid": Foreign Aid in Mao-Era China's Public Diplomacy', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 65, no. 2 (2019): 196-214.

as ‘disinterested’ and as being that of ‘the poor helping the poor’. Despite Beijing’s limited resources, these aspects of its aid diplomacy were well received during this time. The idealism and on-the-ground experience of China’s aid served as an implicit critique of both the Soviet Union’s pursuit of peaceful coexistence and the many aspects of Soviet aid that African governments found wanting.

Chapter 2 is an analysis of Zhou Enlai’s marathon tour of Africa from December 1963 to February 1964, a key moment in the history of Chinese foreign aid and relations with Africa. It explores how the tour served as a platform for Zhou to make explicit China’s implicit critique of the Soviet Union’s aid by announcing ‘The Chinese Government’s Eight Principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance’, technically still in force today. These Principles advertised the special character of PRC aid, and their announcement in Sub-Saharan Africa signalled that the PRC intended to expand its aid program there. While showing that the Eight Principles led to a massive increase in Chinese aid expenditure, the chapter complicates previous treatments of the tour – along with narratives about Sino-African ‘solidarity’ in the Mao era more generally – by comparing the accounts derived from official PRC sources with the evaluations of other actors. In so doing, the chapter finds that despite being characterised as a major highlight in the history of Sino-African relations, the militant anti-imperialist and anti-Soviet tenor of the tour met with a mixed response, foreshadowing issues that were to arise in Chinese aid diplomacy in the mid-1960s.

The third chapter examines Khrushchev’s last forays into relations with Africa and the changes in Soviet aid diplomacy at the beginning of Leonid Brezhnev’s tenure. Specifically, the chapter analyses: Oginga Odinga’s attempt at negotiating various aid projects with both poles of the socialist camp in April 1964; Khrushchev’s state visit to the

UAR in May 1964; the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs' reassessment of propaganda regarding development assistance for Africa in mid to late 1964; and a number of major problems Moscow faced in delivering on the massive extensions of technical assistance in late 1964 to mid-1965. It concludes that Soviet aid diplomacy during this time saw an effort to disengage from Africa, which was arose from Khrushchev's longstanding frustrations and the unwieldy scale of Soviet aid. Paradoxically, as chapter 5 goes on to detail, this disengagement produced a situation where the Soviet Union – in contrast to China – was able to achieve more for less, since Brezhnev was able to use debt relief to cut the losses of the Khrushchev era and then retarget aid to more specific aims and with less risk.

The fourth chapter first compares the results of my research into China's provision of military assistance to the Congo from 1963-1965 with a synthesis of previous scholarship regarding the Soviet Union's involvement in the Congo Crisis from 1960 to 1963, highlighting the interconnected nature of the two countries' projects of aid diplomacy and military provision to guerrillas and African governments. The chapter argues that the means by which Beijing provided military assistance to Congolese rebels and other 'freedom fighters' evoked deep suspicion and hostility on the part of African leaders, sapping China's ability to achieve its foreign policy aims through its aid, notwithstanding the steeply increased expenditure that followed Zhou's 1963-1964 tour. The result was a low ebb in Sino-African relations, leading to Zhou finding himself unwelcome when it came time for his postponed tour of East Africa in early June 1965. The depths of the hostility engendered by the perceived subversive nature of Chinese aid is further shown through brief case studies of African countries which became hostile to China at this time, vocally rejecting China's economic aid in favour of Taiwan's.

The fifth chapter continues the exploration of how developments in the mid-1960s impacted Chinese and Soviet aid diplomacy by investigating the low ebb in Sino-African relations which enabled Moscow to achieve foreign policy goals through targeted offers of aid. Specifically, the chapter discusses three overlapping events: the June 1965 Algerian coup, the torpedoing of the second Afro-Asian Conference by Beijing in October 1965, and the February 1966 coup in Ghana. It shows that during this time the Soviet Union was able to use its largesse in a way which resulted in its achieving significant gains in Africa at the CCP's expense. Moreover, the low ebb in Sino-African relations also saw the expansion of the Taiwanese aid program to Africa. This prevented the PRC from seeking to disentangle itself from Africa, as the Soviet Union was able to do, despite the fact that Chen Yi believed that reducing Chinese aid to Africa was in China's best interests. Taken together, the events demonstrate that 1966 represented the commencement of a severe divergence in Chinese and Soviet aid diplomacy, but the chapter questions the standard explanation that this was due to the Cultural Revolution, emphasising that the reasons for the divergence predated and continued beyond the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution.

The final chapter analyses the impact of this divergence between 1967 and 1971. First, it examines the impact of the 1966 Twenty-Third Party Congress on Soviet aid diplomacy. It shows that the Soviet Union increased its emphasis on elite-focused aid through educational initiatives while reining in its other efforts, redirecting its resources towards domestic development rather than foreign aid. Second, the chapter explores PRC aid diplomacy during the first years of the Cultural Revolution. As a consequence of the events discussed in the fourth and fifth chapters and the radicalism of the Cultural Revolution, China's image was tarnished for all except the most radical of its friends in Africa. It was in this context that

Zhou and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attempted to reset Sino-African relations. A major development resulting from this reset was China's accession to the UN in 1971, and it is with this watershed moment in Sino-African relations that the thesis arrives at its conclusion.

It will be shown that competition between the Soviet Union and China in the sphere of aid diplomacy to Africa was deeply asymmetrical. Moreover, despite China's early successes in achieving significant gains in the first half of the 1960s, it experienced many setbacks on which the Soviet Union and other actors were able to capitalise in the mid- to late 1960s. The chapters trace the complexity of the dynamics that underpinned the history of socialist engagement with Africa, not least by illuminating the importance of the Sino-Soviet dispute for African actors themselves, in a way that has hitherto been neglected. This was never a two-party conflict, and focusing on aid diplomacy highlights the many missteps and setbacks experienced by the two powers.

Chapter 1: The Debut of Communist Aid Diplomacy in Africa, 1959-1963

Introduction

In the 1960s, both the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China engaged with the newly independent nations and liberation struggles of Africa. They did so against the background of a number of regional and global developments. Their independent engagement with Africa ran parallel to the development of the Sino-Soviet Split and was expressed in latent competition for influence over what would become the Non-Aligned Movement. The Soviet Union's arrival in Africa followed Nikita Khrushchev's 1956 'secret speech' and coincided with de-Stalinisation. The PRC's arrival followed its joining of the Afro-Asian Movement inaugurated in the 1955 Bandung Conference and the pinnacle of 'high Maoism' – the Great Leap Forward. Both powers arrived in Africa and found a continent of peoples struggling for freedom in a diversity of ways: from civil disobedience and labour agitation in Ghana, to military coups turned revolutions like that of the Egyptian Free Officers Movement, to total warfare against a brutal colonial regime like in Algeria.

The Soviet Union and China arrived in Africa with related but distinct motivations. Having endorsed peaceful coexistence, Khrushchev hoped that by taking a more active role in post-colonial development, the Soviet Union could deepen its connections with the growing number of independent countries and enable these countries to achieve economic independence, thereby proving the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism and

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa enlisting their support in a peaceful competition with the USA. In contrast, China under Mao Zedong utilised foreign aid as a means of advancing the ideological and strategic imperative of national liberation, all under an avowedly Stalinist rubric which ultimately came to explicitly reject Khrushchev's *sanhe luxian*.⁷⁹

It was against the background of the Soviet Union and China's differing aims and motivations that the two countries arrived in Africa in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This chapter, while focusing on the early 1960s, will provide a general comparison of Soviet and Chinese aid diplomacy in Africa, with the aim of identifying factors which are important across the decade. It will first explore the background of their aid diplomacy by discussing their integration into the 'Nasserist Line' in the 1950s before giving an overview of their economic assistance to West Africa in the early 1960s, leaving their involvement in the Congo Crisis for chapter 4. Then, the chapter will summarise the negotiation and implementation of their different aid efforts by examining their engagement with West Africa and interrogating the differences between their aid personnel. Finally, it will offer an examination of the representation of their aid efforts before reflecting on the reception of their aid.

Background

The Socialist World Joins the 'Nasserist Line'

In the second half of 1950s, two events in North Africa brought the Soviet Union and the PRC into close contact with leaders from around the continent. Those were the Suez Canal Crisis (1956) and the Algerian Revolution (1954-1962). Together, these events are

⁷⁹ 三和路线, or peaceful coexistence, peaceful competition, and peaceful transition.

referred to by Chinese historiography as the 'Nasserist Line' (纳赛尔战线).⁸⁰ After the Suez Canal Crisis, the socialist world – especially the Soviet Union – garnered considerable prestige in the developing world for the role it played. The Soviet aid and assistance to Egypt (which from 1958 became the United Arab Republic [UAR]) which followed Suez foreshadowed much of its subsequent activities. Meanwhile, China's role in arming and training fighters in the Algerian Revolution translated its backing of 'the Nasserist line' into an established position in the militant anti-imperialist politics of Africa in the early 1960s.

In July 1956, Gamal Abdel Nasser was offered US funding for the Aswan High Dam project on the condition that he join the West in the Cold War. He refused, and soon after nationalised the Suez Canal Company.⁸¹ Two months later, to the consternation of Washington, there was a joint Israeli-French-British intervention to retake the canal. The Suez Canal Crisis coincided with the Eastern Bloc crises in Poland and Hungary. The Soviet invasion of Hungary was deeply unpopular in the Afro-Asian world. It made Moscow's commitment to the Panchsheel – especially the first three principles of territorial integrity, non-aggression, and non-interference – seem fake.⁸² Fortunately for Khrushchev, Suez drew the world's attention away from the chaos behind the Iron Curtain and appeared to reveal the West as war mongering and hypocritical in its own right.⁸³ The coincidence of the

⁸⁰ While the Algerian independence struggle began in 1953, significant Soviet and Chinese assistance was not rendered until after the Suez Canal Crisis. For this reason, Suez will be discussed first.

⁸¹ Lorenz M. Lüthi, *Cold Wars: Asia, the Middle East, Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 33-4, 59-61. Also see Silvia Borzutzky and David Berger, 'Dammed If You Do, Dammed If You Don't: The Eisenhower Administration and the Aswan Dam', *Middle East Journal* 64, no. 1 (2010): 84-102.

⁸² WCDA, Center for Preservation of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD) 'Third World Reaction to Hungary and Suez, 1956: A Soviet Foreign Ministry Analysis,' 28 December 1956.

⁸³ Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 812-5.

For Khrushchev's decision to deploy Soviet troops to Hungary as a response to Suez, see, Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 59.

Eastern Bloc Crises and Suez means it is also a useful prologue for comparing the two socialist countries' engagement with Africa.⁸⁴

By 1956, both the PRC and the Soviet Union had been in contact with the Egyptian government. Nasser attended Bandung in 1955 and had personally invited Zhou Enlai to visit Egypt one day. Following their encounter, Sino-Egyptian relations were founded on China's agreement to purchase cotton at prices which were favourable to the Egyptian side.⁸⁵ In the meantime, starting in September 1955, Soviet and Czechoslovakian arms were shipped around the Western-led embargo on Egypt. In May 1956, just two months before nationalising the canal, Cairo recognised the PRC. As Lorenz Lüthi observes, this was as much to undermine a global arms embargo against the Middle East, which was then under discussion by the UN General Assembly, as it was to identify the UAR with the Afro-Asian Movement.⁸⁶ The PRC was excluded from the UN, so Nasser's recognising it served to ensure its support in the lead-up to his decision to nationalise Suez. Both the Soviet Union and the PRC enthusiastically publicised their support for Egypt after the Israeli-French-British intervention. In September 1956, Mao celebrated Cairo's move to nationalise the Suez Canal, characterising it as a righteous act which had sparked a contradiction within the imperialist camp. He wrote that Egypt 'has erected a sturdy anti-imperialist battlefront.... The Soviet Union will do everything in its power to help Egypt. China is also willing to do all it can to help, and there will be no conditions on our help.'⁸⁷ In a first for China's engagement with Africa, Mao made a \$4.7 million grant to Egypt. There were also reports

⁸⁴ Khrushchev writes in his memoirs that it was in this complex international situation that the Kremlin decided to invite a delegation from Beijing to coordinate with, and that this was the last breath of the Sino-Soviet friendship. Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 429.

⁸⁵ Larkin, *China and Africa 1949-1970*, 9.

⁸⁶ Lüthi, *Cold Wars*, 33.

⁸⁷ Mao, 'The Chinese People Support Egypt Reclaiming the Suez Canal', MZDWJWX, 247-9.

that China was registering volunteers to fight in Egypt should Nasser request them (which he did not).⁸⁸ As for the Soviet side, Nasser requested assistance from the Soviet Union in addition to the weapons the Eastern Bloc had already sold to Egypt, and Khrushchev immediately delivered. Soviet military and technical specialists were deployed to maintain the normal running of the canal while the comparatively underequipped Egyptian army fought their doomed battle against the British-French-Israeli forces.⁸⁹

Moscow seized the opportunity presented by the Suez Canal Crisis to use its diplomacy and largesse to enhance the Soviet Union's prestige and mitigate the damage done to its reputation within the post-colonial world by the Eastern Bloc crises. Recognising Washington's consternation about the joint intervention, Khrushchev instructed V. M. Molotov and N. A. Bulganin to reach out and propose a joint Soviet-US response against the invasion of Egyptian sovereign territory.⁹⁰ He simultaneously threatened a long-range missile attack against the three aggressors.⁹¹ With a military victory all but assured, the three invading countries were forced to withdraw in the face of severe political and economic pressure from the USA as well as this catastrophic threat from the Soviet Union.⁹² Thanks to Moscow's diplomatic manoeuvring and material assistance, Nasser was defeated militarily,

⁸⁸ Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa*, 9, 21. Larkin, *China and Africa*, 24-5.

⁸⁹ Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 812.

⁹⁰ Letter from Prime Minister Bulganin to President Eisenhower, 5 November 1956, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1955-57, Suez Crisis, July 26-December 31, 1956*, vol. XVI, 505.

⁹¹ At the same time as Molotov drafted a message to Washington imploring US-Soviet cooperation in putting an end to the crisis, Bulganin sent letters to Anthony Eden, Guy Mollet, and Ben-Gurion. These letters expressed that Moscow had already reached out to the USA and the UN in an effort to place pressure on them and that it was considering levelling the playing field on behalf of a 'country which has only recently attained its national independence and which does not have sufficient means for its defense.' The letter to Eden continued:

In what position would Britain have found herself had she been attacked by more powerful states possessing all types of modern weapons of destruction? Indeed, such countries, instead of sending to the shores of Britain their naval or air forces, could have used other means, for instance, rocket equipment.

Khrushchev later wrote in his memoirs, 'In short, we were hinting at long-range missiles.'

United States Department of State, *United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956-June 1957* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1957), 183-88. Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 815.

⁹² Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (UK: Allen Lane, 2017), 107-8.

Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 812-5. Reflecting on this long after the Sino-Soviet Split had reached its apogee, Khrushchev quipped, 'Our warning had been a serious one—not like China's warnings, which numbered in the thousands.'

but victorious in terms of his domestic legitimacy and regional prestige. Furthermore, Nasser won the gamble of rejecting Washington's assistance for Aswan and nationalising Suez. Less than two years after the crisis he secured Moscow's help in constructing the Aswan High Dam. For Moscow, having been brought in to complete this gargantuan project made its technical assistance part and parcel of the promising future of post-colonial Egypt, and therefore symbolic across the continent. With the project came the need for an entire urban ecosystem around the future site of the dam, including housing, schools, and hospitals, many of which were also constructed alongside Soviet specialists or using Soviet loans and credits. Thanks to this, Soviet-UAR cooperation deepened into the 1960s.⁹³ With this considerable success, in no small part based on competition with the West over the provision of technical assistance, the Soviet Union had established a foothold in North Africa.

As for Beijing, Nasser was reluctant to accept any further Chinese aid following the outbreak of the crisis. Beijing's connection with Cairo, established at Bandung in 1955 and deepened by its role in the 1956 Suez Canal Crisis, undoubtedly served to forge its first linkages with the rest of Africa. It was followed by agreements like the 1956 Sino-UAR cultural cooperation agreement, which allowed it to set up a Xinhua Press office in Cairo that helped to deepen its understanding of and cultural engagement with the rest of the continent. Furthermore, the Chinese Embassy in Cairo became the central hub for all of its activities in Africa throughout the 1960s. However, Sino-Egyptian economic cooperation was always based on Egyptian cotton exports and little else. What was more important for China's role on the 'Nasserist line' was its support for the Algerian Revolution.

⁹³ See Nancy Y. Reynolds, 'City of the High Dam: Aswan and the Promise of Postcolonialism in Egypt', *City & Society* 29, no. 1 (2017): 213-35.

In addition to becoming the first non-Arab state to recognise the Algerian government in exile in September 1958, the PRC also granted military and medical aid valued at approximately \$20 million. During the independence struggle, the PRC acted through Algeria's neighbours to provide medical care, matériel, and training to the *Front de libération nationale* (FLN). After Beijing successfully established commercial relations with Morocco, Rabat recognised the Front in November 1958, and the PRC Embassy in Tangiers became the base for Chinese activity across the border. By the end of the year, Chinese experts were providing training and medical care on the border – especially in the area around Oujda, where a leading faction of the post-revolution FLN was formed – as well as hosting Algerian guerrilla trainees in China.⁹⁴ Kyle Haddad-Fonda has argued that the impact of Chinese military assistance to Algeria has been exaggerated and that the affinity between the Chinese revolution and the Algerian revolution is an illusion.⁹⁵ Nonetheless, as shown by Donovan Chau, Algeria would become the cornerstone of all of China's activity in Africa both on a material and a symbolic level. Through its consistent support of the Algerian independence struggle, Chinese officials, diplomats, and personnel were able to make personal connections with the wider anti-imperialist and Pan-Africanist milieu in Sub-Saharan Africa. Following Algerian independence in 1962, Chinese specialists and technicians became involved in the difficult task of rebuilding the war-torn country, and prominent FLN politicians spoke approvingly of them, publicising China's aid to the rest of Africa.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Donovan Chau, *Exploiting Africa: The Influence of Maoist China in Algeria, Ghana, and Tanzania* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2014), 40-1.

⁹⁵ Kyle Haddad-Fonda, 'An Illusory Alliance: Revolutionary Legitimacy and Sino-Algerian Relations, 1958-1962', *The Journal of North African Studies* 19, no. 3 (2014): 339.

Indeed, while comparisons could be and often were drawn between the Chinese and Algerian revolutions, this belies the fact that the FLN itself saw no comparison. WCDA, Archives Nationales d'Algérie, Alger, Fond GPRA, 1958-62, Dossier 37/01/11, 'The Algerian Problem: Comparison with the Chinese Struggle,' 1962.

⁹⁶ Chau, *Exploiting Africa*, 54-8.

The Soviet Union and the PRC had associated themselves with the 'Nasserist line', making their debuts in North Africa on the eve of the first decade of decolonisation. The Soviet Union's relationship with the UAR was built upon its diplomatic manoeuvring and largesse, both of which made it a compelling alternative to the West for both political support and development assistance. The PRC's relationship with the FLN was premised on its ability to establish relations with regional actors and its willingness to then lend military and other aid in Algeria's struggle for independence. This proved to be the first example of China's adherence to militant anti-imperialist politics through the provision of arms, training, and economic support to national liberation struggles in the African continent.

Overview of the Two Countries Aid in the Early 1960s

As more and more countries gained their independence, with seventeen declaring independence in 1960 alone, the socialist world's opportunities for leveraging aid diplomacy multiplied. Between 1960 and 1963, three dozen cultural, trade, and economic assistance agreements were signed between the Soviet Union and African nations. By the end of 1963, its extensions (or offers) of economic aid to Africa totalled just under \$600 million.⁹⁷ Soviet aid to Africa followed the pattern established by its partnership with the UAR, meaning it was founded on the sorts of large project assistance that was also on offer from the West and the World Bank. Because of the enormous scale of such projects, Soviet aid was frequently characterised by – and ridiculed for – the pursuit of so-called 'white elephants'.⁹⁸ This was partially a result of the Soviet Union's overall emphasis on what are often called the

⁹⁷ If military aid and credits are included, the total rises to nearly \$700 million. NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – And Implications for US Policy, no date.

⁹⁸ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 184.

‘commanding heights’ of African economies. Its aid mostly consisted of development loans and technical assistance targeted at energy, state, agriculture, and resource sectors. The Soviet Union provided diverse and largescale projects in these sectors because they were seen as the pillars of non-capitalist development. Khrushchev was not solely responsible for the ‘white elephants’. African leaders came to Moscow with requests – often with offers on the table from the West – geared towards enhancing their domestic legitimacy through prestige projects as well as arms purchases. Mazov has shown how African leaders often demanded these enormous projects despite Soviet advisors insisting that they pursue more realistic goals.⁹⁹ Concerned, however, that these leaders would look back to the West for assistance if their demands for prestige projects and arms were not met, the Soviet Union under Khrushchev tended to oblige their requests.

China’s aid offering in Africa during the early 1960s was both more modest and less comprehensive in comparison to that of the Soviet Union. From 1960 to 1963, Beijing signed less than two dozen agreements with African nations. Only three of these were economic cooperation agreements. Part of the reason it signed fewer agreements than the Soviet Union was that fewer African countries had recognised the PRC. By 1963, only fourteen of the thirty-nine independent African countries recognised the PRC. An additional number were sympathetic to it, with some hoping to maintain relations with both Beijing and Taipei. Most, however, were still undecided and tended to recognise whichever claimant to Chinese sovereignty that had been recognized by their former colonial power. For the first half of the decade, Chinese aid was almost exclusively focused on agriculture, light industry, and medical and humanitarian help. Because of its roots in providing guerrilla assistance to

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa Algeria, and as will be illustrated by the discussion of the Congo Crisis in chapter 4, it is difficult to accurately disentangle these forms of aid from its military aid. Formal military aid made up a large fraction of the \$138 million total, and economic and military aid were seen as aspects of a single project and were explicitly meant to reinforce one another.

In comparison to the development aid on offer by the West and the World Bank, aid offers from the Soviet Union and China seemed generous. Soviet loans had long repayment periods of between eight to twelve years, and interest was set between 2 and 2.5%. Soviet technical assistance and loans were packaged with credits and trade protocols meant to provide recipients with direct means to repay the cost of these agreements. In theory, this was an attractive approach to development assistance that seemed to provide an alternative to the debt acquisition and conditionality entailed in assistance by the West. Even if they were much smaller in scale, Chinese agreements appeared generous in other ways. Beijing placed a greater emphasis on grant aid, and its loans also had long repayment periods of ten years with interest rates at between 0 and 1 percent. Unlike Soviet aid, Chinese aid was not generally packaged with large credits and trade agreements. Credits for specific items needed for projects were generally included in agreements, but, generally speaking, the agreements were not conceived in the same way as Soviet package aid, meaning repayment was not planned to be a result of the projects themselves. Instead, large commercial and trade agreements often preceded recognition and cordial relations. Every attempt was then made to prevent Chinese aid from disrupting existing trade linkages, meaning its aid was conceived as being additional to bilateral trade relationships rather than a component of them. Furthermore, throughout the 1960s, the small-scale nature of China's aid could be a positive rather than a negative for two reasons. First, the smaller Chinese projects got off the

ground in a few months or years, meaning they quickly began to generate capital for their host countries. Second, the projects were generally labour intensive, so they thereby helped to resolve the serious problem of chronic unemployment.

Considering China's economic situation at the time, the sheer amount of aid it offered was remarkable. By 1962, the Chinese economy began to recover from the catastrophe of the Great Leap Forward. By the next year, just under a third, or \$138 million, of the approximately \$446 million in military and economic aid it extended globally, was offered to far off Africa. The greater part, \$271 million, was offered to countries in Asia. While this was substantially less than the nearly \$600 million offered by the Soviet Union to Africa at the time, it was nearly half as much as the entire Eastern Bloc combined and not far behind the sum of assistance to Africa offered by the World Bank.¹⁰⁰ As pointed out by Rosemary Foot, assembling such a large aid programme so soon after the Bandung conference 'demonstrated a confidence that few other countries in China's objective economic position would have felt able to display.'¹⁰¹

In light of the importance of addressing unemployment and making the most efficient use of local labour, a key function of the aid offered by the socialist world was to provide technical assistance in a wide variety of fields, from shop floor management to state administration. By mid-1964, there were between 1500 and 2000 Soviet experts and advisors working on all kinds of economic projects in Africa.¹⁰² The work carried out by Soviet experts was comprehensive. Soviet experts did everything from managing construction

¹⁰⁰ 中華民國外交部檔案 (Republic of China Foreign Ministry Archives, ROC-FMA), 11-05-01-02-01-012, '共匪對非洲各國之經濟援助' (Economic Assistance to African Countries by the Communist Bandits), 34-5, June 1964.

¹⁰¹ Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power: US Relations with China since 1949* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 200.

¹⁰² NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – And Implications for US Policy, no date.

projects and providing technical training, to serving as educators in universities and consultants for local news publications, to staffing hospitals and transportation infrastructure. So complex was their involvement in Guinea that the Soviet Union even set up a special para-state organisation manned by Soviet experts which was tasked with handling local administrative problems pertaining to Soviet personnel.¹⁰³ The Soviet Union also deployed a large number of military and security experts in Africa who not only provided training but also became absorbed into local military and security forces. Partially because of Soviet involvement in the UN discussed in the introduction, economic and technical assistance was accompanied by generous opportunities for higher education in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc. By mid-1964, some 3500 African students were studying everything from medicine and engineering to journalism and state administration at the Lumumba University and other institutions in the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁴

China also deployed experts and advisors to carry out aid agreements, but did so, at first, in much smaller numbers. By 1963, there were only 470 Chinese economic technicians known to be abroad, with only a handful of these in Africa. The number of military and economic experts ballooned in the late 1960s, peaking in the tens of thousands during the construction of TAZARA.¹⁰⁵ Chinese technicians came from a diverse range of backgrounds. A common request of African governments in the early 1960s was for assistance in setting up tea planting and processing operations to satisfy their domestic markets for green tea. Beijing accommodated this request with the dispatch of experts like Zhang Shungao. Zhang,

¹⁰³ NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, The Soviets' African Balance Sheet in 1966, no date.

¹⁰⁴ NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – And Implications for US Policy, no date.

¹⁰⁵ ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-012, 34, June 1964. Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room (CIA-ERR), CIA-RDP08S02113R000100090001-9, 'Chinese Aid in the Third World', 30 June 1972.

a member of the Tujia minority, was among the first of the accredited experts to be deployed to Africa in the 1960s through the Yunnan Tea Science Research Institute.¹⁰⁶ The fact that he was from an ethnic minority may have been part of a wider project of broadcasting the multiculturalism and national unity of China in a celebration of diversity that appealed to the spirit of the Afro-Asian Movement.

China too offered scholarships and other educational opportunities, but again, these were far less comprehensive than those on offer by the Soviet Union. By 1961, there were just over one hundred African students studying in the PRC. That number grew, but it never approached the thousands of students studying in the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, the content of these students' education was far different than what was being studied at Lumumba University and elsewhere in the Soviet Bloc. Students in China were trained in the Chinese language but were primarily drawn by the opportunity of receiving guerrilla and other military training. In addition to foreign students, union representatives and members of the numerous Afro-Asian organisations were also frequently invited to China. Aside from touring factories and being given a taste of what China had to offer so as to entice them towards socialism, such groups were instructed about the preliberation struggle of Chinese workers and the mass line in the hope that this would encourage them to take up their own militant struggle upon their return home.¹⁰⁸ Technical training and higher

¹⁰⁶ 蔡圆圆, '惟青山不老——记中国现代茶叶科技先生行者张顺高', 《中国高新科技企业》 (Cai Yuanyuan, 'Yet Green Mountains Never Grow Old: Remembering Zhang Shungao, a Scholar of Modern Tea Science and Technology in China', *Chinese High Tech Enterprise*) 2014(32): 170.

¹⁰⁷ PRC-FMA, 108-00770-03, '中华人民共和国对外文化联络委员会报教育部 1959 年至 1960 年接受非洲留学生情况及有关问题' (Foreign Cultural Liaison Committee of the People's Republic of China Report to the Ministry of Education on the Acceptance of African Students from 1959 to 1960 and Related Issues), 17 January 1961.

¹⁰⁸ 上海市档案馆 (Shanghai Municipal Archive, SHMA), C1-2-3664-138, '中国全国总工会国际联络部关于接待乌干达和北罗得西亚代表的小结' (Summary of the International Liaison Department of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions on Receiving Representatives of Uganda and Northern Rhodesia), May 1961.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa

education was of secondary importance to fostering Afro-Asian solidarity through cultural exchange and training African cadres for revolution.

During the early 1960s, Soviet aid to Sub-Saharan Africa was focused on three countries in West Africa: Ghana, Guinea, and Mali. Of these three, Ghana – the first Sub-Saharan African country to gain independence – was the most important. The Soviet Minister of State Farms, Ivan Benediktov, attended the Ghanaian independence ceremony on 6 March 1957 at the invitation of Kwame Nkrumah himself. Alessandro Iandolo has described how Moscow 'persistently courted' Accra with the aim of making Ghana into a showcase for the postcolonial world of the developmental model being applied within the Soviet Union. He has further explained how, by sending the Minister, Moscow was indicating its intention to reproduce the 'central Asian model' in Ghana.¹⁰⁹ At the time, Ghana too was pursuing a mega dam not unlike the Aswan Dam. Recognising Moscow's clear interest in the country and the wider region, the US Department of State staged a concerted effort to secure Western interests in Ghana by assembling multilateral and private backing for the Volta Dam project, all despite congressional opposition.¹¹⁰ This was ultimately to no avail, as Ghana drifted further and further towards the socialist camp, pursuing a wide variety of Soviet-sponsored economic projects all the way until a coup removed Nkrumah in February 1966.

In the early 1960s, Chinese aid to Sub-Saharan Africa was also focused on the three West African nations of Ghana, Guinea, and Mali. Of the three, Beijing focused most on Guinea, the very first recipient of Chinese aid in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 1959, knowing that France had cut off the grain supply on which Guinea relied, China shipped 10,000 and then,

¹⁰⁹ Alessandro Iandolo, *Soviet Policy in West Africa, 1957-64* (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2012), 96-106.

¹¹⁰ NARA II, RG59, Records of G. Mennen Williams, Miscellaneous, Volta River Project, 1961.

in 1960, another 5,000 tons of rice. This was despite the fact that it was facing widespread famine as a result of the Great Leap Forward.¹¹¹ Officials in Beijing were aware that the French colonial authorities' departure from Guinea was ruthless.¹¹² In conversations with Chen Yi and Liu Shaoqi, Guinean officials described how the French colonial authorities took whatever they could and smashed what they could not take, 'destroying even small buildings' and leaving the national treasury 'utterly empty' (空空如也).¹¹³ The Chinese grant to Guinea was followed by a highly publicised treaty of friendship and a development aid package in 1960, and from then on Guinea was treated by the CCP leadership as representative of China's aid in Africa in general.¹¹⁴

Due to Guinea's difficult independence, the Soviet Union too had enthusiastically sought to render exceptionally generous assistance and subsequently make it a model of what non-capitalist development could achieve. It too took note of the fact that 'the development of the Republic of Guinea is closely monitored in many African countries that are still closely connected with the West and are striving to free themselves from this

¹¹¹ PRC-FMA, 108-00032-01(1), '关于援助几内亚大米一万吨的请示、批示等有关文电' (Request for Orders, Comments and Other Relevant Messages on assisting Guinea with 10,000 tons of rice), 23 April-25 November 1960. As quoted in 张浚, '不附加条件的援助: 中国对非援助政策的形成', 《外交评论》 (Zhang Jun, 'Unconditional Aid: The Formation of China's Aid Policy in Africa', *Foreign Affairs Review*) 2010(5): 20-34. Larkin, *China and Africa*, 94.

¹¹² PRC-FMA, 108-00005-08(1), '几内亚独立后的政治情况和今后趋向' (Political Situation and Trajectory of Guinea After Independence), 18 October 1958. As quoted in 张浚, '不附加条件的援助'.

¹¹³ PRC-FMA, 108-00057-03(1), '陈毅副总理接见几内亚代表迪亚瓦杜谈话记录' (Transcript of Vice Premier Chen Yi's Meeting with Guinean Representative Diawadou [Barry]), 12 October 1959; 108-00058-05, '刘少奇接见几内亚工联总书记玛玛迪谈话记录' (Transcript of Liu Shaoqi's Interview with General Secretary of the Guinean Federation of Trade Unions Mamady [Kaba]), 20 May 1959. As quoted in 张浚, '不附加条件的援助'.

¹¹⁴ '中华人民共和国政府和几内亚共和国政府经济技术合作协定', 《中华人民共和国条约集》, 第九集 (北京: 法律出版社, 1961) ('Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Guinea', *Treaties of the People's Republic of China* vol. 9 [Beijing: Law Press, 1961]). Reproduced in English in *Peking Review*, No. 37, 14 September 1960, 11.

dependence.¹¹⁵ However, in Mazov's words, by 1961 the Guinean 'shopwindow for socialism' had turned into a 'black hole'. Sekou Touré and the rest of the Guinean leadership were increasingly critical of the Soviet Union and its aid, accusing it of what was essentially social imperialism, saying it was using its projects as leverage for placing political pressure on African countries.¹¹⁶ In the context of the Sino-Soviet Split, this was advantageous for China, which desired a 'special relationship' with Guinea.¹¹⁷ In 1961, the Soviet Ambassador to Guinea, Daniel Solod, was accused of participating in the 'teacher's plot' to overthrow Sekou Touré and expelled. Following this, Chen Yi applauded Touré's efforts at purging Guinean society of opposition to his rule.¹¹⁸ The Soviet Union attempted to play down the affair and continued to compete with both China and the West for Guinean friendship, but by 1963, Guinea was cut off from further Soviet aid. Mazov argues that fear of another 'blackhole' like Guinea – or what he calls the 'Guinean syndrome' – explains Moscow's reluctance to provide aid on a similar scale after the early 1960s.¹¹⁹

With their arrival in Ghana and Guinea, respectively, the Soviet Union and China's different approaches to aid diplomacy developed out of the roots they had planted in North Africa. Soviet aid diplomacy was about gaining allies in Africa by unmasking the economic exploitation of the West and providing developing countries with the fruits of socialist development. It was intended as a comprehensive alternative to Western development aid. Chinese aid diplomacy was primarily defined by grants or generous credits for use as African governments saw fit, but also by military aid modelled on China's own guerrilla

¹¹⁵ Архив внешней политики российской федерации (АВП-РФ), ф. 0601, о. 2, п. 5, д. 12, л. 20-1, in Мазов С.В., Давидсон А.Б., Балезин А.С., Воеводский А.В., «Россия и Африка. Документы и материалы. 1961 – начало 1970-х» (Москва: Росспэн, 2021), 375.

¹¹⁶ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 185-6.

¹¹⁷ Richard Lowenthal, 'China', in *Africa and the Communist World*, ed. Zbigniew Brzezinski (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963), 177.

¹¹⁸ Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa*, 79.

¹¹⁹ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 258.

experience. Such aid may have been small in scale, but in the context of the anti-colonial movements at the time, it was deeply symbolic and widely publicised.

Negotiation and Implementation

Negotiation

There were some remarkable differences between the ways the Soviet Union and China negotiated aid and economic cooperation agreements. Because it was meant to be a comprehensive alternative to Western assistance, Soviet assistance came packaged with complex trade protocols and conditions. These were intended to make Soviet aid sustainable in the long term such that these countries could achieve economic self-sufficiency. Initially, African leaders were enthusiastic about the prospect of Soviet aid and assistance as an alternative to that of the West. However, in the process of the negotiation of this assistance in the early 1960s, enthusiasm lessened. This was because while on paper it appeared to be a radical alternative, in reality it was just as complex and condition-laden as its Western counterpart. In contrast, Chinese aid was portrayed as 'disinterested' and much smaller in scale. Chinese agreements were therefore much less complex in terms of their negotiation.

In 1961, while negotiating Soviet aid for Ghanaian state farms, Nkrumah was dismayed that the Soviet contract 'dealt almost exclusively with the sale and delivery of Soviet machinery and equipment, and very little with the organization, establishment, and management' of the state farms.¹²⁰ He made the clear and straightforward request that the Soviet side furnish each state farm with a 'Russian specialist, with full responsibility for three

¹²⁰ Willard Scott Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957-1966: Diplomacy, Ideology, and the New State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 274.

years, after which time a trained Ghanaian would replace him.¹²¹ Mazov characterises the Soviet reaction thus:

The Soviets did not agree, for both proposals were impracticable. If approximately half the Soviet state farms were unprofitable, how could Russian managers make them profitable in Ghana?¹²²

The Soviet side was unable to offer this rationale in rejecting Nkrumah's request, as Soviet state farms were the core of its model of non-capitalist development. Because the rejection came with no explanation, the Ghanaian interpretation of this refusal was not generous. The Ghanaian Committee for Economic Cooperation with Eastern Countries (CECEC) concluded in 1962 that Soviet aid agreements were 'devised largely to meet export drives in Machinery and Equipment'.¹²³ This seemed to be the case for other commodities as well. Because the Soviet side sometimes failed to provide the goods for the earmarked credits, or because Ghanaian merchants 'scorned Soviet products for English goods,' the substantial though highly conditional Soviet loans to Ghana were rendered largely useless.¹²⁴ This made repayment of the loans by Ghana exceedingly difficult, and Soviet concerns about the sustainability of their own agreements were proven to be well-founded.¹²⁵

Chinese aid to Guinea at the time contrasted starkly with that of their Soviet counterpart in that it lacked conditionality of any kind. In Article I of the Sino-Guinean agreement, China extended one hundred million rubles interest free.¹²⁶ The Chinese loan had a ten-year deferment followed by another ten-year repayment period. There were no conditions except that the loan was to be used 'in accordance with the items of economic

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 213-4.

¹²³ Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, 275.

¹²⁴ Robert Legvold, *Soviet Policy in West Africa* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970), 212.

¹²⁵ See Alessandro Iandolo, 'De-Stalinizing Growth: Decolonization and the Development of Development Economics in the Soviet Union', in *The Development Century: A Global History*, eds. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

¹²⁶ The original treaty and the translation published in *Peking Review* both write the sum using rubles.

construction to be agreed upon by both sides'.¹²⁷ Sekou Touré was delighted by this aspect of the arrangement in particular and publicly announced that this showed 'that cooperation with the great People's Republic of China has tremendous advantages.'¹²⁸ In Article II, China promised to provide 'complete set equipment, machinery and materials, techniques and other goods,' as well as assistance 'in the training of technicians and skilled workers'.¹²⁹ A frequent complaint about Soviet aid was that it was implemented with outdated equipment, or with equipment which, because of its Soviet make, was difficult to repair or required Soviet technicians for the repair. For instance, despite having been established with technical assistance and generous credits, the carrying costs of Ghana Airlines quickly outpaced the Ghanaian state's ability to afford the airline. The carrying costs were due to 'the very heavy bill for the cost of the salaries and insurance of the Russian crews' and in part due to the fact that the engines of these Ilyushin 18s required overhauling after only 300 hours of flight (as opposed to 2000 for a comparable engine from the West). What is more, this overhauling could only be carried out in Moscow.¹³⁰ In 1962, Accra grounded all but two of its eight 'Soviet Ilyushins of her prestige Ghana airlines due to their prohibitive operating costs'.¹³¹ Due to this issue of equipment and training, Ghana Airlines had become a proverbial white elephant. In their commitment to small, labour-intensive projects, the PRC avoided this.

¹²⁷ 'Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Guinea'.

¹²⁸ PRC-FMA, 204-00444-31(1), '几内亚及有关各方对几总统杜尔访华的反应' (Reaction of Guinea and Other Parties Concerned to President Touré's Visit to China), 14 September-25 October 1960. As quoted in 张浚, '不附加条件的援助'.

¹²⁹ 'Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Guinea'.

¹³⁰ TNA, Foreign Office (FO) 1110-1697, 'Ghanaian Dissatisfaction with Communist Aid', no date, sometime in 1962.

¹³¹ NARA II, RG59, General Records of the Department of State, Ghana, June 8, 1962, Bureau of African Affairs, 2. As quoted in Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*.

The Ghanaian CECEC lamented in 1962 that the Soviet Union had been exceedingly inflexible, forcing Nkrumah to sign agreements with which he was dissatisfied as he saw them as the only viable alternative to turning to the West.¹³² In contrast, agreements signed with China were little more than agreements in principle, meaning that such details with which African leaders might have been dissatisfied could be established over a period of time in notes and protocols signed after the initial sum of assistance was decided. For instance, in Mali, China initially committed five agricultural experts and advisors to a project agreed to in principle by the Sino-Malian economic cooperation agreement. Later, at the request of the Malian side, China also provided two additional industrial technicians. Still later, the Malian side also requested that the PRC send one wood- and ivory-carving expert and one jewellery expert.¹³³ After some delay, the Chinese side obliged, and did so on the same terms as for other experts, as laid out by the Sino-Malian agreement.¹³⁴ Sometimes, as was the case with China's military camps in Ghana, implementation began even before the agreement was signed, showing that such agreements were considered a formality between China and governments that it deemed 'friendly'.¹³⁵ To African governments then, it appeared that agreements signed with China could be spent in almost any way they could imagine.

In reality, before any given negotiation, different agencies and offices within different levels of the Chinese government generated detailed reports about what projects they would

¹³² Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, 273.

¹³³ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 108-00800-03, 'Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Mali to the General Bureau for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries, "Regarding the Various Issues Concerning the Experts Coming to Mali"', 17 August 1962; 108-01057-03, 'Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Mali, "The Two Notes Given to China by Mali"', 18 February 1964.

¹³⁴ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 108-00800-03, 'Cable from the General Bureau for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries to the Chinese Embassy in Mali, "Regarding Amendments to the Exchange of Notes"', 30 August 1962; 108-01057-03, 'Cable from the Head Office of the All China Handicraft Cooperative', 8 December 1964; 108-01057-03, 'Cable from the Foreign Cultural Liaison Committee, "Regarding the Issue of Sending Experts in Woodcarving and Ivory to Mali"', 12 December 1964.

¹³⁵ Later, such an approach proved problematic for African governments answerable to elected parliaments, as there was (and indeed is) a demand for a high degree of clarity about what an economic or technical agreement with entails.

and would not support. For instance, in 1964, Ghana requested that China use part of the funds allotted by their agreement to construct a hairbrush factory. Like a number of other Chinese projects in Africa at the time, this was supposed to be a modest light industrial enterprise which was labour- as opposed to capital-intensive. The Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Foreign Economic Relations carried out research into the feasibility of the project, and determined that the project should not be undertaken due to the fact that it was cheaper for Ghana to import the finished products than to import the needed materials in sufficient quantity to satisfy the local market.¹³⁶ As will be seen in chapter 3, these were the types of issues which Soviet projects sometimes failed to take into consideration. It also shows that China was not merely satisfying every request made of it by African governments, and that it operated its own economic calculus that went beyond a general endorsement of mutual aid. Moreover, over the course of the 1960s, it became increasingly clear that China would never deliver on the massive sums it had promised in the agreements. As explored in chapter 6, the gap between its offers and the aid that was actually drawn upon grew steadily across the decade, with some projects never materialising or being folded into multilateral development projects years and even decades later. Nevertheless, in the early 1960s, it appeared that China's more modest alternative fulfilled the promises about debt and conditionality which Soviet aid did not.

Technicians and Personnel

Throughout the 1960s, one of the most important and most symbolic differences between the Soviet Union and China was the on-the-ground character of their aid and

¹³⁶ SHMA, B32-2-92-37, '关于研究承担援助加纳毛刷厂项目的复函' (Reply on the Undertaking to Assist Ghana with the Brush Factory Project), 17 August 1964.

assistance as embodied by their personnel. Article III of the Sino-Guinean agreement most clearly illustrates some of the overarching differences between Soviet and Chinese aid.

The traveling expenses, going and coming, of the Chinese experts, technicians and skilled workers... and their salaries during the period of working in the Republic of Guinea *shall be borne by the Government of the P.R.C.* The living expenses of the Chinese experts, technicians and skilled workers during the period of working in the Republic of Guinea *shall be paid out of the loan, and their standard of living shall not exceed that of personnel of the same rank in the Republic of Guinea.* The living expenses of the trainees to be sent to China by the Government of the Republic of Guinea to learn techniques *shall be paid from the amount of the loan.*¹³⁷

Rather than imposing the costs for technicians and experts – the beating heart of any technical assistance project – on the recipient, Chinese personnel were paid for by the Chinese government itself. Chinese personnel lived at the same standard of living as their Guinean counterparts. Similar agreements were made with Mali and Ghana.¹³⁸ In these countries, the wages, travel from China, and allowances of Chinese experts and advisors were all borne by the Chinese government itself, while their room and board, transportation in-country, and return travel were paid for out of the loans outlined by the economic cooperation agreements. Because Guinea's situation was dire, China was more generous, paying for these latter expenses as well.

This was in sharp contrast to Soviet aid for three reasons. First, Soviet experts and advisors had high salary requirements and expected considerable privileges. For African governments whose currency reserves were already being drained by urgent and costly tasks which faced all recently independent nations, the salaries and privileges demanded by

¹³⁷ 'Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Guinea'.

¹³⁸ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 108-00800-03, 'Letter from the Ambassador Extraordinary of the PRC in the Republic of Mali to the Government of the Republic of Mali', 1962. 'Protocol on Dispatching Military Experts by the Government of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Ghana', 5 August 1965. As photocopied in *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa: Documentary Evidence of Nkrumah's Interference in the Affairs of Other African States* (Accra-Tema: Ministry of Information, 1967).

foreign personnel could be prohibitively expensive. Worse, Soviet personnel working abroad were to be paid higher salaries than they would be in the Soviet Union. Indeed this was as much as twenty percent higher than those of comparable Western technicians.¹³⁹ In 1962, under the explicit orders of Nkrumah, the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested that Moscow follow international norms and take upon itself the expenses of these salaries and privileges. Nkrumah also directed a telegram to Khrushchev himself, reminding him that Ghana was the 'vanguard of socialism in Africa' and should not be 'forced' to shoulder such a heavy burden.¹⁴⁰ Hoping to stave off a possible US-Ghanaian rapprochement at the time, Khrushchev decided 'to meet your (Nkrumah's) wishes half-way'. He reduced Soviet technicians' salaries by half and agreed to take over the payments for part of their privileges, namely their 'installation' allowance, insurance, and luggage fees.¹⁴¹ The Ghanaian side still had to pay for their housing, transport, and medical care. Although this lessened the financial burden of Soviet aid on Ghana, Soviet aid and personnel remained costly to maintain in comparison with their counterparts from other countries, especially China.

Second and relatedly, Soviet technicians lived a life apart from their hosts. In the UAR, Soviet specialists lived in one-family accommodations equipped with air conditioning, refrigerators, and other amenities. Strict rules discriminated between who could and could not enter their residential areas. The High Dam Authority even constructed a second hospital exclusively for Soviet technicians and their families. Over time, conditions deteriorated to the point that Soviet specialists too were impacted by a 1964 housing crisis which forced them to move into communal apartments, but they otherwise lived in relative

¹³⁹ TNA, FO 1110/1697, 'Ghanaian Dissatisfaction'.

¹⁴⁰ AVP-RF, f. 575, o. 5, p. 7, d. 16, ll. 126-7, in «Россия и Африка», 208-9.

¹⁴¹ Tawia Adamafio, *By Nkrumah's Side: The Labour and the Wounds* (Accra and London: Westcoast Publishing House and Rex Collins, 1982), 127-8.

luxury.¹⁴² In Sub-Saharan Africa, the residential areas inhabited by Soviet specialists and their families came to be called 'Soviet colonies' (КОЛОНИЯ). Eduard Tsvetkov succinctly characterises these 'Soviet colonies' as a 'paradoxical embodiment of the Soviet Union's closed society introducing other nations to internationalism.'¹⁴³ These 'colonies' had their own schools, parks, clubs, markets, libraries, and more. Cinemas and other establishments were erected to give the Soviet specialists and their families a connection to home, as well as to keep them away from Western media. Arrangements were made for local citizens to visit these 'colonies' so as to view what the cinemas and libraries had to offer, but aside from this, the coming and going of both Soviet citizens and locals was subject to checkpoints. Prior to arrival, specialists went through days upon days of instruction and guidance on how to behave themselves and preserve the 'honour' of the Soviet Union through morally upright behaviour. Upon arriving at their post, some would take liberties, sneak out of the colonies, and seek out more authentic encounters with their host countries.¹⁴⁴

This is not to say that life was not hard for Soviet personnel living abroad, as it often was. More remote postings very rarely had access to luxuries like air conditioners or refrigerators, let alone clubs or cinemas, even if they were in locations which needed these things such as Mali, Sierra Leone, or Uganda.¹⁴⁵ Nonetheless, there was the general perception of Soviet personnel living a life apart from their hosts, much in the same way as the recently departed colonial administrations had done.

In contrast, Chinese technicians lived at a comparable level to their local counterparts. Unlike Soviet personnel, who could count on supply lines and marketplaces catering to them

¹⁴² Reynolds, 'City of the High Dam', 221-2.

¹⁴³ Едуарда Цветков, 'Советские специалисты в Тропической Африке. 1960—1970-е гг.: проблемы повседневности', «История» 7, Выпуск 3 (2016).

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ Государственный архив Российской Федерации (GARF), f. 5446, o. 100, d. 1173, ll. 11-3, 3 June 1966.

in their Soviet 'colonies', Chinese personnel brought with them only what they needed for their deployment. Their small allowances were mostly spent on souvenirs and luxuries which were not widely available in China, while necessities like clothing and house slippers were brought from home. They avoided fraternising with local citizens or workers, but also lived among them and in the same conditions. Jamie Monson has described how Chinese and Tanzanian workers on the TAZARA project lived similar if segregated lives in construction camps. Working hours were spent together while leisure hours mostly were spent apart in comparably equipped communal living areas on opposite ends of the same camp. Life for both Chinese and local workers was 'spartan', but amenities were adequate.¹⁴⁶

Chinese military experts lived where they carried out their training, in barracks or tents. They were given enough of an allowance to cover the costs of tobacco, clothing repairs, and tea with a little to spare.¹⁴⁷ In most cases, their lives were more privileged than what they would have enjoyed back in China, but they were made to live frugally and to 'resist adopting the conduct of the capitalist class' (抵制资产阶级生活作风).¹⁴⁸ For military advisors, this frugality and discipline was strictly enforced. This was possible because they were even more closely supervised than economic technicians due to the sensitive nature of their work. One of the demands the Chinese Embassy in Accra made on Ghana was that the Chinese military experts be provided a car to travel back and forth from the clandestine training camps to the embassy in Accra at least once a week.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Monson, *Africa's Freedom Railway*, 57-63.

¹⁴⁷ 李丹慧, '赴非洲新使命——马法贤老人访谈录', 《冷战国际史研究》 (Li Danhui, 'A New Mission to Africa: An Interview with Ma Faxian', *Cold War International Studies*), 2008(03): 260.

¹⁴⁸ 李丹慧, 陈波, 樊百玉, '非洲丛林中的新使命——马法贤老人访谈录 (三)', 《冷战国际史研究》 (Li Danhui, Chen Bo, and Fan Baiyu, 'A New Mission in the African Jungle: An Interview with Ma Faxian [III]', *Cold War International Studies*), 2010(01): 268-9.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 18.



Lt. Chang Chuan-shih, Sr. Capt. Li Fu-kun and Lt. Yang Te-yeh giving practical demonstration on how to lay anti-personnel mine.

1 Photograph of Chinese military experts hard at work in Ghana. Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa.

Former military advisor to Zambia, Ma Faxian recalls that the lives of engineers and economic advisors were somewhat more comfortable than those of military experts both in terms of the level of their freedom from supervision and their material conditions. Economic technicians had access to alcohol and fruit as well as free time to go fishing. Their communal living quarters were air conditioned, an amenity which military experts did not have in their jungle barracks or tents.¹⁵⁰ Whether they were military advisors or economic technicians, however, Chinese personnel lived modestly and exemplified the spirit of 'making revolution thriftily' (节约闹革命). Moreover, Chinese experts and advisors taught and worked with their trainees in a practical and egalitarian manner which compared favourably against the

¹⁵⁰ Li, Chen, and Fan, 'An Interview with Ma Faxian (III)', 268-9.

methods of their Soviet and Eastern Bloc counterparts. In Mali, five Chinese agricultural experts trained students of various backgrounds chosen by the Malian Ministry of Rural Development. The method of training was tailored to the individual students and was ‘part lecture, part hands-on work, part study combining theory with practice.’¹⁵¹ The experts ‘adhered to a consistent spirit of setting an example’, labouring together with their students. According to a report by the Chinese personnel, their participatory pedagogy was welcomed by the trainees:

When (we) first started practical field work, some of the students were not very interested in being active participants. They sat on the sidelines and watched (but when) they saw that all of us labored together they were (emotionally) moved.¹⁵²

Working together with the students and linking study with practice were established methods of instruction. Chinese military advisors in Ghana too placed a premium on teaching by example and praxis. The Chinese military advisors reportedly told their trainees that their ‘basic guiding’ principle was ‘to combine instructor’s lectures and demonstrations with students’ discussions and actual operations; to combine tactics with techniques; to link their studies with local conditions; and to make use of figurative teachings.’¹⁵³

Third and finally, Soviet experts and advisors occasionally exhibited poor discipline and took advantage of their status while in Africa. When this had been the case in the 1950s in China, Mao had expressed some degree of understanding, saying to Khrushchev in 1958, ‘more than 90% are good people.... The ones we are talking about are outliers.’ He

¹⁵¹ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 108-00888-04, ‘Work Summary for Training Malinese Agricultural Technical Personnel related to Tea’, 25 July 1963.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ *Nkrumah's Subversion*, 19-20.

Ma Faxian recalls that Mao’s ‘On Practice’ and ‘On Contradiction’ were the ‘spirit’ of their teaching efforts. Li, ‘An Interview with Ma Faxian’, 254.

For an examination of the ‘hands-on’ nature of Chinese training methods in Tanzania, see Jamie Monson, ‘Learning by Heart: Training for Self-Reliance on the TAZARA Railway, 1968-1976’, *Made in China Journal* 6, no. 2 (2021).

complained that these outliers came and went at a whim, that their understanding of China was lacking, and that there were those who were idle, but he always added that he could not blame them (也不能怪他们).¹⁵⁴ However, in Africa, the behaviour of some Soviet experts and advisors was troublesome. Ghanaian officials and military personnel felt that Soviet experts and advisors arrived 'in too large numbers', 'behave(d) arrogantly once there', were 'high-handed', spoke 'poor English', and exhibited 'inflexibility which borders on extreme obstinance.'¹⁵⁵

Two Soviet instructors sent to Ghana to train 'freedom fighters' from Ghana's neighbours provide a particularly egregious example of the misbehaviour of Soviet personnel. Between 1961 and 1966, Ghana organised four guerrilla training camps. At Mankrong, the first of these, two Russian instructors ran an eighteen-week course in 1961 in which their trainees received ranger training in weapons and explosives. The staff and trainees faced food shortages.¹⁵⁶ Meanwhile, their Soviet instructors 'were given a car, a cook, a house-boy, (and) an unlimited supply of food and alcoholic drinks'. They 'had a patronising air toward the members of the Bureau (of African Affairs) who were serving as translators and administrators at the camp and who took the first course along with the trainees.'¹⁵⁷ They insulted and demeaned the Ghanaian instructor meant to replace them once their training course was complete.¹⁵⁸ They are also alleged to have gotten 'over intoxicated' and disturbed their cook on multiple occasions. On one such occasion, 'the younger of the two instructors had attempted to seduce the wife of the cook after getting him

¹⁵⁴ Shen, *Soviet Experts in China*, 303-5.

¹⁵⁵ TNA, FO 1110/1697, 'Ghanaian Dissatisfaction'.

¹⁵⁶ *Nkrumah's Subversion*, 7.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ 'MKG. PROJECT', 26 June 1962, photocopy in *Nkrumah's Subversion*.

intoxicated.¹⁵⁹ Before their departure, they behaved ‘meanly’ and took as much alcohol and rations as they could. Unsurprisingly, the director of the camp ‘was glad to see them leave.’ The Mankrong camp lasted only two courses. The Soviet instructors did not return after the first course and from that point forward the clandestine camps were staffed by local or Chinese instructors.¹⁶⁰

Part of the reason for this was that in the early 1960s, Chinese personnel were under close supervision. Chinese embassy personnel in both Guinea and Mali regularly reported on the work and effectiveness of Chinese aid personnel and on the progress of initiatives, showing that the Chinese side’s emphasis on fostering friendship through the specific character of its aid to African countries was a top-down affair. The regulation of aid personnel was directed hierarchically through party groups and by ‘complying with the embassy’s instructions.’¹⁶¹ The closely supervised nature of Chinese aid work went back to the very beginnings of CCP foreign policy. It was at least partially inspired by Mao’s grudge against the CPSU for the role of the Comintern in early CCP history. He held a special resentment towards Otto Braun and his advice during the doomed Jiangxi Soviet. Luo Guibo, China’s first diplomat to Vietnam and one of the first officials put in charge of Chinese foreign aid, remembers Mao telling him apropos of his own mission with the Chinese Military and Political Advisory Groups in the early 1950s,

Li De (Otto Braun’s Chinese name) did not understand China’s internal situation and did not understand the situation of the Chinese workers’ and peasant’s Red Army. He had not done investigation and research, and he did not listen to other opinions. He just mechanically applied strategies and tactics that were effective in the Soviet

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.* Austin Jersild notes that drinking among Soviet technicians unaccompanied by their families had been a problem in China as well, and that in 1959 the Chinese side cut off the Soviet advisors’ and experts’ access to hard liquor after a previous attempt to rein in the drinking. Austin Jersild, *The Sino-Soviet Alliance: An International History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 44-6.

¹⁶⁰ *Nkrumba’s Subversion*, 7.

¹⁶¹ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 108-00805-03, ‘Work Report of the Tea Specialist Group Aiding Guinea’, September 1962.

Union but not feasible in China. He just waved the flag of the Comintern everywhere to scare people. He was domineering, haughty, bossy, and imposed his will on everyone like an extremely pompous imperial envoy. Li De, Bo Gu, and others carried out a series of mistaken strategies and tactics in military affairs, causing us to pay a heavy price in blood.

According to Luo, he continued:

When you work in Vietnam, you must take Li De as a lesson in what to avoid. We should teach this lesson to all the comrades in the Advisory Groups and let them remember this profound lesson. Tell them that in helping others, they must not make them copy our way of doing things by rote or mechanically apply our methods. Helping others well means not doing so according to subjective desires but according to the situation on the ground.¹⁶²

He concluded the conversation telling Luo to ensure that the advisory groups constantly report on and reassess their work so as to continually improve Chinese aid practices. This was done, and when Chinese aid expanded to Africa in the late 1950s, this practice was expanded further afield. Conversations with African leaders show that the Chinese leadership continued to involve themselves in the supervision of their aid personnel into the 1960s. While speaking with a Guinean official visiting Beijing in May 1963, Mao asked about the performance of Chinese aid personnel. Addressing the official as well as Zhou and Ye Jizhuang, Mao said,

Let us know if we have people doing bad things in your country. For instance, if they look down on you, or act self-important, or have a chauvinistic attitude. Do we have such people? If we do, we'll take some actions against them.

¹⁶² Luo, 'The Shining Example of Proletarian Internationalism'.

In contrast to the negative example of Otto Braun and the Twenty-Eight Bolsheviks, Mao also tells Luo of the positive example set by Canadian doctor, Norman Bethune, praising not his skills as a doctor but his spirit of self-sacrifice. Mao tells Luo, that like Bethune, he should be willing to be buried in the country to which he travels to render assistance, telling him (against Confucian tradition) two lines of poetry: 'There are loyal bones buried everywhere in the green hills. What need is there to return the corpses from the battlefield (literally, wrap corpses in horsehide)?' (青山处处埋忠骨，何须马革裹尸还). Indeed, a number of Chinese experts and technicians died in Africa, including sixty-four who were buried in Gongo la Mboto, Tanzania. Matthew Galway, 'Building Uhuru: Chinese Workers and Labour Diplomacy on the Tan-Zam Railway', Ivan Franceschini and Christian Sorace, *Proletarian China: A Century of Chinese Labour* (London: Verso, 2022).

Are Chinese experts privileged and better paid than their Guinean colleagues? I'm afraid they are. (Addressing Zhou and Ye) You should check it up. They should be treated equally, preferable lower.

Whoever acts like an overlord in your country, not abiding by your laws and engaging in subversive activities, should be driven away.¹⁶³

Chinese experts and advisors worked under the close supervision of Chinese embassies throughout their deployment, while Soviet experts enjoyed special privileges and sometimes took liberties during theirs. On the one hand, the fact that the number of technicians present in Africa was small enough to be so closely supervised highlights again how small the scale of China's aid was in comparison to that of the Soviet Union. On the other, thanks to this close supervision and the on-the-ground character of China's aid as embodied by its personnel, the PRC was able to garner considerable good will.

Representation and Reception

Socialist Aid on Paper and on the Silver Screen

Due to the tacit 'revolutionary division of labour' established by Stalin and Liu Shaoqi, the Soviet Union lagged behind China in its media and propaganda outreach to Africa until the mid-1960s. This might be best exemplified by a simple metric: radio broadcasts. In 1956, two years before the Soviet Union had any radio broadcasts directed at Sub-Saharan Africa, China had already begun experimenting with radio broadcasts to Madagascar and South-eastern Africa. In 1958, it was broadcasting apolitical content in Cantonese for consumption by the Chinese diaspora in Africa. By 1961, full propaganda programs were being aired in English, Cantonese, Portuguese, Swahili, and French across Africa, for a total of sixty weekly

¹⁶³ Mao Zedong, 'Our Relations with All African People are Good, May 3, 1963', *On Diplomacy* (Beijing, 1998), 375.

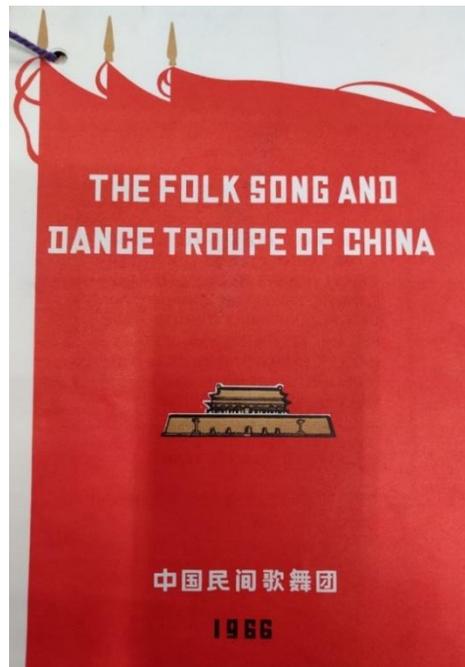
broadcast hours.¹⁶⁴ Due to the symbolic nature of its professed quest to lend aid in the spirit of the poor helping the poor, cultural engagement was a central aspect of China's diplomacy and a parallel phenomenon to its aid work. In addition to commercial linkages and trade agreements, Chinese cultural troupes were another common prelude to recognition and offers of aid. In the 1960s they became a fixture in the cultural scene of Africa. In 'friendly countries', their performances were co-organised with local cultural organs. For instance, in Ghana, a performance by the Nanjing Acrobatic Art Troupe was co-organised by the Chinese Embassy in Accra and the Ghanaian Institute of Art and Culture. The event was jointly hosted by a member of the acrobatic troupe and Betty Bossman, a young employee of the Ghanaian newspaper, *Drum*. The pair walked on and off stage, hand in hand, with Bossman translating into English whatever statements were made by her Chinese counterpart.¹⁶⁵

In other instances, these troupes were deployed to advance China's line on anti-colonial struggle and post-colonial development. In August 1966, The Folk Song and Dance Troupe of China visited Zambia, arriving after calling on Yemen and Algeria. According to the introduction to their programme pamphlet, they were relaying Mao's thought in the same way as they would to workers in factories and peasants in fields in China. The troupe's performance included dances, choral performances, and instrumental songs. The instrumental performances were meant to exhibit sheer skill and virtuosity, especially 'Birds Singing in the Woods'. The choral performances accentuated the multi-ethnic character of the PRC with Tibetan, Mongolian, Kazakh and other songs from the repertoire of minority areas as well as songs like 'The People of Asia, Africa and Latin America Want Liberation',

¹⁶⁴ Cooley, *East Wind Over Africa*, 197.

¹⁶⁵ TNA, Dominions Office (DO) 195-232, Letter from C.E. Wool-Lewis, 5 December 1964. This should be a familiar scene to anyone who has been dragooned into a university recruitment event in China or has worked for the Confucius Institute, perhaps without the handholding.

'Africa is Roaring', 'I am Producing Petroleum for the Motherland', and 'Beautiful Scene of Tachai in June'.¹⁶⁶ The dances bore the densest significance. After opening with the women dancers of the troupe performing 'Song of a Bumper Harvest', the troupe moved into three pieces in a row invoking militant revolutionary struggle.



2 Cover of brochure for the Folk Song and Dance Troupe of China's performance in Zambia. TNA, DO 209-71.

Such performances were not always well received. In the case of the performance in Zambia, it may have been lost on the audience that the performers were exclusively Han despite the strong emphasis given to China's multi-ethnic character.¹⁶⁷ What was not lost on the audience was the insensitivity exhibited by the fact that 'Militant Africa' was performed

¹⁶⁶ TNA, DO 209-71, Memo from A.P. Fabian, 11 August 1966.

¹⁶⁷ TNA, DO 209-71, 'Second editorial in Zambia News Sunday 4 September 1966', 5 September 1966.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa in blackface makeup. According to a British official in attendance, the Zambian officials invited to the event 'were frankly shocked.'¹⁶⁸ Acknowledging this, it becomes clear that Africans were not the only, and often not even the primary, intended audience of Chinese propaganda about and directed at Africa. In fact, in at least one case to be discussed in chapter 6, aid was leveraged as a means of purchasing the endorsement of China's propaganda and Mao's line from African leaders.



3 The brochure included photographic depictions of many of the performances in the programme. TNA, DO 209-71.

¹⁶⁸ TNA, DO 209-71, Memo from A.P. Fabian, 11 August 1966.

This was also an issue later during Guinean-Malian friendship delegation's viewing of *Drums on the Equator* in Beijing in August 1968. Foreign and Colonial Office (FCO) 21-58, Memo from G.G.H. Walden, 13 August 1968.

In her *Revolutionary Bodies*, Emily Wilcox contends that the use of blackface ('racial impersonation') was done in the spirit of Afro-Asian solidarity and suggests that audiences understood it as such. She goes further, pointing to Zhou Enlai's direction to the Ministry of Culture to learn from and respond to the feedback of foreign audiences. This clear discomfort with blackface would seem to suggest that this was not so, and the fact that the use of blackface continued throughout the Cultural Revolution and into the current day would suggest that there were limits to the degree to which the Ministry of Culture followed Zhou's order. Emily Wilcox, *Revolutionary Bodies: Chinese Dance and the Socialist Legacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018), 149.

This is further evident in the way Chinese cultural engagement evolved in response to events relevant only to China or developments in the Sino-Soviet relationship, not events or issues relevant to Africa. During the 1960s, Chinese media in Africa was increasingly focused on criticising the Soviet Union, not publicising its aid or bilateral partnerships. For instance, the second event at the Chinese Embassy in Tanzania after its closure in the Cultural Revolution (discussed in chapter 6) was a screening – complete with Chinese whisky – of flagrantly anti-Soviet propaganda to an audience of 350 to 400 people, including the British High Commission, Chinese and Tanzanian workers working, as well as everyday Tanzanians. According to the British High Commissioner in attendance, ‘The object seemed to be to show that Lenin had promised to restore to China the land given to Russia by “unequal treaties”, but that the promise had been broken by the USSR.’ It gave the overall impression that China was facing ‘bullying white aggressors (sic), much bigger and better equipped than themselves.’¹⁶⁹ The audience’s divided reaction to the anti-Soviet film was revealing. The Chinese attendees cheered when a Chinese fisherman hacked a Russian fire hose in half, to the bemusement of their Tanzanian counterparts. The Tanzanian guests, presumably enjoying themselves thanks to the whiskey, laughed loudly at Chinese fishing boats being capsized, rather upsetting China’s Ambassador to Tanzania, Zhong Xidong.¹⁷⁰

From the early to the mid-1960s, the Soviet Union rapidly caught up in terms of metrics like broadcast hours, handily surpassing China in 1963 with over 115 hours weekly.¹⁷¹ As its capacity in Africa expanded, publicising the massive aid the Soviet Union was providing to Africa and otherwise delivering content relevant to local audiences were central to its outreach to African citizens. Naturally, perception and awareness are key to

¹⁶⁹ TNA, FCO 31-441, ‘Chinese anti-Soviet Propaganda’, 6 October 1969.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ RGANI, f. 5, o. 55, d. 54, ll. 31-2, 1 March 1963.

aid's function as a diplomatic tool. In preparation for the Twenty-Second All Party Congress of the Soviet Union in 1962, a report was drafted for the Presidium by the Department of Propaganda and Agitation reflecting on how to improve the information work and outreach of the Soviet Union in Africa. It argued that,

the African reader, by and large, already knows about the impressive achievements of the Soviet socialist system, and now in each article he eagerly seeks the answer to the questions of what practical way the Soviet Union came to these achievements, and what concrete knowledge can be gleaned from the experience of the Soviet Union in building a new life in a particular country.¹⁷²

The report included a striking account to show that '(s)ome African friends, in the heat of frankness, held that loud phrases and vivid photographs depicting the scale of Soviet achievements affect some readers in an irritating rather than convincing way.' The director of the People's Bookstore in Bamako had reportedly responded to such materials with the following tirade:

Well, good. You have already achieved this and can enjoy all the blessings and even fly into space. But we still live in poverty, we do not have capital or skilled labour, and we do not know what to do or how to tackle our problems. We bow to your achievements, but is it possible to briefly and simply tell us how and where you started: how you nationalised enterprises and resources, how you created the first savings for investments in the development of industry, what role government loans played, what tax system was adopted, how working conditions and wages were improved and changed, how socialist enterprise was organised (its specific budget, plan, distribution of profits, product sales, relations between the administration and workers), how socialist unions were organised, what stages rural cooperation went through and what benefits the state and peasants received from various forms of cooperation, how illiteracy was eliminated, how epidemic diseases were eliminated, how the Supreme Council was built and how it functions, and how were youth involved in the common cause of building a new life?¹⁷³

A central conclusion of the report was that outreach materials should highlight relations between the Soviet Union and African countries and concretely explain the nature of Soviet assistance and the assistance of other socialist countries in such a way that convincingly –

¹⁷² RGANI, f. 5, o. 33, d. 181, l. 119, 22 December 1961.

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, l. 121.

rather than irritatingly – encourage these countries to continue along the path of non-capitalist development.

During the early to mid-1960s, Moscow was particularly successful in forming a professional and holistic alternative to Western information services. Because of their affordability and professionalism, but also because the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc had invested so much in the training and equipping of African journalism and radio broadcast infrastructure, these wire services were frequently the default for more remote African capitals like Kampala, Uganda. This meant that these countries' media environments were heavily skewed towards interpretations of events which were favourable to the socialist camp.¹⁷⁴ Because it was primarily aimed at competing with the information and cultural work of the USA and the West, not China, Soviet outreach to Africa generally allowed such anti-Soviet displays by Chinese propaganda discussed above to go without reply, as they were not relevant to local audiences.

International film festivals provided an ideal opportunity for the Soviet Union to publicise its aid and deliver other messages to the world in a more 'convincing' manner. A film festival organised in Nigeria exemplifies how Soviet thinking on the use of film as a medium for representing its aid evolved over time. Initially planned to take place in the summer of 1963 in Ibadan, the Third International Film Festival was delayed until after the adoption of Nigeria's constitution in October 1963. It was finally held in February 1964. It was split between the capital Ibadan and the most populous city, Lagos. Planning for Soviet participation began in February 1963 after the Soviet Embassy to Nigeria invited a delegation

¹⁷⁴ TNA, FO 1110-2092, 'The Nkrumah Problem', 7 March 1966.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa to attend the Moscow International Film Festival, as it expected a reciprocal invitation.¹⁷⁵ Preparations and selection of films began before the invitation was received. Initially, the Ministry of Culture suggested preparing two films. One was the 1959 Moldovan-produced *Lullaby* (Колыбельная) and the other was the 1962 *Star Brothers* (Звездные братья).¹⁷⁶ Later, the Ministry of Culture reconsidered. After receiving the invitation in early 1964, the Sovexportfilm office in Accra was instructed to furnish the festival with *Lullaby*, *Seven Winds* (На семи ветрах), *Girl Seeks Father* (Девочка ищет отца), *The Girls* (Девчата) as well as the documentaries *Star Trek* (Звёздный путь), *Through the Eyes of a Friend* (Глазами друга), *Winter Fantasy* (Зимняя фантазия), *Happiness to You, Mali!* (Счастья тебе, Мали!), *My Tashkent* (Мой Ташкент), and *Salom, Bakhor!* (Салом, Бахор!).¹⁷⁷

Before 1963, international film festivals were treated as an opportunity to exhibit Soviet art and to give foreign audiences a chance to learn about the history and day-to-day life of the Soviet Union. This is evident in the selection of the films *The Girls* and *Through the Eyes of a Friend*. The Soviet experience of WWII was shared through *Seven Winds* and *Lullaby*, and the achievements of Soviet science and technology were celebrated in *Star Brothers* or *Star Trek*. Some of these films were also shown in a film festival the same year in Cartagena for the same purposes alongside the 1962 romantic drama *The Wild Dog Dingo* (Дикая собака Динго) and international award-winning *Ivan's Childhood* (Иваново детство).¹⁷⁸ In Ibadan and Lagos, however, it was the showings of the 1962 Uzbek films *My Tashkent* and *Salom, Bakhor!* alongside the 1963 *Happiness to you, Mali!* which were especially significant. The first two films were in keeping with the effort to depict the level of development achieved by the

¹⁷⁵ RGANI, f. 5, o. 55, d. 52, l. 12, 13 February 1963.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, l. 11.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, ll. 13-4, 7 December 1963.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, l. 11, 13 February 1963.

Soviet Union's Central Asian republics. *Happiness to you, Mali!* was expressly tailored to publicise and explain the nature of Soviet assistance to countries in Africa.

The task of publicising Soviet aid and its endorsed path of development was continually pursued by propaganda organs throughout the 1960s. This stands as a major difference between China and the Soviet Union in terms of their use of cultural organs for the purposes of aid diplomacy. However, the Soviet effort also encountered setbacks and challenges. In 1964, the Soviet Union and the UAR co-produced another film highlighting Soviet aid. The film was directed by the fiercely independent Youssef Chahine. The original 1968 version, *The Nile and the Life* (النيل والحياة), was never released in either the Soviet Union or the UAR, but later earned some acclaim internationally. Its release was cancelled in the UAR and the Soviet Union primarily at the behest of the Soviet side, as the film had been commissioned in 1964 to portray the Aswan Dam in a positive light and was seen as having failed to do this. Aspects of it were objectionable to the UAR side as well. The Soviet engineer befriended by the protagonist always walks in front of him, and Soviet women are depicted as liberated in comparison to their Egyptian counterparts. *One Day, the Nile* (الناس والنيل) is Chahine's second attempt at the same film. Chahine considered it a failure. After years of editing and reshoots, it was approved for release in the UAR and the Soviet Union in 1972, one year before Cairo began to look to Washington instead of Moscow after the 1973 Yom Kippur War.¹⁷⁹

In contrast, Chinese media rarely publicised its aid for its recipients. However, there is one film which has direct bearing on the story of Chinese aid to Africa. In 1964, Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao initiated the development of what would become the model opera, *On*

¹⁷⁹ Youssef Chahine and Joseph Massad, 'Art and Politics in the Cinema of Youssef Chahine', *Journal of Palestine Studies* 28, no. 2 (1999): 83.

the Docks (海港). The opera was based on a 1964 Huai opera by the Shanghai Opera House called *The Docks in the Morning*. The play depicted a dock preparing a large shipment of grain for an unnamed country in Africa. The protagonist—a party secretary named Jin Shuying (金树英) in the original and Fang Haizhen (方海珍) in the final version—makes constant references to the importance of remembering class struggle. To try and solve the problems she is faced with in the course of the opera, she reflects on her experience in the revolution and consults with her fellow comrades in arms—especially an older stevedore with memories of the War to Aid Korea and Resist America.

After being taken on by Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao, the opera underwent several rounds of editing and was adapted into a model opera. *On the Docks* is performed with traditional Chinese opera music and choreography along with recognisable fragments of the 'Internationale'.¹⁸⁰ Thanks to the setting of the dock warehouses, it was possible to include posters painted with slogans like 'self-reliance' in the background of the opera diegetically. A draft of the new version was presented to Mao in 1966 just two days before he was scheduled to meet with Zambian president, Kenneth Kaunda. Mao approved of the play and was pleased by its central invocation to always remember class struggle. He requested that it further emphasise the continuation of class struggle under socialism by including a recognisable antagonist. Reflecting on *On the Docks* in 1976, Zhang Chunqiao said that the opera was ultimately about uncovering hidden enemies, not foreign aid.¹⁸¹ Based on audience feedback during revisions between 1966 and 1971, that hidden antagonist was

¹⁸⁰ The antagonist mutters under his breath at one point, daydreaming about humiliating the revolution, 'We will see how you all sing the high notes of the "Internationale" after that!'

¹⁸¹ 袁成亮, '革命京剧《海港》诞生记', 《党史博采》 (Yuan Chengliang, 'The Birth of the Revolutionary Peking Opera *On the Docks*', *Lessons of Party History*), 2006(4): 42-5. 张士敏, '我参与修改样板戏《海港》始末', 《书屋》 (Zhang Shimin, 'The Whole Story of My Participation in the Revising of the Model Opera *On the Docks*', *Study*) 2006(8): 18-23. 张春桥, '张春桥接见于会泳的谈话', 《春桥文录》 (Zhang Chunqiao, 'Zhang Chunqiao's Conversation with Yu Huiyong', *Chunqiao Records*), 6 February 1976.

constructed as a saboteur with a special, longstanding hatred for the revolution, rather than a foreign spy or corrupt official. This was to highlight the unique nature of class struggle under socialism.¹⁸² During preparations for shipping rice and grain to Africa, a senior longshoreman named Qian Shouwei (钱守维) takes advantage of a coming storm in hopes of tarnishing the reputation of the revolution. It is implied that he was a saboteur as far back as the Korean War who had managed to remain undiscovered. Qian neglects to tell Fang Haizhen about an incoming storm and then ruins the shipments, soiling each with sacks of rice and wheat mixed with fiberglass. The other stevedores discover the fibreglass and that the storm is coming on the day before the shipment is due to be made. They must then both undo Qian's evil deed and accelerate the shipments in order for them to arrive in Africa in time for the growing season.

The opera was not shown outside of China until it was finalised in 1971 and turned into a film in 1972. Even then, Zhang Chunqiao believed it was not fit for African audiences because it was about life and class struggle in the socialist era and not about guerrilla struggle under the circumstances of national revolution. *On the Docks* was openly paternalistic and therefore went against the spirit of China's aid diplomacy. The protagonist and her comrades in arms speak about their obligation to render aid now that they have had their own revolution, and that there are still 'countless today who live worse than cattle and horses' (世界上还有多少人过着牛马不如的日子), as they had before liberation. The overall effect is to portray China as having achieved what the rest of the Third World still strives for.

¹⁸² Yuan, 'The Birth of the Revolutionary Peking Opera *On the Docks*'. Zhang Chunqiao noticed that audience members were puzzled that earlier versions of Qian Shouwei could exist under Chinese socialism. How could a spy not be ferreted out by a government as effective as China's? How could such an obviously corrupt person be allowed to exist, and what would they be tempted by under the bountiful circumstances of Chinese socialism?

Instead of *On the Docks*, Chinese plays and other media about guerrilla struggle were directed at African visitors, as Africa was seen as not yet having attained socialism and still in the phase of national democratic revolution. The other model opera closely associated with Zhang Chunqiao, *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*, was frequently shown. Plays portraying Africa such as the aforementioned *Drums on the Equator* and others like *The Congo River is Roaring* were also likely to be shown to African delegations visiting China. However, there was little emphasis on publicising China's aid to Africa, and such cultural outreach was shaped by a rigidly teleological vision of the passage from national revolution to socialism rather than by the demands of Africans themselves.

Reception of Socialist Aid

While the reception of cultural outreach by the Soviet Union and China was mixed, in the early 1960s there was great enthusiasm for the aid they offered. As explored in the section on negotiation, enthusiasm for Soviet assistance quickly waned due to its complexity and conditionality as well as the raft of difficulties which came with its implementation. In contrast, in the early 1960s, enthusiasm for Chinese aid as a third alternative boomed until its peak during Zhou Enlai's 1963-1964 tour discussed in the next chapter. This was especially due to the comportment of Chinese personnel and the way that its aid appeared to be totally without conditions and remarkably flexible in terms of implementation.

In 1974, reflecting on the foreign policy successes of China in Africa, Nigerian international relations scholar, Alaba Ogunsanwo, wrote, 'Chinese discipline, enthusiasm

and devotion to work were proverbial.¹⁸³ China's Embassy in Mali at the time would have agreed with Ogunsanwo's positive assessment of Chinese aid. In January 1963, the Chinese Embassy in Bamako cabled to the Chinese General Bureau for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries to report that the work of the experts and advisors was fostering friendly bilateral relations between China and its aid recipients in West Africa.¹⁸⁴ Positive assessments of Chinese aid were often juxtaposed with the Soviet Union's competing aid by connecting their successes with the struggle against 'revisionism'. For instance, it was reported in another 1963 cable from the Chinese Embassy in Bamako:

The results of our training class have been remarkable. Not only (have we) promoted friendship between the two countries of China and Mali and promoted progress in (our work), but (we have also) achieved great victories in the struggle against imperialism and revisionism.¹⁸⁵

The cable continues to deride the Soviet Union, relaying a Malian official's praise for Chinese personnel:

Our country has (hosted) many foreign experts, including experts from (other) socialist countries. It seems (to me) that (experts from) your country have the best performance.¹⁸⁶

The Guinean side also held Chinese aid in higher esteem than that of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc countries. The Chinese Embassy in Conakry reported in 1962:

Our work and work practices made a relatively good impression on the masses. They said: 'The white people only talked about some theories and never lifted a finger. They called us stupid when we did not understand what they said. The Chinese experts showed good attitude and they personally did the work and answered all the questions that we had, and we learned from them.'¹⁸⁷

Touré himself told Zhou Enlai during a state visit,

¹⁸³ Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa*, 145.

¹⁸⁴ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 108-00889-04, 'Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Mali, "The Duration of Employment for the Agricultural Experts Aiding Mali"', 10 January 1963.

¹⁸⁵ WCDA, PRC-FMA 108-00888-04, 25 July 1963.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ WCDA, PRC-FMA 108-00805-03, September 1962.

Guinea has not a single person who does not express their satisfaction with your aid. This is especially true regarding the attitude and spirit of your technicians, and this is something which the technicians from our so-called friends (the Soviet Union) have not achieved.¹⁸⁸

As seen above, the reports from this early period of Chinese aid were glowing throughout. The relationship that Chinese experts and advisors fostered between themselves and the communities in which they lived and worked became an analogue for China's bilateral relationship with West African countries, and the embassies treated it as such.

Our working methods have not only given Malinese leaders and cadres at all levels a good impression of us but have also made the masses in Sikasso (Mali's second largest city) aware of how Chinese experts work hard (in) constructing (projects beneficial) to others. This expands our influence and enhances the friendship between us.... The students also often come to our lodgings to visit and be friendly. This has been a step further in the development of friendship between China and Mali.¹⁸⁹

It is possible that the positivity of these reports is a result of the exaggeration of embassy personnel hoping to advance their careers by taking a side in the growing Sino-Soviet rift. It is also possible that the politicians of the recipient countries were flattering Chinese embassy and aid personnel in hopes of receiving further aid. However, the fact that these were the reports that the Foreign Ministry received, in addition to the fact that after this early period, the PRC increased its engagement with Africa, suggests that Chinese aid diplomacy in West Africa was considered a success. In this way, the diplomatic successes of the early 1960s became entwined with its work as an aid provider.

Being the larger of the two, Soviet aid was subject to more criticism both for the ways it did not measure up to aid on offer by the West and for the ways that Chinese aid suggested it could adopt alternative methods of work. Soviet officials recognised this dynamic. In

¹⁸⁸ PRC-FMA, 203-00496-01, 《周恩来总理同杜尔总统会谈记录》 (Record of the meeting between Premier Zhou Enlai and President Touré), 32. Quoted in 薛琳, '对改革开放前中国援助非洲的战略反思', 《当代世界社会主义问题》 (Xue Lin, 'Reflection on China's Strategy of Assistance to Africa Before Reform and Opening Up', *Issues of Contemporary World Socialism*), 2013(1): 103-15.

¹⁸⁹ WCDA, PRC-FMA 108-00805-03, September 1962.

January 1962, Head of the African Countries Department of the Union of Friendship Societies, P. Shmelkov, recorded a conversation with an African student, who explained the growing preference for Chinese assistance thusly:

Many African leaders underestimate the Soviet Union's assistance to the peoples of Africa and overestimate China's assistance. To some extent, this is because of purely superficial differences between the assistance of the Soviet Union and China. When African nationalists turn to Soviet comrades with a request for financial assistance, the Soviet Union, as a rule, limits itself to general assurances of friendship, promises to consider the issue, and then either does not provide it, or provides it after a long delay. And when the Africans turn to the Chinese with the same request, the Chinese find out for what purpose the help is needed, how much is needed, and then they promptly solve the issue at a cost two to three times less than the amount initially requested.¹⁹⁰

Despite this, the fact is that many Soviet projects had enormous impacts on livelihoods in Africa. Soviet experts and advisors, deployed to West Africa in the thousands, built factories, dams, power plants, railways, schools, and hospitals. Soviet scholarships funded thousands of African students' education in engineering, law, medicine, and other fields. In 2014, Oxfam estimated that more than eleven percent of Ghanaian doctors were trained by the Soviet Union and that Soviet scholarships for medical students played a 'crucial role' in 'averting a catastrophic shortage in the healthcare delivery system' in post-independence Ghana.¹⁹¹ But the impacts of their enormous efforts were often not felt until much later, while causes for complaint were immediate.

While enthusiasm for China's alternative was growing, it was also becoming increasingly clear both to the Soviet Union and African governments that the pattern of Soviet aid as implemented under Khrushchev was unsustainable. This was exemplified best

¹⁹⁰ AVP-RF, f. 0590, o. 4, p. 8, d. 19, ll. 80-1, in «Россия и Африка», 749-50.

¹⁹¹ OXFAM, *Scholarships and the Healthcare Human Resources Crises: A case study of Soviet and Russian scholarships for medical students from Ghana*, December 2014. As quoted in Elena Kochetkova, David Damtar, Lilia Boliachevets, Polina Slyusarchuk, and Julia Lajus, 'Soviet Technological Projects and Technological Aid in Africa and Cuba, 1960s-1980s', Basic Research Program, Working Papers, 2017.

by the Soviet Union's 'white elephants' in Africa. Due in no small part to ill-conceived projects like Ghana Airlines and the Volta River Dam, Ghana's debt was staggering after Nkrumah's removal in 1966. Its foreign reserves were practically empty. So was its Black Star Square and the ornate building overlooking the square which Nkrumah meant to house the Pan-African Congress. A BBC journalist quipped acerbically in 1969, referring to Soviet projects from an earlier period, saying, 'They say the Russians actually managed to sell snowploughs to this state in Equatorial Africa.'¹⁹² This apocryphal claim illustrates how such 'white elephants' could reflect poorly on the Soviet Union.

In contrast, Chinese aid to West Africa avoided encumbering recipient countries with debt or carrying costs. The offer of guaranteed equipment and comprehensive training was enticing (even if it was left largely unfulfilled), and the emphasis on cost-effectiveness and rapid capitalization yielded immediate if modest results.¹⁹³ Furthermore, there was a parallel emphasis on mutual aid, bilateral partnership, and a celebration of diversity befitting the Bandung spirit. While this was often delivered didactically and with a lack of tact, and while the Chinese effort quickly proved to be unsustainable as well, the negative effects of these facts on Sino-African bilateral relations were not felt until later in the decade.

¹⁹² 'Black Power', *Pandora's Box* (London: BBC2), timestamp 38:03.

¹⁹³ I have argued elsewhere that these aspects of Chinese aid were identified and then enshrined in the Eight Principles, to be discussed in the next chapter. These principles were prepared in direct if not explicitly stated reference to the issues which plagued Soviet aid at the time and are therefore as much an artifact of the Sino-Soviet Split as they are of Sino-African relations. See 马柯瑞, '历史的低音: 前苏联和中国对非之援助, 1960-1963', 《文化纵横》 (Ma Kerui, 'The Bass Notes of History: The Former Soviet Union and China's Aid to West Africa, 1960-1963', *Beijing Cultural Review*), 2019(4): 94-103.

Conclusion

After making their debuts on the 'Nasserist Line' in the late 1950s, the Soviet Union and China both extended their respective brands of aid and assistance to the rest of Africa, starting with West Africa. The Soviet Union had made its mark in Egypt with diplomatic manoeuvring and material largesse, and it was the latter of the two which drew the West African nations of Ghana, Guinea, and Mali towards it, as all three were seeking comprehensive alternatives to the development assistance already on offer by the West. At the same time, China had exhibited its militant commitment to Algeria, and this commitment took the form of guerrilla training and material assistance.

The scale of the two countries' assistance was vastly asymmetrical. The Soviet Union's expenditure nearly tripled that of China in the early 1960s, and it engaged in a far wider range of projects than did China. However, it soon became subject to criticism for the complexity and conditionality of its assistance, as well as for the costliness, privileged lifestyles, and improprieties of its personnel. These issues cast Chinese aid in a favourable light during the early 1960s, as it was seen as being flexible and without the conditionality of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, its personnel were 'proverbial' for their egalitarian and practical mode of work, and the way the small scale of their efforts had immediate impacts on the lives and livelihoods of African citizens.

Despite the comportment of Chinese personnel, however, Chinese media and propaganda outreach was either didactic or disconnected from the interests of African audiences. On the one hand, Chinese propaganda and outreach celebrated Afro-Asian diversity and bilateral partnerships with African countries. Its emphasis on anti-imperialist struggle appealed to many during the early 1960s, which Mazov calls the 'halcyon days of

anti-imperialism'.¹⁹⁴ On the other, Chinese media and cultural outreach from the mid-1960s on was concerned with anti-Soviet polemics and domestic politics. Soviet media, by contrast, was focused on providing an alternative information space to that of the West and publicising the nature of its assistance in Africa in a 'convincing' rather than 'irritating' way. In the early 1960s, Chinese propaganda ran in parallel to its aid effort, both of which testified to its identity as a post-colonial member of the Afro-Asian Movement providing mutual aid rather than engaging in neo-colonialism or social imperialism. With the decline of the Afro-Asian Movement in the mid-1960s, the inauguration of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, and the heightening of Sino-Soviet tensions into the late 1960s and early 1970s, its propaganda became increasingly detached from the concerns of African audiences. It was narrowly focused on delivering messages about a linear progression through revolutionary stages rather than the practical concerns of governance and economic development. Meanwhile, although its reception was mixed, Soviet propaganda focused on local concerns and raised awareness of its aid work.

In the early 1960s, enthusiasm for both countries as aid providers was growing. However, the Soviet side encountered numerous challenges. Its track record as a diplomatic tool was mixed, as best exemplified by its troubled relationship with Guinea and the growing influence of China in Ghana. Consequently, Soviet expenditure in Africa peaked in this period and did not recover until its reengagement with the Horn of Africa in the 1970s. The enthusiasm with which Chinese assistance was sought out seemed to be a function of the disappointments and complaints which African leaders held for Soviet aid. Its successes in this period went on to inform all of its subsequent efforts in Africa. This means that while

¹⁹⁴ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 258.

this was the peak of Soviet engagement with Africa in the 1960s, for China, it was only the beginning.

Chapter 2: Zhou Enlai's 1963-1964 Tour of Africa

Introduction

From December 1963 to February 1964, Chinese Premier, Zhou Enlai, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chen Yi, went on a marathon tour of fourteen countries in Africa, Europe, and South Asia. The tour lasted a total of seventy-two days. This so-called 'safari' was a major milestone in the history of China's diplomacy. It was the first time a top CCP leader visited Africa. During the tour, Zhou enumerated the Chinese Government's Eight Principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries. The tour came at a time when the imminent collapse of Sino-Soviet interparty relations, along with the development of the Non-Aligned Movement, posed the prospect of China's being utterly isolated from the international community. A primary foreign policy goal for China was therefore to break out of that isolation. As Zhou told the public and assembled press on his first day in Cairo, he had come to Africa to 'seek friendship, cooperation, to come to understand more, and to learn more'.¹⁹⁵ The tour was intended to generate international support for the PRC and its policies as well as to give African leaders an opportunity to connect with Zhou directly, thereby alleviating the PRC's growing isolation.

The tour is widely considered to be a significant episode in the Cold War. This makes it ubiquitous in biographies of Zhou and in histories of Sino-African relations. Odd Arne Westad describes the tour as signalling that 'China was on the offensive in the Third

¹⁹⁵ ZELNP, 1024.

World'.¹⁹⁶ Deborah Brautigam characterises the tour as an alarming moment for the West which preceded a massive increase in both the scope and scale of China's aid program.¹⁹⁷ For Jeremy Friedman, in addition to serving as a means for Zhou to communicate Beijing's side of the Sino-Soviet Split to the Third World, the tour is cast as being the moment when China laid out its competing model of development.¹⁹⁸ This chapter offers a thematic investigation of the aims and impacts of the tour. In reflecting on this historic episode in the story of Sino-African relations, the chapter re-examines its wider significance in the history of Chinese aid diplomacy in Africa in the 1960s.

Background of the Tour

In addition to the 1954 Geneva Conference and the 1955 Bandung Conference, the 1963 'safari' is considered by Chinese historiography to be one of the three greatest highlights of Zhou's personal diplomacy. The impact of each is treated as cumulative. Geneva provided Zhou with the opportunity to get China onto the world stage independently of the Soviet Union. From there, Bandung enabled him to connect with the growing number of independent and post-colonial countries as well as to enshrine a product of Sino-Indian diplomacy, the Panchsheel drawn from the 1954 Sino-Indian Agreement, in the founding charter of both the Afro-Asian Movement and the nascent Non-Aligned Movement.

¹⁹⁶ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 162-3.

¹⁹⁷ Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift*, 33-4. Indeed, as will be explored in the fourth and fifth chapters, Chinese foreign aid expenditure reached a peak in 1964 to 1965. In 1964 alone, the sum total of Chinese extensions to Africa alone accounted for between a third and a half of all Chinese extensions to Africa made between 1959 and 1966. ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-012, '中共對非洲各國之經濟援助' (Chinese Communist Economic Aid in Africa), 72 (no date, sometime between June 1966 and 1967). NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Subject Files, Communism, 21 February 1966.

¹⁹⁸ Friedman, *The Shadow Cold War*, 117-8.

In the same year that the Sino-Indian Agreement was signed, Josip Broz Tito signed a joint statement enumerating 'positive' non-alignment alongside Jawaharlal Nehru.¹⁹⁹ After that, Tito was able to make significant inroads in Africa through Yugoslavia's own aid diplomacy.²⁰⁰ Nasser's UAR became the site where two competing strains of non-aligned politics collided with one another, each laying claim to the legacy of Bandung. In winter 1957, Cairo hosted the African Asian People's Solidarity Conference, to which the Soviet Union was able to gain entry, in part thanks to the lobbying of the PRC.²⁰¹ The African Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) was formed at this conference. AAPSO dedicated itself to the cause of national liberation and has been called the 'People's Bandung'.²⁰² Its appeal was greatest among Afro-Asian governments and liberation movements which viewed militant solidarity and even cooperation with the Soviet Union as the best means for ending imperialism and achieving peace. In 1959, as part of Tito's own maritime tour of the non-aligned world, Cairo also hosted the preparatory meetings for the 1961 Belgrade Conference of Non-Aligned Nations. Neither the Soviet Union nor its satellites were able to attend the Belgrade Conference as it required attendees not to have any military treaties with either Moscow or Washington. Although the Sino-Soviet Split was already well underway, this stipulation excluded China as well.

While AAPSO laid claim to the radical anti-imperialist spirit of Bandung, Belgrade's brand of non-alignment spoke both to the more conservative countries like Morocco as well as to the more radical like Ghana. China preferred yet another strain of Afro-Asian solidarity.

¹⁹⁹ 'Appendix XVII: Text of India UAR-Yugoslavia Joint Statement', Najma Heptulla, *Indo-West Asian Relations: The Nehru Era* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1991), 266-9.

²⁰⁰ See eds. Radina Vučetić and Paul Betts, *Tito in Africa: Picturing Solidarity* (Belgrade: Museum of Yugoslavia, 2017).

²⁰¹ RGANI, f. 5, o. 30, d. 307, l. 88, 6 August 1959.

²⁰² Carolien Stolte, '“The People's Bandung”: Local Anti-Imperialists on an Afro-Asian Stage', *Journal of World History* 30, no. 1-2 (2019): 125-56.

It preferred one which excluded Soviet participation. Many countries also sought for a direct successor to the first Bandung Conference to be held on its tenth anniversary in 1965. As a Nigerian journalist opined at the time, 'Bandung or Belgrade? That is the question.'²⁰³ By late 1963, Zhou was too late to dissuade any governments from pursuing a second Belgrade Conference. Preparations for the conference were all but completed prior to his tour, and invitations to the Second Non-Aligned Conference in Cairo were issued in February 1964, just after Zhou left Africa.²⁰⁴ Nonetheless, he was concerned that the excitement for a Belgrade II would sap the enthusiasm for a Bandung II or even result in the Non-Aligned Movement replacing the Afro-Asian Movement entirely. In his preparations for the tour, Zhou's priority was to ensure that a Bandung II – one distinct from AAPSO which would exclude the Soviet Union – was still held after Belgrade II.

Zhou's quest to rejuvenate the Bandung spirit came at a time when the Afro-Asian world was splintering from within. By the time of Zhou's tour in late 1963, much had changed since the first Sub-Saharan African countries achieved independence, and these changes complicated rather than streamlined the allegiances and affinities of post-colonial Africa. Some of the ruptures within the Afro-Asian Movement were directly due to the actions of Zhou's own government. In 1962, China and India, the two countries that were credited with enumerating half of Bandung's core principles, clashed over a remote Himalayan border, violating the second principle of the Panchsheel, the commitment to mutual non-aggression and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Despite Nehru's repeated encroachments on Chinese territorial claims in the immediate lead-up to the conflict, China

²⁰³ ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-026, '周恩來訪非' (Zhou Enlai Visits Africa), 95, 16 January 1964.

²⁰⁴ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Chou En-lai's visit to the United Arab Republic, December 14-21, 1963'; 'Report on Chou En-lai's Visit to Algeria from December 21-27 1963'; 'Report on M. Chou En lai's visit to Morocco, December 27-31, 1963'.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa was seen as the belligerent because of its militarised occupation of several contested points along the border and its rejection of the McMahon Line. Even those who were sympathetic to China were deeply concerned that its intransigence would push India back towards the West. Nasser, who had just that year provided India with a shipment of arms, bemoaned China's stubborn comportment towards a fellow Afro-Asian power. Damaging its reputation within the movement further, China rejected the 1963 Colombo Proposal put forth by the six non-aligned nations of Ceylon, the UAR, Ghana, Indonesia, Burma, and Cambodia that called on China to withdraw.²⁰⁵ China instead initiated a unilateral withdrawal and retained its claims on the disputed territory.

Two border disputes in Africa caused further ruptures in the Afro-Asian Movement. The first of the two border disputes concerned the Sand War between Morocco and Algeria. The war in October 1963 was essentially a skirmish which saw Morocco encroach on Algeria's territory in a mineral rights dispute. Morocco believed that the territories in question, which had only been integrated into then French-administered departments of Algeria in 1952, should have been returned to it after 1956. After supporting the Algerian war of independence and allowing his borders to serve as a base for China's support of the FLN, Morocco's King Hassan travelled to Algiers to negotiate the return of the territories in March 1963. Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella, preoccupied with the situation resulting from his country's recent independence, told the King it would be best to negotiate a precise boundary at another time. In his impatience and concern for the growing momentum of the Moroccan opposition to his rule, Hassan ordered the Royal Moroccan Army to the border in a show of force. Fighting broke out in late September 1963. After weeks of skirmishes

²⁰⁵ Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa*, 109.

between the two countries, a ceasefire was negotiated in Bamako, Mali. When Zhou visited in December 1963, Ethiopian and Malian peace-keeping forces were maintaining the boundaries of a demilitarised zone while Hassan and Ben Bella awaited a meeting of foreign ministers at the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in February 1964.²⁰⁶

The second border dispute was between Ethiopia and Somalia. In mid-1963, ethnic Somalis in the Ethiopian Ogaden engaged in a tax boycott and began a separatist insurrection against Ethiopia. The guerrillas received the support of Somalia, which held numerous irredentist claims against its neighbours, the Ogaden prime among them. In November 1963, Somalia signed a military agreement with the Soviet Union worth \$30 million and capable of equipping a standing army of 20,000, making Somalia the second largest recipient of Soviet military assistance at the time. This agreement itself was negotiated after the PRC offered a \$23 million military assistance package to Somalia earlier that year. Somalia used this offer to haggle with the Soviet Union, which had already agreed to provide Somalia with \$52 million in economic aid. Moscow resolved to outbid Beijing and easily did so.²⁰⁷ After Somalia negotiated for military assistance first from the China and then the Soviet Union, Ethiopia carried out a pre-emptive strike in an attempt to settle the dispute on the border before arms deliveries could be made, escalating the conflict from guerrilla skirmishes to a cross-border war in January 1964.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ See: Alf Andrew Heggoy, 'Colonial Origins of the Algerian-Moroccan Border Conflict of October 1963', *African Studies Review* 13, no. 1 (1970): 17-22; Ana Torres-Garcia, 'US Diplomacy and the North African "War of the Sands" (1963)', *The Journal of North African Studies* 18, no. 2 (2013): 324-48; Saadia Touval, 'The Organization of African Unity and African Borders', *International Organization* 21, no. 1 (1967): 102-27; Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

²⁰⁷ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Country Files, Ethiopia, POL 17 – Chinese Communists, Has Ethiopia Recognized Communist China?, 3 February 1964. TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Chou En-lai's African Tour – Ethiopian Press have followed tour with interest but have refrained from commentary', 22 January 1964.

²⁰⁸ See Touval, 'The Organization of African Unity and African Borders'.

By August 1963, a final issue marked China out as an outlier within the Afro-Asian Movement: the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty, or the Test Ban Treaty. After the world was brought to the brink of nuclear apocalypse in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the majority of the world's governments welcomed the Test Ban Treaty. But Beijing refused to sign it. Mao unleashed his ire on Khrushchev by staging mass rallies and accusing him first of being an adventurist for placing nuclear weapons on Cuba and then a capitulationist for withdrawing them.²⁰⁹

It was against this complicated backdrop that Zhou's trip to Africa took place. The spirit of Bandung was in danger of being absorbed into the Non-Aligned Movement from which China was excluded. In this context, 'seeking friendship' meant generating support for China and its aims, achieving wider prestige, and establishing relations with African governments. 'Understanding and learning more' meant giving African leaders an opportunity to understand China's unpopular position on the issues and carrying out an assessment of China's aid efforts against those of the rest of the world. These aims underpinned the tour, which was the platform upon which the two sets of principles – the Five Principles for Handling Relations with Arab and African Countries and the Eight Principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries – were announced.

²⁰⁹ Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 227.

A Chronology of the Tour

In April 1963, a leading small group (LSG) of the CCP was tasked with arranging Zhou's tour of Africa.²¹⁰ It was composed of State Council Foreign Affairs Office Deputy Director, Kong Yuan, Assistant Foreign Minister, Huang Zhen, and Director of the Premier's Office, Tong Xiaopeng. Drawing on the resources of the Foreign Ministry, the Central Military Commission, and other organs of the Chinese state, the supra-ministerial Kong-Huang-Tong LSG created five teams responsible for distinct tasks for the duration of the trip. These teams were responsible for political work, news media, secretarial work, protocol, and security. The entire delegation totalled around sixty people. Kong and Tong's frequent interaction with Yang Shangkun over the course of the summer and fall prior to the trip suggests that he was intimately involved in the security arrangements.²¹¹ These were comprehensive and included the advance deployment of scouting teams to establish outposts and coordinate with embassies in the countries to be visited.²¹²

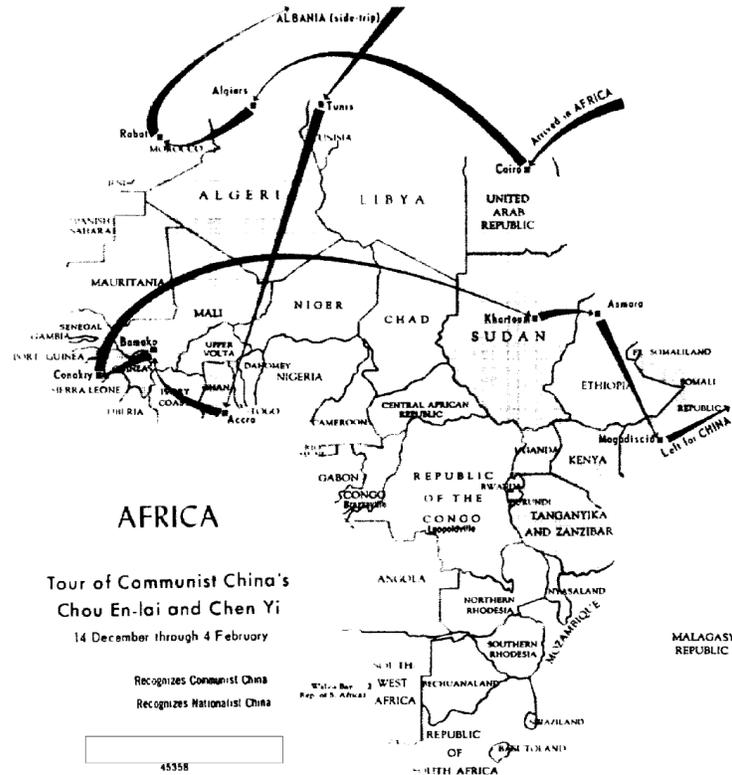
The trip was to start in the UAR before proceeding to Algeria and then Morocco, after which the delegation would spend New Year in Albania. From Tirana, it was initially planned that the delegation would travel to West Africa, beginning in Ghana before travelling to Mali and then Guinea. From there, the East African leg of the journey would be

²¹⁰ Leading Small Groups (领导小组) are ad-hoc supraministerial bodies answerable to the Politburo and the State Committee. They are tasked with formulating policy guidance and coordinating policy implementation across Chinese governmental authorities. For the functioning of LSGs in terms of foreign affairs, see Lu Ning, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decision Making in China* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 2000).

²¹¹ Yang Shangkun spoke by telephone with Kong and Tong about 'security concerns' both before Zhou's departure and upon his return. 《杨尚昆日记》(北京: 中央文献出版社, 2001) (*Diary of Yang Shangkun* [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2001]), 273-336, 351.

²¹² 童小鹏, '我随周恩来访问亚非欧十四国', 《漳州职业大学学报》(Tong Xiaopeng, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai on his Visit to Fourteen Countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe', *Journal of Zhangzhou Vocational University*), 2001(1): 1. TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Report on M. Chou En lai's visit to Morocco, December 27-31, 1963'. '周恩来访问非洲' 系列 第一集 '冲破外交封锁', 《国家记忆》, CCTV-4, 2017年12月8日 ('Zhou Enlai Visits Africa', series episode 1, 'Breaking Through the Diplomatic Blockade', *National Memory*, CCTV-4, 8 December 2017). Timestamp: 7:05-7:35. The scouting teams are not included in the count of the 60-person delegation.

to Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, and finally Somalia. Due to surprise invitations from Tunisia, Sudan, and Ethiopia as well as army mutinies in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika, this was not how the tour ultimately went. Instead, the delegation visited Tunisia between their New Year with Enver Hoxha and their delayed meeting with Kwame Nkrumah. While visiting West Africa, Zhou and Chen sent a telegram to Beijing informing the Central Committee that the delegation would be visiting Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia before returning to Kunming in time for Chinese New Year.²¹³ The visit to East Africa was postponed until the next year.



4 Central Intelligence Agency map of Zhou's tour. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79-00927A004500040003-8, 'Chinese Communist Activities in Africa', 19 June 1964.

²¹³ ZELNP, 1030.

Prior to departure, Zhou attended the fourth session of the Second National People's Congress on 2 December 1963 where he first delivered the Eight Principles before unveiling them to the wider world. A week later, on 9 December, Chen Yi left from Kunming for Nairobi ahead of Zhou to attend the Kenyan independence ceremony on 12 December. He then travelled to the UAR to await Zhou's arrival. Zhou and his coterie arrived in Cairo on 14 December. After what must have been a taxing two months abroad, Zhou and the delegation began making their way home via Karachi, Pakistan and Rangoon, Myanmar on 4 February 1964, arriving in Kunming in time for Chinese New Year on 13 February.²¹⁴



5 Zhou and Nkrumah sharing a match of ping pong in Osu Castle. Chen Yi stands in the middle, serving as referee. 吴德广, '在周总理领导下做礼兵工作', 《纵横》 (Wu Deguang, 'Overseeing Protocol Under the Leadership of Premier Zhou', Across Time and Space), 2019(3).

²¹⁴ ZELNP, 1021, 1024. 《陈毅年谱》 (北京: 人民出版社, 1995) (*Chen Yi Chronology* [hereafter, CYNP] [Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995]), 998-9, 1014. Tong, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai', 5.

Seeking Friendship and Cooperation

Following the 1961 Belgrade Conference and the PRC's rejection of the 1963 Colombo Proposal, the gap between it and the other members of the Afro-Asian Movement was widening. The need to develop cordial and friendly relations with their hosts in Africa necessitated that the Chinese delegation explain why it desired a Second Afro-Asian Conference, China's unpopular position on the Test Ban Treaty, and the situation on the Sino-Indian border. In pursuit of a creating an anti-imperialist united front, the delegation made various appeals to the shared legacy of cultures interrupted by imperialism. They also propagated a different brand of 'peaceful coexistence' than Khrushchev's.

Appealing to Cultural Legacies and Anti-Imperialism

A primary aspect of China's engagement with the Afro-Asian Movement was its appeal to the spirit of anti-colonial struggle. Figures like Chairman of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, Guo Moruo, emphasised that the countries of the Afro-Asian Movement had the shared experience of having had their cultural legacies violently interrupted by imperialism. An outgrowth of this emphasis on the traumatic experience of imperialism was a celebration of cultural rebirth and diversity within and across the Afro-Asian Movement. This was welcomed by many, and this celebration of diversity manifested itself in the presenting of cultural artifacts and other items as state gifts. When Nkrumah visited Beijing in 1961, he was gifted a custom *Zhongshan zhuang* (中山装, or Sun Yat-sen

tunic suit). He was clad in the suit throughout Zhou's visit with him during the tour and even had photos taken while he played a game of ping pong with Zhou.²¹⁵

The explicit fusion of cultural appeals and anti-imperialist solidarity was a pronounced part of Zhou's tour. In Cairo, Zhou flattered his hosts at the state banquet on their military prowess during the Suez Canal Crisis – publicly commemorating those who died in a visit to Port Said – before making repeated references to Egypt's grand history at Giza and elsewhere.²¹⁶ More interestingly, he waxed lyrical at the Aswan High Dam, saying:

In the past, the river Nile gave birth to your splendid (光辉灿烂) ancient culture. Today, the Nile serves the purpose of developing your national economy (民族经济). I sincerely believe, that in the future, the Nile River will contribute even more to the industrious and wise people of the UAR.²¹⁷

Zhou's admiration for Egypt's 'splendid' culture and emphasis on its 'national economy' was echoed in *People's Daily's* pieces praising fellow people's democracies in the 1950s. It also resembled language used in a domestic context around the Yellow River and the Sanmenxia Dam. What is more important, however, is what Zhou did not say. In 1958, when the Soviet Union took on the construction of the Aswan High Dam, the *People's Daily* published an ode to the project called 'Sanmenxia Sings the Praises of Aswan' (三门峡歌唱阿斯旺). In the lyric poem, the workers at the two dams, both constructed with the assistance of the Soviet Union, sing out to the Volga River in anti-imperialist solidarity. 'Shoulder to shoulder' (肩并肩), and thanks to the 'selfless warmheartedness' (无私的热心肠) of their comrades to the north, the 'sons and daughters' of the Nile and the Yellow rivers see their 'prosperity blossom' (幸福花

²¹⁵ Tong, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai', 4. '周恩来访问非洲' 系列 第三集 '掀起建交浪潮', 《国家记忆》, CCTV-4, 2017年12月20日 ('Zhou Enlai Visits Africa', series episode 3, 'Starting a Wave of Establishing Diplomatic Relations', *National Memory*, CCTV-4, 20 December 2017). Timestamp: 6:39-7:01.

²¹⁶ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Chou En-lai's visit to the United Arab Republic December 14-21, 1963'. ZELNP, 1024.

²¹⁷ ZELNP, 1024.

开).²¹⁸ Five years later, standing upon the Aswan Dam, Zhou had not a word to say about the Volga or the Soviet technicians toiling away at the dam beneath him, choosing to focus instead on the river itself. No mention was made of Soviet help in the Chinese press. Ignoring the dam, Zhou said it was the Nile River, representing all the natural wealth of the UAR, which would bring the Egyptian people wealth, denying by his silence that the 'selfless warmheartedness' of the sons and daughters of the Volga would have anything to do with it, even as they toiled away just below him.²¹⁹

Despite the position he would ultimately take on the Sand War, Zhou's anti-imperialist appeals were most potent in Algeria. Zhou's visit to Algeria was exceedingly friendly. The delegation arrived on 21 December, and Zhou met with FLN cadres and spoke with them in a fraternal manner. Press coverage in China, in the words of Sir Terence Garvey, then British chargé d'affaires in Beijing, emphasised the 'militant anti-capitulationist factors which link (the FLN) with Peking rather than Moscow.'²²⁰ Zhou donated \$20,000 to an orphanage for children who had lost their parents in the Algerian revolution. Arnold Street was renamed Peking Avenue, and Zhou presided over the commemoration ceremony.²²¹ Under the direction of the team within the LSG responsible for propaganda, such appeals were co-arranged with Xinhua news agency working in the countries Zhou visited. These

²¹⁸ 刘岚山, '三门峡歌唱阿斯旺' (Liu Lanshan, 'Sanmenxia Sings the Praises of Aswan'), *People's Daily*, 16 November 1958.

²¹⁹ ZELNP, 1024.

²²⁰ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Chou En lai's visit to Africa – Press treatment of the Algeria and Moroccan Visits', 3 January 1964. *People's Daily* was in fact replete with coverage of Zhou's tour which consistently emphasised the 'militant friendship' of the Chinese and Algerian people/Arab peoples. This headline offers a representative example: '非洲人民敢于武装斗争敢于胜利的光辉榜样 周总理热烈赞扬阿尔及利亚人民革命斗争的伟大胜利 中国人民坚决支持阿尔及利亚人民推进革命走社会主义道路' (The African People Are a Shining Example of Daring to Engage in Armed Struggle and Win, Premier Zhou Warmly Praised the Great Victory of the Revolutionary Struggle of the Algerian People, The Chinese People Firmly Support the Algerian People in Promoting Revolution and Taking the Socialist Road), *People's Daily*, 28 December 1964.

²²¹ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Report on Chou En-lai's Visit to Algeria from December 21-27 1963'. ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-027, '周恩来访非' (Zhou Enlai Visits Africa), 169, 25 December 1963. CYNP, 1001.

appeals required a level of detailed research on the part of Xinhua. In Khartoum, Zhou alluded to China and Sudan's shared experience with British colonialism. Zhou's speeches mentioned General Charles George Gordon (1833-1885), the British Army general who had commanded the 'Ever Victorious Army' of Qing soldiers that had put down the Taiping Rebellion. General Gordon later fought in colonial Sudan against a revolt led by a self-styled Mahdi, where he was killed; or as Zhou put it, 'finally punished by the Sudanese people for his misdeeds in China'. Stories furnished by Xinhua correspondents to Sudanese newspapers prior to the tour gave audiences a primer for the obscure reference.²²²

However, Zhou's insistence on using the platforms given him by his hosts to criticise American actions against the Martyr's Day riots in Panama took his anti-imperialist appeals too far for some hosts. Even the most radical African leaders were sensitive to the fact that being seen as too overtly anti-American might limit their ability to negotiate for Western aid. In Guinea, despite being explicitly asked not to do so, Zhou made public remarks critical of the USA. The offending passage was stricken from the version of the speech reprinted in the government's mouthpiece, *The Horoya*.²²³ While in Sudan, Zhou again criticised the US presence in Panama despite the requests of his hosts. Zhou's delegation was so insistent on a public show of anti-Americanism in Sudan that they refused to allow their KLM aircraft to be refuelled with American fuel.²²⁴ Zhou's ideological pronouncements were problematic for his African hosts in another way too. African leaders and press noted that Zhou had ratcheted up his criticism of Yugoslavia during his New Year's stopover in Albania. Reporting on African opinions on Zhou's trip, John K. Cooley wrote,

²²² TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to the Sudan January 27-30', 1964.

²²³ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to Guinea – Encloses texts & joint communique and speeches exchanged', 28 January 1964.

²²⁴ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to the Sudan January 27-30', 1964.

Mr. Chou's speech at Scutari, Albania, Jan. 5 branding Yugoslav Socialists as a 'special detachment of American imperialism' was badly received here. North Africans are on especially cordial terms with President Tito.²²⁵

In Cooley's analysis, progress Zhou had made in fostering a positive attitude towards China in North Africa through cultural and anti-imperialist appeals was partially reversed by his dogmatic criticism of Tito.

Additionally, the stringency of Zhou's security failed to embody the Afro-Asian solidarity he espoused. Just prior to the tour, Yang Shangkun was preoccupied with the assassination of John F. Kennedy in November 1963.²²⁶ In the context of such a high-profile assassination, it was not unthinkable that an attempt might be made on the delegation. Zhou's visit to Ghana provides a glimpse into how the LSG responded to risk. While in Tirana, the delegation received a telegram informing them that there had been an attempt on Nkrumah's life. The LSG counselled postponing the journey, but Zhou rejected their advice on the grounds that 'a friend in need is a friend indeed' (患难见真情, also translated as 'you see who your true friends are when you go through trials and tribulations'). Instead, he instructed the LSG to deviate from protocol and have Nkrumah await his visit at a safe location. Huang Zhen was sent ahead to coordinate with the Chinese Ambassador to Accra, Huang Hua, and to advise that the reception at the airport be cancelled. Security on Zhou's dawn arrival in Accra on 11 January 1964 was stricter than had been the case at other destinations. Ghanaian troops, complete with a modified van fitted with a light machine gun, accompanied the diplomatic corps, stationed at key points around the airport and along the route to Osu Castle where Nkrumah awaited Zhou behind several security checkpoints.²²⁷ Elsewhere though, the security arrangements, no matter how understandable, conveyed a

²²⁵ ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-026, 5, 11 January 1964.

²²⁶ *The Diary of Yang Shangkun*, 331.

²²⁷ ZELNP, 1025-1026. TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to Ghana January 11-16', 1964.

lack of faith in the African hosts. In Sudan, the LSG insisted that, for security reasons, the government palace would have to host twenty-eight of Zhou's staff instead of the twelve that had been planned for, which meant each room had to accommodate eight delegates.²²⁸ The LSG arranged for Zhou to be ferried from the airport to the palace away from the public. The refusal to allow a public procession angered Sudanese officials even more. Sudanese officials told the LSG that the Chinese Embassy would have to explain to the Sudanese public why such an insulting arrangement was necessary.²²⁹

The army mutinies in East Africa and the revolution in Zanzibar at the end of January 1964 produced the greatest disruption in the initial plan of Zhou's tour. The climate of general unrest resulted in the cancellation of his visits to Uganda, Kenya, and Tanganyika. Zhou's decision not to visit the three countries was unilateral on his part, however, and the prioritisation of his safety was not always sympathetically received. Where he had been willing to take a risk on behalf of his friend in Accra, he seemed unwilling to entrust his safety to recent acquaintances in Nairobi and Kampala. The cancellation was capitalised on by forces already sceptical of China's intentions in Africa. Following the tour, the Soviet Embassy in Kenya wrote a report which noted that Zhou's tour had been poorly received there, not least for his oft-cited proclamation that 'Africa is ripe for revolution.' The report wrote,

Such a statement caused discontent among the ruling circles of Kenya, who perceived it as a kind of call for the overthrow of the existing government. Kenyan leaders breathed a sigh of relief when they learned that Zhou Enlai had to cancel his trip to Kenya in January this year due to internal complications in Kenya itself. The well-known statements of the leaders of the PRC on issues of war and peace are also perceived negatively in the ruling and public circles of Kenya.²³⁰

²²⁸ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to the Sudan January 27-30', 1964.

²²⁹ Tong, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai', 4.

²³⁰ RGANI, f. 5, o. 50, d. 604, ll. 76-7, in «Россия и Африка», 649-50.

The report further observed that the Kenyan government avoided openly criticising Zhou, as it still hoped to acquire economic aid from China. Kenyan civil society, however, was open in its criticism of him and his decision not to visit. An editorial in the Nairobi-based *Daily Nation* wrote,

Is the communist boss sincere in his protestations of friendship, in his affected concern for the welfare of African peoples and governments? Apparently he is not. Proof of the duplicity of Chinese Communist thinking has been provided by their own government-controlled press. In reporting recent events in East Africa, the official New China News Agency declared that British troops had entered Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika to 'suppress' the African troops demanding Africanisation of the armies.... No mention was made of the fact that the East African governments asked for British military aid to contain a potentially explosive situation.... Nor was mention made of the fact that without some military assistance there would have been a strong possibility that mutineers would have toppled the governments and replaced the freely-elected representatives of the people with dictators of their own choice.²³¹

As will be discussed in the next chapter, Nikita Khrushchev's boisterous visit to Cairo in May 1964, by contrast, was a welcome show of faith by a foreign leader, which strengthened the prestige and domestic legitimacy of his hosts. Moreover, it was a show of faith that the LSG repeatedly denied African authorities, stoking doubts about China's intentions in Africa.

Zhou's Brand of Peaceful Coexistence

The visit to Morocco provided a great opportunity for Zhou to exhibit China's particular brand of peaceful coexistence. Former Chinese Ambassador to Morocco, Yang Qiliang, characterises this as the first time China's position on coexistence between different social systems was expressed.²³² It was not. While it may not have been characteristic of

²³¹ ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-026, 102, 30 January 1964.

²³² 杨琪良, '周恩来总理访问波兰和摩洛哥回忆片断', 《新中国外交风云》(北京: 世界知识出版社, 1990) (Yang Qiliang, 'Extracts from the Memory of Premier Zhou Enlai's Visits to Poland and Morocco', *New China's Diplomatic Situation* [Beijing: World Culture Publishing House, 1990]), 83.

China's policy in Africa up to that point, the position dated back to Mao's personal diplomacy with the British Labour Party in August 1954. After arguing that the USA wanted to use anti-communism as a pretext to 'bully' and control countries like the UK, Mao said to them,

You ask if there can be peaceful coexistence between us and your socialism. I think, yes. Then a question arises: Can there be coexistence only with this kind of socialism, and not with other things? Nonsocialist things, such as capitalism, imperialism, feudal kingdoms, etc.? I think the answer is also yes; only one condition is needed, i.e., both sides must be willing to coexist. Why? Because we think that different social systems can coexist peacefully.²³³

This was an element in China's 'United Front' diplomacy which aspired to a reconfiguration of its relations with the 'intermediate zone' which Mao later came to call the 'Second World'. This conception of 'peaceful coexistence' referred not to coexistence between the socialist and the imperialist camps, but between the diverse members of the postcolonial world. In an addendum to his 1955 speech in Bandung, Zhou clarified that this entailed peaceful coexistence between different social systems within what later came to be called the 'Third World':

The Chinese delegation has come to ask for unity, not discord. Of course, our Communist Party would never fail to proclaim our belief in communism and that we regard the socialist system to be good. Nevertheless, the purpose of this meeting is not to advocate for any one ideology or political system, though these kinds of differences do exist between us.²³⁴

He went on to reiterate his stance, saying, 'This meeting of ours should seek unity and set aside differences' (求同而存异).²³⁵

²³³ Mao, 'On the Intermediate Zone', *On Diplomacy*, 123-4.

²³⁴ 《周恩来外交文选》(北京: 中央文献出版社, 1990) (People's Republic of China Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Selected Diplomatic Works of Zhou Enlai* [hereafter, ZELWJWX] [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1990]), 112-34.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

Nonetheless, Yang Qiliang is correct that peaceful coexistence was a central element in the tour's charm offensive. In Rabat, the delegation was received by dignitaries from around the world, and Zhou maintained studious cordiality in the face of public criticism. King Hassan II was unrestrained in his condemnation of Beijing's foreign policy. The fact that the Chinese delegation endured this and avoided making any critical remarks about Morocco's social system was remarkable.²³⁶ So, aside from the criticisms he held of China, the King was actually pleased with the visit. After conversing on a number of matters of state, the King suddenly took on a tragic tone and posed an unexpected question: 'In today's world, there are fewer and fewer sovereigns like me. Who can say what the future holds?' Zhou and Chen Yi burst out laughing before the Premier suggested, 'You all can organise a committee to discuss it!'²³⁷ Hassan was not the only one gratified by the visit. The Vietnamese chargé d'affaires in Rabat reported to a British official that Zhou had been happier with his visit to Morocco than with Algeria.²³⁸ According to Tong Xiaopeng, Zhou was as impressed with Hassan as Hassan was with him. Tong remembers that prior to their arrival, Zhou and Chen viewed Hassan as just another backward king. They then found in their conversations with him that he had a 'mind for politics'.²³⁹

As Han Suyin wrote of the tour in her biography of Zhou, now that the 'United Front' was directed against both the US and the Soviet Union, 'it was on the basis of patriotism, national liberation, that the intermediate zone – the Third World – would achieve independence and progress.' Han quotes Zhou as explaining to Enver Hoxha that under this

²³⁶ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Report on M Chou En lai's visit to Morocco December 27-31 1963'; 'Chou En lai's visit to Africa – Press treatment of the Algeria and Moroccan Visits', 3 January 1964.

²³⁷ Yang, 'Extracts from the Memory of Premier Zhou Enlai's Visits to Poland and Morocco', 83. Also in Tong, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai', 3.

²³⁸ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Chou En-lai's African Tour: Vietnamese Chargé d'affaires reports luke-warm reception in Algeria', 17 January 1964.

²³⁹ Tong, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai', 3.

new interpretation of the united front, '(e)ven kings, princes, aristocrats, are patriotic.'²⁴⁰ Hoxha, who had fought as a partisan against the self-declared King Zog during World War II, was not impressed. But for Morocco's King, this brand of peaceful coexistence, in addition to Zhou's flexibility on the Sand War to be discussed below, was a welcome step towards improving relations.

Seeking Understanding and Learning

During the tour, Zhou affirmed China's position on critical political issues such as regional border disputes within the Afro-Asian Movement and the Test Ban Treaty. Zhou had two opportunities to explain China's understanding of the principles of the Non-Aligned Charter in a way which might have helped African governments to better understand why China had rejected the Colombo Proposal. However, he instead took two contradictory positions, which implied different interpretations of the Non-Aligned Charter. This was done in a way which exhibited China's limitations as an aid provider rather in a way which established a principled stance on border disputes. The tour also gave African leaders the opportunity to express what sorts of aid they sought from the PRC.

Taking Positions on Border Disputes

Prior to his visit to Morocco, Algerian officials tried to impress upon Zhou the correctness of their position regarding the Sand War. They held that the territories in question were acquired in a war of liberation against the French and were thereby Algerian.

²⁴⁰ Han Suyin, *Eldest Son: Zhou Enlai and the Making of Modern China, 1898-1976* (London: Pimlico, 1994), 299.

During the visit to Morocco, the Chinese delegation was given a collection of photocopies pertaining to the territorial dispute. The Moroccan documents showed that this was a border which had been set not by two free national governments but by a distant imperial power, much as the McMahon Line had been. In contrast with the other joint communiques which mostly bore the signs of Chinese drafting, the Sino-Moroccan joint communique was drafted by Rabat and accepted 'more or less without alteration' by Zhou. The communique endorsed an interpretation of the first principle of the Panchsheel emphasising territorial integrity in a way which effectively asserted China's neutrality on the Sand War.²⁴¹ Zhou's endorsement of the Moroccan side was strange. The Moroccan side was widely seen as the aggressor and as having gone against the OAU charter. Zhou's endorsement was therefore criticised widely. Even the Moroccan opposition newspaper was displeased, remarking that they wished that Zhou could have stayed out of the Moroccan-Algerian dispute in the same way King Hassan had stayed out of the Sino-Indian border dispute.²⁴²

An examination of Zhou's handling of another border dispute will clarify that he was acting pragmatically and not on principle. As explained in the chronology of the tour above, there were three surprise invitations while Zhou was in Africa. The last was from Ethiopia and directly concerned the second of the two border disputes which arose during the tour. The escalating conflict in the Ogaden was why Haile Selassie issued a surprise invitation. From the beginning of Zhou's tour, the Ethiopian press had been following his movements with great interest. Just before 26 January 1964, Zhou received a telegram formally inviting his delegation to Addis Ababa.²⁴³ Zhou hoped that this might be an opportunity to convince

²⁴¹ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Report on M Chou En lai's visit to Morocco December 27-31 1963'.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Emperor has now invited Chou En-lai to visit Ethiopia during his present tour of Africa – possible recognition', 27 January 1964.

Selassie to switch recognition. The USA understood this move by Selassie as a bid for increased aid to Ethiopia on its part.²⁴⁴ The UK government emphasised that Somalia was in Zhou's original itinerary and that Selassie likely desired China's support in the rapidly developing dispute over the Ogaden. In the opinion of the UK Foreign Office, Selassie hoped to take advantage of the Sino-Soviet split and China's recent loss to the Soviet Union in Somalia to acquire his own military aid package before the impending war.²⁴⁵ The Chinese delegation decided to accept by Selassie's invitation. In return for agreeing to visit Ethiopia prior to Somalia, and in return for providing a 'declaration in support of territorial integrity of the States', Zhou was assured before his departure to Mogadishu on 1 February that Ethiopia would switch recognition that April. In a reversal of his position in Morocco, where he had supported self-determination, Zhou endorsed the territorial status quo in the Ogaden.²⁴⁶

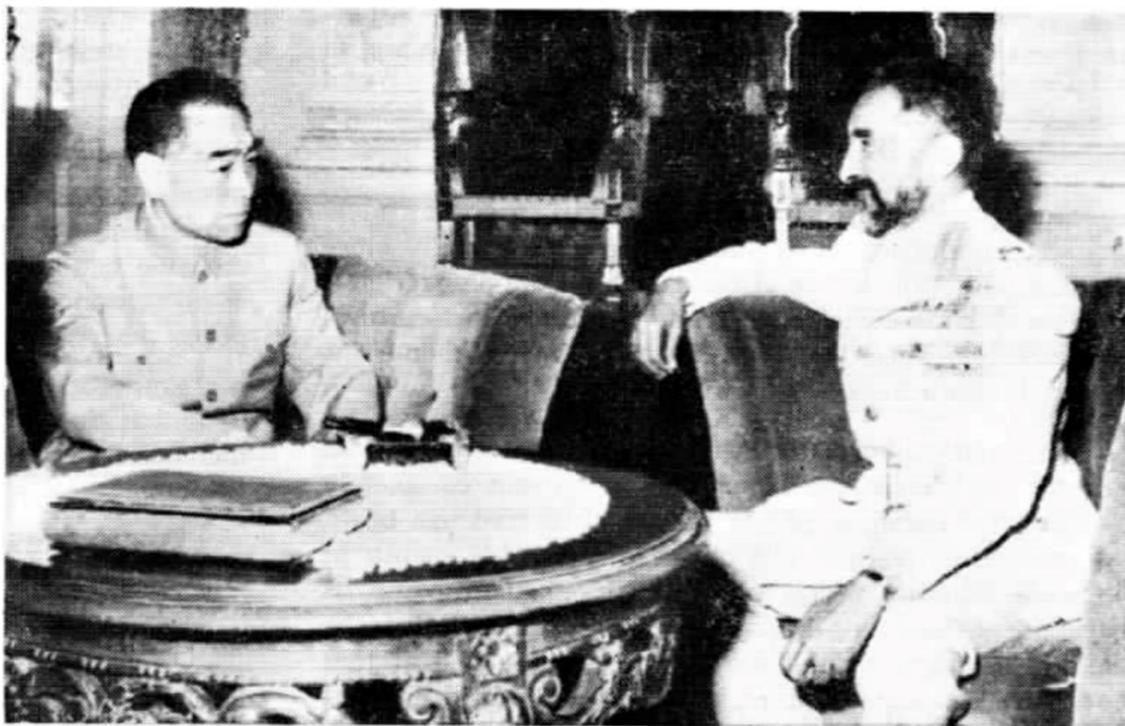
Zhou's subsequent visit to Somalia was a fiasco. The Somali government was both reticent to welcome China due to its recent agreement with the Soviet Union and enraged at Zhou's endorsement of Ethiopia's continued sovereignty over the Ogaden. The disorder of the visit was partially due to vacillation on the part of the Somali government. After acquiring the Soviet agreement, Somalia attempted to fend off Zhou's visit as the agreement had not yet been fulfilled and they were concerned Moscow would be displeased. However, after his visit to Ethiopia, the Somali government reinstated its invitation to Zhou. This was

²⁴⁴ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Country Files, Ethiopia, POL 17 – Chinese Communists, Has Ethiopia Recognized Communist China?, 3 February 1964. TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Chou En-lai's African Tour – Ethiopian Press have followed tour with interest but have refrained from commentary', 22 January 1964.

²⁴⁵ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Emperor has now invited Chou En-lai to visit Ethiopia during his present tour of Africa – possible recognition', 27 January 1964. NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Country Files, Somalia, CSM 7 – Chicoms, Visit of Chou-en-lai, 1-4 February 1964; POL 1 – Western Counter Strategy, 11 December 1963.

²⁴⁶ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En-lai's visit to Ethiopia Joint Communique', 3 February 1964.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa to no avail, as far as their irredentist territorial claims over the Ogaden were concerned.²⁴⁷ Ultimately, Selassie did not keep his promise to Zhou. Ethiopia only recognised China on the eve of its accession to the UN six years later on 24 November 1970.²⁴⁸ In the meantime, immediately after Zhou's departure from Africa, full-scale war erupted in the Ogaden between the American-armed Ethiopian army fighting Soviet-armed Somali fighters. Despite being outgunned by Ethiopian aircraft and tanks, and despite not yet having received all of the Soviet aid package, the Somali ground forces were able to fight to a stalemate, inducing a ceasefire at subsequent talks in Khartoum in early April 1964.



6 Zhou looking somewhat sullen during his seven-hour conversation with Selassie. Peking Review, No. 6, 7 February 1964.

²⁴⁷ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Country Files, Somalia, CSM 7 – Chicoms, Visit of Chou-en-lai, 1-4 February 1964.

²⁴⁸ 《中国非洲关系大事记：1949年10月1日—1984年12月》（中国社会科学院西亚非洲研究所）（*Chronicle of Events in Sino-African Relations: 1 October 1949-December 1984*, [Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Institute of West Asia and Africa]), 99.

These two disputes set a worrying precedent in African politics. That summer, the OAU passed the Cairo Declaration calling on all African states to respect existing borders as they were 'on the day of their independence', formally endorsing the principle of *uti possidetis*, regardless of the colonial legacy of many of Africa's borders.²⁴⁹ Endorsing *uti possidetis* in principle could mean forfeiting Chinese territorial claims to not only the Sino-Indian border but also elsewhere, and yet endorsing self-determination according to ethnic boundaries (as in the Somali case) posed its own risks considering China's multi-ethnic character. Thus, Zhou took a calculated but delimited risk in choosing to side with the two monarchies. It was his understanding that Sino-Moroccan relations might face serious difficulties were he to endorse the Algerian side. It was probable that, despite having a standing invitation, King Hassan would never visit Beijing if Zhou did not side with him. Similarly, he had been assured by Selassie that if he endorsed the Ethiopian position, he would earn Addis Ababa's recognition. Considering the recently lost bidding war with Moscow over providing military assistance to Somalia, this too appeared to be a worthwhile gamble. However, he failed to lay to rest China's position either on its own border disputes or to take the same side of the majority of African governments at a key moment in the political history of post-independence Africa.

China's Unpopular Stance on the Test Ban Treaty and Achieving French Recognition

Mao's belligerence and callousness regarding the possibility of nuclear war troubled even China's most radical allies. The only independent African country other than South Africa which refused to sign the Test Ban Treaty was Guinea. For some countries, China's

²⁴⁹ African Union Common Repository, 'Resolutions adopted by the First Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Cairo, UAR, from 17 to 21 July 1964'.

stance was a major bone of contention. During his visit to Ethiopia, Selassie scolded Zhou for not signing the treaty in a marathon seven-hour discussion.²⁵⁰ The tour offered the opportunity to explain the rationale behind Beijing's opposition in a way which both mitigated the damage done to its prestige and shored up the splintering Afro-Asian Movement.

While in the UAR, Zhou stated his all or nothing position on nuclear arms most forcefully. He told the press that the PRC would support nothing less than a total ban on nuclear tests and the abolition of nuclear weapons.²⁵¹ He contended that the world was not made safer by the Test Ban Treaty and pointed to the fact that the USA had continued to engage in underground testing even as the treaty was negotiated. He further pointed to the fact that American generals were pushing Congress to approve the continued development of new nuclear weapons, especially tactical nuclear weapons that might be more practical to deploy in the field. He was emphatic that the treaty was not negotiated in a way in which smaller countries had a say. Arguing that negotiations of such import should be carried forward in a way which considered the positions of all governments, not merely the USA, the UK, and the Soviet Union, while in the UAR he also nodded to Nasser's position by expressing support for making Africa a nuclear free zone. China's role, in his view, was to expose the treaty as a fraud and thereby 'safeguard the destiny of mankind'.²⁵²

While Zhou was explaining China's unpopular position, three countries decided to recognise the PRC. One was Tunisia, which had also issued a surprise invitation to the delegation while they were in Algeria. Another was Burundi, which came to play an

²⁵⁰ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En-lai's visit to Ethiopia Joint Communique', 3 February 1964.

²⁵¹ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Chou En-lai's visit to the United Arab Republic, December 14-21, 1963'.

²⁵² *Ibid.*

important role in Beijing's engagement with the Simba Rebellion. However, the most consequential was not a country in Africa, but France. While Zhou visited Africa, a French delegation was in Beijing arranging the sale of a French chemical plant.²⁵³ The French visit was part of a longer overture which culminated in the establishment of Franco-Chinese diplomatic relations on 27 January 1964. Since 1961, the French Foreign Ministry had counselled rapprochement with China, and with the end of the Algerian War in 1962, this became possible. Finally, the 1963 Test Ban Treaty pushed the two countries together, France being one of the few major powers not to sign.²⁵⁴ There were moments in the Chinese delegation's trip to Africa when it seemed it was more interested in communicating with France than with the leaders of its former colonies. During a public conversation with Algerian Foreign Minister, Abdel Azziz Bouteflika, Chen Yi welcomed greater French involvement in Asia, where the FLN's brothers in arms, the Viet Minh, had only recently thrown off French rule and were still at war with the USA. Zhou gave a much-publicised interview in *Jeune Afrique* where he expressed nostalgia for his time in France: 'I was initiating myself in Marxism-Leninism in those days.... I enjoyed my stay in France very much. I would like to return one day.'²⁵⁵ Zhou reassured Ben Bella and Nkrumah that the aim of the Franco-Chinese rapprochement was not merely to get France to recognize the PRC but to use Charles de Gaulle as a wedge with which to divide the West.²⁵⁶ In his view, because of the treaty and other issues, 'France and the USA are now at odds with one another' (法美现在在闹别扭).²⁵⁷ In this way, Zhou was able to provide an ideological justification for

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ See Lorenz M. Lüthi, 'Rearranging International Relations? How Mao's China and de Gaulle's France Recognized Each Other in 1963-1964', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 16, no. 1 (2014): 111-45.

²⁵⁵ ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-026, 14-6, 11-12 January 1964.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ PRC-FMA, 203-00623-01, '周恩来总理同恩克鲁玛总统的第二次单独会谈记录' (Record of Premier Zhou Enlai's Second Conversation with President Nkrumah), 14 January 1964.

the PRC's unpopular position on the Test Ban Treaty and use it to form a crucial partnership for its subsequent efforts in Africa.

Taking Stock

Tong Xiaopeng remembers that the trip to Africa came amid a 'new phase' and 'second peak' of Chinese international relations which was directly targeted at countering Soviet technical and economic aid.²⁵⁸ In February 1963, in response to an aid and development conference held in Mali, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contacted the Chinese embassies in Guinea, Ghana, Morocco, and Yemen and instructed them to begin preparing reports for the purposes of an upcoming expansion of the Chinese aid program. The telegram explicitly said this was an 'anti-revisionist' project.²⁵⁹ On the tour itself, Zhou and Chen met with Chinese embassy staff and aid personnel in every country where they were operating.²⁶⁰ Zhou's conversations with Guinean personnel were especially important to him, according to Foreign Ministry staff, Zhao Yuan. Zhao remembers that Zhou considered China's aid work in Guinea as symbolic of its work across the continent because Guinea was where China's aid to Sub-Saharan Africa had made its debut. Zhou instructed him thus:

Besides examining the political situation of the country in which an ambassador is stationed, one should also attentively understand and research that country's economic situation and economic policy with an emphasis on foreign aid work.²⁶¹

In Zhou's eyes, foreign aid was the primary task of Chinese ambassadors, and the work of Chinese aid personnel was the most direct expression of the relationship between the PRC

²⁵⁸ Tong, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai', 1.

²⁵⁹ PRC-FMA, 108-01289-02, '关于研究改进中国对外经济技术援助工作' (Regarding Research for Advancing China's Foreign Technical Assistance Work), 23 February 1963.

²⁶⁰ CYNP, 999-1013.

²⁶¹ 赵源, '忆周总理几内亚之行', 《新中国外交风云》第三辑 (世界知识出版社, 1996) (Zhao Yuan, 'Recalling Premier Zhou's Trip to Guinea', *New China's Diplomatic Situation*, Part 3 [World Culture Publishing House, 1996]), 44.

government and African countries. Along with the rest of the Chinese personnel, Zhao had to prepare a report for submission to the Foreign Ministry. Immediately following their return to China after the Chinese New Year festivities, the LSG prepared a comprehensive document collating such reports and condensing the knowledge gained by the tour.²⁶²

An important part of the tour was Zhou and Chen Yi's visits to industrial sites and port installations. These gave them a hands-on illustration of the gap between the aid the PRC was providing and that which African countries sought. In West Africa, the delegation witnessed the modest fruits of their country's modest aid program. In their visit to Mali from the 16 to 21 January, they met in a fraternal manner with the *Union Soudanaise-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (US-RDA), the party of Malian President, Modibo Keita, before viewing the Chinese projects under construction there. In Guinea, where the delegation stayed from the 21 to 27 January, Zhou viewed a cigarette factory and a match factory, both of which were constructed with Chinese aid.²⁶³ In almost every country on Zhou's itinerary, the delegation viewed highlights of their hosts' national economies since there were not yet any Chinese operations of note. These highlights often indicated to the delegation what was sought by African leaders, which often was not economic aid. For instance, Sudan's priority was increasing its exports of cotton, as had been the case with the UAR in the late 1950s. So instead of viewing aid or infrastructural projects, the main event on the itinerary of the Sudanese government was a visit to its cotton-growing centre in Gezira, as a spur to asking China for an increase in its imports of Sudanese cotton at preferential prices.²⁶⁴

²⁶² Tong, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai', 5.

²⁶³ ZELNP, 1028-9. CYNP, 1010. TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En-lai's visit to Guinea: Main points of communique issued after visit', 28 January 1964.

²⁶⁴ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to the Sudan January 27-30', 1964.

The delegation also visited facilities operated or constructed by other providers. Perhaps because of the 1960s oil rush in Manchuria and the significance of the Daqing oilfields at this time, Zhou also took an interest in petroleum processing plants throughout the North African leg of the trip. In Algeria, he viewed a gas liquefaction plant at Arzew, which was under western management. At a press conference, Zhou 'rather curiously took (this gas plant) as his single example of the miraculous progress made by Algerian Socialism'.²⁶⁵ Zhou's appreciation of foreign-operated firms can be viewed in another light when one considers the anti-Soviet impetus of the tour. In Morocco, Zhou praised another Western-operated oil and gas installation:

Foreigners (Soviet personnel, placing the West and the Soviet Union on a par) helped us build an oil extraction plant like this one at Lanzhou that is staffed with 6000, but this facility, with trainees included, only requires some 300. It is shocking how we waste manpower in comparison! (Addressing Chen) Remember this, after we return home, we must send our oil technicians here to observe and study, this is very worth looking into.²⁶⁶

Zhou used the Moroccan operation to allude to China's own experience of Soviet aid in a negative light while simultaneously praising the results achieved by African countries. Furthermore, he emphasised mutual learning as the centrepiece of China's engagement with Africa, stating that it was Morocco rather than China which had something to teach.

If a country had port or other major infrastructural facilities to exhibit, they did so. As noted above, Nasser took Zhou to view the historic Port Said, the main port on the Suez Canal and one of the largest cities in Egypt. The city symbolised Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal and the achievements of the post-revolution Egyptian economy.²⁶⁷ In Ghana, Zhou viewed the state-of-the-art Tema port and industrial park. Named after a nearby

²⁶⁵ CYNP, 1002. TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Report on Chou En-lai's Visit to Algeria from December 21-27 1963'.

²⁶⁶ Yang, 'Extracts from the Memory of Premier Zhou Enlai's Visits to Poland and Morocco', 84.

²⁶⁷ TNA FO 371-175919, 'Chou En-lai's visit to the United Arab Republic, December 14-21, 1963'.

fishing village, the port city of Tema was among independent Ghana's first largescale development projects, second in importance and ambition only to the Volta River Dam. The construction of the harbour was planned, designed, and carried out alongside British experts in just two years under the auspices of the Tema Development Corporation. China's smaller projects in West Africa paled in comparison to such a monument to Nkrumah's quest for rapid national development.²⁶⁸ The Aswan High Dam under Soviet construction was even more monumental. While visiting the Aswan High Dam, Zhou had a small medical incident at the top of Africa's largest infrastructural aid project at the time. Upon reaching the top along with the press and his hosts, Zhou had a nosebleed and took refuge in a corner. One of the two doctors accompanying him rushed to his side while an aid told the press, 'This happens from time to time.... It is not serious but that's why he always has a doctor with him.'²⁶⁹ Tong Xiaopeng remembers that Zhou frequently had nosebleeds and that the predominantly *halal* diet during the trip exacerbated this.²⁷⁰ An attendant to Zhou on the trip attributed the nosebleeds to his having 'excessive internal heat' (上火) from all the mutton they ate.²⁷¹ In any case, Zhou recovered immediately and completed the tour of the dam without issue, 'ignoring the burning sun' in an open car.²⁷² There is no indication that the sixty-five-year-old revolutionary suffered from any other health issues on what must have been a taxing journey to distant lands far different from his own. Nonetheless, Western and local press would not let go of the event and speculated on Zhou's health for the rest of the

²⁶⁸ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to Ghana January 11-16', 1964.

²⁶⁹ ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-027, 84, 19 December 1963.

²⁷⁰ Tong, 'I Accompanied Zhou Enlai', 3.

²⁷¹ 黎虹, '亲历: 历时 72 天 随周总理访问亚非欧 14 国', 中国共产党新闻网, 2012 年 9 月 26 日 (Li Hong, 'Personal Experience: 72 Days Accompanying Premier Zhou to Visit 14 Asian, African, and European Countries', News Network of the Chinese Communist Party, 26 September 2012). Consumption of mutton is considered to cause excessive internal heat in Traditional Chinese Medicine, and this is said to lead to some symptoms which would generally be attributable to dehydration.

²⁷² ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-027, 84-5, 19 December 1963.

tour. So did Soviet operators, who, waiting in the wings for much of the Chinese tour, whispered to the press and other diplomats about Zhou's 'little accident at Assuan'.²⁷³

Two Sets of Principles

During the tour, Zhou issued two sets of principles. One was the Five Principles for Handling Relations with Arab and African Countries, and the other was the Eight Principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries. The Five Principles made their debut in Cairo, the first stop on Zhou's tour. The Five Principles were a version of the Panchsheel, retooled to fit the ongoing struggles for independence in Sub-Saharan Africa. Rather remarkably, they endorsed North Africa's preference for the Non-Aligned Movement.²⁷⁴ During his visit, Zhou convinced Nasser to acknowledge in the Sino-Egyptian joint-communiqué that the original Bandung Conference had been a turning point in world history, but Nasser also told Zhou in no uncertain terms that it was too early for a Bandung II. Furthermore, his North African neighbours supported this position. During the tour, both Algeria and Morocco were clear about their preference for a new Belgrade Conference rather than a Bandung II. So it was for this reason that Zhou's concession was made, in hope of gaining political capital for preserving the chances of a Bandung II later.

The Eight Principles, articulated first in Ghana, are typically what the tour is remembered for. The principles were as follows:

- 1.) The Chinese Government always bases itself on the principle of equality and mutual benefit in providing aid to other countries. It never regards such aid as a kind of unilateral alms but instead regards it as mutual.

²⁷³ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to Ghana January 11-16', 1964.

²⁷⁴ For a discussion of how these principles were seen to be contradictory with Chinese foreign policy in Africa, see Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa*, 120.

- 2.) In providing aid to other countries, the Chinese Government strictly respects the sovereignty of the recipient countries, and never attaches any conditions or asks for any privileges.
- 3.) China provides economic aid in the form of interest-free or low-interest loans and extends the time limit for the repayment when necessary, so as to lighten the burden of the recipient countries as far as possible.
- 4.) In providing aid to other countries, the purpose of the Chinese Government is not to make the recipient countries dependent on China but to help them embark step by step on the road of self-reliance and independent economic development.
- 5.) The Chinese Government tries its best to help the recipient countries build projects which require less investment while yielding quicker results, so that the recipient governments may increase their income and accumulate capital.
- 6.) The Chinese Government provides the best-quality equipment and material of its own manufacture at international market prices. If the equipment and material provided by the Chinese Government are not up to the agreed specifications and quality, the Chinese Government undertakes to replace them.
- 7.) In giving any technical assistance, the Chinese Government will ensure that the personnel of the recipient country fully master such techniques.
- 8.) The experts dispatched by China to help in construction in the recipient countries will have the same standard of living as the experts of the recipient country. The Chinese experts are not allowed to make any special demands or enjoy any special amenities.²⁷⁵

These Eight Principles were tailored to reflect those aspects of Chinese aid which Sub-Saharan African countries had found most appealing and were reminiscent of its successes in West Africa in the early 1960s. In chapter one, we explored the way that African governments welcomed the 'disinterested' nature of Chinese aid, praising the low interest rates and long repayment times as well as the way Chinese aid was offered without conditions. The principles highlighted the special character of China's aid, especially in contrast with that of the Soviet Union. This is most directly evident in the fifth principle. Instead of assisting foreign countries to develop heavy industry and largescale staple agriculture as the Soviet Union was attempting to do, Chinese projects were primarily focused on fostering light industry and commodity agriculture so as to assist in the accumulation of capital. Mali's President, Modibo Keita, was especially pleased with the last

²⁷⁵ ZELWJWX, 388. Also in ZELNP, 1028.

two of the Eight Principles. He agreed to place the full text of the principles in the Sino-Malian joint communique following Zhou's visit.²⁷⁶

A fact which is generally neglected in accounts of Zhou's tour is that the declaration of the Eight Principles was selective. They were not mentioned in North Africa, but were enumerated first in Ghana and then repeated in Guinea, Mali, Sudan, and finally Somalia. They were not broadcast to Selassie as Ethiopia had not yet recognised the PRC. In Liu Bai and Xu Renlong's contribution to *Researching Zhou Enlai*, it is suggested that the reason the Eight Principles were not announced in the UAR or Algeria is that Zhou was still developing them during that leg of the tour. However, the two authors also show – and it is documented in the *Zhou Enlai Chronicle* – that the principles had a longer pedigree. As stated in the chronology above, immediately prior to departing for Africa, Zhou had delivered both sets of principles to the National People's Congress. Indeed, Liu and Xu themselves go further, revealing that the principles were already in utero when Zhou attended Bandung in 1955.²⁷⁷ Ye Jizhuang also played an important role in the Eight Principles' development. Nicknamed the 'Red Manager' (红色管家), Ye was the first head of the Ministry of Foreign Trade from 1949 to his death in 1967 and was instrumental in developing China's commercial links with Asia and Africa. In October 1962, Zhou instructed Ye to work with Chen Yi and the State Council Foreign Affairs Office to begin preparing distinct sets of principles for economic

²⁷⁶ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Report on Chou En lai's visit to Mali – Encloses programme and texts of public statements', 3 February 1964.

²⁷⁷ 柳白, 徐人龙, '建立国际经济新秩序的光声—周恩来倡导的对外援助八项原则', 《研究周恩来: 外交思想与实践》(北京: 世界知识出版社, 1989) (Liu Bai and Xu Renlong, 'Heralding the Establishment of a New International Economic Order: The Eight Principles of Foreign Aid Put Forward by Zhou Enlai', *Researching Zhou Enlai: Diplomatic Thought and Practice* [Beijing: World Culture Publishing House, 1989]), 139.

cooperation and commerce with socialist and newly independent countries.²⁷⁸ As Liu and Xu point out, Zhou shared a prototype of these with a Somali delegation in early 1963.²⁷⁹

The selective announcement of the Eight Principles suggests that North African countries were not considered to be prospective recipients of Chinese aid. This becomes clear when reflecting on Zhou's reception in North Africa. Upon arriving in Cairo, Zhou was not met by Nasser as per protocol. Nor was he seen off by Nasser upon his departure to Algeria. Instead, his delegation was received by Ali Sabri and an underwhelming crowd of unenthusiastic workers and children. The wider Egyptian public and media were confused and even wary of the strange honour of Zhou's visit. Press coverage was sparse, uncertain, and somewhat irreverent. The Egyptian Arabic slang for 'What, When, Where?', which rhymes somewhat with the Arabic transliteration of 'Zhou Enlai', was jokingly used in headlines to express this confusion.²⁸⁰ According to a British Foreign Office official's account, the UAR authorities 'gave the impression of being somewhat embarrassed and apprehensive' about the visit. Third-party analyses understood the apprehension of the UAR government and press as an extension of Nasser's wider distrust of foreign ideology, especially communism, and Beijing's brand of communism in particular.²⁸¹ Han Suyin and the popular Chinese documentary series *National Memory* both assert that Nasser's slight was because he was concerned that too friendly a reception for Zhou would endanger the UAR's chances for greater aid from the Soviet Union.²⁸² This may have been the case, but the fact was that

²⁷⁸ ZELNP, 974.

²⁷⁹ Liu and Xu, 'Heralding the Establishment of a New International Economic Order', 139.

²⁸⁰ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Chou En-lai's visit to the United Arab Republic December 14-21, 1963'.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² 'Breaking Through the Diplomatic Blockade', *National Memory*. Timestamp: 14:48-15:20.

The episode goes as far as to claim that the Soviet Ambassador threatened that too great a show of friendship would result in the cancellation of the Aswan Dam project, complete with an unrelated and unflattering photograph of Khrushchev yelling aggressively at an audience. Han Suyin similarly reports that the Soviet Ambassador to Cairo 'had threatened to cut off a major loan should Nasser show too much friendliness to the Chinese. Nasser had

Nasser had standing offers of aid from China that had yet to be put to use. Only a small fraction of the \$85 which China had offered between 1956 and 1964 was ever drawn upon. Moreover, as discussed in the first chapter, and as was the case with Sudan as well, Sino-Egyptian relations were built not upon Chinese aid offers but Chinese agreements to purchase large quantities of Egyptian cotton.²⁸³

Algeria, too, appears not to have seen Zhou's visit as an opportunity to get Chinese aid. Zhou was greatly annoyed by the fact that his visit shared front page space with a report on an Algerian delegation in Moscow negotiating an additional economic cooperation agreement with the Soviet Union. Algeria was, in the words of a British Foreign Office Report, 'non-aligned twice over', meaning both non-aligned in the Cold War and attempting non-alignment in relation to Moscow and Beijing. However, in the analysis of that same report,

She (Algeria) probably feels the Soviet *bloc* has more to give her than China, but against this she has a greater political affection for the Chinese, a sense of gratitude and of being in the same boat, though she is also a little frightened of them.²⁸⁴

By 1963, Soviet aid to Algeria was increasing rapidly. In late 1963, Moscow offered a single credit grant of almost \$250 million, which was more than the sum of China's aid to Africa as

suddenly had urgent business, but turned up with profuse apologies some twenty-four hours later.' Han, *Eldest Son*, 298.

The Taiwanese Foreign Ministry found the most compelling explanation to be an editorial pointing out that the president 'was deeply angered when Peking publicised a speech delivered at the Chinese Communist Party Congress in 1959 by Arab communist leader Khaled Bakdash in which he attacked President Nasser in strong terms and accused him of establishing his dictatorship in Syria.' Nasser's slight against Zhou was not merely because he hoped for more positive relations with the Soviet Union, as claimed by National Memory. It is also highly doubtful that the Soviet Union was concerned about a strengthening of ties between the UAR and China considering its appraisal of Nasser as desiring to keep Beijing at arm's length until he could achieve his goal of uniting the Arab world, a goal which had been indefinitely postponed first by the Syrian coup of 1961 and by the Ramadan Revolution in 1963. ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-027, 68, 14 December 1963. RGANI, f. 5, o. 30, d. 307, ll. 37-8, 14 August 1959.

²⁸³ Larkin, *China and Africa*, 90-5.

²⁸⁴ TNA, FO 371-175919, 'Report on Chou En-lai's Visit to Algeria from December 21-27 1963'.

a whole in that same year.²⁸⁵ Morocco and Tunisia were no different except that they looked primarily to the West rather than the Soviet Union for aid. The coolness of the delegation's treatment there was attributed to the fact that at the time Tunisia received more US aid than any other North African country (about \$60 million *annually*).²⁸⁶ Moreover, in Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba subjected the Chinese delegation to another round of criticism, Zhou showing the same restraint as he had in Morocco. Bourguiba would prove extremely critical of China in the years to come as well, taking a strong stand against Zhou's statement at the end of his tour that Africa was 'ripe for revolution'. Later, in 1965, Bourguiba told an interviewer that China's engagement with Africa was 'colonialism camouflaged in ideology'. He continued:

Yes, as long one observes (China's) desire to infiltrate herself a little bit everywhere, to provoke difficulties, to aggravate existing contradictions, to arm and train guerrillas against established regimes. Chou En-lai doesn't deny it and tells anyone who listens that Africa is ripe for revolution.

But as far as I'm concerned I have the impression that China will have a great deal to do before casting our continent into anarchy and subversion. Many Africans are distrustful, or are frankly allergic. I don't foresee Chou En-lai's winning in the near future.²⁸⁷

In sum, none of the North African countries valued China as an aid provider. This was the reason why the Eight Principles were not presented there. The reiteration of the Panchsheel via the Five Principles was used, however, as rhetorical boilerplate in North Africa as part of the diplomatic and symbolic project of broadening the anti-imperialist united front across different social systems. By contrast, Chinese assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa had an on-the-ground character which made it attractive, so the debut in presenting the Eight Principles

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.* CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP78-03061A000400020007-0, 'Algeria in the Soviet Orbit: A Maghribi Mirage?', March 1969. NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chron, An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – and implications for US Policy, no date (early 1965). According to classified figures, between 1954 and 1965, excluding military aid, China pledged a total of \$52 million to Algeria. Only \$2 million was ever drawn upon. NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Subject Files, 1960-65, Communism, Article in *New York Times*, 21 February 1966.

²⁸⁶ ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-026, 5, 11 January 1964.

²⁸⁷ Larkin, *China and Africa*, 134.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa in Ghana was not accidental. These Principles were reserved for prospective recipients of an expanded 'anti-revisionist' aid effort and were meant to show that China's brand of peaceful coexistence and cooperation promised material benefits.

Despite the enthusiasm for the Eight Principles in Sub-Saharan Africa, all was not well in China's appeals. There were doubts about China's economic know-how and frustrations with its paternalism, and these issues clashed with the spirit of the Eight Principles. For instance, Nkrumah expressed some exasperation at his meetings with Zhou, whom he saw as forgetting that Ghana was by some indicators more developed than China (and even one or two European countries as well).²⁸⁸ Zhou had dedicated much of his time in Osu Castle to didactically explaining to Nkrumah how he should organise his government and economy, often quoting outdated statistics to advise Nkrumah about how to improve his five-year plans. Nkrumah patiently corrected his outdated information and humoured the discussion.²⁸⁹ Similarly, in Mali, Zhou's public appraisal of the country's progress since independence was seen as 'distinctly patronising'. Prior to that, he had refrained from any anti-Soviet polemics or criticism of the USA, and the visit was thought to have gone well. However, at the airport on the day of his departure, Zhou said that Mali's successes thus far only constituted 'an important first step'. According to Zhou, the Malian people were working with '*assiduité et application*' under their 'dynamic and competent' government, but had not yet arrived at independent development, let alone socialism. He may have intended this as a compliment, but he was seen as denying the Malian government's official position

²⁸⁸ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to Ghana January 11-16', 1964.

²⁸⁹ PRC-FMA, 203-00623-01, 14 January 1964; 203-00623-02, '周恩来总理同加纳总统恩克鲁玛会谈记录' (Record of Premier Zhou Enlai's Conversation with Ghanaian President Nkrumah), 15 January 1964.

that the country had already achieved socialism.²⁹⁰ As will be discussed in chapter four, Zhou's patronising statements at the airport laid the groundwork for the Soviet Union to improve its own relations with Bamako at Beijing's expense in 1965.

Consequently, whatever appreciation African leaders had for China's brand of aid, they also felt compelled to remind the delegation that they enjoyed a certain agency, since they could choose between aid providers. After Zhou went against the wishes of his Guinean hosts regarding criticism of the USA, high-level instructions were issued from Conakry directing the governor of Labe to 'include in his speech of welcome... a pointed passage expressing gratitude for Chinese help *and immediately following this with no less warm expressions of gratitude* for the help received from the United States, Soviet Union, West Germany, the U.A.R., Czechoslovakia, East Germany, France, Yugoslavia, Cuba, Great Britain and Hungary.'²⁹¹ Moreover, even if certain aspects of China's aid compared favourably with Soviet aid, all African countries probably felt, as Algeria did, that the Soviet Union and other providers simply had more to offer. During the visit to Ghana, Soviet Ambassador, Gyorgy Rodionov, attended all the events in the Chinese delegation's programme. According to a UK Foreign Office official present at the time, Rodionov 'busied himself in an amiable way, in minimising the significance of everything that was going on and faintly deriding the Chinese.' Among Rodionov's repeated points was that the restrained itinerary in Ghana was not because of the recent assassination attempt on Nkrumah, but because Zhou was in poor health, as evidenced by his 'little accident at Assuan'. On the arrival of the Chinese delegation in Bamako, hired youths distributed

²⁹⁰ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Report on Chou En lai's visit to Mali – Encloses programme and texts of public statements', 3 February 1964.

²⁹¹ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to Guinea – Encloses texts & joint communique and speeches exchanged', 28 January 1964. Emphasis in original. When the governor did this, it was the first time British assistance to Guinea had received any public acknowledgement by a Guinean official.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa pamphlets detailing past Soviet aid projects while the same rumours about Zhou's health were rife in the local and international press. This was all despite the fact that Zhou had not had a single documented health incident since his inopportune nosebleed on the unfinished Aswan Dam.²⁹² In any case, this all reflected how difficult it was to conceive of China offering any project of aid on the same scale as the Soviets; and Soviet operators pointed to the 'little accident' as evidence that even Zhou was bowled over by the gargantuan efforts of the Soviet Union in Africa.

Conclusion

Zhou's 'safari' to Africa had mixed results. On the one hand, Zhou was able to strengthen the personal connections between himself and African leaders through appeals to shared cultural legacies and anti-imperialist solidarity. He had an undeniable charm and was generally popular in Africa. On the other, his appeals to solidarity were contradicted by aspects not only of Beijing's foreign policy but also by the manner in which the tour was conducted. In exhibiting China's position on two border disputes that were not unlike its own with India, Zhou had alienated two nominally socialist governments in exchange for improving relations with two monarchies. Moreover, he failed to clarify for African countries why China had taken the position it had on the Sino-Indian Border War. While Zhou's tacit endorsement of Moroccan irredentist claims had a negligible impact on the almost fraternal Sino-Algerian relationship, his endorsement of Ethiopian territorial integrity had a more severe impact on Sino-Somalian relations. This was one of the most significant events that contributed to Somalia's diplomatic isolation, a process which saw it fall firmly

²⁹² TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Chou En lai's visit to Ghana January 11-16', 1964. ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-026, 83-4, 11 February 1964.

into the Soviet orbit. After being outbid in November 1963, Chinese aid to Somalia was almost exclusively humanitarian, and relations between the two countries were never more than cordial. However, the tour did present opportunities for African leaders to indicate what they wanted from China, which mainly entailed further purchase orders and an expansion of aid projects. In fact, following the tour, the total value of China's offers of aid increased to an all-time high that was not matched again until 1968.

The tour served as an important occasion to propagate the Eight Principles, and these were welcomed, especially by countries like Mali and Guinea which had already expressed their positive appraisal of China's brand of aid diplomacy. However, the Eight Principles, and their selective announcement only to Sub-Saharan Africa, betrayed a sort of paternalism on the part of the Chinese leadership. This would turn out to be an ill portent for Sino-African relations in the mid-1960s. North Africans were to be courted with symbolic appeals and given political concessions, such as support for a Belgrade II (on condition that a Bandung II was also held). Sub-Saharan African countries, on the other hand, were seen as prospective aid recipients first and foremost, if not to the exclusion of all else. However, the obtrusive security arrangements of the LSG also undermined the domestic legitimacy of African leaders, as did the paternalistic manner in which Zhou offered the Eight Principles and advised African leaders on the governance of their countries. This all contradicted the Afro-Asian spirit of solidarity that the Eight Principles were intended to symbolise.

Chapter 3: The Khrushchev-Brezhnev Interregnum, 1964-1965

Introduction

In spring 1964, just after Zhou Enlai completed his marathon tour of ten African countries, it had been nearly half a decade since the two powers had made their debuts in Sub-Saharan Africa. By October, Nikita Khrushchev, the leader who had overseen the development and implementation of the Soviet aid program for Africa, was removed from power in a palace coup. After a brief interregnum, Leonid Brezhnev, who had supervised Khrushchev's Virgin Lands Campaign in Kazakhstan between 1955 and 1956 and had visited three African countries himself in February 1961, ushered in a new era in Soviet engagement with Africa and the rest of the post-colonial world.

Over the course of the summer and fall of 1964, however, three developments pertinent to the question of Soviet aid diplomacy in Africa in the 1960s took place. Among them was the utter collapse of Sino-Soviet intraparty relations. During this time, international venues like AAPSO and the Afro-Asian Writers Association were increasingly used by the two sides to air their grievances against one another. During Zhou's tour, Beijing's representatives had reversed their original support for Soviet participation in a Second Afro-Asian Conference and had become vociferous opponents of Soviet participation in any Afro-Asian organisation on the grounds that the Soviet capital was in Europe and that the Soviet Union was therefore European. This opposition would only increase until, as is

discussed in chapter five, China withdrew entirely from Bandung II to permanently prevent Soviet participation.²⁹³

Another issue that arose during Zhou's tour was the Partial Test Ban Treaty. Throughout his 1963-1964 tour, Zhou had militated against the treaty to little avail due to its overwhelming popularity. He had also used the Test Ban Treaty as a wedge issue to establish relations with France, a fellow non-signatory. Charles de Gaulle's attempts to establish the Fifth Republic as an independent pole in the Cold War, the role of nuclear weapon's testing in this, and the fracturing of the socialist camp all had profound effects on the orientation of African governments, not least on many of the more radical Francophone ones which were the natural allies to the socialist camp.

These were no longer the 'halcyon days' of anti-imperialism in Africa, and major issues had arisen in Soviet-African relations between the Year of Africa in 1960 and Khrushchev's removal in October 1964. Chapter 1 has shown that there were numerous complaints surrounding the negotiation and implementation of Soviet aid in the early 1960s. As Mazov explores in his *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, the Soviet Union had come down with a case of 'Guinean syndrome', removing Guinea from the aid roster in September 1963 and becoming increasingly averse to pouring resources into far away African countries without reciprocal guarantees.²⁹⁴ Moreover, the spirit of Bandung and unified opposition to imperialism had given way to complex valences of non-alignment. A given African country, faced with the Cold War, the Sino-Soviet Split, the choice between a Bandung II or a Belgrade II, and any number of regional questions regarding post-colonial relationships with their former metropolises, could be once, twice, or thrice non-aligned. This dynamic proved

²⁹³ Lüthi, *Cold Wars*, 283-4.

²⁹⁴ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 196.

difficult for both the Soviet Union and China to navigate throughout the Cold War but was reaching its full force in the mid-1960s.

Before his ouster, Khrushchev was able to make two final contributions to Soviet-African relations. The first was the negotiation of an agreement in principle with the Kenyan government in April and May 1964. The actual negotiations were carried out by figures who would continue to be important into and beyond the interregnum between Khrushchev and Brezhnev; but, as will be seen, this was a defining moment for his troubled place in the history of Soviet-African relations. The second was his first and only visit to the African continent. In May 1964, Khrushchev made a much-publicised journey to the UAR to meet face to face with Nasser and assess the progress of the Aswan High Dam. With this visit, Khrushchev was able to advertise the fruits of Soviet aid to the world, much as Zhou had tried to do for China's aid with his tour and the announcement of the Eight Principles months earlier. It is on these two contributions that the first part of this chapter will focus.

The second part of the chapter will investigate two key elements of Soviet engagement with Africa around the time of the interregnum between Khrushchev and Brezhnev. The first is the continued implementation of agreements made between Khrushchev's government and African governments following his ouster. The second is the evolution of its propaganda efforts and its promotion of non-capitalist development through the media. It will be shown that, prior to Khrushchev's removal, a transformation was occurring in Soviet institutional understandings of Africa and that this transformation foreshadowed the changes to come under Brezhnev.

Khrushchev's Final Contributions to Soviet-African Relations

The Negotiation of the May 1964 Soviet-Kenyan Agreement

Throughout 1964, Soviet aid agreements continued to be signed and implemented largely as before Zhou's 1963-1964 tour. Among the most significant agreements negotiated towards the end of Khrushchev's tenure was with Kenyan Vice-President and fervent anti-imperialist, Oginga Odinga. Odinga arrived in Moscow on 18 April 1964, Khrushchev's seventy-first birthday, before leaving the Soviet Union for Beijing on 2 May. Odinga's visit was overshadowed in the Soviet press by intra-camp politics, the Vietnam War, and the arrival of Algerian President, Ahmed Ben Bella, later that month. Nonetheless, Odinga's delegation received high level treatment throughout his visit. He was seated at Khrushchev's right hand atop Lenin's Mausoleum for the May Day festivities where he listened to Ben Bella's speech celebrating the achievements of socialism in the Soviet Union.²⁹⁵ Prior to this, he was given a tour of the Russian metropolises of Moscow and Leningrad as well as Georgia's capital Tbilisi and Tashkent, Uzbekistan, the showpiece of Soviet non-capitalist development.²⁹⁶ He was accompanied on his tour of the Soviet Union and China by Kenyan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joseph Murumbi, and Minister of Health, Ndojorogo Mungai. They met with not only Khrushchev but also with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrei Gromkyo, with the future head of the Africa department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Y. A. Malik, and with the former Deputy Chair of the Council of Ministers, Iosif Kuzmin.

²⁹⁵ «Известия» (*Izvestiia*), № 105, 1 May 1964. *Pravda*, № 123, 2 May 1964.

²⁹⁶ «Советско-Кенийское Коммюнике», *Pravda*, № 139, 18 May 1964. Ben Bella's visit to Tashkent was given front page coverage in *Pravda*. «Узбекистан тепло встречает гостей из Алжира», *Pravda*, № 120, 29 April 1964.



7 Odinga, Khrushchev, and Ben Bella celebrating May Day atop Lenin's Mausoleum in Moscow's Red Square. *Izvestiia*, № 105, 1 May 1964.

The delegation also met with former chairman of Gosplan and future Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Alexei Kosygin; chairman of the State Committee on Foreign Economic Relations of the Council of Ministers, S. A. Skachkov; and historian and head of the CPSU-CC International Department, Boris Ponomaryov.²⁹⁷ Between 18 April and 2 May, then, the Kenyan delegation arranged for the provision of a number of significant technical assistance loans for a variety of projects primarily focused on agriculture, textiles, and food processing. In addition to this project aid, Moscow would later append the grant aid of a hospital staffed with Soviet doctors for two years, in time for the Soviet-Kenyan Joint Communiqué detailing

²⁹⁷ 'Прием Н.С. Хрущевым', *Pravda*, № 112, 21 April 1964.

the results of the trip. The prospective agreement also included the construction of a radio station and as well as an entire technical college for 1000 students in grant aid.²⁹⁸

The agricultural, textile, and food processing projects were characteristic of Soviet project aid across the continent at the time. The food processing projects enabled the countries to not only shore up their domestic markets but also to process goods for export, a key step to fulfilling the Soviet trade protocols which undergirded Soviet technical assistance. As explored in the first chapter, Soviet agreements were accompanied by protocols which placed import and export quotas upon recipient governments, obliging them to export particular commodities to the Soviet Union as well as to import from it. Fulfilling these protocols – using local or international currency to purchase the defined imports and delivering the required exports – was the means that Soviet loans were repaid. In addition to serving a similar economic role, cotton and other textiles had become symbolic of the development of Central Asia and were therefore prevalent in Soviet-African agreements as well. Between 1964 and 1965, as will be discussed in greater detail below, assistance in the construction of such projects was rendered to Algeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Uganda. Food-processing plants, textile factories, and agricultural equipment were just some of the many accoutrements of modernity the Soviet Union attempted to render to African countries alongside infrastructural projects as large as deep water ports and as small as credits for the purchase of buses.

To Khrushchev's approval, prior to departing for Beijing on 2 May, Odinga endorsed the Test Ban Treaty. This endorsement was clearly expressed in the final joint communique later that month. It was an important issue for Khrushchev. During their meetings,

²⁹⁸ 'Советско-Кенийское Коммюнике', *Pravda*, № 139, 18 May 1964.

Khrushchev told Odinga, 'The Americans are *not* a paper tiger' and spoke at length on the horrors of nuclear war, using models of Soviet rockets on his desk to demonstrate. The impact that de Gaulle's rejection of the Test Ban Treaty and Zhou's tour had had on Sino-French relations had not gone unnoticed by Khrushchev, who told Odinga, unprompted, 'I know that de Gaulle would fight with the Americans against me if war comes; but yesterday I sent him a telegram congratulating him on his recovery from his prostate operation'.²⁹⁹ Another issue of importance to Khrushchev was to get an invitation for the Soviet Union to attend a Bandung II conference. Khrushchev stressed to Odinga his conviction that the Soviet Union was an Asian power and should therefore participate.³⁰⁰ In the end, the brief Kenyan joint communique did not raise the matter at all.

In his attempt to balance between the two socialist patron states, Odinga moved on to Beijing.³⁰¹ While there, Odinga's delegation were also received with top-level treatment, but their arrival was overshadowed, this time by the publication in the Chinese press of the seven letters exchanged by the CPSU and the CCP, a landmark in the polemics between the Soviet Union and China which marked the end of interparty relations. The delegation met with all high-level Chinese leaders including Zhou Enlai, Chen Yi, Minister of Finance, Li Xiannian, who like Odinga was Vice-President, and Minister of the Interior, Zeng Shan, and with Mao himself on 9 May in Shanghai.³⁰² During the visit, Odinga's hosts disparaged their Soviet rivals as pernicious and controlling. The Kenyan Ambassador to Beijing reported to his counterpart at the British chargé d'affaire's office that 'no effort was spared to inculcate in the visitors the belief, supported by detailed stories of bitter Chinese experience, that Soviet

²⁹⁹ TNA, DO 213-214, 17 July 1964 letter from B.L. Crowe.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ 'Советско-Кенийское Коммюнике', *Pravda*, № 139, 18 May 1964.

³⁰² TNA, DO 213-214, 'Visit of Kenyan Delegation to China', 27 May 1964. MZDNP, vol. 5, 347.

aid is fraudulent and that acceptance of it spells disaster for all but the most circumspect recipient.' The ambassador later said that throughout the delegation's tour, the Chinese hosts had spoken at length about their experience of Soviet aid, taking the Korean War loans as one example, and that they 'emphasized the unwisdom of becoming dependent on the U.S.S.R.'³⁰³

This time, Odinga's delegation did not have to share the limelight with Ben Bella during his public appearances. On May Day in Moscow Odinga was not given the opportunity to speak. In Beijing, he was given the honour of speaking at length at a 6 May event at the Great Hall of the People organised by the Chinese-African People's Friendship Association. Odinga, after excoriating British imperialism, emphasised struggle, not peaceful coexistence. He insisted that the remaining African countries that were not yet independent or were under the domination of settler-colonial regimes would not be free 'until the Independent African States jointly are prepared to wage war.' He went further, addressing the crowd, saying that 'the war needs your help.'³⁰⁴ During the exceedingly friendly visit, the Kenyan delegation was offered a surprise \$15 million in aid agreements. Among the projects was a largescale irrigation project that was in direct competition with the one on offer by the Soviet Union.³⁰⁵

Odinga's return to Moscow on 11 May 1964 was given little publicity in the Soviet press. The fact that he had returned from Beijing was not mentioned at all. The two aid offers from the two powers were in direct competition with one another precisely at the moment when the Sino-Soviet dispute was being aired in the Chinese press. In a counteroffer, in time for the 18 May joint communique, the Soviet Union appended the

³⁰³ TNA, DO 213-214, 'From Peking to Foreign Office', 13 May 1964.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 'The Speech Delivered by the Leader of the Kenya Government Delegation, the Hon. Oginga Odinga, Minister for Home Affairs, at a Rally at the Hall of Chinese Peoples Political Consultative Conference, Peking', 6 May 1964.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 'Visit of Kenyan Delegation to China', 27 May 1964.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa

above-mentioned hospital staffed by Soviet doctors for two years. This offer delighted Minister of Health, Mungai, as did the offer of educational opportunities. He told his hosts: 'It is more useful for an African to study in the USSR than in any other country.'³⁰⁶ Moscow's leaders were doubtless pleased and took note of this remark. Aside from Mungai and Odinga however, others in the delegation and in the Kenyan government were troubled by the journey. Odinga's enthusiasm for China was not shared by his counterparts in Nairobi. According to a Commonwealth Relations Office official who reported on the delegation's return, Foreign Affairs Minister Murumbi 'was most unhappy throughout the tour'. He found China's rhetoric surrounding the Soviet Union 'racialist', vulgar, and unhelpful for Kenya.

(H)e disliked the racialism in Chinese advocacy of a line-up of coloured people against whites (including Russians). He told the Chinese that this was quite contrary to Kenya policy.³⁰⁷

Indeed, Kenyatta waited until Odinga was in Beijing to express approval for the Soviet offer, the implicit indication being that his government did not share Beijing's perspective on the Sino-Soviet dispute.

Furthermore, Odinga had not been authorised to sign any agreements, so despite their seeming generosity, the projects offered by the Soviet Union posed a distinct challenge to Kenyatta's government. Aside from the radio station, neither Odinga nor Murumbi had been briefed on the possibility of including the other projects in the national development plan, nor had they been authorised to pursue such projects. There was the concern that recurrent costs tied to the agreements would have a negative impact on the Kenyan budget. In particular, Deputy Chief of the US Mission in Nairobi, James R. Ruchti, believed that the

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 'Letter from B.L. Crowe', 21 May 1964.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 'Russian Aid to Kenya', 19 May 1964.

implications of the offers were 'disturbing'. He understood that Kenyan officials worried that 'Kenya would be bound to accept them, leading to a distortion in the Development Plan, whereafter the West might be approached for further assistance to restore balance... or take up recurrent costs of Communist projects.'³⁰⁸

This was also part of a longer story of the conflict between Odinga and President Kenyatta, since aid from the socialist camp enabled Odinga to gain more leverage in Kenyan politics. In the opinion of Wendell B. Coote, Deputy Director of the Office of East and South African Affairs, 'Odinga had been able to score a personal victory despite Kenyatta's apparent desire to keep him in place.'³⁰⁹ This victory, however, like the agreements themselves, was not to last. The projects agreed to by Khrushchev and Odinga in April 1964 were never implemented as written. In May 1965, Nairobi rejected a shipment of Soviet arms on the grounds that they were shoddy and second-hand. An editorial in the Swahili newspaper, *Taifa Leo* (The Nation Today), used the 'gift of arms' to criticise Soviet aid more generally, saying, 'It is obvious that when one wants to give a gift to his friend, he gives a good and necessary gift and does not "give it just for the sake of giving".'³¹⁰ This very public spat occurred while the Kenyatta government attempted to renegotiate the agreement arranged by Odinga. Nearly two years later in February 1966, Kenyan Minister of Justice, Tom Mboya, said that the agricultural, textile, and food processing technical assistance projects had all been deleted outright, leaving only the grant aid projects of the technical college and the hospital as possibilities. Even the technical college had been downgraded to

³⁰⁸ TNA, DO 213-214, 'Odinga's Visits to Moscow and Peking', 26 May 1964.

³⁰⁹ TNA, DO 213-213, 'Telegram to Foreign Office', 1 June 1964.

³¹⁰ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, 1958-1966, Country Files, Kenya, Pol – 2 Kenya-USSR, 3 May 1965.

two smaller secondary schools at the behest of the Kenyan side.³¹¹ As regards the competing Chinese offers, they were never pursued because Sino-Kenyan relations deteriorated through the 1960s and 1970s as Kenyatta sought to neutralise rivals like Odinga and leftist dissident forces in his country, many of whom had an affinity for China's interpretation of socialism.³¹²

Nevertheless, for Khrushchev, Odinga's visit presented the opportunity to privately discuss the Soviet position in the Sino-Soviet dispute.³¹³ More importantly, he was able to trade Soviet largesse for Kenya's support for the Test Ban Treaty. Despite Odinga's affinity for Beijing's brand of Marxism-Leninism, the size and scope of Soviet assistance on offer, in addition to the greater prestige of the Soviet Union in the world at large, meant he had to balance between the two providers in his attempt to use foreign offers of assistance as leverage for greater power in Kenyan politics.

³¹¹ NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, 1946-1984, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, February 1-28, 1966.

³¹² Jodie Yuzhou Sun, '“Now the Cry was Communism”: The Cold War and Kenya's Relations with China, 1964-1970', *Cold War History* 20, no. 1 (2020): 19.

³¹³ Indeed, the Soviet-Kenyan joint communique highlighted that the two leaders dedicated time to discussing 'Sino-Soviet relations and other such international problems'. 'Советско-Кенийское Коммюнике', *Pravda*, № 139, 18 May 1964.



8 Illustrated map of Khrushchev's itinerary in the UAR as printed in *Izvestiia*. His journey began with his arrival in Alexandria before he travelled to Cairo by car. From Cairo, he flew to and from the Aswan High Dam Project, after which he visited Suez and Port Said before embarking for home again from Alexandria. *Izvestiia*, № 123, 23 May 1964.

Khrushchev's First and Last Visit to Africa

Khrushchev visited the UAR for fifteen days in May 1964, only three months after Zhou's departure from East Africa that February. Khrushchev's two-week visit received extensive front-page coverage in the UAR. On 10 May, he disembarked from the *Armenia* in the port of Alexandria where he and Gromkyo were met by Nasser himself.³¹⁴ As he toured the country, visiting projects constructed and manned by Soviet personnel, as well as cultural

³¹⁴ 'Салют Нации в Александрийском Порту', *Pravda*, № 131, 10 May 1964.

and political sites such as the national museum and the Egyptian parliament, the Soviet press was replete with depictions of thronging crowds welcoming their prestigious guest in 'thunderous salutation of the nation'. Throughout his visit to Cairo, banners reading 'Moscow, Cairo – Peace, Friendship!' were hung along thoroughfares and at the entrances to sites on the itinerary.³¹⁵ The road between Cairo and Alexandria was dubbed 'the road of friendship'.³¹⁶ A special correspondent for *Izvestiia* reported on the second day of the trip,

Wherever he appears, wherever his path runs, everywhere he is greeted by thousands and hundreds of thousands of people. How many of them greeted the dear guest in Alexandria, on the way to Cairo, and finally in the capital itself – a million, one and a half, two – is impossible to establish. Newspapers have lost count.³¹⁷

An iconic image from the trip snapped by a *Pravda* photographer shows Khrushchev and Nasser sitting side by side in a convertible escorted by a fleet of motorcycles driven by UAR police in dress uniform. *Reuters* footage of Khrushchev's open carriage ride alongside Nasser shows enthusiastic Egyptian citizens breaking through the motorcade and mobbing the convertible in an ebullient show of welcome to the Soviet leader, who, unbeknownst to them, was only months away from being removed from office.³¹⁸

³¹⁵ 'Москва, Каир – Мир, Дружба', *Pravda*, № 134, 13 May 1964.

³¹⁶ 'Сердца открыты друзьям', *Pravda*, № 143, 22 May 1964.

³¹⁷ 'Слава Братства Звучат в Парламенте ОАР', *Izvestiia*, № 112, 11 May 1964.

³¹⁸ 'Egypt: Tumultuous Welcome for Mr. Khrushchev in Alexandria and Cairo', *Reuters*, 10 May 1964.



9 Khrushchev waves to the assembled crowds from an open car in a Cairo motorcade. *Pravda*, № 144, 23 May 1964.

Multiple African and Arab leaders took the occasion of Khrushchev's visit to the UAR to send delegations to meet with him. Kwame Nkrumah sent cordial greetings on behalf of not only Ghana but all of Africa, and his letter was reprinted in full on the front page of *Izvestiia*.³¹⁹ Regional leaders like the North Yemeni President, Abdullah al-Sallal, and Iraqi President, Abdul Salam Arif, accompanied him throughout the tour. *Pravda* lauded the visit as 'historic' the day after Khrushchev's return to Moscow on 25 May.³²⁰ It was notable that despite having ample print space, the Soviet press demurred from using Khrushchev's trip to explicitly counter the Chinese tour. Rather than answer the Chinese challenge directly, the Soviet press focused on illustrating the benefits of close cooperation with the Soviet Union.

³¹⁹ 'Великое прошлое, светлое настоящее', *Izvestiia*, № 113, 12 May 1964.

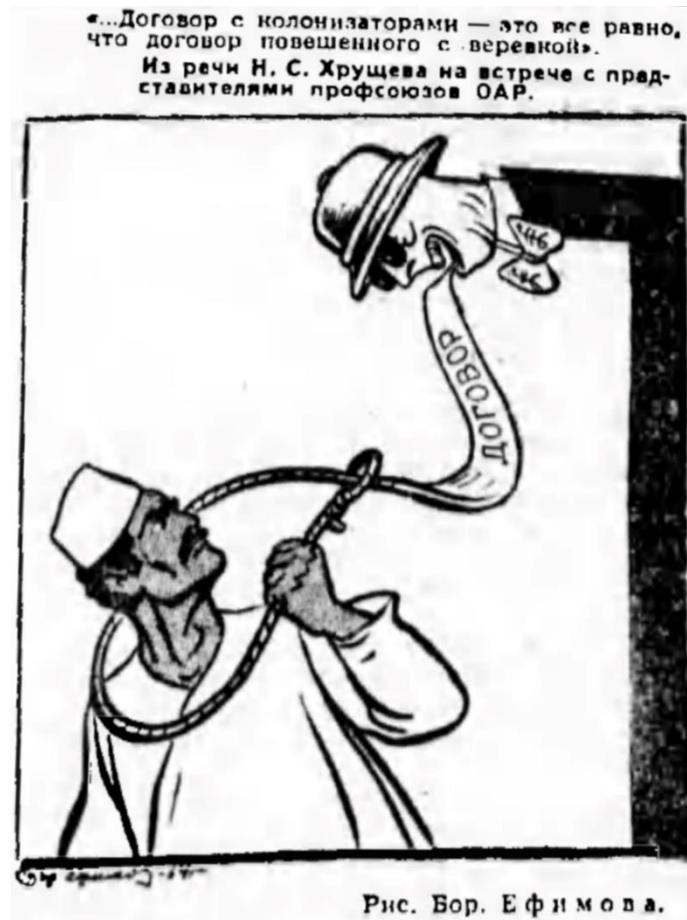
³²⁰ 'Исторический визит', *Pravda*, № 147, 26 May 1964.

Throughout the visit, the Soviet press exuded Schadenfreude at the anxiety exhibited by the Western media. *Pravda* quoted a *New York Times* editorial on the visit stating that 'The old US policy towards Nasser has gone bankrupt' before quoting the Cairo-based *Al-Gumhuriya* rebuttal that 'it only had itself to blame' because it had 'remained imperialist'.³²¹ Khrushchev's visit was seen as significant in the region, especially in view of the civil war that had broken out in North Yemen. In February 1964, Nasser renewed his attack on the British presence in the Arab world, demanding the liquidation of all British and US military bases in Libya in particular and on Arab soil more generally.³²² The fact that North Yemeni President, Abdullah al-Sallal, travelled with Abdul Salam Arif, a fellow Nasserist, to see Khrushchev in the UAR 'upset the enemies of the Soviet Union'. According to *Pravda*, 'the British bourgeois press is full of panicky articles in which the authors try to prove the need to keep Aden under British control, in view of, they say, the value of this base for NATO.' *Pravda* noted that the *New York Times* had picked up this line of reasoning in the British press, adding that not only was Aden a key base for NATO but that it was also central to all Western oil supply lines from the Arab Peninsula and the Persian Gulf. To this, *Pravda* quipped, 'So this is where the dog is buried!'³²³

³²¹ 'Сердца открыты друзьям', *Pravda*, № 143, 22 May 1964.

³²² 'Nasser Asks Libya to Eliminate U.S. and British Military Bases', *The New York Times*, 23 February 1964.

³²³ 'Сердца открыты друзьям', *Pravda*, № 143, 22 May 1964.



10 Cartoon by renowned Soviet political cartoonist Boris Efimov (1900-2008) depicting an imperialist attempting to ensnare the UAR with the empty words of an agreement. The caption above, drawn from a speech delivered by Khrushchev in the UAR and based on a famous quip by Lenin about capitalists selling the very rope they are to be hanged with, reads, 'Agreements with colonialists are all the same. They are like the agreement of a hanged man with a rope.' *Izvestiia*, № 122, 22 May 1964.

The Soviet-constructed Aswan High Dam, the largest aid project on the continent at that time, was the crown jewel of Khrushchev's journey and the centrepiece of the Soviet media's criticism of Western assistance. The completion of the first stage of its construction was the official reason for Khrushchev's visit. Soon after arriving, he was ferried to Aswan on the *Ramses*, the last steamboat to traverse from the Lower to the Upper Nile and back.

Here, he was shown the project as Soviet and UAR technicians worked together towards its completion. In addition to highlighting the unprecedented enthusiasm with which Khrushchev continued to be received, an *Izvestiia* special correspondent detailed how the USA and UK had endeavoured since 1952 to use the dam project to 'lure' Egypt 'into economic bondage'. The USA and the UK had both offered \$200 million in loans in addition to sponsoring the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development to extend a loan of \$300 million, but all this assistance, according to *Izvestiia*, was tied to 'onerous conditions, both economic and political'. *Izvestiia* further quoted the Cairo-based *Arab Observer* which wrote that all Western aid offers at that time were nothing more than 'a series of behind-the-scenes manoeuvres by John Foster Dulles'. In the correspondent's estimation, the day came when Cairo 'realised' that only the socialist camp could provide the sort of 'truly fraternal and effective' assistance that it sought.³²⁴

Before his departure on 25 May, Khrushchev and Nasser were photographed sitting side by side at the president's residence in Alexandria signing the lengthy Soviet-UAR Joint Communiqué.³²⁵ The communiqué summarised Khrushchev's journey, noting his encounters with North African and Arab leaders before dedicating several entire paragraphs to the Soviet Union's role in the Suez Crisis. This served as the background for the communiqué's substantive positions on aid to the UAR, Bandung II, Belgrade II, the Test Ban Treaty, and ongoing territorial disputes between African countries.³²⁶ On each of these points, Nasser and Khrushchev were able to find common ground, unlike Zhou, for whom some of these issues had been irreconcilable with Chinese interests. In finding common

³²⁴ 'Здравствуй, великая плотина!', *Izvestiia*, № 114, 13 May 1964.

³²⁵ 'Беседа Н.С. Хрущева с Гамаль Абдель Насером', *Pravda*, № 145, 24 May 1964.

³²⁶ 'Совместное заявление о переговорах между председателем совета министров СССР Н.С. Хрущевым и президентом ОАР Гамаль Абдель Насером', *Izvestiia*, № 124, 25 May 1964.

ground, the UAR strengthened the Soviet position in Africa in three ways. First, the communique lauded Soviet aid, enumerating some seventy projects that had been completed in addition to the first stage of the Aswan dam, plus nearly one hundred industrial sites that were still in progress. It also enumerated many dozens of planned fulfilments of orders for heavy equipment. It endorsed an expanded role for the UN Conference on Trade and Development, Moscow's preferred alternative to the World Bank. Throughout, without going as far as to explicitly criticise Western aid, it decried the 'psychological war' being waged by the West against the economic development and political independence of the UAR since the Suez Canal crisis.

Second, the communique expressed unreserved support for the Test Ban Treaty and endorsed nuclear free zones in not only Africa but also Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and Asia. This was significant considering subtleties found in the Sino-UAR joint communique just months before. The latter had only supported Africa becoming a nuclear free zone, not Asia. That communique had reflected the all-or-nothing position Beijing used to justify its continued nuclear aspirations.³²⁷ Now, in a reversal of that support, Nasser endorsed the progress made by the Test Ban Treaty and implicitly called on the PRC to abandon its newfound status as a nuclear power.

Third and most crucially, Khrushchev was able to lay the ground for Soviet participation in a prospective Second Afro-Asian Conference by ingratiating himself with Nasser. Not wanting to fall behind Zhou, Khrushchev enhanced Nasser's domestic and political legitimacy and made a major concession on a matter particularly important to him, namely, the Algerian-Moroccan and the Somali-Ethiopian disputes discussed in the last

³²⁷ TNA, Foreign Office (FO) 371-175919, 'Joint Communique of the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the United Arab Republic', 24 December 1963.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa chapter. The communique endorsed the peaceful settlement of all territorial disputes between African governments, explicitly naming these and agreeing with the conclusion reached by the OAU. Nasser had offered to mediate in both disputes, and for this he enjoyed the Soviet Union's support. In a major concession which paralleled the one made by Zhou months earlier, Khrushchev 'noted' the achievements of the first Belgrade Conference and, remarkably, stated that Belgrade II should be held in Cairo. In return, the communique characterised the Soviet Union as both a European and an Asian power in the breath as it described the UAR as both an African and an Asian power. This was something that the Soviet joint communiques with Kenya and Algeria had not been able to secure. This moved the Soviet Union closer to being eligible to attend a Bandung II. Nasser announced his intention to attend the planned Bandung II that was being planned for March 1965 while Khrushchev stated that the conference enjoyed the full support of the Soviet Union. The communique insisted that in order for a Bandung II to be successful, 'all' African and Asian powers had to participate, a point which could be read as tacit support for the Soviet Union's participation given Nasser's acceptance of the Soviet Union as a Eurasian power.

The boisterous reception and grand media spectacle of Khrushchev's tour belied a simmering disagreement between the Soviet leader and his Nasserist counterparts. Nasser and the Iraqi President were at odds with one another on a number of minor issues, but Arif and Khrushchev positively despised one another. Despite styling himself a socialist, Arif was wary of Soviet meddling in Iraqi Kurdistan after the 1963 Ramadan Revolution, and Khrushchev was deeply dismayed by the reprisals carried out by Arif against progressive forces in Iraq following the coup which brought him to power. Finding he was to be seated beside Arif at the welcoming banquet, Khrushchev told Nasser, 'This is very distasteful.

According to our information, Aref has arrested or killed a lot of people. It is distasteful even to sit next to such a person.'³²⁸ Nasser reassured Khrushchev again and again that he was an ally, but failed to convince him. After being egged on by both Ben Bella and Nasser, Khrushchev engaged in a public polemic with Arif during their speeches at Aswan, using 'arguments that are elementary for Marxists' to decry his calls for Arab unity that day as reactionary opportunism.³²⁹ A focal point for the disagreements between Khrushchev, Nasser, and Arif was the significance of the Aswan Dam itself. Throughout the trip, Nasser and Arif characterised the dam as a 'symbol of Arab unity and nationalism'. Much in the same way as he was suspicious of Nasserist Pan-Arabism, Khrushchev was dissatisfied with the way that Nasser and Arif represented the Aswan Dam in their speeches at the dam and elsewhere during his tour. For the UAR and the pro-Nasserist wing of the Iraqi government, the Soviet-built dam represented Pan-Arab unity, symbolized by the stars on the tricolours of the UAR, post-1961 Syria, Iraq, and North Yemen. For Khrushchev, however, who bickered angrily with Arif during a ninety-minute conversation over this question, the dam represented the fruits of socialist development and proletarian internationalism, not the narrow Arab nationalism of Nasserist technocrats. During this argument, Khrushchev again publicly scolded Arif, whom he considered to be a 'limited person', saying that the Nasserists were too focused on 'Arab unity and nationalism' and should instead work harder to 'unite

³²⁸ Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 832. Why Khrushchev would take special exception to Arif's purging of 'progressive forces' in his memoirs is curious considering the high esteem with which he held both Nasser and Ben Bella, two other leaders who routinely suppressed their local communists. Immediately following his initial reflection on his utter distaste for Arif, Khrushchev explains his affinity for Ben Bella, who was 'well informed on questions of socialist construction and of Marxism', pointing to the fact that the Algerian Communist Party, while illegal, was informally allowed to operate freely in Algeria under his leadership. But this does not explain why he was so impressed with Nasser, who had brutally and repeatedly clamped down on communists in 1950s and 60s and expressly refused to allow them the same sort of informal freedom enjoyed by their counterparts in Algeria. Khrushchev does briefly mention that he acquired assurances from Cairo prior to his visit that Egyptian communists would be released from prison prior to his visit, but says little else on the matter, neglecting even to mention that his request to lift the ban on Syrian communists was angrily rebuffed by Nasser in 1958. See Saïd K. Aburish, *Nasser: The Last Arab* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2004), 163.

³²⁹ Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 836.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa the workers of the world.'³³⁰ Ultimately, Nasser and Khrushchev were able to compromise on both Arif and the dam. Receiving assurances from Ben Bella that Arif would be a valuable partner against the West, Khrushchev said, 'If you were born stupid, your father would go on cursing you' (Коли глупым ты родился, всегда отец бранился).³³¹ The meaning of this was that there was no point in continuing to squabble with Arif. Similarly, the dam could serve as a material testament to both Arab unity and socialism. In the end, the joint communique called the dam 'the most grandiose dam on the African continent and the only one of its kind in the whole world' and 'a living symbol of the policy of peaceful coexistence and fruitful cooperation' between the USSR and the UAR.³³² It was a fitting advertisement both of Soviet assistance to Africa and of the achievements of the UAR's post-colonial development. Four months later, Nasser sent a letter to Khrushchev which was reprinted in *Izvestiia* calling the dam 'a symbol of brotherhood and friendship' between the Soviet Union and the UAR.³³³

Of course, relations between the two countries could not be reduced to brotherhood and friendship; but in contrast to Zhou's troubled tour, Khrushchev received an unparalleled welcome and achieved several concrete diplomatic goals. In addition to drawing attention to the scope of Soviet aid to the continent both in the spectacle of the dam and in the enumeration of Soviet assistance found in the joint communique, Khrushchev had garnered support for the already popular Test Ban Treaty and established support for Soviet participation in a Bandung II. He was able to do so because the boisterous nature of the visit had done much to add to Nasser's domestic legitimacy and regional prestige, something that

³³⁰ *Ibid*, 837. 'Khrushchev Talks with Arif in Cairo; Meeting Said to Take Chill Off Relations with Iraq', *The New York Times*, 21 May 1964.

³³¹ Khrushchev, *Statesman*, 837.

³³² 'Совместное заявление', *Izvestiia*, № 124, 25 May 1964.

³³³ 'Символ братства и дружбы', *Izvestiia*, № 226, 21 September 1964.

cannot be said about Zhou's trip months earlier. The trip also served as a major media spectacle for domestic consumption in the Soviet Union, displaying the difference between Soviet and Western aid both at home and abroad. Despite these successes, this 'historic visit' was to be one of Khrushchev's last achievements.

Changes and Continuities Across the Khrushchev-Brezhnev Interregnum

Issues in Fulfilling Soviet Aid Agreements from 1964-1965

On the whole, the wide variety of Soviet projects in Africa continued to be fulfilled in this period, and a further series of agreements were signed with the more moderate or pro-Western African governments of Senegal, Niger, Dahomey, Cameroon, and others.³³⁴

Towards the end of 1964, however, persistent issues in the fulfilment of Soviet aid commitments arose. As shown above, Soviet aid to Africa was comprehensive and included everything from finished commodities and set equipment, to complex multi-stage technical assistance projects, to the establishment of educational and political institutions. With greater complexity came more potential problems. Machine parts, for example, that were needed to fulfil Soviet agreements with African countries had been in short supply under Khrushchev, but in 1965 these supply chain failures became increasingly prevalent. A central problem were chronic failures to meet delivery targets. This was sometimes due to incongruities in the delivery schedule operative in the Soviet Union and those set down in the assistance agreements. For instance, according to a 1963 agreement, two rotor excavators were to be delivered to Mali at the beginning of 1964. However, because Mali required versions outfitted for tropical environments, delivery was delayed until March because these

³³⁴ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, 1958-1966, Country Files, Senegal, Pol Senegal-USSR. April 1963.

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versions were only produced in specific Soviet factories during certain months of the year.³³⁵ In addition, many of the spare parts needed for Ghana and other Anglophone African countries were non-standard because imperial units had not yet been completely phased out. This required special adaptation in Soviet plants.

The growing number of aid agreements commitments meant that even the supply of basic components came under pressure. In the summer before the removal of Khrushchev, delays in providing a whole range of components as simple as wires, valves, and switches jeopardized the timely construction and equipping of a polytechnic institute and a stadium in Guinea. In June 1964, Skachkov requested guidance from then First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Anastas Mikoyan, on what to do about factories in Guinea that were not being built by the agreed deadlines. Mikoyan and Skachkov then contacted all the Sovnarkhozy involved, officially instructing them on behalf of the All-Soviet Council of Ministers to ensure the delivery of various rudimentary and specialised components.³³⁶ In total, there were eleven Sovnarkhozy responsible for the factories which had yet to fulfil their orders. The orders included valves, generators, transformers, radio equipment, tachometers, as well as all kinds of minor electrical components. The components were required from factories as far away as Novosibirsk, Kiev, Kharkov, or Dnepropetrovsk. After some delay and the personal intervention of leading members of the Soviet government, the projects were completed in time for a fall opening.³³⁷ Even with the intervention of the Council of Ministers, however, subsequent projects were not completed on time.

³³⁵ GARF, f. 5446, o. 98, d. 1483, l. 10, February 1964.

³³⁶ GARF, f. 5446, o. 98, d. 1483, l. 19-30, June 1964.

³³⁷ 'Меняется облик Гвинеи', *Pravda*, № 47, 16 February 1965.

Supply difficulties grew elsewhere. One of the most notable failures occurred in Ghana, one of the Soviet Union's closest partners in Africa. In February 1965, it became clear that a number of projects were in jeopardy. An insufficient allocation of funds by the relevant Sovnarkhozy meant the delivery of a shipment of three buses to Accra due in August 1965 was imperilled. The funds initially allocated for the buses were spent on other materials and on the costs of technical assistance in geological exploration, and the trade protocols meant to fund local costs (such as technician salaries) were inadequate. The problem of budget shortfalls was persistent in Soviet aid across Africa. On behalf of the State Committee, Ivan Arkhipov requested that the All-Soviet Council of Ministers 'oblige' the Sovnarkhozy in question to supply the requested buses by the end of 1965.³³⁸

Another project which faced difficulties was the provision of a cannery plant due in the first half of 1966. Such plants were crucial to the repayment of Soviet loans, as without them, goods could not be brought to the international market. The plant's machinery was to be constructed by the Kuibyshev Simferopol Food Machinery Plant but was not anticipated to meet the schedule set by the agreement. This problem was initially brought to the attention of the Council of Ministers in late May 1965 by an official in the Ukrainian Black Sea Region Sovnarkhoz. The All-Union Council of Ministers directed the Kuibyshev plant to accelerate production on 9 June 1965. However, by 18 June, the Black Sea Sovnarkhoz informed the All-Union Council of Ministers that the order could not be fulfilled by the Kuibyshev plant. According to the letter:

³³⁸ GARF, f. 5446, o. 99, d. 1505, l. 6, February 1965. I could not verify whether or not the Council of Ministers did indeed 'oblige' the Sovnarkhozy of the USSR to furnish the funds for the buses or the buses themselves, but the slip indicating agreement by one member of the Council of Members or another which normally follows such requests was not included in the *delo*, suggesting they may have disregarded the request.

Despite the timely placement of orders for components for the equipment to be sent to the Republic of Ghana, the supplier plants repeatedly refused to supply them and some returned orders contrary to those made by the Council of Ministers.³³⁹

The latter ordered numerous Sovnarkhozy and ministries to take measures to accelerate the provision of the required components two weeks after receiving this news.³⁴⁰ But in August, the Black Sea Sovnarkhoz informed the All-Union Council that because they still lacked the specified components to complete their part of the project, 'the execution of the specified task is threatened with failure'.³⁴¹ Ultimately, the plant was one in a large number of so-called 'bearded projects' – or unfinished projects – left behind after Nkrumah was unseated in 1966.

The supply chain failures may partly have resulted from Kosygin's economic reforms which decentralised authority over production down to the enterprises themselves, a factor that David Engerman highlights as having had a negative effect on Soviet aid to India during this period.³⁴² This decentralisation resulted in changes in the decision-making structures which determined production. These changes created problems in domestic production and supply, consequently disrupting the fulfilment of aid agreements. As discussed in chapter 1, bilateral trade was supposed to fund aid projects, with the cost and the repayment of the associated loans covered by protocols that set out targets for the sale of Soviet commodities to Africa and the import of African commodities to the Soviet Union. The terms of the May 1964 Soviet-Kenyan agreement exposed the practical difficulties of this arrangement. One of the technical assistance projects, a proposed irrigation scheme for the Kano Plains, was estimated to necessitate the local sale of about \$17 million worth of Soviet goods in four years. Tom Mboya and other Kenyan officials held that this was impossible, as this was an

³³⁹ *Ibid*, ll. 15-22, June 1965.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid*, ll. 24-5, June 25, 1965.

³⁴¹ *Ibid*, l. 59, 19 August 1965.

³⁴² Engerman, *The Price of Aid*, 292-3.

enormous sum to be absorbed by an economy such as Kenya's. This situation was exacerbated by Kenya's reliance on the East African Shilling instead of a sovereign currency, a problem for other African governments as well.³⁴³

By Khrushchev's final year, a number of Soviet aid recipients had begun requesting an amelioration of the import quotas specified in the trade protocols, or, in other words, debt relief. Among the earliest was a 1964 request from Mali regarding its national airline, Air Mali. As of January 1964, Air Mali owed the Soviet Aviaexport 865,700 rubles for the salaries of Soviet personnel and for repair costs due to persistent budget shortfalls brought on by the inability of the trade protocols to cover local costs. Aviaexport conveyed a request to the Trade Advisor of the Soviet Union in Mali, suggesting he advise the All-Union Council of Ministers on measures for handling Mali's growing debt burden. The Soviet Embassy in Mali thereby made a number of proposals, including that the Malian airline be granted an outright cancellation on the three previous years of debt.³⁴⁴ Initially, the Ministry of Foreign Trade rejected this idea, encouraging a rescheduling of debt repayments across the subsequent three years instead.³⁴⁵ However, they would ultimately become more compliant. This may have been because West Africa had become increasingly contested by China, the Soviet Union, and the USA. Since its tumultuous independence and feud with the more pro-Western Senegal in 1961, Mali had been provided waivers to receive US military aid not normally on offer to the more Marxist-aligned states of West Africa.³⁴⁶ This was in part due to its relatively limited territorial aspirations and to Washington's belief that Mali could be

³⁴³ NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, 1946-1984, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, February 1-28, 1966.

³⁴⁴ GARF, f. 5446, o. 98, d. 1453, l. 1, January 1964.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁶ NARA II, RG59, Office of the Asst Legal Advisor for Economic Affairs, Records Relating to U.S. Foreign Aid Programs 1947-1965, Mali, 24 April 1961.

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gradually swayed away from its alignment with the Soviet Union. Furthermore, China was making progress in Mali as well through the progressive implementation of its own economic and technical cooperation agreement. The Soviet Union was therefore obligated to entertain Mali's requests so as to maintain its influence in West Africa, already badly damaged by the Solod Affair. Moscow did finally grant Bamako debt relief, and, as will be discussed, this led to a rejuvenation of Soviet-Malian relations under Brezhnev.³⁴⁷

In 1966, just prior to the Twenty-Third Party Congress which will be discussed in chapter 6, the Soviet government identified the still small volume of trade between the Soviet Union and African countries, as well as insufficient trade volume between African countries themselves, as a primary obstacle to the success of Soviet aid diplomacy in Africa. As explained by the Deputy Chair of the Ministry of Installation and Special Construction Works (Минмонтажспецстрой), a body involved in the construction of educational institutions abroad, a major reason for delays in the delivery of necessary goods to African countries was that even where materials and components existed, the absence of a reliable supply chain seriously impeded aid projects.³⁴⁸ For this reason, he advised that the overall volume of trade needed to be increased drastically. Trade among African countries also needed to be boosted, since Soviet construction projects required local materials to be feasible. For instance, a project to complete a cement plant in Mali was held up by a lack of gypsum, which the Malian side had planned to purchase from neighbouring Mauritania. However, by the time construction was nearing completion, the Mauritians confessed that they had not yet developed the capacity to extract and export the gypsum. The Malians then requested that the Soviet Union temporarily export gypsum to get the plant up and running,

³⁴⁷ AVP-RF, f. 607, o. 9, p. 10, d. 8, ll. 40-9, in «Россия и Африка», 447-53.

³⁴⁸ GARF, f. 5446, o. 102, d. 1290, ll. 28-9, September 1968.

but since the cost would be prohibitive, the Soviets proposed Mali instead draw on further Soviet aid to carry out mineral exploration locally.³⁴⁹

Complications such as these took their toll. Between 1965 and 1970, Soviet exports to Sub-Saharan Africa grew only slightly, with growth in trade occurring principally with North Africa and the Middle East. Exports to Sub-Saharan Africa grew from \$85 million to \$95 million, while exports to North Africa from \$35 million to \$125 million. The situation regarding imports was rather better. Imports from Sub-Saharan Africa more than doubled from \$60 million to \$140 million, while those from North Africa trebled from \$20 million to \$85 million. Considering the overall aid expenditure of the Soviet Union to Africa for this same period (approximately \$200 million), however, the Soviet Union was barely breaking even, even when one takes into account that expenditure on aid would decrease drastically in the late 1960s. Despite making up nearly three quarters of Soviet aid in the 1960s, the trade volume with Africa accounted for only eighteen percent of its trade globally in 1970.³⁵⁰

The Reassessment of Soviet Propaganda to Africa

A transition had begun in the Ideological and International Departments of the CPSU which emphasised an even more targeted approach to engagement with African countries than the 1961 report discussed in chapter one. As Khrushchev's tenure ended there was a pivot to what we would now call 'soft power'. Previous analyses have attributed targeted engagement to the Brezhnev era, but the processes which led to this change began under

³⁴⁹ *Ibid*, ll. 44-6, December 1968. As discussed in chapter 1, such concerns were taken into account by Chinese economic and commercial organs when considering projects in Africa.

³⁵⁰ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP08S01350R000601960001-5, 'Communist Aid activities in Non-Communist Less Developed Countries, 1979 and 1954-79', October 1980.

Khrushchev and are evident in Moscow's response to the changing media environments in Africa and to its acknowledgement of past mistakes.³⁵¹

Prior to Khrushchev's removal in October, another major personnel change occurred in September 1964 with the death of world-renowned ethnographer, historian, founding director of the Soviet Institute of African Studies, head of the African Section of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, and President of the Soviet-African Friendship Society, Ivan Potekhin. This led to a significant change in how the Soviet Union studied and formulated policy for Africa. A prolific scholar, Potekhin had encouraged an interdisciplinary approach to understanding Africa in the Institute of African Studies, which was called the 'Peoples of Africa Institute'.³⁵² Between all his duties he also found time to teach courses on African history at Moscow University. A short piece published in the journal *Modern African Studies* eulogising Potekhin, concluded by noting his commitment to 'scientific socialism' as opposed to any brand of African socialism.³⁵³ The historian Potekhin was replaced by V. G. Solodovnikov, an economist and former director of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations. Upon becoming the second director of the Institute of African Studies, Solodovnikov inherited Potekhin's positions in the International Congress of Africanists and elsewhere.³⁵⁴ In comparison with the more academic Marxist theoretician and historian, Solodovnikov was something of an activist. After consulting with his colleagues in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR in 1965, he bemoaned that African studies in the Soviet Union were not as advanced as they were even in the Eastern

³⁵¹ See: Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*; Alessandro Iandolo, 'The Rise and Fall of the 'Soviet Model of Development in West Africa, 1957-64', *Cold War History* 12, no. 4 (2012): 683-704.

³⁵² Indeed, among his dozen plus books was his 1954 *Peoples of Africa* «Народы Африки».

³⁵³ George Skorov, 'Ivan Potekhin-Man, Scientist, and Friend of Africa', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 2, no. 3 (1964): 4.

³⁵⁴ RGANI, f. 5, o. 35, d. 212, ll. 1-2, 4 May 1965. Potekhin had been the Vice President of the London-based International Conference of Africanists since 1961. When he died, the Institute of African Studies had the right to appoint Solodovnikov in his place. RGANI, f. 5, o. 35, d. 212, l. 79-80, 21 May 1965.

Bloc countries, let alone the West.³⁵⁵ He therefore set about redressing that problem, and advocated that the Institute of African Studies adopt a more political role and do more to guide government policy. He was also a public intellectual and regularly contributed to the Soviet press, taking strong positions on events in Africa.³⁵⁶ He is best known as the preeminent theorist of non-capitalist development, elaborating in two translated volumes on the application of economic development methods pioneered in Soviet Central Asia and the Mongolian People's Republic to North Africa and the Middle East, as well as advocating these methods for Sub-Saharan Africa.³⁵⁷

This enshrinement of the theory of non-capitalist development in the Institute of African Studies coincided with an effort to reinvigorate Soviet propaganda in Africa. Despite initially trailing behind the PRC in terms of propaganda and radio broadcasting, by the mid-1960s Soviet information and propaganda efforts had permeated the continent. In 1961, the Novosti Press Agency (APN) had replaced the Sovinform Bureau and begun expanding operations through embassies and Soviet affiliated non-governmental organisations throughout the world, including Africa. Excluding Arabic language broadcasts, Soviet radio broadcasting in Africa had reached sixteen hours and thirty minutes a day in the Western languages of English, French, and Portuguese as well as the African languages of Hausa, Swahili, and Amharic. By 1963, in the UAR, the APN published a biweekly illustrated magazine in English and Arabic with a circulation of 15,000 copies as well as a monthly magazine with a circulation of 7000. APN and TASS also worked in broadcasting and teletype in the countries of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, UAR, Ethiopia, Morocco, Congo, and

³⁵⁵ Eric Burton, James Mark, and Steffi Marung, 'Development', in *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonisation*, eds. James Mark and Paul Betts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 86-7.

³⁵⁶ В. Г. СОЛОДОВНИКОВ, 'Неоколониалистская Политика США в Африке', *Pravda*, № 11, 11 January 1966.

³⁵⁷ V. G. Solodovnikov, *Non-Capitalist Development: An Historical Outline* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975); *The Present Stage of the Non-Capitalist Development in Asia and Africa* (Budapest, 1973).

Nigeria.³⁵⁸ These countries often rebroadcast or republished the information they received from APN or TASS to their neighbours. Of particular concern to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the embassies' continued role in the targeted distribution of newsletters to influential persons in local societies. In 1963, APN newsletters targeted at elite elements in local societies had a circulation of 250 to 900 copies in the seven African countries of Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Morocco, Somalia, Tunisia, and the UAR. Embassies were also directly involved with the organisation of exhibitions and cultural exchanges. Aside from broadcasting, wire services, and select publishing activities in friendly countries like the UAR, the embassies were the primary medium by which Soviet propaganda was delivered to Africa.

In the words of a Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs report to the Presidium for providing guidance for future ideological and information efforts in Africa, this had 'triggered a series of measures aimed at severing local populations from objective information about the Soviet Union on the part of Western powers and extreme nationalist circles in African countries'. This report acknowledged that the USA, UK, Western Germany, and France had all expanded their media efforts in Africa since the beginning of the decade. It also recognised that China was a prime contender in the media field. Zhou's tour had made the Ministry of Foreign Affairs all the more sensitive to China's media presence in Africa. A backlash against Soviet media was occurring among some African governments, as 'extreme nationalist circles', in the report's characterisation, sought to assert greater control over local media. Even the Ghanaian government had closed a Soviet cultural establishment, and the detrimental effects of this dynamic were being felt in Mali as well (not to speak of the

³⁵⁸ RGANI, f. 5, o. 55, d. 54, l. 31-2, 1 March 1963.

collapse of Soviet-Guinean relations as a result of the Solod Affair). Soviet-Guinean relations were no longer at their nadir, but that government had also imposed a total ban on the Soviet media presence. More conservative governments like Tunisia's had also restricted the distribution of materials by the Soviet Embassy, a task which was redirected to the APN offices in Tunis and elsewhere. The latter thus became both news agencies in their own right *and* embassy press offices due to the restrictions.³⁵⁹

While China's presence was acknowledged as posing a distinct problem, the primary concern was competing with the West for influence. The report reflected on the 'intensification of Chinese propaganda in Africa', arguing that Soviet media should, in a 'calm tone, clearly and convincingly explain to the African public our point of view on peaceful coexistence, the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism, the possibility of preventing wars, and national liberation movements.' Setting this short observation to the side, the report emphasised that it was USA and other Western countries which produced media that was more accessible and more popular than Soviet media, and that this fact required a reciprocal stepping up of cultural and interpersonal efforts by the Soviet Union. The report observed that competing US information efforts included the establishment of cultural centres and 'biblioparks', or ad hoc outdoor libraries, as well as cinemas which showed not only movies but also information on science and technology 'of interest to the common man'. The cultural centres, libraries, and cinemas served as venues for meetings between US citizens and locals. This provided further opportunities to inculcate African attendees with anti-Soviet views on a face-to-face basis. Furthermore, the USA had also deployed the Peace Corps and enjoyed the anti-Soviet sentiments of the large number of

³⁵⁹ RGANI, f. 5, o. 55, d. 54, ll. 33-5, 1 March 1963.

privately run religious missions working in Africa. Particular attention therefore had to be paid to 'covering the life of the Soviet people' in a way which was approachable for the 'common man' in a given African country.³⁶⁰

The report concluded that there were two other issues that demanded improvement. The first problem was that Soviet efforts, bound up as they were with APN news work globally, were still not sufficiently tailored to each country or locale. Rather than taking account of local requirements and paring down materials distributed to each locale, the APN simply sent everything in translation, thereby unintentionally flooding local media environments with irrelevant and sometimes incomprehensible information. Second, and in connection with the previous issue, Soviet reporting on African events was one-sided and often did not take into account that a stance supportive of one African government might distress another, even if both governments were pro-Moscow. Even worse, because information on offer to African governments was both not tailored and one-sidedly pro-Moscow, it was, on occasion, offensive and arrogant. For instance, articles sent to all African governments by APN celebrating the fourth anniversary of the proclamation of Guinea's independence claimed that 'only Soviet assistance saved Guinea' to the ire of the Guineans themselves who were not in agreement about this.³⁶¹

In order to redress the three primary issues of accessibility, specificity, and objectivity, the report advised taking twelve measures which can be summarised thus: Tailoring propaganda to each government such that it shows the advantages of adopting a non-capitalist avenue of development (показу преимуществ некапиталистического пути развития для слаборазвитых стран); increasing the number of languages on offer while

³⁶⁰ *Ibid*, ll. 33-9, 1 March 1963.

³⁶¹ *Ibid*.

also increasing the availability of Russian language courses locally; increasing the number of visual media available to African audiences; and increasing interpersonal interaction between Soviet personnel and citizens with African nationals. The report also specifically encouraged the distribution of documentaries describing Soviet life like *My Tashkent* as well as the creation of other documentaries specifically for African markets like *Happiness to You, Mali!* and *The Nile and the Life*.³⁶²

* * *

In a December 1963 issue of *Krokodil*, regular *Pravda* contributor Yu. Kharlanov mocked Chinese-supported African authors attending various international writers' conferences for their insensitivity and vulgar anti-imperialism. He began by introducing the character of Ahmed Kheir, a Sudanese writer who had been living in Beijing since the 1930s. Kheir was removed (or, 'pulled out by the ear and into the sun') from an Afro-Asian Writer's Association conference when the Sudanese delegation objected to his comments that 'these white (Soviet writers) have no business here at a conference of representatives of the yellow and black races'. Kheir reappeared in Hiroshima for the Ninth International Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Weapons along with the Zanzibari Aisha Ali Sultan. Both had apparently had their journeys paid for by Beijing and did not officially represent their respective national governments at the congress. In Hiroshima, the pair presumed to speak on behalf of all of Africa and vociferously condemned the Test Ban Treaty as a 'great deception' which 'pours water on the mainstream of anti-imperialism and increases the danger of nuclear war'. Their comments were picked up by the Chinese delegate at the conference who went further, decrying the Test Ban Treaty and claiming that the Afro-Asian

³⁶² RGANI, f. 5, o. 55, d. 54, ll. 38-42, 1 March 1963.

countries endorsed an all or nothing position. Kheir even accused the Soviet Union of assisting in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba.³⁶³

The Mayor of Hiroshima, Shinzo Hamai, and the Chair of the Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Weapons, Ichiro Moritaki, both of whom had lauded the Moscow Treaty as a major step forward, and both of whom were survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima, took great umbrage at this pantomime. Thus, the PRC found itself the butt of a joke in *Krokodil*.

It is known that Chinese magicians are famous for their dexterity. They bring birds, sculptures, and even whole aquariums complete with live fish out from their sleeves. But no one has yet seen whole countries and continents being pulled out of a magician's sleeve, no matter how large the opening is. Is it any wonder that this trick failed in Hiroshima too?

Plus, there are places where tactful people would never play tricks. It is inappropriate to clown about on the graves or to arrange a market scam on grounds strewn with the ashes of tens of thousands of victims of the atomic bomb.

Several years ago, an American boor tried to fry eggs on the eternal flame of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Paris. Young Parisians, cheered on by the crowd, taught the impudent subject some manners. Back then, it seemed like this was the height of blasphemy.

But who could have guessed that in 1963 in the PRC there would be people who consider themselves communists trying to warm up a foul-smelling anti-Soviet brew on the sacred fire of Hiroshima!³⁶⁴

Besides this, as noted above, Chinese engagement with Africa was given only the barest coverage during Zhou's tour and was not even alluded to during Khrushchev's visit to the UAR. Even if the Soviet press avoided Zhou's tour or directly comparing Soviet and Chinese aid, the Test Ban Treaty, and China and France's special opposition to it, was at the top of the docket not only in the satire of *Krokodil* but also in official meetings with African politicians, and offers of aid played an important role in swaying the opinion of African leaders.

³⁶³ 'Из широкого рукава', «КРОКОДИЛ» (*Krokodil*), 31 December 1963, 10.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

Between April and October 1964, Khrushchev was successful in generating further support for the already popular Test Ban Treaty with not only more moderate actors like Kenyatta but also with leftist stalwarts like Odinga. As has been shown, at least part of the vocal support of these leaders was secured by the offer of aid. In terms of competition with the PRC for influence over Africa, the Soviet Union had the clear advantage of the scale of resources at its disposal and the prestige attached to its aid as *the* alternative to Western aid. Furthermore, even leftist leaders and fervent anti-imperialists were sometimes exasperated by the PRC's anti-Soviet rhetoric. Its racialised rhetoric was effective in some cases, but some, such as Kenya's Murumbi or the Malians, who still remembered the use of 'Annamite troops' by the French colonial administration, were not so easily persuaded.³⁶⁵ While Zhou received a chilly reception in the UAR during his tour, Khrushchev was granted the unmatched opportunity to advertise Soviet aid to the world while latent disputes between himself and regional leaders were kept under the table; and even leaders largely in agreement with Beijing such as Odinga preferred to balance between the two poles of the socialist camp.

The challenges facing the Soviet Union in its continuing effort to fend off their rivals 'calmly' and 'convincingly', however, were numerous. Some, such as the problems with messaging and propaganda, were recognized and rectified in response to the changing information environment in Africa. Others required far more substantial measures. The most obvious issue was that of the trade protocols that underpinned the aid agreements. The Soviet Union's refusal to provide capital injections of any kind meant that repayments were only possible through the prearranged sale of large quotas of imports or through payment in

³⁶⁵ ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-026, '周恩來訪非' (Zhou Enlai Visits Africa), 84, (date unclear) 1964.

kind. This created budget shortfalls, owing to the inability of recipients to export sufficient goods or absorb sufficient Soviet commodities. This led, in turn, to aid recipients requesting further funds to cover costs or debt, and so the cycle would continue until the aid recipient either dropped Soviet assistance for another provider altogether or was able to persuade Moscow to countenance debt relief. Potential 'black holes' like Guinea dotted the continent, meaning the use of aid as a diplomatic tool could be something of a Faustian bargain. Furthermore, while debt forgiveness guaranteed a particular trade protocol would be a loss for Moscow, it also came at a political cost for the local governments, and this was a cost not all were willing to pay. Due to these challenges, at the end of Khrushchev's tenure, the Soviet Union was in search of a more sustainable means of leveraging its largesse for diplomatic gain.

Chapter 4: The Congo Crisis and its Impact

Introduction

By the mid-1960s, 'generic anticolonialism' was losing its potency as a unifying force in Africa.³⁶⁶ This was for several reasons, including boundary disputes between independent African countries, challenges of the sort faced by Nasser in his effort to create a greater United Arab Republic, and the vicissitudes of maintaining non-alignment in a Cold War world made more complex by the Sino-Soviet Split. Chief among the reasons for the decline of generic anticolonialism, though, was the difficulty postcolonial governments had in negotiating the meaning of, and in turn their relationships with, 'neo-colonialism'. In March 1961, in the wake of the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the Third All-African People's Conference in Cairo passed a resolution condemning specific manifestations of neo-colonialism, including the creation of puppet governments, the presence of foreign military bases, and the deliberate sabotage of national development carried out by personnel working under the aegis of 'so-called foreign and United Nations technical assistance'.³⁶⁷ The passage of this resolution, however, belied the fact that there were simmering divisions within the conference.

For Kwame Nkrumah, the meaning of neo-colonialism, and the rationale of his government's principled opposition to it, was crystal clear. He defined neo-colonialism as

³⁶⁶ I borrow this phrase from James R. Brennan's treatment of Nasser's changing engagement with Sub-Saharan Africa after the Congo Crisis. James R. Brennan, 'Radio Cairo and the Decolonization of East Africa, 1953-1964', in *Making a World After Empire: The Bandung Moment and its Political Afterlives*, ed. Christopher J. Lee (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010), 186.

³⁶⁷ 'All-African People's Conferences', *International Organization* 16, no. 2 (1962): 432-4.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa

the persisting domination over a nominally independent country maintained by its former colonial power (or a 'consortium of financial interests') through primarily, but not exclusively, economic means. In his 1965 *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, Nkrumah defined neo-colonialism using a superficial but nonetheless influential reading of Marxism-Leninism. He thereby tied his definition of it to Ghana's Pan-Africanist political program and its affinity for the socialist bloc:

Neo-colonialism is also the worst form of imperialism. For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress. In the days of old-fashioned colonialism, the imperial power had at least to explain and justify at home the actions it was taking abroad. In the colony those who served the ruling imperial power could at least look to its protection against any violent move by their opponents. With neo-colonialism neither is the case.³⁶⁸

For other African governments, the matter was less straightforward. Aside from Guinea, every African country was closely connected with the governments and financial interests of their former imperial powers after independence. In terms of the civil service, military, political leadership, and even the civil societies of African countries, the continuing cultural hegemony of these powers was a matter of course. Many African governments sought various means to 'Africanise' these elements of their nations, but their approach was often more pragmatic than what Nkrumah's principled stance might have prescribed. Nkrumah's fellow Pan-Africanist, Julius Nyerere, made a defence policy of formal non-alignment the basis of Tanzania's Africanisation, seeking assistance from the socialist and non-socialist world in roughly equal measure while simultaneously diluting the country's reliance on the UK with resources from the wider Commonwealth.³⁶⁹ Other governments embraced what seemed to be to them the necessity of continuing engagement with their former imperial

³⁶⁸ Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London: Nelson, 1965), xi.

³⁶⁹ For an exploration of the coexistence of Swedish and Chinese assistance to Tanzania in the 1960s and 70s, see George T. Yu, *China's African Policy: A Study of Tanzania* (New York: Praeger, 1975).

power. Côte d'Ivoire's first president, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who coined the term *Françafrique* in 1955, embodied this. Throughout the 1960s, The Soviet press mocked him as the 'troubadour of neo-colonialism' (трубадур неокOLONИализма).³⁷⁰ Even if these countries took a principled stance against engaging with their former imperial power, they still sought connections with the West as a whole. Zhou and Chen reported to Mao during their tour that most African leaders 'can only bring up anti-colonialism, and don't particularly wish to bring up anti-neo-colonialism, avoiding any insinuations against the USA.'³⁷¹

The Congo Crisis clarified the issue of neo-colonialism. For the governments and independence movements of Africa, Lumumba and the Congolese people's battle against the remnants of Belgian colonialism for a 'second independence' was symbolic of the wider continent's continued struggle. But the potency of this symbolism also made it divisive. In the early 1960s, two rival African camps came into being – the Brazzaville Group and the Casablanca Group, named for the places where their original summits were held – which took nearly diametrically opposed positions on the linked issues of the Congo Crisis and African political and economic integration. The radically Pan-Africanist Casablanca Group advocated for a fundamental transformation of the continent. It considered the formation of a united military command to assist the Congolese government in Leopoldville against secessionist Katanga. It further sought to pressure the UN Operation in the Congo to provide greater support, threatening to withdraw their peacekeeping forces from the UN if it

³⁷⁰ Nic Cheeseman, Eloise Bertrand, and Sa'eed Husaini, *A Dictionary of African Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2019). 'Трубадур неокOLONИализма', *Izvestiia*, № 140, 14 June 1961.

³⁷¹ 周恩来、陈毅致中共中央并报毛泽东的报告, 1964年1月10日, in 廖心文, '开户和发展中非关系的两个里程碑——兼谈周恩来的历史贡献', 《党的文献》 (Liao Xinwen, 'Two Milestones in Opening and Developing Sino-African Relations: A Discussion of Zhou Enlai's Historical Contributions', *Literature of the Chinese Communist Party*) 2013(2): 46.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa did not take more resolute action against the separatists. The Brazzaville Group, organised by Houphouët-Boigny and attended primarily by members of the *Communauté française*, argued for enhancing economic cooperation but against political integration of any kind, let alone for a unified military command. While paying lip service to the government in Leopoldville, the Brazzaville Group further criticised the UN's peacekeeping operation for 'interfering' in the Congo.³⁷² As will be seen in this chapter, it was along these lines as much as those set by the Cold War that African governments interacted with the Soviet Union and the PRC in the mid-1960s.

Meanwhile, a major divergence was emerging in terms of the Soviet Union and China's aid diplomacy in Africa. Khrushchev's idealistic attempts at furnishing Africa with the material base of socialism were fraught and expensive, and his limited military support to the Stanleyville government in the Congo was disastrous. As was examined in the previous chapter, when Brezhnev assumed power in late 1964, there were a number of continuities. Among them was the fact that in late 1964 Moscow once again found itself entangled in events in the Congo. However, the aid policy of the Soviet Union after Khrushchev moved away from what Brezhnev called the 'chaos' brought on by 'the rein of arbitrariness' (царит произвол) and 'subjective desires of Comrade Khrushchev' (субъективное желание тов. Хрущева).³⁷³ This both freed up resources for domestic development – which, as will be seen in chapter 6, was a major emphasis of Brezhnev's 1966 Speech to the Twenty-Third Party Congress – and saw Moscow turn to other forms of aid diplomacy. In contrast, immediately following Zhou Enlai's 1964 tour, Chinese engagement

³⁷² 'African Political Groupings', *International Organization* 16, no. 2 (1962): 434-9.

³⁷³ Доклад Президиума ЦК КПСС на Октябрьском Пленуме ЦК КПСС (Вариант), not later than 13 October 1964. In Андрей Артизов, «Никита Хрущев: Стенограммы пленумов и другие документы» (Москва: Международный фонд 'Демократия': Материк, 2007), 200.

intensified across Africa.³⁷⁴ A major part of this enhanced engagement was military aid. It was during this period that China's assistance became known for sponsoring 'freedom fighters'. The Congo Crisis is an important episode in the history of China's clandestine military assistance and provides the unique opportunity to examine Soviet and Chinese assistance to rebel movements in Africa side by side.

The aims of this chapter are twofold. First, it will compare Moscow and Beijing's different programs of military assistance to the rebels of the Congo Crisis. The Soviet Union's role in the Congo is a key moment in the story of its engagement with Africa as a whole. As will be explored below, the Soviet Union's experience of the first part of the Congo Crisis had an immense impact on Khrushchev's evolving perspective on Africa for the remainder of his tenure as First Secretary of the CPSU. Furthermore, Natalia Telepneva notes that the Simba Rebellion was also one of the key precedents informing Soviet support for liberation struggles in Lusophone Africa in the 1970s, insofar as the fate of the Simbas was seen as interlinked with that of other nationalist movements.³⁷⁵ The Congo was no less important to Sino-African relations. The first section will synthesise previous scholarship examining Soviet aid in the Congo from 1960 to 1962 and then contrast these findings with an examination of China's assistance to the Congo from 1963 to 1965. Second, the chapter will examine how the PRC's mode of engagement in the Congo impacted its relations with other African countries during the same period of 1963 to 1965. To do this, the chapter will examine two countries which became adamant supporters of Taipei in this period. It will

³⁷⁴ The sum total of Chinese extensions to Africa made in 1964 alone accounted for between a third and a half of all Chinese extensions to Africa made between 1959 and 1966. ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-012, '中共對非洲各國之經濟援助' (Chinese Communist Economic Aid to Countries in Africa), (no date, sometime between June 1966 and 1967), 72. NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Subject Files, Communism, 21 February 1966.

³⁷⁵ See Natalia Telepneva, *Cold War Liberation: The Soviet Union and the Collapse of the Portuguese Empire in Africa, 1961-1975* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa then briefly explore Zhou's first trip to Tanzania in June 1965. In comparing the Soviet Union and China's aid during the Congo Crisis and its impact on the wider region, the chapter will attempt to problematise a prevailing narrative about Chinese aid to Africa during this period, drawing attention to the low ebb in Sino-African relations which characterised the mid-1960s and then deepened with the Cultural Revolution. It will also show how the divergent trends of the two socialist countries' aid to Africa prefigured experiences discussed in the next chapter.

Assisting an Encircled Countryside

Background

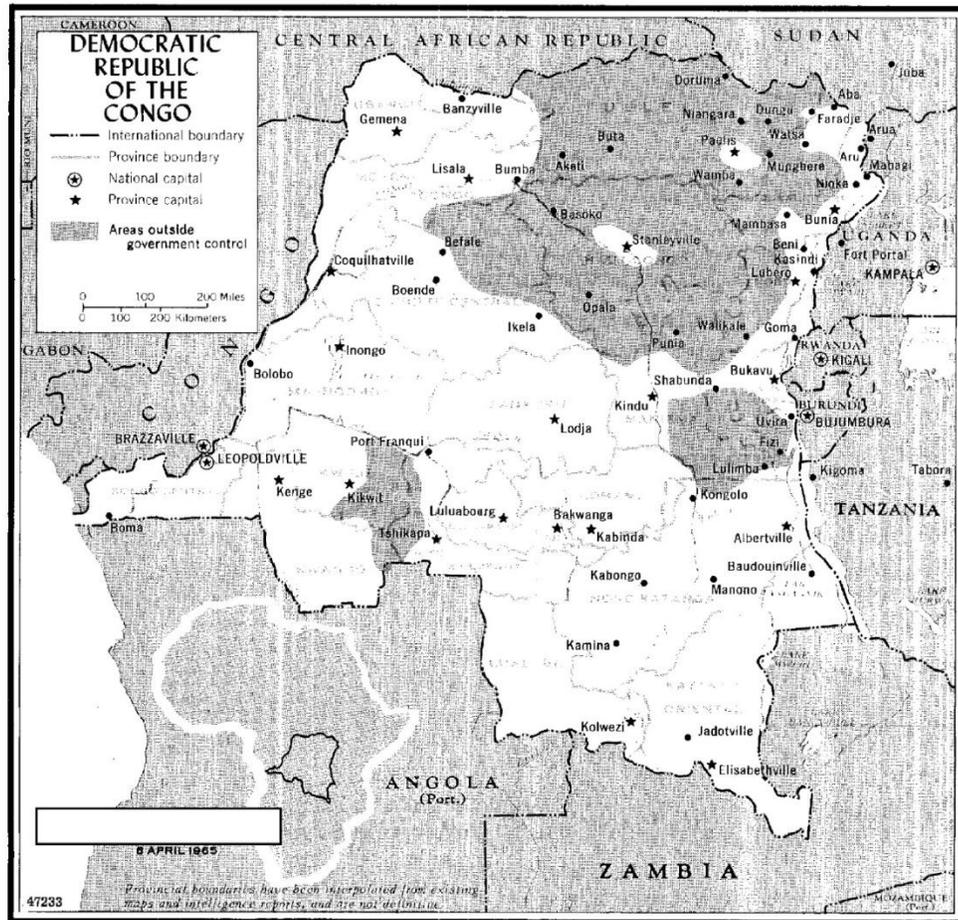
What is called the Congo Crisis (1960-1965) can be split into two distinct crises separated by a short hiatus. The first crisis, from 1960-1962, began when Moïse Tshombe, backed by Belgian mining interests, led the Katangese secessionist movement against Congo's first independent government. This led to a constitutional crisis, Joseph-Désiré Mobutu's first coup, the declaration of a short-lived competing government under Antoine Gizenga in Stanleyville, and a largescale UN intervention during which Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld lost his life under suspicious circumstances. It was this first crisis which witnessed the CIA-abetted assassination of Lumumba by Katangese and Belgian forces, and it was this crisis which made what is today the Democratic Republic of the Congo (hereafter, the Congo or Congo [L]) an eternal symbol for the struggle for decolonisation beyond mere 'flag independence'.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁶ This section draws on the following: Catherine Hoskyns, *The Organization of African Unity and the Congo Crisis 1964-65* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1969), xii-xv; David Anderson, 'Global Struggles and Africa's Cold War',

The second crisis, from 1963-1965, began soon after the first ended with the forcible reincorporation of Katanga by UN forces in December 1962. President Joseph Kasa-Vubu's subsequent attempt at reconciliation between the different factions precipitated by the first crisis resulted in a weak, divided government in which Gizenga was side-lined. This led former Congolese Minister of the Interior, Christophe Gbenye to create a revolutionary Lumumbaist émigré group called the *Comite* or *Conseil National de Libération* (CNL) in October 1963. With this, the short hiatus between the two crises ended. Lumumba's Minister of Education and Fine Arts, Pierre Mulele, started a rebellion in Kwilu which escalated rapidly. His forces terrorised police, civil servants, and other agents of the Leopoldville administration in their territory with primitive weapons and esoteric practices. Inspired by them, rebel factions tied to the CNL began fighting for control of eastern Congo (L). In early 1964, led by Lumumba's Minister of Defence, Gaston Soumialot, and North Katanga's provincial governor, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, these factions took control of part of the north-eastern Orientale region and Mobutu's home region of Kivu. At their peak in mid-1964, armed with little more than javelins and a belief in animist magic which supposedly turned their enemies' bullets into water, the Lumumbaist insurgents took two thirds of the Congo's territory. Possessing the countryside, they began to encircle the cities. In response, the USA began covertly (and illegally) arming the *Armée Nationale Congolaise* (ANC) through the Agency for International Development (US AID). Meanwhile, Prime Minister, Cyrille Adoula's resignation and Kasa-Vubu's shocking selection of Tshombe as interim prime minister in June 1964 was followed by widespread unrest. By then, if riots in Leopoldville are included, there were four separate rebellions against the central government. Gbenye

seminar, Global and Imperial History Research Seminar, University of Oxford History Faculty, Oxford, 18 October 2019; Lanotte Olivier, 'Chronology of the Democratic Republic of Congo/Zaire (1960-1997)', Mass Violence and Resistance – Research Network, Sciences Po, 6 April 2010, web retrieved 14 May 2021.

and Soumialot's forces took control of the countryside surrounding Albertville and Stanleyville as well as the Congo's north-eastern borders with Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Lake Tanganyika.



11 CIA Map of rebel-controlled areas of Congo (L) in April 1965. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00474A001100020001-7, 'The Situation in the Congo', 7 April 1965.

In July 1964, vested with the authority given to him by Kasa-Vubu, Tshombe ordered Mobutu's ANC to put down the rebellions alongside European, South African, and Rhodesian mercenaries. These mercenaries were led by a British veteran of the first crisis,

'Mad' Mike Hoare. It was also at this time that US advisors and a force of Cuban émigrés assembled by the CIA began arriving in the Congo to support the Leopoldville government. Soon after, barely in control of their own territory, Gbenye and Soumialot declared another doomed Stanleyville government, this time called the People's Republic of the Congo.

The Soviet Union and the Congo Crises

Historians have convincingly argued that it was during the first Congo Crisis that Moscow found its limits in Africa. Mazov writes that after supporting a Security Council intervention on behalf of Lumumba and then promising him their support when the UN intervention proved insufficient to put down Katanga, the Soviet Union found itself both unable and unwilling to provide adequate support to the Gizenga government in Stanleyville. This was partially because the regional actors through which the Soviet Union had to furnish its aid often kept weapons and other resources for themselves instead of delivering them to Gizenga. Even Nkrumah attempted to hold Soviet arms shipments hostage with the goal of pitting Washington and Moscow against each other for the financing of the Volta River Project in March 1961.³⁷⁷ During the crisis, the Soviet Union sought to balance security and ideology in a way which prioritised avoiding superpower conflict over the survival of Gizenga's government. This was born of a calculation that recognised how the Soviet position in Africa was inferior to that of the West.³⁷⁸ Lise Namikas echoes Mazov's contention that Khrushchev's engagement with the Congo was that of the 'politics of the possible', arguing that he sought not Soviet supremacy in Africa but merely to deny US

³⁷⁷ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 161-3, 165-6.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 253-8.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa supremacy.³⁷⁹ The disaster of the first crisis is used to explain the Soviet Union's subsequent disentanglement from the rest of Africa in the mid-1960s. Mazov writes that the fact that regional actors had refused to serve as reliable regional partners led the Soviet Union to depart from Africa except where either ideological loyalty could be positively confirmed or where security concerns outweighed all others.³⁸⁰ Ilya Gaiduk adds that in the midst of the crisis, Khrushchev lost all faith in the UN. He argues that Moscow's 'systematic lobbying' of the developing world for the purpose of creating a pro-Soviet equivalent of Washington's 'voting machine' failed and that Moscow therefore lost faith in the developing world as well.³⁸¹ In Gaiduk's view, Hammarskjöld's death moved Khrushchev, and pushed the Soviet Union to reengage with the UN.

The developing world was not so redeemed. The Soviet Union's acknowledgement of its limits and loss of faith in the developing world is why, initially, it did not provide assistance during the second crisis. Only when the USA and Belgium carried out Operation Dragon Rouge did Moscow begin openly supporting the rebels by shipping enough weapons to arm 18,000 to Algeria, the UAR, Ghana, and Tanzania as well as offering special training in the Soviet Union for 380 Congolese fighters.³⁸² By then it was too late. Following the declaration of the second Stanleyville government and Gbenye's announcement in late September that all foreigners remaining in Stanleyville would not be allowed to leave, the USA and Belgium mounted a coordinated campaign alongside Hoare and the ANC to rescue the Belgian and US citizens being held hostage by the desperate insurgents. This led to

³⁷⁹ Namikas, *Battleground Africa*, 223-4.

³⁸⁰ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 181, 258.

³⁸¹ I. V. Gaiduk, *Divided Together: The United States and the Soviet Union in the United Nations, 1945-1965* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012), 265.

³⁸² Мазов С. В., 'СССР и повстанцы восточного Конго, 1964-1965 гг. (по материалам АВП РФ)', «История» 9, Выпуск 5 (2018).

Operation Dragon Rouge, which David Anderson calls 'The Rape of Stanleyville'. On 24 November 1964, following strategic bombings by the Cuban émigré pilots from the USA, assembled by the CIA, the mercenaries entered Stanleyville and began killing indiscriminately and committing mass rape. While approximately 1800 were rescued, eighty-five of the hostages were killed in the chaos. On the next day, the rebels mounted a futile counterattack from the suburbs but were beaten back by the mercenaries and the several hundred Belgian paratroopers routed there via Ascension Island. On the third day, the approximately 50,000 residents of the city were concentrated in a stadium in the city centre and subjected to 'cleansing', meaning torture and execution by means that were by all accounts unspeakable. Residents who had not heeded the call to report to the stadium were summarily executed in their homes. In short, the mercenaries and Belgian paratroopers brutally 'dealt with' the rebels before the ANC 'mopped up'. No one bothered to count, but the death toll was likely to have been in the tens of thousands.³⁸³

Moreover, the Leopoldville government had initiated a scorched earth policy in Kwilu in January 1964. Against nothing but javelins, arrows, and esoteric beliefs, the well-equipped ANC and mercenaries were able to mow down the rebels. Due to their use of human wave tactics, the Simbas faced death in the hundreds or even thousands against even a few disciplined ANC soldiers.³⁸⁴ Seeing this and the brazen imperialist aggression of Operation Dragon Rouge, Moscow finally entered the fray. The German Democratic Republic followed its lead, providing ammunition, grenades and even tanks.³⁸⁵ However, according to Namikas, this assistance was little more than a 'token', and the East German aid

³⁸³ Anderson, 'Global Struggles and Africa's Cold War'. Ludo De Witte, 'The Suppression of the Congo Rebellions and the rise of Mobutu, 1963-5', *International History Review* 39, no. 1 (2017): 118-9.

³⁸⁴ Olivier, 'Chronology of the Democratic Republic of Congo/Zaire'.

³⁸⁵ Piero Gleijeses argues that it was East Germany which pressured Moscow into intervening. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 75. Namikas, *Battleground Africa*, 212.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa likely never arrived in the Congo. The UAR, the country it was routed through, was not wont to give it up for a cause it considered already lost, and so it held onto the valuable matériel for safekeeping.³⁸⁶ As for the Soviet weapons, only those which were shipped through Tanzania ever reached the front, and just a small number of Congolese trainees were able to avail themselves of the training put on offer by the Soviet Union.³⁸⁷ Cuban support, while heroic, was also too little too late. Che Guevara famously led a group of Cuban military experts to the Congo. Outgunned and outmanned, he found the seven-month experience harrowing and dispiriting. After briefly considering a suicidal westward march to unite his dwindling forces with Mulele's Simbas in Kwilu, Guevara took his leave in November 1965, despondent, concluding that the political conditions for revolution in the Congo simply did not exist.³⁸⁸ Later that month, Mobutu seized power for a second time, this time for three decades.

China and the Second Crisis

In contrast with Moscow, Beijing had begun to provide all kinds of support to the rebels even before the second crisis had begun. This was because Congo (L) was of central importance to Mao Zedong, as he saw it as the frontline where the African people were in direct military confrontation with US imperialism. In the words of a report prepared in 1960 by Chen Jiakang, China's Ambassador to the UAR and liaison with the Congolese rebels, 'What is most advantageous is that the Congolese people know perfectly well who the enemy

³⁸⁶ Namikas, *Battleground Africa*, 195, 212.

³⁸⁷ Мазов, 'СССР и повстанцы восточного Конго'.

³⁸⁸ Che Guevara, *The African Dream: The Diaries of the Revolutionary War in the Congo* (London: Harvill, 2000), 240.

is' (最有利的是, 谁是敌人, 刚果人民清清楚楚).³⁸⁹ Consequently, it was a focal point of not only China's Africa policy but also its vision for the world revolution. As pointed out by Alexander Cook, Mao's famous dictum 'Dare to struggle, dare to win!' was originally issued in support of the Congolese rebels.³⁹⁰ Zhou discussed the question of furnishing aid to the Congo with Ye Jizhuang at least as early as September 1960, the same month as the formation of Gizenga's Stanleyville government.³⁹¹ Beijing had also been among the handful of countries to immediately recognise the first Stanleyville government. In February 1962, a full year and a half before the Simba rebellion began, the Adoula government in Leopoldville complained that China was providing training to dissidents before returning them to the Congo to then train local fighters.³⁹² Mulele had himself led a group of as many as 200 Congolese rebels to China to receive training in 1963. While accounts of his Maoism generally discount the influence of local beliefs and politics on his movement, his forces did resemble Chinese guerrilla forces organisationally thanks to his study in China.³⁹³

China's history with the rebellions of the second crisis ran deep, but the actual efficacy of its aid, like the Soviet Union's in the first, was limited. Cook emphasises in his exploration of the play 'War Drums on the Equator' (赤道战鼓) that 'China's engagement in the Congo Crisis was primarily symbolic.'³⁹⁴ According to Cook, 'War Drums on the Equator' and the enthusiastic demonstrations held in Tiananmen depicted the Congolese struggle as a raging prairie fire, but this belied the reality that their struggle was closer to that of so many

³⁸⁹ PRC-FMA, 108-00018-02, '陈家康大使关于刚果情况报告' (Ambassador Chen Jiakang's Report on the Situation in the Congo), 21 September 1960.

³⁹⁰ Alexander C. Cook, 'Chinese Uhuru: Maoism and the Congo Crisis', *positions east asia critique* 27, no. 4 (2019): 584.

³⁹¹ ZELNP, 900.

³⁹² CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP78-03581R000200120001-3, 'Communist Subversion Threat to Africa', April 1965.

³⁹³ *Ibid.* Renee C. Fox, Willy De Craemer, Jean-Marie Ribeaucourt, '“The Second Independence”: A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 8, no. 1 (1965): 106.

³⁹⁴ Cook, 'Chinese Uhuru', 590.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa sparks, starved of fuel, being extinguished in the damp of the jungle. Nonetheless, while China's efforts to arm and train Congolese guerrillas was ultimately futile, it had a lasting impact on not just the Congo but the rest of Africa.



Chairman Mao waving from Tien An Men rostrum to demonstrators protesting against U.S. and Belgian imperialist aggression in the Congo (L)

12 Chairman Mao soon after reporting on Operation Dragon Rouge circulated in China. Peking Review, 4 December 1964, No. 49.

During the second crisis, North Africa remained the rest of the continent's window to the socialist world. Rebel leaders and trainees travelled through Algeria and the UAR to consult with foreign officials and receive training in China, the Soviet Union, and the Eastern Bloc. China's Embassy in Cairo was among the few means the rebels had to communicate directly with their benefactors in Beijing, and Soumialot, Gbenye, and other rebel leaders met regularly with Ambassador Chen Jiakang.³⁹⁵ Logistically, whether directly or via a third country, Algeria and the UAR were also pivotal to conveying assistance from outside Africa to the Congo. To do so, these countries required transport vessels and aircraft. The Soviet Union and the PRC therefore furnished them with a handful of Ilyushin aircraft and freighters. In a rare instance of Sino-Soviet cooperation, the two countries even worked together to deliver Ilyushin transport aircraft to Algeria. In addition to directly granting its own aircraft to Algiers, Moscow allowed Beijing to purchase three planes on favourable terms so it too could grant them to the country.³⁹⁶

In their conversation with Algerian officials, Chinese leaders were explicit that this support was not merely for transportation infrastructure but for supporting the Lumumbaist insurgents. In August 1964, Zhou obliquely expressed to the Algerian Ambassador that any other assistance to Algeria was premised on its cooperation in the Congo. He explained Beijing's rationale thus: 'Today's Congo is like Algeria was in the past. They passed down their armed struggle from the Arab world to that of Black Africa. As far as we're concerned,

³⁹⁵ PRC-FMA, 108-01423-01, '周恩来总理访问坦桑尼亚时接见刚果（金）革命最高委员会主席苏米亚洛谈话记录' (Premier Zhou Enlai's Conversation with Soumialot of the Congo [Kinshasa] Supreme Revolutionary Council During his Visit to Tanzania), 5 June 1965. RGANI, f. 5, o. 50, d. 699, ll. 255-63, in «Россия и Африка», 784-88.

³⁹⁶ WCDA, Polish Archive of Modern Records (AAN), KC PZPR XI A/10, 517, 524, 11 February 1965.

that is the key.'³⁹⁷ Later in their discussion, he explicitly linked aid to Algeria's commitment to host the Second Afro-Asian Conference but implied that it was really premised on its continued cooperation in the Congo, saying 'we have the responsibility to provide material aid'. He continued:

Because Algeria has personal experience with armed resistance, you are sympathetic with the peoples' struggles in Congo.... Not only do you help them, but they also look to you for salvation. Because you have close relationships with all of Africa: East, West, and South, it's easy to go through you.³⁹⁸

The next month, Ahmed Ben Bella stated in a speech that his government had provided Stanleyville with men and arms and that Algeria would continue to do so.³⁹⁹ That December, Mao praised Algeria's contributions to the Congo in a conversation with Ben Bella, acknowledging that prior to the granting of the Ilyushins, Algiers had only one long-distance aircraft of its own and that they showed 'excellent internationalist spirit' by putting it to use regardless of that fact. He further acknowledged that they had lost a ship to the 'counter-revolutionaries' and promised to deliver a cargo vessel to Algeria, again on the condition that it was used to provide further support.⁴⁰⁰ In February 1965, a 13,000-ton freighter called the *Lumière de l'Aurore* (曙光) arrived in the port of Algiers. It was a generous gift, considering China had only twelve ships of the sort at the time.⁴⁰¹ But Algiers was far from any port which could access Congo (L). Just as the Soviet Union had found in the first crisis, it was necessary to establish further logistical support and involve additional regional partners. Two countries served as rebel training bases and hubs for materials arriving from North

³⁹⁷ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-01448-02, 'Memorandum of Conversation from the Meeting between Premier Zhou Enlai and the Algerian Ambassador to China Mohamed Yala,' 6 August 1964.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁹ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP78-02646R000300060001-8, 'The Congo Rebellion', December 1964.

⁴⁰⁰ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 107-00600-03, 'Record of Conversation from Chairman Mao's Reception of the Algerian Militia Delegation', 26 December 1964.

⁴⁰¹ TNA, FO 371-1965, Letter from A.V. Hayday, 15 February 1965. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00472A000700020040-6, 'Chinese Communist Activities in Africa', 30 April 1965.

Africa and elsewhere. These were therefore just as pivotal as Algeria and the UAR, if not more so for their greater proximity to the battle lines. They were Ghana and Tanzania.

Despite its disagreements with the Soviet Union during the first crisis, Ghana continued to bear the mantle of Pan-Africanist revolution in the second. While overall Chinese military aid to Africa from the period from 1959 to 1964 was less than a sixth of that the Soviet Union, by 1966 its total provision to Ghana was valued at \$2 million more than the Soviet Union's.⁴⁰² By spring 1965, great shipments of Chinese arms were arriving in Ghana on a regular basis.⁴⁰³ Most importantly, from 1963 to 1966, Ghana was central to China's efforts to arm and train African freedom fighters from all over Sub-Saharan Africa. Ghana was host to what would later become infamous guerrilla training camps staffed by Chinese guerrilla experts discussed in the first chapter. These training camps were set up in the fall of 1964 to take over from camps operated by Russian instructors and had trained more than 200 guerrilla fighters by May 1965. This number included a contingent from Congo (L). These fighters left with not only military skills, such as minelaying and ambush tactics, but also with a political education which emphasised the paired principles of self-reliance and armed struggle as the sole means of overcoming colonialism and neo-colonialism.⁴⁰⁴

The border area between it and Congo (L) made Tanzania even more important than Ghana. Furthermore, the army mutinies in East Africa which had postponed Zhou's trip there provided an unprecedented opportunity for the PRC to participate in the construction of a national army in Africa. Following the mutinies, Nyerere became committed to constructing a truly Africanised and nonaligned 'people's army' for Tanganyika. To do this,

⁴⁰² NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, 'An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – And Implications for US Policy', September 1964. ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-012, 72-3, (no date, sometime between June 1966 and 1967).

⁴⁰³ TNA, DO 195-232, Accra Letter from DC Reid, 30 April 1965.

⁴⁰⁴ *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa*, 18-20.

he called on assistance from the socialist world as well as countries like Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany. Thanks to this opportunity, a number of Chinese-staffed and supplied guerrilla training camps were then set up in Tanzania.⁴⁰⁵ Nyerere enthusiastically supported the Lumumbaist cause. China provided economic assistance as part and partial to its overt military aid. This assistance was so massive it was competitive with the Soviet Union's.⁴⁰⁶ Most importantly, this economic engagement served to facilitate further military assistance for the Congo. It was during the second crisis that Nyerere began to negotiate first a Tanzanian-Chinese joint shipping line and later TAZARA, both of which were explicitly meant to not only ferry weapons to the fronts in Congo and Southern Africa but also provided Tanzania with the economic development necessary to sustain itself.⁴⁰⁷ Economic assistance also served to conceal military assistance, presumably at the behest of Nyerere, who still hoped to balance between his Pan-Africanist sympathies and his policy of non-alignment. South African Defence Force intelligence reports claimed in June 1965 that Chinese munitions 'consigned as wheat in hessian bags' were flowing regularly into Dar es Salaam. By that point, rumours abounded in Western diplomatic circles that Tanzania was effectively a Chinese colony.⁴⁰⁸ That was no doubt hysteria on their part, but the fact was that Tanzania hosted numerous Chinese-manned training camps and served to convey a steady supply of arms and supplies to the Congo, either directly across Lake Tanganyika or indirectly through neighbouring countries.

⁴⁰⁵ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Country Files, Tanganyika, Aid – 6 Communist Bloc Aid, 2 September 1964.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁷ ZELNP, 1088.

⁴⁰⁸ ROC-FMA, 11-31-50-00-021, '我國與南非交換共黨情報' (Intelligence Exchange with South Africa), 72, 20 August 1965.

These smaller neighbouring countries were also important for providing supply lines and bases of operations closer to the front as well as places of refuge for wounded fighters. As discussed by Gregg Brazinsky, a major part of the US counterinsurgency effort in Congo (L) was cutting the rebels off from outside support, and these smaller neighbouring countries were the focus of that effort. These countries were what is today the Republic of the Congo (hereafter Congo [B]), Burundi, Uganda, and Sudan. In August 1963, a coup brought the pro-socialist Alphonse Massamba-Débat government into power in Brazzaville. Congo (B) immediately became a primary staging ground for Chinese and Soviet interventions in Leopoldville just across the river. The first Chinese-constructed guerrilla training camps were formed soon after the coup. One at Gambona was already in operation at the end of 1963, and another was set up at Impfondo on the Congo River by the beginning of 1964.⁴⁰⁹ When questioned on this by Western press, the Brazzaville government helpfully deflected, ‘What rebels? What camp?’⁴¹⁰ The Chinese Embassy in Brazzaville became the next most important diplomatic point of contact with the rebels aside from Cairo. It became something of a beneficent society for all sorts of rebel factions in Congo (L). The PRC’s Ambassador to Brazzaville could, at his own discretion, provide rebels with hard currency and even assurances about the safety of their families, and rebels crossing back and forth from Congo (L) to (B) consulted regularly with the Embassy about even routine activities.⁴¹¹

Due to the proximity of Brazzaville and Leopoldville, it was inevitable that the West would endeavour to prevent socialist assistance from continuing cross the Congo River unchallenged. After all, Congo (L) was regarded by Beijing to be the ‘strategic centre of

⁴⁰⁹ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP78-02646R000300060001-8, December 1964.

⁴¹⁰ ROC-FMA, 11-05-31-01-01-001, ‘不拉薩市剛果與中共之外交關係’ (Relations Between Congo [Brazzaville] and the Chinese Communists), 22, 14 November 1964.

⁴¹¹ PRC-FMA, 108-00614-01, ‘剛果（利）自由战士莫贵迪介绍刚国内的几点情况’ (Congolese [Leopoldville] Fighter Moukoudi Introduces Some Points about the Internal Circumstances of the Congo) 07 April 1965.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa America's control of Africa'.⁴¹² In *Winning the Third World*, Brazinsky notes that activity between the two countries was under close CIA scrutiny.⁴¹³ Efforts to slow or halt cross-border assistance from Congo (B) were jointly carried out by the CIA and the ANC, and Congo (B) was pressured to participate in this. As a Chinese embassy report put it, Congo (B) still 'maintained illusions about imperialism (ongoing economic connections with France) and revisionism (in attempting to balance between USSR and PRC)' (对帝、修还有幻想) and 'lacked the spirit of self-reliance' (缺乏自力更生的思想). By withholding their own aid, which the Chinese Embassy acknowledged was direly needed, Western countries sought to enlist Congo (B) in halting cross-border assistance. Therefore, if the PRC did not do more to lend both military *and* economic support, the West could continue to exert considerable pressure on its regional partners so as to limit their pro-Simba activities.⁴¹⁴

This dynamic applied to the other neighbouring countries as well, but was also complicated by local politics. Burundi is a representative case of this. Brazzaville hosted the CNL government in exile until Gbenye relocated to Stanleyville in early August 1964. Soumialot arrived there soon after that to shore up the formation of the People's Republic of the Congo. Prior to that, Soumialot had been operating along the Burundi-Congo (L) border. In February 1964, Soumialot opened a CNL office in Bujumbura, Burundi to serve as his headquarters. By May, rebels had full control of the border with Burundi and could safely convey weapons, men, and supplies from Tanzania and elsewhere into the Congo. Within Burundi, the rebels enjoyed the fervent support of the Pan-Africanist wing of Burundi's government as well as the country's cross-border Tutsi population. Among the Tutsi, who

⁴¹² PRC-FMA, 108-00619-01, '中国驻刚果（布）使馆关于一九六四年八月革命以来的形势的总结' (Summary of the Chinese Embassy in Congo [Brazzaville] on the Situation Since the Revolution in August 1964), 17 January 1965.

⁴¹³ Brazinsky, *Winning the Third World*, 265.

⁴¹⁴ PRC-FMA, 108-00619-01, 17 January 1965.

were underrepresented in Burundi's Hutu-dominated government, there was the belief that Chinese support served not only to aid their brothers and sisters across the border but also to build Tutsi power within Burundi. Western pressure on Burundi grew to eject Chinese cross-border assistance. Its government was told that if it did not do so, it would not receive future US or Belgian aid. With a vested interest in suppressing the growth of Tutsi power in the border area, the Burundi government began to impound arms shipments from Tanzania bound for the Congo in December 1964.⁴¹⁵ An excuse to cut off support entirely came soon after. Following the assassination of its Hutu prime minister by a Tutsi US Embassy employee on 17 January 1965, Burundi's government suspended relations with the PRC on the supposition that this employee had been in contact with Chinese agents. Rene Lemarchand argues that, in fact, the assassination was carried out as a repercussion for the Burundi King's withdrawal of support for the previous Tutsi Prime Minister, something which was itself done to curtail the growth of Chinese influence. When relations were resumed, the Burundi government had ceased cooperating with Chinese cross-border assistance to the Congo entirely, closing their border to the Lumumbaist insurgents.⁴¹⁶

Due to both Western pressure and internal concerns, Uganda and Sudan too closed their borders to the insurgents. Like in Burundi, the Congo Crisis was an issue on which Uganda was divided along ethnic lines, with the more conservative Bakaba ethnic group resolutely opposed to Milton Obote's support for the Simbas.⁴¹⁷ Also like Burundi, efforts

⁴¹⁵ Brazinsky, *Winning the Third World*, 265. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00472A000400040008-6, 'Tanzanian Support for the Congo Rebels', 7 April 1965.

⁴¹⁶ 'Burundi Repulse to Peking Noted: Chinese Report Ouster from Center of Africa Effort', *New York Times*, 31 Jan 1965. Rene Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1996), 69-70.

⁴¹⁷ PRC-FMA, 108-01422-02, "以廖承志为首的中国代表团同以苏米亚洛为首的刚果（金）革命最高委员会代表团第二次谈记录" (Record of the Second Discussion Held by Head of the Chinese Delegation Liao Chengzhi

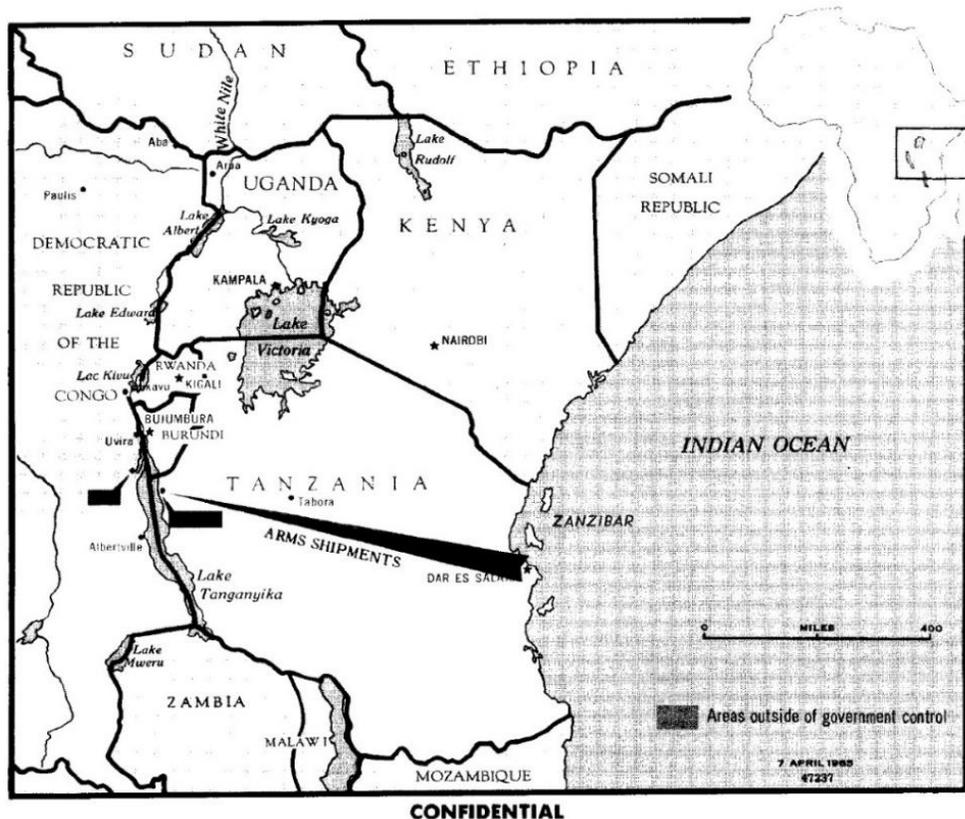
were made to isolate the insurgents from within the Congo. Cuban émigré pilots flying ANC jets supplied by Belgium bombed the Ugandan side of the border in February 1965, provoking mass protests in Kampala. By March 1965, in combination with the bombings, the ANC encirclement operation in Congo (L), and the growing pressure faced by Obote both from within and without his own government, the Ugandan border was cut off entirely.⁴¹⁸ Internal factors were decisive in the case of the Sudanese border. Due to Sudan's role as a bridge between Congolese rebels and the UAR, its border became host to large numbers of rebels and their families, with some border areas ultimately developing into both rebel bases and refugee camps. Soviet reports documented that circumstances on the border deteriorated such that the rebels and their families had become reliant on the Sudanese Army for rations and were dying at staggering rates due to starvation and disease.⁴¹⁹ The conditions faced by the nearly 8000 rebels and their families were viewed by the Sudanese government and army as a scandal and a security risk. After the outbreak of nationwide protests sparked by a military crackdown on a seminar series at the University of Khartoum in October 1964, the Sudanese army became reluctant to allow weapons in its south for fear they might fall into the hands of their own rebels. The Sudanese border, too, was closed by March 1965.⁴²⁰

and the Head of the Delegation of the Supreme Council of the Democratic Republic of the Congo [Kinshasa] Soumialot), 21 August 1965.

⁴¹⁸ Hoskyns, *The Organization of African Unity and the Congo Crisis*, xv. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00472A000400040008-6, 7 April 1965.

⁴¹⁹ Мазов, 'СССР и повстанцы восточного Конго'.

⁴²⁰ Algeria too ceased assistance after the coup against Ben Bella in June 1965. The coup government promised the USA that no further support would go to the insurgents. By October 1965, even Tanzania began to terminate assistance, with Nyerere increasingly concerned that the Congolese rebels should use the assistance they received 'in the fight against Tshombe and not accumulate it unnecessarily on the territory of Tanzania.' RGANI, f. 5, o. 50, d. 766, ll. 309-13, in «Россия и Африка», 791-3. Мазов, 'СССР и повстанцы восточного Конго'. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00472A000400040008-6, 7 April 1965.



13 CIA map of Chinese arms shipments to Congo (L) in April 1965. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00474.A000400040008-6, 'Tanzanian Support for the Congo Rebels', 7 April 1965.

The Lumumbaists' Last Appeals for Assistance

In mid-1965, Soumialot and other Lumumbaist leaders, known since the establishment of the People's Republic of the Congo as the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC), made two final attempts to plead their lost cause. The PRC would have preferred limiting its support to actors other than the SRC, and the Soviet Union had been concerned from the beginning that the Congolese rebels lacked a unified leadership. Like Guevara, they both recognised the special potency of Mulele's struggle, and Mulele had refused to subordinate himself to the SRC. Moreover, the PRC saw Mulele's ideological position towards both the USA and the USSR as correct (对帝、修认识明确), and the Soviet

government saw all the potential leaders aside from Mulele as 'dishonest'.⁴²¹ Soviet military intelligence preferred Gbenye, but Moscow ultimately settled on Soumialot. This was not due to any merits on Soumialot's part, but because Gbenye was seen to be unpopular among the other Lumumbaists, as 'secretly hanging out with the Americans', and as at risk of blackmail because his family resided in Europe.⁴²² The PRC shared the Soviet Union's distrust for Gbenye, but for different reasons. In a document prepared by the Chinese Embassy in Congo (B), Gbenye was assessed as 'a traitor' (叛徒) who had attempted to work within the Adoula government and then released CNL documentation to the Soviet Union. He was later characterised as a Soviet pawn for sowing divisions within the Congolese struggle.⁴²³ Zhou Enlai had his own doubts about both Gbenye and Soumialot. During their pleas for help, he admonished the SRC for declaring a government prematurely. He encouraged them to learn from the experience of Algeria and the situation of the Viet Cong, emphasising that it was important to first construct a united front forged in struggle before establishing a government.⁴²⁴ The Soviet government would have concurred:

(I)ntead of joining their efforts in the fight against Mobutu's government troops and mercenary detachments, (the Congolese rebels) are fighting internecine strife and splits, thereby discrediting themselves.... So it is in the eyes of public opinion in African countries.⁴²⁵

Despite this, following Dragon Rouge, neither country could look the other way, and so they both gave audience to the desperate SRC.

⁴²¹ PRC-FMA, 109-03526-06, '赫修对刚果 (利) 局势的态度' (The Attitude of the Khrushchevite Revisionists Towards the Situation in Congo [Leopoldville]), 4 September 1964. Мазов, 'СССР и повстанцы восточного Конго'.

⁴²² Мазов, 'СССР и повстанцы восточного Конго'.

⁴²³ PRC-FMA, 108-01028-01, '关于具格尼要求我援助问题' (About Gbenye's Request for Our Assistance), 24 April 1964; 109-03526-06, 4 September 1964.

⁴²⁴ PRC-FMA, 108-01423-01, 5 June 1965.

⁴²⁵ RGANI, f. 5, o. 50, d. 766, ll. 309-13, in «Россия и Африка», 791-3.

As observed by Namikas, the Soviet Union had been more selective in its support for different factions in the first crisis. When Soviet personnel discovered one faction or another had an affinity for Chinese socialism in the first crisis, they were removed from the aid roster.⁴²⁶ In the second crisis, while Beijing may have been displeased with reports about Congolese rebels 'maintaining illusions' towards revisionism or 'balancing between China and the Soviet Union' (在中苏之间保持平衡), there is no evidence that they outright refused to provide them with any support at all, provided they were engaged in armed struggle. They did, however, hint that they would give greater support if the rebels cast off these 'illusions' about the Soviet Union. In September 1964, the Chinese Ambassador to Burundi reportedly berated Gbenye and Soumialot:

Where is your friend, the Soviet Union? We have always told you that the Soviet Union does not want to help you, and you keep saying the opposite. Give up the Soviet Union, and then China will begin to provide you with more extensive assistance.⁴²⁷

Despite this, in their last appeals, the SRC asked the Soviet Union again for help, turning to China only once it found it was not forthcoming.

The first opportunity to do this came when Zhou visited Tanzania in June 1965. Soumialot first thanked him for China's aid, and Zhou responded that what the PRC gave was still too little. The SRC then explained to Zhou that they were scattered, outnumbered, and outgunned and that the Chinese weapons arriving from the UAR and Tanzania, while generous, were insufficient. Worse, shipments had slowed to a trickle, and they could barely keep the battlefield supplied. Some smuggling was still possible (the SRC had smuggled themselves out of the Congo via Sudan), but the insurgents found themselves encircled by

⁴²⁶ Namikas, *Battleground Africa*, 48-9.

⁴²⁷ RGANI, f. 5, o. 50, d. 604, ll. 161-6, in «Россия и Африка», 763-5.

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their own country's borders. Zhou instructed them to build positive relations with other regional actors so as to increase the volume of assistance, but he also acknowledged that seeking Sudanese, Burundian, and Ugandan support was no longer an option.⁴²⁸ After first touring the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, the SRC met with the Chinese leadership for a second time in Beijing in August 1965. By this point, their desperation was obvious. On his first day, Soumialot said that assistance was only arriving via Tanzania. Soumialot was specifically frustrated that the Chinese recoilless cannons intended for carrying out hit and run operations had not arrived. Soumialot lamented that his pleas to the other countries surrounding Congo (L) had fallen on deaf ears. According to him, he was told time and again, 'You became independent in 1960. What else do you want?'⁴²⁹

What they wanted was everything. Soumialot complained that the rebels were short of all supplies, including the most basic of necessities. But he would not have been satisfied with just those. He arrived bearing a laundry list of requests: large quantities of food and medicine, allowances for wounded fighters recovering in the UAR and neighbouring countries, all sorts of land and waterborne transportation vessels, radio transmitters, printing presses, paper, the dispatch of Chinese military advisors to the front, and even training for political and military cadres (including for ground forces, air, and sea!).⁴³⁰ They also had less tangible needs. He hoped China would set itself apart from the Soviet Union by not only recognising their provisional government but also allowing them to establish an official

⁴²⁸ PRC-FMA, 108-01423-01, 5 June 1965.

⁴²⁹ PRC-FMA, 108-01422-01, '以廖承志为首的中国代表团同以苏米亚洛为首的刚果（金）革命最高委员会代表团第一次谈记录' (Record of the First Discussion Held by Head of the Chinese Delegation Liao Chengzhi and the Head of the Delegation of the Supreme Council of the Democratic Republic of the Congo [Kinshasa] Soumialot), 20 August 1965; 108-01422-02, 21 August 1965.

⁴³⁰ PRC-FMA, 108-01422-01, 20 August 1965.

Embassy in Beijing.⁴³¹ This turned the discussion Zhou towards the 'revisionists'. When asked to detail Soviet support, Soumialot said that 'Russia has provided more canned goods than guns'.⁴³² He then denied Western reports that Soviet and Cuban personnel were providing support in eastern Congo (L). He claimed that there were only three Malian trainers and four Guineans who may have been mistaken for Cubans.⁴³³ Zhou listened but did not let on that he knew this was a lie. He had met with Guevara just before Guevara travelled to the Congo earlier that year.⁴³⁴ Furthermore, Kabila had appraised Zhou of Cuba's efforts during his own June visit to Dar es Salaam, and according to Cuban Ambassador to Tanzania at the time, Guevara was in correspondence with Zhou from the front.⁴³⁵

Knowing this, it is clear that Soumialot sought to leverage the Sino-Soviet dispute to acquire more committed support from the PRC. While understandable, this ignored that Chinese assistance was partially made possible by the Soviet Union and its satellites. The weapons the PRC provided were often of Soviet or Eastern Bloc make, and the Ilyushin aircraft it used to fly supplies in from elsewhere in Africa had been purchased on favourable terms from the Soviet Union. Moreover, while overt Soviet support was not forthcoming until after Operation Dragon Rouge, its satellites, to differing degrees, lent significant support throughout the crisis. Among the most militant was Bulgaria, which by 1963 was running 'full scale subversion' training sessions for African students. Guevara confirmed this, writing that in addition to China and the Soviet Union, the largest number of trained

⁴³¹ PRC-FMA, 108-01422-02, 21 August 1965.

⁴³² *Ibid.*

⁴³³ PRC-FMA, 108-01422-01, 20 August 1965; 108-01422-02, 21 August 1965. These trainers would themselves have likely been trained by Soviet or bloc personnel in their home countries.

⁴³⁴ ZELNP, 1074.

⁴³⁵ Guevara, *The African Dream*, introduction by Richard Gott, xxxviii, 95.

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men came from Bulgaria.⁴³⁶ While this was certainly not a Sino-Soviet joint effort, the Chinese leadership still knew that the rebels were receiving support from their socialist rivals and were not fooled by Soumialot's appeal to their rivalry with the 'revisionists'. The PRC may indeed have desired the situation to develop such that they could focus their support on specific groups (and as discussed above, Soumialot and Gbenye probably would not have been among these), but the political and logistical situation was so dire that they had no choice but to funnel support to neighbouring governments on the understanding that it would be used to support the Congolese struggle, and this arrangement had already collapsed.

Like the Soviet Union experienced in the first crisis, this placed much of its material support largely at the mercy of regional actors. Due to regional politics and Western political pressure, less and less of this support arrived at the front, stacking up instead in the revolutionary hubs of Tanzania, Ghana, and elsewhere, until finally, the rebels were snuffed out. On his last day in Beijing, Soumialot met with Mao and repeated his complaints and requests. He remained proactive in his criticisms of the Soviet Union. He told the chairman of how the rebels were fighting alone, with little more than bows and arrows, against a state-of-the-art army and air force supported by South African, Israeli, Belgian, and US advisors and mercenaries. Mao told him that bows and arrows were effective. Mao then asked, 'Do you plan to fight for very long?' Soumialot replied, 'We do. We intend to fight for 100 years, 200 years', to which Mao said, 'Perhaps you won't need to fight that long.'⁴³⁷

⁴³⁶ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP78-03581R000200120001-3, April 1965. Guevara, *The African Dream*, 227.

⁴³⁷ PRC-FMA, 108-01422-03, '毛泽东主席接见以苏米亚洛为首的刚果（金）革命最高委员会代表团的谈话记录' (Record of Chairman Mao Zedong's Conversation with the Delegation of the Supreme Council of the Democratic Republic of the Congo [Kinshasa] Led by Soumialot), 25 August 1965.

Unforeseen Consequences

Ultimately, the Lumumbaists were scattered.⁴³⁸ With neither millet nor rifles, they had no choice but to rely on the magic meant to turn their enemies' bullets into water, and according to David Van Reybrouk, many believed that since the 1964 rainy season, that spell had been washed away.⁴³⁹ Around the time Guevara departed the Congo, the insurgency collapsed entirely. In February 1966, Soumialot announced the end of armed struggle. He was severely beaten when he refused to pay the salaries of his staff and hospitalised under police protection Tanzania.⁴⁴⁰ The remaining forces moved to neighbouring countries. Before and after they were scattered, and Chinese military assistance intended for the Congo was effectively redirected. This was done either by China itself or regional actors. The primary effect of the redirection of China's assistance implicated it in local efforts to influence or overthrow independent African governments. This section will explore two countries where this occurred.

Malawi, Niger, and Elsewhere

Three weeks before Malawi's independence, Dr Hastings Banda, Malawi's pro-Western prime minister and later president, met with the PRC's special envoy to Tanganyika, He Ying. They met in Zomba, Malawi's capital. Handing him a copy of the Eight Principles, He advertised to Banda the sort of assistance that would be on offer to Malawi should its government recognise the PRC as the sole government of China. The generous offer – between \$6 and \$18 million – reflected Malawi's strategic location for the continuing struggle

⁴³⁸ For another treatment of Chinese support for the Lumumbaist insurgency, see Jodie Yuzhou Sun, 'Supplied Cash and Arms but Losing Anyway: Chinese Support of the Lumumbist Insurgencies in the Congo Crisis', *Cold War History*, ahead of print, DOI: 10.1080/14682745.2022.2050699.

⁴³⁹ David Van Reybrouk, *Congo: The Epic History of a People* (London: Fourth Estate, 2014), 326.

⁴⁴⁰ RGANI, f. 5, o. 50, d. 766, ll. 309-13, in «Россия и Африка», 791-3.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa against South African apartheid and Portuguese colonialism. Banda declined, insisting that Malawi would recognise both the Beijing and Taipei governments. For the independence ceremony on 4 July 1964, Malawi's government invited delegations from both the ROC and the PRC. Both demurred from sending official delegations. Zhou and Chen Yi sent a congratulatory telegram, but the Chinese press accused Dr Banda of colluding with the USA in propagating the 'two-China conspiracy'.⁴⁴¹

Banda's cabinet argued for recognising one China or the other. Among them was a group largely aligned with the Malawian left. The conventional understanding is that He Ying attempted to bribe them for recognition, permanently spoiling relations between Banda and China. This interpretation originated from reporting by John K. Cooley and is echoed in David H. Shinn's and Joshua Eisenman's brief entry in the encyclopaedic *China and Africa*.⁴⁴² There is, however, a question about whether this was really a matter of bribery. Seeing the way in which recognition of the PRC was followed by extensions of assistance in the rest of Africa, the anticolonial left members of the cabinet sought to ensure Malawi benefited from this arrangement too. In August 1964, they met with He Ying in Dar es Salaam to negotiate recognition without Banda. He Ying told them just what he had told Banda in Zomba: China could provide \$6 million in assistance before potentially expanding the program to \$18

⁴⁴¹ 武涛, '独立初期马拉维未同中国建交的原因', 中国社会科学院西亚非洲研究所 (Wu Tao, 'Reasons for Malawi's Failure to Establish Diplomatic Relations with China in the Early Days of Independence', Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Institute of West Asia and Africa), 23 October 2015. CYNP, 1038. '我国决定承认马拉维 中总理陈外长电贺马拉维独立' (China Decides to Recognise Malawi's Independence, Chinese Premier Foreign Minister Chen Congratulates Malawi on its Independence), *People's Daily*, 6 July 1964. '马拉维总理公然发表“两个中国”谬论' (Malawi's Prime Minister Openly Propagates the 'two China' Fallacy), *People's Daily*, 9 July 1964. For an overview of Sino-Malawian relations from 1961 to 2014, see Bryson Nkhoma, 'Taiwan or China? Contestations over Diplomatic Relations in Southern Africa, with Particular Focus on Malawi, 1961-2014', *South African Historical Journal* 72, no. 4 (2020): 677-98.

⁴⁴² Cooley, *East Wind Over Africa*, 97-8. Shinn and Eisenman, *China and Africa*, 358.

million, and that its aid would be implemented according to the Eight Principles.⁴⁴³ That He confirmed for them this quid pro quo could hardly be called a bribe.

The ministers returned from their meeting with He Ying and demanded that Banda recognise China. Banda furiously refused and accused He of 'naked bribery'.⁴⁴⁴ Banda then accused the three members of his cabinet of conspiring to kill him and dismissed them. Among the dismissed, Henry Chipembere raised a small army in Malawi's southeast and began skirmishing with Banda's army and police just months later.⁴⁴⁵ Following the cabinet crisis, Banda became a prominent opponent of China in Africa. Banda characterised the PRC as an interventionist and even imperialist power, declaring at the UN General Assembly in September 1964 that 'the PRC has a special reverence for armed struggle, is openly interfering in other countries' affairs, and has an outspoken hatred for the UN'.⁴⁴⁶ According to Cooley, Banda 'was said to have added that while the West had relinquished control of the body of Africa, the Chinese were scrambling for its soul'.⁴⁴⁷ In December 1964, Banda became one of a handful of African leaders who advocated for Taiwan to remain in the UN.⁴⁴⁸ The revolting ministers saw Banda's refusal to recognise China as part of a larger issue. After he dismissed the three ministers, the remainder of Banda's cabinet, save for one, resigned in protest at what they saw as Banda's autocratic tendencies. The ministers were dissatisfied with not only Banda's refusal regarding China but also his refusal to cut ties with South Africa and Portugal, his reintroduction of the colonial practice of detention without trial, and his refusal to adopt social welfare policies and reforms aimed at Africanising

⁴⁴³ Wu, 'Reasons for Malawi's Failure to Establish Diplomatic Relations with China'.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁵ Cooley, *East Wind Over Africa*, 97-8.

⁴⁴⁶ Wu, 'Reasons for Malawi's Failure to Establish Diplomatic Relations with China'.

⁴⁴⁷ Cooley, *East Wind Over Africa*, 97.

⁴⁴⁸ Malawi only recognised Beijing in 2007.

Malawi's civil service (a process which would have been made easier with the funds left on the table by He). According to Colin Baker, what caused the crisis was Banda's determination not to be 'Nyererized', meaning made a puppet to his own ministers.⁴⁴⁹ It was only after the ministers began resigning in the face of these issues that Banda alleged that they were corrupted by a foreign power.

Later, some of the rebel ministers gave interviews in exile countering Banda's accusation of bribery, claiming that he was in the pocket of Rhodesia.⁴⁵⁰ For them, not recognising China had not only deprived the Malawian government of valuable resources to pursue social welfare but also aligned the Malawian government with neo-colonial forces who saw no point in a 'second independence' for the Congo or for anyone else. For these ministers, however, the question of recognition was essentially ancillary, a reflection of Banda's affinity for Malawi's former colonial power and his authoritarian tendencies more generally. Nonetheless, this was understood by many at the time as an attempt by the PRC to purchase a government in Africa outright. Perhaps the most damning evidence was: In September 1965, the South African Defence Force Intelligence reported that Malawian émigrés, trained in Tanzania by Chinese experts, were preparing to invade Malawi and put into power a 'pro-Chinese' government.⁴⁵¹ According to later reports, they were equipped and armed by the Chinese as well.⁴⁵² Considering the scale of Chinese military training and assistance on offer in Tanzania for the purpose of the Congolese struggle, this was plausible. If He Ying's 'naked bribery' had not made Banda a committed enemy of the PRC, such reports certainly did.

⁴⁴⁹ Colin Baker, *Revolt of the Ministers: The Malawi Cabinet Crisis, 1964-1965* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2001), 306.

⁴⁵⁰ Cooley, *East Wind Over Africa*, 98.

⁴⁵¹ ROC-FMA, 11-31-50-00-021, 73, 9 September 1965.

⁴⁵² *Ibid*, 85, 27 October 1965.

Niger's experience of China's 'interference' was indirect, but this did not stop it from becoming another rare advocate for Taiwan. In early 1965, roughly 150 Nigerien émigrés crossed the Ghanaian border into Niger with the intent of overthrowing Nigerien President, Hamani Diori. These 'commandos' counted on the support of the Hausa tribesmen in the villages between the border and the capital. This proved a miscalculation. When the commandos arrived in the villages, the tribesmen refused them water and immediately alerted the Nigerien military to their presence. In some villages, the commandos were hacked to pieces with machetes before the military could come to capture them. The rest were arrested and brought to the capital where they were summarily executed. One of their bodies was laid in the dirt outside the police station for a whole day as an example of what would happen to rebels against Diori's government.⁴⁵³ The rebels had been recruited in Ghana and received training in China and Algeria. In March, Diori himself accused the PRC of smuggling the commandos into Niger via Ghana, saying, 'Africans have been taken to (Red) China and given education in Marxism, Leninism, and military training.' According to Diori, they then returned to Africa and 'tried to teach the new doctrines with machine guns.'⁴⁵⁴ Admaou Mayaki, Niger's permanent representative to the UN, also accused China of training rebels, explaining that when the Nigerien government was made aware of Chinese engagement with Nigerien émigrés in Ghana in 1963, it sent a Chinese official home empty handed.⁴⁵⁵ The next month, a grenade was hurled at the president as he visited a mosque, killing a child and wounding several others. Afterwards, a Nigerien paper implicated Nkrumah in the attempt and also accused him of orchestrating the 1963 Togolese

⁴⁵³ ROC-FMA, 11-31-50-00-007, '中共與尼日關係' (Chinese Communist Relations with Niger), 66, 7 February 1965.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 70, 14 March 1965.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 68, 2 March 1965.

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coup, all in collusion with Beijing. The paper wrote, 'Any fellow African who leaves his country to go to Ghana today is looked upon with suspicion'.⁴⁵⁶ Diori's complaints about Sino-Ghanaian collusion against him continued into late 1964. He held that the rebels 'are using the Chinese method of attack' and that 'Communist China is helping them financially'.⁴⁵⁷

While, again, this was plausible considering the scale of Chinese military assistance and training to Ghana for the purposes of the Congolese struggle, in this case, Diori was scapegoating China. He selectively reported the intelligence he was in possession of regarding Chinese weapons and training, playing down the fact that he had also been made aware of the seizure of Czech arms and ammunition. This in itself did not exculpate China, but he also blamed China for training commandos at a specific training camp in Ghana which was operated by Eastern Bloc personnel, not China.⁴⁵⁸ Furthermore, this was all occurring against the background of his government's negotiations with Taipei to expand its agricultural assistance in the country.⁴⁵⁹

A similar case is the Central African Republic (CAR). In January 1966, Colonel Jean-Bédél Bokassa broke relations with Beijing immediately after assuming power. He then carried out a crackdown on Chinese agricultural experts who were engaged in fulfilling the September 1964 Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement. He asserted that he had become aware of a pro-Chinese 'popular army' with plans to kill him. At a press conference, Bokassa displayed illustrated leaflets on guerrilla training seized from the residence of the expelled Chinese experts as well as photographs of a rifle range he claimed was being used to

⁴⁵⁶ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Country Files, Ghana, 'Subversion, Espionage, Sabotage', 24 April 1965.

⁴⁵⁷ *Nkrumah's Deception of Africa* (Accra: Ghana Information Services, 1967), 36.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁹ ROC-FMA, 11-31-50-00-007, 68, 2 March 1965.

train the popular army. On this basis, he arrested David Dacko, the former (and subsequent) President of the Central African Republic, claiming he had been made ‘prisoner of pro-Chinese elements’.⁴⁶⁰

In all such cases, the ‘freedom fighters’ in question had received weapons, equipment, and training in those countries most key to the effort to support the Congolese struggle, namely Burundi, Ghana, Tanzania, the UAR, Algeria, and even China itself, and this provided evidence for the narrative that China was not merely supporting anticolonial struggles but also backing terroristic wars against independent African governments. Some, like the CAR, directly bordered the Congo and had seen an influx of fighters following Soumialot’s surrender in February 1966.⁴⁶¹ Mao himself understood that this had resulted in the emergence of a narrative about Chinese aid, but dismissed this as an unavoidable reality. In July 1964, he said, ‘Wherever support is needed, we provide it, and so our “reputation” (名誉) is bad, as we have been labelled “militant adventurists” (好战分子).’⁴⁶² Different authors have echoed this narrative. In his pioneering *China’s Policy in Africa*, Alaba Ogunsanwo writes that the PRC intentionally placed countries which had not yet recognised it in jeopardy in this manner, using the promise of aid as a carrot and support for anti-government rebels as a stick in the quest to drive Taiwan out of Africa.⁴⁶³

But did China intentionally unleash guerrillas on independent African governments in this fashion? As Mao acknowledged, this was certainly a narrative useful in many quarters. Beginning in the early 1960s, the USA and UK had begun a coordinated information campaign against socialist influence in Africa. Early on, there was recognition

⁴⁶⁰ TNA, FO 1110-2073, ‘Chinese Activities in Africa: January – March, 1966’.

⁴⁶¹ RGANI, f. 5, o. 50, d. 766, ll. 309-13, in «Россия и Африка», 791-3.

⁴⁶² 毛泽东, ‘从历史来看亚非拉人民斗争的前途’, 9 July 1964, JGYLZYWXXB 19, 5.

⁴⁶³ Ogunsanwo, *China’s Policy in Africa 1958-1971*, 174.

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on the UK side that the two socialist countries were pursuing different aid programs that had to be countered independently. At this time, the UK government held that Soviet aid could be beneficial to the economic development of newly independent states, lessening the UK's own aid burden, so it advocated that it be countered or pre-empted on a case-by-case basis. Chinese assistance on the other hand, had a 'special capacity to promote anarchy, which needs watching'.⁴⁶⁴ UK communications with African elites thus focused on casting all Chinese assistance as potentially destabilising. Among the materials generated by the Information Research Department and distributed to African elites were the monthly 'Chinese Activities in Africa' which highlighted China's guerrilla assistance, dedicating the second section of each issue to the question of 'Support for Subversive or Rebel Movements' or 'Support for Minority Groups'.⁴⁶⁵ The Soviet Union too leveraged this narrative, albeit in a less overt way. Internally, reports to the presidium characterised Chinese aid activities in African countries as nothing more than political and ideological 'penetration'. Soviet publications in the mid-1960s also lamented the role of China's 'aid pressure' and the way its bargain-bin aid was used as a vehicle for 'subversion' and 'adventurism'.⁴⁶⁶

As indicated by the Malawian experience, both Chinese assistance itself and narratives about Chinese aid had implications for the domestic or factional politics of certain states. Most obviously, the question of diplomatic recognition of the PRC became a contentious issue determined as much by local politics as by the aid offered by Beijing or Taipei. Governments which were affiliated with or sympathetic to the conservative Brazzaville Group (and/or members of the *Communauté française*) were more likely to recognise Taiwan, meaning their local opposition increasingly saw the question of

⁴⁶⁴ TNA, DO 165-162, 'Communist Penetration in Africa and the role of aid in Countering it', 21 August 1964.

⁴⁶⁵ TNA, FO 1110-2073, 'Chinese Activities in Africa: January – March, 1966'.

⁴⁶⁶ GARF, f. 4459, o. 43, d. 9444, ll. 70-1, 1969.

recognition as symbolic of their wider concerns about neo-imperialism, not just aid. This dynamic also operated in the opposite direction. In the case of Niger and the CAR, the two government's vociferous opposition to the PRC's support for freedom fighters corresponded with bids for Taiwanese assistance. Examining the Congo Crisis and its impact on Sino-African relations more generally presents a more complicated picture of the history of Chinese aid in Africa which recentres the agency of African leaders and societal forces. The overall impact of China being bound up with 'freedom fighters' was to sow widespread distrust among African leaders even after Zhou's charm offensive in 1964.

Counterintuitively, the reputation of Soviet aid diplomacy was not seen as having a direct impact on domestic politics precisely because of its vacillation and the challenges it faced in terms of its cooperation with its partners in the region. By holding on to its military aid rather than delivering it, these countries had prevented the diffusion of matériel and prevented the Soviet Union from becoming as embroiled in the same ethnic and subversive movements in which China found itself implicated in the wake of the Congo Crisis.

Zhou Finds Himself Unwelcome

As a result of the association of China's activities with chaos, Chinese leaders found themselves increasingly unwelcome in Africa despite the huge increase in the volume of China's aid since Zhou's tour in 1963. Zhou himself remained popular, but significant pressure had been exerted on all African governments to limit their interaction with the PRC during the Congo Crisis, and the aforementioned narrative about China's 'special capacity for anarchy' had taken hold among some. Principally, the most important economies aside from Ghana and Tanzania took steps to limit Chinese influence and rejected Chinese offers of

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aid while also isolating pro-Chinese forces within their own societies. China's relations with Kenya were probably the most turbulent due in large part to Kenyatta's rivalry with the leftist Pan-Africanist Oginga Odinga. After the army mutinies of 1964, Kenyatta began to take steps to limit Chinese influence in Kenya, banning Chinese publications before deporting its Xinhua correspondent in June 1965. Kenyatta's government alleged that the deportee had been using journalism as a cover for financing and advising anti-government forces and dissidents within the Kenya African National Union (KANU), meaning Odinga's faction. Meanwhile, Kenyatta had a list of politicians and civil servants with pro-Chinese sympathies compiled so that they might be arrested on short notice.⁴⁶⁷

Having been unable to visit East Africa in his first tour, there were indications in May 1964 that Zhou intended to arrange a tour of Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, and Zanzibar.⁴⁶⁸ It was his hope to orchestrate a tour for the month of June 1965 that would climax with his attendance at the Second Afro-Asian Conference in Algiers on 22 June. However, apart from Tanzania, no country in Africa would have him. During his tour there, the Foreign Minister of India and the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union both 'studiously stayed away' from Tanzania while visiting Uganda and Zambia respectively.⁴⁶⁹ Instead of being a month-long tour culminating in what the Chinese press presented as an epochal event, Zhou spent a lonely four days in Tanzania before having to return home. Zhou departed for Tanzania on 1 June 1965. He arrived in Dar es Salaam on 4 June where he was greeted by Nyerere and Abeid Karume. 'Lorry loads' of Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) supporters were driven to the airport to greet him, and school children lined the

⁴⁶⁷ NARA II, RG59, Record of the Bureau of African Affairs, Country Files, Kenya, Pol - 2 China - Kenya Relations, 2 August 1965. ROC-FMA, 11-05-16-02-01-005, '周恩來訪坦尚尼亞' (Zhou Enlai Visits Tanzania), 161-2, 7 June 1965; 11-31-50-00-021, 73, 9 September 1965.

⁴⁶⁸ ROC-FMA, 11-05-16-02-01-005, 4, 2 May 1964.

⁴⁶⁹ TNA, FO 371-180991, 'Chou En-lai's Visit to Tanzania, 4-8 June 1965'.

streets into town. TANU party cell leaders, charged with shepherding ten houses a piece, escorted even more people to view Zhou's arrival, employers having given everyone the day off. On his arrival, local newspapers recalled tenth-century trading links between China and Tanzania, prompted by the Chinese side.⁴⁷⁰

Zhou and Nyerere spent several days discussing prospective aid projects. On the first day, they focused on the setting up of a Sino-Tanzanian shipping line, identifying it as an immediate priority for increasing the volume of assistance being provided to the Congolese rebels. On the second day, Zhou encouraged Nyerere to send more of Tanzania's military officers for training in China, stating that 'one hundred questions are not as good as one visit.' On the third day, he and Nyerere discussed TAZARA for the first time. Zhou promised that surveyors would arrive in September. On the fourth and final day, he took the opportunity to share once more the Five Principles for Relations with Arab and African Countries that had debuted on his first tour, along with the Eight Principles.⁴⁷¹ These conversations foreshadowed an unprecedented increase in Chinese expenditure in Africa as well as its pivot from the West to the East and South of the continent.

Despite the momentousness of these conversations, Chinese press coverage was sparse, and all was not well. At a rally held on 5 June, Zhou again insisted on criticising the Americans to the annoyance of his hosts. Nyerere's speech was not to Zhou's liking either. Zhou sat, 'grim and unsmiling', as Nyerere told the assembled audience, 'From no quarter... shall we accept direction or neo-colonialism and at no time shall we lower our guard against the subversion of our Government or our people.' This was as much directed at Beijing as it was Moscow or Washington. While visiting Zanzibar, Zhou again harangued his audience

⁴⁷⁰ ZELNP, 1087. TNA, FO 371-180991, 'Chou En-lai's Visit to Tanzania, 4-8 June 1965'.

⁴⁷¹ ZELNP, 1087-9.

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about the Americans, and was again assured of the futility of attempting to exercise influence over Tanzanian politics. Abeid Karume said at that rally, 'Nobody should take pride to say that he is leading Tanzania. Tanzania will be led by Tanzanians.' Karume then went on to specifically thank the Soviet Union and East Germany for their assistance, again to Zhou's chagrin.⁴⁷² Privately, Nyerere also took issue with Zhou's continued appeals to a shared legacy of having histories damaged by European colonialism. He reminded Zhou that China had played a part in the Indian Ocean slave trade during the Song – the trading links celebrated by local reporters on Zhou's arrival – and told him that these were not 'links... between two free peoples'.⁴⁷³ Around the same time as this short visit, a discussion under the heading, 'Is China a Paper Dragon?' began circulating in the British Foreign Office discussing the 'recent slump' in Beijing's foreign relations, especially those with Africa.⁴⁷⁴ It was dismissed as unhelpful at the time, but it was nonetheless clear that Sino-African relations were indeed at a low ebb. This downturn in Sino-African relations made the successful holding of a Bandung II of paramount importance to China, and it is to this that the next chapter will turn.

Conclusion

The distinct experiences of the Soviet Union and PRC in providing aid and assistance to Congo (L) bore striking similarities. In the first crisis, logistical access to the Congo itself was a major challenge which required the Soviet Union to work with regional partners. These partners proved unreliable and susceptible to pressure from the West. Specifically, in

⁴⁷² TNA, FO 371-180991, 'Chou En-lai's Visit to Tanzania, 4-8 June 1965'. ROC-FMA, 11-05-16-02-01-005, 190, 16 June 1965.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁴ TNA, FO 371-180991, 'Is China a Paper Dragon?', 22 November 1965.

their quest for financing and technical assistance for domestic development, these partners were willing to compromise their support for the first beleaguered Congolese government. The reality of this had not changed much in the short hiatus between the two crises. The PRC's logistical capabilities were a far cry from the Soviet Union's (which were themselves no match for the West, with its possession of strategic assets such as Ascension Island), making it even more reliant on regional partners for its provisions to the Congo. However, again, their partners were susceptible to pressure from the West, whether through airstrikes or aid. Multiple Chinese embassies in Africa at this time lamented that African governments 'maintained illusions' about foreign aid and 'lacked the spirit of self-reliance'. These reports were written sympathetically, with acknowledgment of the immediacy of the economic needs of these countries.

However, while the experiences of the two crises were similar in this respect, the result was a major divergence in the overall pattern of Moscow and Beijing's aid provision. Succinctly, Soviet assistance to Africa decreased while China's increased. As will be explored in greater detail in chapter 6, in March 1966 the Soviet Union publicly announced it would be reducing its foreign aid. Moved by the desperation of the Lumumbaist rebels and the atrocity of Operation Dragon Rouge, Soviet assistance returned to the Congo in late 1964, but only in a limited, largely symbolic fashion. In contrast, following the second Congo Crisis, the PRC continued on the path it had set itself. It is important to remember that the bulk of Beijing's negotiations with Dar es Salaam over the construction of infrastructure and setting up of joint shipping was initiated during and immediately after the Congo Crisis. Following the Congo Crisis, the attention given to large-scale infrastructure projects which could be used to facilitate militant provision was increased. This is most evident in TAZARA, but

there were a number of others. Large-scale projects, hitherto the realm of the Soviet Union and the West, were now taken on by China.

For the Soviet Union the experience of the first Congo Crisis was a cautionary one, endangering its wider goals of stepping up development at home, generating support within the UN, and attaining peaceful coexistence. In the wake of the first crisis, it became difficult to justify at home or abroad the massive expense of Soviet aid diplomacy in Africa. For China, which had the Vietnam War raging on its doorstep, anti-imperialist struggle was an end in itself. The question was how to continue and widen that struggle with limited resources. This explains the divergent lessons that the two countries drew from their experiences of the Congo Crises. The divergence, however, was shaped by events and political developments within Africa. With the decline of 'generic anticolonialism', the Chinese brand of assistance fell out of favour. China's commitment to armed struggle imperilled its efforts to build cordial relationships with more moderate African governments, and opposition to neo-colonialism proved to be a far more complex matter than had the struggle against formal colonialism. Military assistance for the Lumumbaists and other anticolonial movements embroiled China in local and regional politics, so that the acceptance or rejection of Chinese aid became bound up with narrower issues such as ethnic allegiances or regional alliances as well as broader ideological issues concerning a country's orientation towards 'neo-colonialism'. Ultimately, on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, China could only count on the most radical Pan-African leaders and the most desperate minority rebel groups in Africa. For the rest, China's putatively principled opposition to neo-colonialism was inconvenient at best, and existentially dangerous at worst.

Chapter 5: Africa's 'Rightward Drift', 1965-1966

Introduction

This chapter analyses the 'rightward drift' of African politics brought about by the decline of 'generic anticolonialism' in the mid-1960s to explore fundamental shifts in the nature of Chinese and Soviet aid diplomacy during that time. It does so by investigating the fate of the Second Afro-Asian Conference as well as the response of the two countries to two coups: the 1965 coup which ousted Ahmed Ben Bella and the 1966 coup which ousted Kwame Nkrumah.

At the beginning of 1965, Mao Zedong was preoccupied with the Third Front project and the US bombing campaign on North Vietnam.⁴⁷⁵ On 15 June 1965, prior to a meeting with Ho Chi Minh, he spoke with Zhou Enlai, Peng Zhen, Chen Yi, Li Xiannian, and Luo Ruiqing about the then upcoming Second Afro-Asian Conference, scheduled to be held on 20 June in Algiers. His central concern was maintaining and expanding an international united front against the expansion of the war in Vietnam. Mao worried that Soviet participation in the conference would provoke a number of non-aligned Afro-Asian countries to abandon the front at an inopportune moment.⁴⁷⁶ In a subsequent conversation between Zhou, Chen, and Ho, the conference was discussed at length. Aid was recognized as a factor that would help determine whether an Afro-Asian country supported or opposed Soviet participation. Ho had sources which indicated that thirty-eight countries in the Afro-Asian Movement already

⁴⁷⁵ The Third Front Project (三线建设) was a top-secret effort to develop the industrial and defence capacity of China's interior in preparation for possible war with either the United States or the Soviet Union or both. See Covell F. Meyskens, *Mao's Third Front: The Militarization of Cold War China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

⁴⁷⁶ MZDNP, vol. 5, 500. ZELNP, 1089.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa supported Soviet participation. These were countries that avoided taking public stances on the issue for fear of offending Moscow or Beijing – especially the latter – and thereby losing access to further offers of aid. Chen recalled how the Soviet Union had attempted to gain entry to the preparatory conference in Jakarta in April 1964 by granting ten ships of comparable size to the *Lumière de l'Aurore* to the Indonesian government. At that time, Indonesian Deputy Prime Minister, Subandrio, acknowledged the conflict of interest and enlisted the Afghan delegation to serve as a substitute host, but the fact that the Soviet Union could utilise its largesse in this way posed an obvious risk, and there was no guarantee that the subsequent host would be so forthcoming in acknowledging such a conflict of interest.⁴⁷⁷

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was endeavouring to enter the Afro-Asian Movement in part by proposing additional assistance to Afro-Asian countries, including to the host of conference, Algeria. The ground for Soviet participation in a potential Second Afro-Asian Conference had already been laid during Khrushchev's trip to the UAR and was affirmed again at Winneba in Ghana during the Fourth Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference in May 1965. At Winneba, the Indian delegation announced its support for Soviet attendance, calling the Soviet Union an Asian country.⁴⁷⁸ With this, the UAR and India, the two most prominent members of the Afro-Asian Movement aside from China, had both laid the foundation for Soviet attendance at a Second Afro-Asian Conference. Zhou concluded that due to the growing likelihood of Soviet attendance, the conference either had to be held on time or not at all.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁷ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-00861-02, 'Record of Conversation between Premier Zhou Enlai and Chairman Ho Chi Minh,' 15 June 1965.

⁴⁷⁸ 李潜虞, '中国对亚非人民团结大会的政策 (1957-1965)', 《外交评论》 (Li Qianyu, 'Chinese Policy towards Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation [1957-1965]', *Foreign Affairs Review*), 2012(4): 126.

⁴⁷⁹ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-00861-02, 15 June 1965.

The 1965 Algerian Coup

Chinese Press Coverage of the Coup

What became known in China as the '19 June Incident in Algiers' prevented the conference from being held on time. Together with other members of the Oujda Group, Algerian Defence Minister Houari Boumédiène and Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika placed Ahmed Ben Bella under house arrest. They did this just three days before Ben Bella had arranged to fire Bouteflika. Under the leadership of Boumédiène, the military centralised control under the aegis of a junta called the Revolutionary Committee. They began disestablishing the popular militias which had been a hallmark of Ben Bella's leadership and which threatened the monopoly of force enjoyed by the army.⁴⁸⁰ Among the first targets of the Revolutionary Committee were radio and television broadcasting stations. By the end of the first day of the coup, Boumédiène used them to issue an official communique that explained the Revolutionary Committee's rationale. The coup was swift, next to bloodless, and served to cement the Oujda Group as a fixture in Algerian politics right until today.⁴⁸¹ None of this was reported in commonly available Chinese newspapers until days after it began. The *People's Daily* and *PLA Daily* ran pre-prepared editorials announcing Beijing's positions on a variety of issues to be discussed at the forthcoming Second Afro-Asian Conference. *Cankao Shaoxi*, a Chinese newspaper primarily consisting of translations of foreign news wires that was restricted to high-level party cadres, did not

⁴⁸⁰ Earlier in 1965, Algeria and China had begun exchanging information and training on people's militias, something which had been the fulcrum of Ben Bella's control and had been a major impetus for the military's coup. Had this gone forward, it would have been an almost unprecedented opportunity for Beijing to deploy its aid on behalf of the security of a national government in Africa. TNA, FO 371-1965, 'Office of the British Chargé d'affaires letter from TJB George 29 December 1964'.

⁴⁸¹ See: William B. Quandt, *Revolution and Political Leadership: Algeria, 1954-1968* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969); David Ottaway and Marina Ottaway, *Algeria: The Politics of a Socialist Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970). Bouteflika only resigned from power, after four full presidential terms, during the 2019 Hirak Movement.

report on the coup either. Instead, the three publications continued to run pre-prepared coverage for the conference.

A central part of *People's Daily's* prepared coverage included a salvo of articles against Soviet participation in the conference. For most of 1965, Chinese officials and publications had been muted on the Sino-Soviet dispute. This was because, while Zhou's insistence on criticising the USA despite the wishes of his hosts had been frustrating during his 1963-1964 tour, it was nonetheless understandable. However, the way that Afro-Asian forums had become arenas for the Sino-Soviet dispute had become grating and disruptive in the eyes of most African governments. As discussed by Jeremy Friedman, reports communicating this were arriving from Chinese embassies in Africa.⁴⁸² Even members of African trade unions were fed up. When a British High Commission official in Accra spoke with a representative of the All African Trade Union Federation in October 1965, he was told that during a visit to China, the trade unionists' hosts had 'sought the whole time to score ideological points against the USSR' and that they had formed the opinion that 'the Chinese regarded Africa as a battleground rather than a place where Africans wanted to live and work in peace'. The author of this report quipped,

It sounds as if (John Kofi Barku) Tettegah has come to exactly the same conclusion as President (Félix) Houphouët-Boigny, that the Chinese are 'a constant source of hate and war between men'! An odd couple to concur so completely about an issue common to both! I was really surprised by the evident bitterness which the Chinese had engendered. (J. P.) Addei said that you simply could not argue with them: they took an ideological standpoint on every single issue and could not be budged. Their main theme was armed insurrection to oust imperialist colonialists and neo-colonialist regimes, which were being supported by Soviet revisionists who should be ejected too, and so on.⁴⁸³

⁴⁸² Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*, 115.

⁴⁸³ TNA, DO 195-232, Letter from J. D. M. Blyth 13 October 1965. John Kofi Barku Tettegah (1930-2009) was secretary-general of the All-African Trade Union Federation and an influential Ghanaian trade unionist, diplomat, and politician. J. P. Addei was part of the delegation which visited China with him.

Recognising this 'evident bitterness', the Chinese delegates to the Afro-Asian Economic Seminar in Algiers on 28 February 1965 had refrained from the polemics which characterised past forums.⁴⁸⁴

In the two months prior to the Second Afro-Asian Conference, the truce ended. The Chinese delegation at the Fourth Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference in Winneba on 9 May – the same conference in which the Indian delegation spoke in favour of Soviet attendance at Bandung II – unleashed a torrent of criticism of the Soviet Union for its approach to the war in Vietnam. Taking Vietnam as representative of the anti-imperialist struggle more widely, the delegation focused their critique on the character of Soviet aid to the country. The Chinese delegation characterised Soviet aid as being self-interested and even profit-seeking in the capitalist sense despite the dire situation of the Vietnamese anti-imperialist struggle.⁴⁸⁵ The anti-Soviet polemic grew in intensity over the course of May and June 1965. On 14 June, just over a month before the Second Afro-Asian Conference was to be held, *People's Daily* published a stinging piece called 'Struggle Against Khrushchev's Revisionism to the End'. This expressed that view that despite Nikita's Khrushchev's ouster in October 1964, the struggle against his brand of 'revisionism' was far from over.⁴⁸⁶ On 18 June, in anticipation of the arrival of the Chinese delegation in Cairo the next day, *People's Daily* published an article titled, 'The Soviet Union is not Eligible to Attend the Afro-Asian Conference'. The article was

⁴⁸⁴ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T01003A002200190001-6, 'The Afro-Asian Economic Seminar', March 1965.

⁴⁸⁵ Li, 'Chinese Policy towards Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation', 125. Also in 李潜虞, 《从万隆到阿尔及尔: 中国与六次亚非会议 (1955-1965)》 (北京: 世界知识出版社, 2016) (Li Qianyu, *From Bandung to Algiers: China and Six Afro-Asian Meetings [1955-1965]* [Beijing: World Culture Publishing House, 2016]).

⁴⁸⁶ '把反对赫鲁晓夫修正主义的斗争进行到底 – 纪念《关于国际共产主义运动总路线的建议》发表两周年' (Struggle Against Khrushchev's Revisionism to the End – Commemorating the Second Anniversary of the Publication of 'Suggestions on the general line of the international communist movement'), *People's Daily*, 14 June 1965. This piece received Mao's personal approval. '对《赫鲁晓夫言论》第三季出版者说明的批语', 《建国以来毛泽东文稿》第十一册 (北京: 中央文献出版社, 1996) ('Comments on the Publisher's Description of the Third Edition of Khrushchev's Speeches', *The Manuscripts of Mao Zedong Since the Founding of the People's Republic of China* [hereafter, JGYLMZDWG], volume 11 [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press]), 339.

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reprinted in all major publications in China and put forward the official line that only countries which by their geography were situated in Asia or Africa or were still actively engaged in liberation struggles were eligible to attend the conference. It called on the Soviet Union to dispel any further confusion by unambiguously withdrawing its interest in attending.⁴⁸⁷

Such coverage continued even as the coup in Algeria took place. The Chinese press only reported on the coup on 21 June when it reprinted the Algerian Revolutionary Committee's communique alleging that Ben Bella had sought to use the Second Afro-Asian Conference for his own gain. This was published alongside the assurance of Bouteflika that the conference would go ahead as scheduled despite the coup, something contradicted by Boumédiène but welcomed by Beijing.⁴⁸⁸ Bouteflika repeated his assurance the next day, telling the international press, 'Struggle and love of freedom are traditions in Algeria.... It will not allow the Third World to be disappointed.'⁴⁸⁹ *People's Daily* and *PLA Daily* then continued printing the prepared editorials and announcements relevant to the conference.

⁴⁸⁷ '苏联没有资格参加亚非会议', (The Soviet Union Is Not Eligible to Attend the Afro-Asian Conference) *People's Daily*, 18 June 1965; *PLA Daily*, 19 June 1965.

⁴⁸⁸ '阿国家人民军政治部发表文告' (The Algerian National Military Issues a Communique); '阿尔及利亚外交部长发表声明' (The Algerian Foreign Minister Makes an Announcement), *PLA Daily*, 21 June 1965.

⁴⁸⁹ '阿尔及利亚外交部长布特费利卡打法记者问', 《参考消息》 (Algerian Foreign Minister Bouteflika Responds to Questions from French Journalists, *Cankao Shaoxi*), 22 June 1965.



14 Ben Bella's release from prison and then house arrest was a popular political demand all the way until he was finally set free in 1980, two years after Boumédiène's untimely death. RGANI, f. 5, o. 30, d. 489, l. 208, 1966.

However, it soon became clear that the coup would prevent the Second Afro-Asian Conference from going forward as scheduled. *Cankao Shaoxi* slowly began to divulge that a large number of Afro-Asian countries, including the majority of British Commonwealth Countries, wanted the conference to be postponed. For many governments, Ben Bella's arrest was simply intolerable. Some, like Turkey, announced that they would not attend no matter what. For others, like Kwame Nkrumah, who had hoped that Accra and not Algiers would

be the capital of the Afro-Asian Movement, it was a chance to effect a change of venue.⁴⁹⁰ The 14 June article, the focus on preventing Soviet participation in the Afro-Asian Conference, and the emphasis on Bouteflika's assurance on holding the conference on time gave an indication of where the PRC's priorities lay. The fate of Ben Bella was of less concern than the timely success of the Second Afro-Asian Conference, but ensuring its success would turn out to cost more than China could afford.

Zhou's Attempt to Salvage Bandung II

When the Chinese delegation arrived in Cairo en route to Algiers on 19 June, UAR Prime Minister, Ali Sabri, told them that the UAR would wait and observe before coming to a decision about how to respond.⁴⁹¹ Zhou did not share his counterpart's patience. Together with Nasser at a banquet in Cairo on 22 June, Zhou announced that he was committed to holding the conference as scheduled.⁴⁹² He sent a telegram to the Afro-Asian Conference summit announcing that China did not intervene in the domestic politics of other countries, which meant that China was officially neutral on the matter but effectively supportive of the military junta.⁴⁹³ This was in marked contrast to the Soviet Union, which was vocal in its support and concern for Ben Bella. Moscow even authorised the international students at Lumumba University to hold a demonstration against the coup. While their demonstration was not reported in the Soviet press, demonstrations by international students in London

⁴⁹⁰ '外电报道：阿尔及利亚两名使节抵伦敦将向英联邦亚非国家说明阿尔及利亚局势' (Foreign Reports: Two Algerian Envoys Arrive in London to Explain the Situation in Algeria to the Asian and African Countries of the Commonwealth), *Cankao Shaoxi*, 21 June 1965.

⁴⁹¹ 《周恩来外交大事记：1949-1975》(北京：世界知识出版社) (*Chronicle of Events of Zhou Enlai's Diplomacy: 1949-1975* [hereafter, ZELWJDSJ] [Beijing: World Culture Publishing House]), 270.

⁴⁹² TNA, FO 371-180991, 'Chou En Lai's visit to Cairo 19 & 30 June 1965'.

⁴⁹³ CYNP, 1117. ZELNP, 1091.

and elsewhere were, as were the pro-Ben Bella demonstrations in Algeria itself.⁴⁹⁴ In response, *PLA Daily* accused the Soviet Union of interfering in Algerian affairs for its own benefit.⁴⁹⁵

Supporting Boumédiène was an unpopular position for Zhou to take. For the many countries which viewed Ben Bella as an anti-imperialist icon, Zhou's insistence on salvaging the conference was too nakedly self-interested. Fidel Castro said the coup was disgraceful, called Boumédiène a fascist, and criticised the CCP for abandoning Ben Bella so quickly. Qiao Guanhua was frustrated that Castro had 'cursed both of us (meaning both China and the Soviet Union)' for recognising the new regime too early, but he could understand. Qiao reflected, 'Of course, we cannot approve of the way in which Boumédiène came to power, but it is not necessarily right to say that he is counterrevolutionary and a fascist.'⁴⁹⁶ It soon became clear that Bouteflika was stringing Zhou along using assurances about the conference. On 23 June, Nasser revealed to Zhou that Bouteflika had told him days before that the conference would likely be postponed.⁴⁹⁷ On 25 June, the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the conference would be delayed one further day, but behind closed doors it had already been all but agreed to postpone the conference.⁴⁹⁸ On 28 June, citing the fact that not enough delegations had arrived and the fact that there were disputes over the venue of the conference, the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the

⁴⁹⁴ '莫斯科卢蒙巴大学一些学生公开举行集会' (Some Students of Lumumba University in Moscow Held a Public Rally), *Cankao Shaoxi*, 29 June 1965. 'К положению в Алжире', *Pravda*, № 177, 26 June 1965; 'Взрыв в алжирском «Дворце наций»', *Pravda*, № 178, 27 June 1965.

⁴⁹⁵ '坚决反对苏联代表分裂国际青运恶劣行径' (We Firmly Oppose the Bad Behavior of the Soviet Union's Representatives in Splitting the International Youth Movement), *PLA Daily*, 3 July 1965.

⁴⁹⁶ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-00836-13, 'Record of Conversation between Vice-Foreign Minister Qiao Guanhua and North Korean Ambassador in China Pak Se-chang', 23 July 1965.

⁴⁹⁷ ZELWJDSJ, 271.

⁴⁹⁸ '合众国际社报道：印、日、蒙等国策划推迟亚非会议的提案' (United Press International Report: India, Japan, Mongolia and Other Countries Plan to Postpone the Asian African Conference), *Cankao Shaoxi*, 25 June 1965.

conference was postponed to 5 November 1965. On 29 June, Nasser finally admitted to Zhou that on 23 June Bouteflika had not just said the conference would likely be delayed but that postponement was unavoidable.⁴⁹⁹ To console a disappointed Zhou, the 'Four Man Summit' of Nasser, Zhou, Sukarno, and Ayoub Khan met briefly and issued a boilerplate joint communique committing themselves to ensuring the success of the postponed conference.⁵⁰⁰ Zhou was less than sincere in signing onto this communique.

The Soviet Union Gains Entry to a Cancelled Conference

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union continued to lobby for its entry to the conference. However, Soviet ambassadors in the mid-1960s found it increasingly challenging to conduct their business. One dramatic example came in May 1965. The Soviet Ambassador to Uganda 'opened his heart' at a reception at the Czechoslovakian Embassy. He confided to his British counterpart that the Ugandan government treated him as a 'leper' and that, aside from social get-togethers, none of the Ugandan cabinet members would even talk to him. He complained that discussions of assistance could only be had through the most official channels and that the Ugandan government intentionally delayed all procedures, even on matters as innocuous as bringing a dance troupe. An additional problem on the Ambassador's mind was the esteem with which China was still held in Africa.⁵⁰¹ Despite finding himself the subject of criticism in a Chinese pamphlet which had outraged neighbouring East African governments, Uganda's President, Milton Obote, told the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson on 29 July, prior to the scattering of the Congolese rebels

⁴⁹⁹ ZELWJDSJ, 278.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰¹ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Country Files, Uganda, Uganda-Sov. Bloc, (no date, sometime in mid-1965).

discussed in the previous chapter, that he remained most impressed with the PRC.

According to a Foreign Office record of that conversation, Obote said,

(T)he Russians were not making the running. If Chou En-lai were to tour Africa, such was his charm that he feared that Chou En-lai would make the whole of Africa pro-Chinese. The Chinese in general seemed to be able to get on better with people in Africa than the Russians.⁵⁰²

However, it was not Zhou who made the next tour of Africa but Chen Yi, and Chen's poor performance produced an opening for the Soviet Union.

Chen's September 1965 tour following the Algerian coup was limited because, just as Zhou had in the months prior, he found himself somewhat unwelcome as the Lumumbaist struggle approached collapse. Aside from a perfunctory visit to Algeria, only the radical Pan-African stalwarts of West Africa would see him. In Bamako, Chen had two extended conversations with Modibo Keita and spoke at length with both the US-RDA Politburo and Mali's ministers of planning and commerce. He further availed himself of the opportunity to view a Chinese-built sugar refinery in Sikasso and to review Chinese personnel, whom he personally instructed to continue contributing to the improvement of Sino-Malian relations (as he did in Guinea and Algeria on his way home as well).⁵⁰³ Sikasso's mayor praised China for its aid, saying, 'This sort of assistance is given with humility, the technical level is very high, and the efficiency is great'. He then personally asked Chen to give Mao his regards.⁵⁰⁴ This show of friendship was despite the fact that Sino-Malian relations had run into difficulties after Zhou's 1964 visit. As noted in chapter 2, Zhou's farewell remarks in Mali were taken as 'distinctly patronising', according to a report prepared for the foreign office by British Ambassador to Mali, Martin Le Quesne. Le Quesne reported that upon his departure

⁵⁰² TNA, FO 371-180991, 'Record of Conversation between the Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Uganda, Dr. Milton Obote on 29 July', 1965.

⁵⁰³ CYNP, 1120-2.

⁵⁰⁴ '陈毅副总理抵科纳克里访问' (Vice Premier Chen Yi Arrives in Conakry), *PLA Daily*, 16 September 1965.

from Bamako, Zhou had politely but undeniably rebuked the self-avowed socialist leader by publicly stating that while Mali was on the right path, it was not yet socialist.⁵⁰⁵

Concerned about its declining influence in West Africa, the CPSU began requesting that Mali send an official delegation to Moscow soon after Zhou's tour. First Secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party and candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee (CPSU-CC) Politburo, Sharof Rashidov, reached out to Mali's ruling party, the US-RDA, in January 1965.⁵⁰⁶ These requests went ignored until Chen Yi's September 1965 visit to Mali. In his conversations with Keïta, Chen reiterated Zhou's assertion that Mali was not yet socialist but in more unambiguous terms and with less tact. He told the Malian leadership that they would face a coup in the immediate future if they did not quicken the pace of land reform and adopt an anti-American foreign policy. Furthermore, he derided the Malian leadership for corruption and graft, accusing them of using Chinese economic aid for profiteering and speculation. He claimed that he had intelligence showing that Chinese clothing, food, and equipment purchased by Mali with the loan from the Sino-Malian economic cooperation agreement were being sold upriver in Upper Volta and Senegal. He also, in a 'bellicose manner', demanded that Mali oppose Soviet participation in the Second Afro-Asian Conference.⁵⁰⁷ The visit ended so poorly that Chen and Keïta were unable to cobble together a joint communique. Having waited eight months, Keïta procrastinated no longer in answering Rashidov's invitation. Immediately after Chen's visit, Keïta assembled a delegation to visit Moscow.

⁵⁰⁵ TNA, FO 371-175920, 'Mr. Chou En-lai's Visit to Mali', February 3, 1964.

⁵⁰⁶ NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, 1946-1984, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, November 1-30, 1965.

⁵⁰⁷ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-01476-06, 'Record of Second Conversation of Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Chen Yi with Foreign Minister Pak Seong-cheol', 11 November 1965. NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, 1946-1984, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, October 1-31, 1965.

Chen Yi prepared a report on his brief, troubled tour of Africa upon his return. In it, he wrote that opinions differed across the Afro-Asian countries regarding the time and place of the conference and, crucially, that none held a position that was not negotiable. He pointed out that what would harm China's standing more than an indefinite postponement of the conference was a continued effort at criticising the Soviet Union and insisting on its exclusion. He wrote that the Sino-Soviet dispute had sapped the energy of the global anti-imperialist movement (中苏争论削弱了世界反帝力量), and that it was happening at a time when the Afro-Asian countries were plagued with economic problems and political instability, not to mention at a time when faith was waning that the USA could be defeated in Vietnam.⁵⁰⁸

Meanwhile, Afro-Asian support for Soviet participation in the Afro-Asian Movement continued to grow. Just a day prior to the coup, on 18 June 1965 Ben Bella's government had signed another agreement with the Soviet Union. In this agreement, which was largely devised to assist Algeria spend more effectively the 90-million-ruble loan it had received in 1963, the Soviet Union committed itself to providing technical training for 4000 Algerian workers as well as to deploying 200 doctors and 130 university instructors. Such negotiations served as avenues for the Soviet Union to further insinuate itself into the Afro-Asian Movement, and China simply could not compete.⁵⁰⁹ Prior to the conference, Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda indicated his support for Soviet participation to journalists in London.⁵¹⁰ By

⁵⁰⁸ '对外交部关于陈毅出访五国概况汇报的批语' (Comments on the Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Chen Yi's Visit to Five Countries), JGYLMZDWG, vol. 11, 468-9.

⁵⁰⁹ «СССР и Страны Африки. Документальные материалы. 1963-1970 гг.», Часть 1 (1963-1966 гг.) (Москва: Политиздат, 1982), 75-7, 217-8.

In contrast, while Beijing had contributed as much as \$20 million to the Algerian independence struggle and had offered a total of \$50 million by 1965, Algeria had only drawn on \$2 million. NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Subject Files, Communism, 21 February 1966 Memorandum from William F. Scott.

⁵¹⁰ 'Каунда: Мы за участие Советского союза', *Pravda*, № 165, 14 June 1965.

22 June, TASS was reporting from Baghdad that it was a 'fait accompli' that Moscow would receive an invitation to attend the Second Afro-Asian Conference.⁵¹¹ Shortly after the postponement of the conference, on 1 September, in a quid pro quo for debt relief, Nasser officially endorsed Soviet participation in the second Afro-Asian Conference in a joint communique issued in Moscow.⁵¹² This enraged the Chinese leadership. Zhou told Guinea's Minister of Communications on 3 September, 'Nasser abandoned his promise to us.'⁵¹³ Seeing that it was all but guaranteed that the Soviet Union would attend the Second Afro-Asian Conference, Zhou began to pursue an indefinite postponement. The Indian-Pakistani conflict in Kashmir in August 1965 and the September 30 Movement in Indonesia gave him the pretext he needed to prevent Soviet participation permanently. An Indonesian delegation visited China between 30 September and 1 October 1965. Zhou told them that he hoped the conference would still go forward but was concerned that the USA and the Soviet Union were cooperating in attempt to divide the Afro-Asian Movement. He reassured them that the spirit of Bandung would persist without a Bandung II.⁵¹⁴ While Keita was in the Soviet Union on 9 October, Zhou told the Pakistani Commercial Minister that the conference would not happen for a number of reasons, but he emphasised that the Soviet Union was trying to insinuate itself into the meeting and use it as an arena for the Sino-Soviet dispute.⁵¹⁵ As the date of the conference drew nearer, Zhou insisted on postponement.⁵¹⁶ This doomed

⁵¹¹ 'Голос Иракской Печати', *Izvestiia*, № 146, 22 June 1965.

⁵¹² «СССР и Страны Африки» Часть 1, 254.

⁵¹³ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 108-01426-07, 'Record of Premier Zhou Enlai's Fourth Conversation with Guinea's Minister of Posts and Communications Minister Diop', 3 September 1965.

⁵¹⁴ ZELNP, 1100.

⁵¹⁵ ZELWJDSJ, 281.

⁵¹⁶ ZELWJDSJ, 282.

the conference forever, as aside from India and the UAR, China was considered a cornerstone of the organisation. On 2 November, the conference was postponed indefinitely.⁵¹⁷

On 27 October, Zhou published an article in *People's Daily* explaining China's decision to boycott the conference.⁵¹⁸ *Izvestiia* fired back that Zhou was lying when he said 'many African and Asian countries' supported the postponement. It was right. It pointed out that most countries, including the host, Algeria, still wanted to go forward. In fact, other than China, only Cambodia, Vietnam, North Korea, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Guinea – all of which were major recipients of Chinese aid – supported China's proposal to postpone the conference.⁵¹⁹ *Izvestiia* argued that the imperialist countries wanted the conference to fail, placing China in their company, and it pointed out that in contrast the Soviet Union 'unswervingly' supported that it go forward in Algeria as soon as possible.⁵²⁰ The Soviet press was not alone in criticising the PRC for its decision. Thailand and Indonesia's governments both criticised China and Cambodia. The Thai Foreign Minister, Chang Keman, said, 'This June, China obstinately opposed postponement and called those opposing them traitors to the Afro-Asian Movement. Now the Chinese themselves want to postpone the meeting.' He went on to say of Cambodia, the largest recipient of Chinese aid in Southeast Asia other than Vietnam, 'This prince (Sihanouk) is like a weathercock: He changes however his master in Beijing changes.'⁵²¹ Malawi's President, Hastings Banda, said that the dearth of African countries endorsing China's call for postponement revealed that its influence in

⁵¹⁷ ZELNP, 1102.

⁵¹⁸ '坚持团结 反对分裂 维护在团结反帝基础上写上一致的原则 中国政府郑重宣布不参加导致分裂的亚非会议' (Adhere to the Principle of Unity, Oppose Splittism, and Uphold the principle of Solidarity on the Basis of Unity Against Imperialism: The Chinese Government Solemnly Announces That it Will not Participate in an Afro-Asian Conference Which Sows Disunity), *People's Daily*, 27 October 1965.

⁵¹⁹ ZELNP, 1101.

⁵²⁰ 'Накануне 2-й конференции стран Азии и Африки', *Izvestiia*, № 256, 28 October 1965.

⁵²¹ '科曼攻击中柬联合建议' (Keman Attacks the Position of China and Cambodia); '班达对我进行恶毒攻击' (Banda Launches a Vile Attack on Our Country), *Cankao Shaoxi*, 22 October 1965.

Africa was shrinking. He said, emphasising Malawi's intention to go forward with the conference, 'Whatever China doesn't want, I want, and whatever China wants, I oppose.'⁵²²

In announcing their withdrawal from the conference, Chen and Zhou set out four conditions for Chinese participation in any Second Afro-Asian Conference. None of these conditions were likely to be met – indeed, they may have been designed this way. The first was that all the attendants would have to take an anti-American stance, something which was impossible considering, for instance, Japan's or Liberia's membership in the organisation. Second, none of the 'puppet groups', meaning the South Vietnamese government or the Congo (L) government, should be allowed to attend. This was a point which divided the movement, not least those African countries which had abandoned the Lumumbaist struggle early on. Third, the UN could not participate in any way. U Thant had a standing invitation to attend the postponed conference as an observer, and if Zhou could not convince Ben Bella on this matter prior to the coup, it was even more unlikely that he would be able to convince Boumédiène or Bouteflika. The fourth was that the Soviet Union could not attend.⁵²³ Was the conference held as scheduled, Soviet participation would have been an inescapable reality. The Supreme Soviet had already convened in December 1965 to prepare for this inevitability. On 10 December, *Izvestiia* reproduced Andrei Gromyko's speech to the Supreme Soviet. It said that the Soviet Union was 'ready' to participate and that the Afro-Asian Movement supported their participation and that therefore it would seek entry to any confirmed conference.⁵²⁴ To provide symbolic support the Soviet claim to legitimate participation, Tajik Communist Party Central Committee member and award-winning poet,

⁵²² *Ibid.*

⁵²³ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁴ 'Сообщение Министра иностранных дел СССР А. А. Громыко', *Izvestiia*, № 291, 10 December 1965.

Mirzo Tursunzoda, resolutely endorsed Gromkyo in his own soaring speech.⁵²⁵ This was intended to provide evidence for the Asian-ness of the Soviet Union and therefore its eligibility to attend the conference. With that, and with the snowballing of African support for Soviet participation since Nasser's endorsement earlier that year, the four conditions laid out by Zhou would never be fulfilled. There would be no Bandung II.

The 1966 Ghanaian Coup

Coups continued to rock the Afro-Asian world into 1966. In February 1966, just three months after the publication of Yao Wenyuan's critique of *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*, Kwame Nkrumah travelled to China with Ghana's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alex Quaison-Sackey, along with a party of eighty-four.⁵²⁶ They were en route to Hanoi, where Nkrumah intended to call for peace talks as a representative of the British Commonwealth. This issue had become a major point of friction between Accra and Beijing and had been worsening since Nkrumah attended the Fourteenth Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference in late June 1965, just before the original scheduled date of the Second Afro-Asian Conference. Prior to Nkrumah's visit, Zhou sent telegrams to the Chinese Ambassador to Accra, Huang Hua, telling him to stress to Nkrumah that any discussions with the US would help realise a permanent occupation of the south.⁵²⁷ In hopes of dissuading him before his arrival in Hanoi, Nkrumah was invited to visit Beijing to discuss the matter further.

⁵²⁵ 'Речь депутата М. Турсун-заде', *Pravda*, № 344, 10 December 1965.

⁵²⁶ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Dr. Nkrumah's Visit to Peking 2 March 1966'. '对有关《海瑞罢官》问题七个材料的批语' (Comments on Seven Materials Related to 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office'), JGYLMZDWG, vol. 12, 7.

⁵²⁷ ZELNP, 1112.

While Nkrumah was in the air from Rangoon, Myanmar to Kunming on 24 February 1966, a coup occurred in Accra. Another military junta, calling itself the National Liberation Council (NLC), took power and began purging pro-Nkrumah elements from Ghanaian politics and society. They immediately shut down Nkrumah's ideological school as well as a number of other institutions and arrested hundreds. The arrestees included the editors of *Spark*, *The Ghanaian Times*, as well as pro-Nkrumah ministers and other government officials.⁵²⁸ As was the case with the Algerian coup over half a year earlier, publicly available Chinese news media did not report the coup until days later.⁵²⁹ When Nkrumah arrived on 24 February, everything went forward as per protocol as if he was still a major head of state. He was welcomed by Zhou, Liu Shaoqi, and a twenty-one-gun salute at the airport. 'Some thousands' chanted '*wansui*' to the friendship of the two peoples, although British diplomatic staff reported a dearth of onlookers.⁵³⁰ The crowds normally organised may have been called off either because of the coup or because of the Chinese leadership's dissatisfaction with the goal of Nkrumah's journey. Nkrumah, whose army was now ransacking his own country, inspected the Chinese military. Banners were hung throughout the thoroughfares of Beijing celebrating Sino-Ghanaian friendship. About half an hour before the banquet organised in his honour, the banners welcoming Nkrumah by name were quietly taken down.⁵³¹

Nkrumah was ferried to his room at the Diaoyutai Hotel and given time to rest before the banquet that evening. It was at this point that he became aware of the coup. Before the banquet, he had the first of five meetings with Zhou. These meetings were increasingly

⁵²⁸ 'Положение в Гане', *Pravda*, № 59, 28 February 1966.

⁵²⁹ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Dr. Nkrumah's Visit to Peking 2 March 1966'. '加纳部分部队发动政变' (Elements of the Ghanaian Military Launch a Coup), *PLA Daily*, 5 March 1966.

⁵³⁰ '加纳总统恩克鲁玛到京 刘少奇主席设宴欢迎贵宾' (Ghanaian President Nkrumah Arrives in Beijing: Chairman Liu Shaoqi Cordially Welcomes Him), *PLA Daily*, 25 February 1966.

⁵³¹ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Dr. Nkrumah's Visit to Peking 2 March 1966'.

concerned with what support, if any, China might lend him in recovering his authority. Ultimately, no support was forthcoming. The banquet was attended by numerous foreign dignitaries, but, conspicuously, not by Ghana's newly accredited Ambassador in Beijing, who himself had only arrived just weeks before the coup. At the banquet, Nkrumah gave an extemporaneous speech that was described as 'rambling and incoherent'. Liu Shaoqi gave a speech directly criticising Nkrumah for his trip to Hanoi, telling 'would-be meddlers, however well-intentioned', not to seek negotiations in Vietnam.⁵³² By this point such criticism was superfluous. The Ghanaian Embassy's position was confirmed on 26 February 1966 when Nkrumah's portrait hung in the Embassy disappeared. Despite the Embassy's choice to stand with the new government, Nkrumah was defiant. Quaison-Sackey relayed his message to the press: 'I am the constitutional head of the Republic of Ghana and the supreme commander of the armed forces. I will be back in Ghana soon.'⁵³³ The governments of Guinea and Mali declared solidarity with him the same day.⁵³⁴ The bulk of the members of the OAU joined in protesting against the coup, calling it an imperialist conspiracy.⁵³⁵

Members of Nkrumah's delegation began their evacuation on 26 February, departing Beijing for Guangzhou and Hong Kong with the final destination of Addis Ababa. For some reason, there was some confusion about when exactly Nkrumah himself left, and some documentation has the date as late as 4 March, including the official *Chronicle of Liu Shaoqi*.⁵³⁶ This was because of the manner in which he was seen off. On 28 February, Agence France-Presse and Reuters correspondents were at the Beijing airport for a different reason. Then,

⁵³² ZELNP, 1114. TNA, DO 195-232, 'Dr. Nkrumah's Visit to Peking 2 March 1966'.

⁵³³ 'Положение в Гане', *Pravda*, № 57, 26 February 1966.

⁵³⁴ 'К событиям в Гане', *Pravda*, № 58, 27 February 1966.

⁵³⁵ '杜尔指责英国策划加纳政变' (Touré Blames British Plot for Ghanaian Coup), *Cankao Shaoxi*, 2 March 1966. 'Положение в Гане', *Izvestiia*, № 51, 1 March 1966.

⁵³⁶ 《刘少奇年谱》(北京: 中央文献出版社, 1998) (*Chronicle of Liu Shaoqi* [Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1998]), 598.

(They) detected signs of movement accompanied by determined, but unsuccessful efforts to persuade them to go away. Soon afterwards, a convoy appeared bearing Dr. Nkrumah and some supporters, followed by a Chinese group led by Liu Shao Chi and Chou En-lai, come furtively to speed the departing guest.⁵³⁷

Nkrumah was seen off by Zhou, Liu, and the Soviet Ambassador, and departed for Moscow on an Aeroflot plane that afternoon. In Moscow, he was greeted by Gromkyo as well as a number of Soviet officials.⁵³⁸ After seeking support first from Beijing and then from Moscow, both without success, Nkrumah arrived for his life-long exile in Conakry on 2 March.

Soviet Aid and the Ghanaian Coup

Ghanaian-Soviet relations collapsed almost immediately after the coup. This was partly due to the fact that, despite not granting him any concrete assistance, the Soviet Union had hosted Nkrumah during his return journey. This was also because the Soviet press and government immediately came out against the coup. From the beginning, the Soviet press reported, in detail, on Nkrumah's movements and statements. It reprinted the condemnations and recriminations of regional governments as well as the OAU's formal condemnation of the NLC.⁵³⁹ It also reprinted Nkrumah's statement made on his arrival in Conakry, in which he said he was 'on the road to Accra'.⁵⁴⁰ Perhaps most gallingly, *Pravda* translated and reprinted a Lusaka-based Zimbabwean newspaper comparing the coup against Nkrumah to the assassination of Lumumba, implying that the NLC was an imperialist puppet regime just like Katanga.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁷ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Dr. Nkrumah's Visit to Peking 2 March 1966'. '恩克鲁玛声明' (Nkrumah Makes an Announcement), *Cankao Shaoxi*, 2 March 1966.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁹ 'Положение в Гане', *Izvestiia*, № 51, 1 March 1966.

⁵⁴⁰ 'Вокруг события в Гане', *Izvestiia*, № 54, 4 March 1966.

⁵⁴¹ 'Сообщения из Ганы', *Pravda*, № 69, 10 March 1966.

In a real sense, the Soviet Union was on the opposite side of the battle lines from the NLC. During the coup itself, Soviet security personnel in Ghana found themselves in the crossfire. This was because, after a number of attempts on Nkrumah's life and a retaliatory purge of the police in the early 1960s, Nkrumah contracted Soviet personnel to serve as part of his personal security force. During the coup, scores were killed in the fighting, and his Soviet security personnel were among the first to find themselves in harm's way. Curiously, Soviet press denied that any Soviet security personnel were actually killed, but it was widely reported that a dozen died in the first hours of the coup.⁵⁴² An explanation for why TASS denied that Soviet personnel had been killed might be that, in addition to saving face, the CPSU sought to give the NLC a way to normalise relations. After centralising power, the new authorities in Ghana announced that they would not alter the country's foreign policy and that they would continue to respect the agreements with socialist countries. While making the caveat that it did not find it believable considering the treatment of their personnel to that point, the Soviet press welcomed this.⁵⁴³ On 5 March, *Izvestiia* ran a ponderous editorial reflecting on the fact that while military coups might seem to be reactionary, the January 1966 coup in Nigeria led by Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi showed that this was not always the case and that they could become progressive with time.⁵⁴⁴ A report drafted on 21 March 1966 emphasised that there was not yet any evidence that the NLC was explicitly anti-socialist, and that it was primarily pro-English, in search of normalised relations with its neighbours, dissatisfied with Nkrumah's mismanagement of the economy, and – crucially from the Soviet perspective – resentful of his cult of personality.⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴² 'Опровержение ТАСС', *Pravda*, № 67, 8 March 1966.

⁵⁴³ 'Гана: Положение в стране', *Izvestiia*, № 53, 3 March 1966.

⁵⁴⁴ 'Накал борьбы в Африке', *Izvestiia*, № 55, 5 March 1966.

⁵⁴⁵ AVP-RF, f. 0573, o. 10, p. 20, d. 11, ll. 73-7, in «Россия и Африка», 350-2.

The NLC subsequently showed little interest in normalising relations with the Soviet Union or with any other part of the socialist world. Its political orientation was ultimately revealed to be actively anti-socialist. The immediate reestablishment of Ghanaian-British relations was quickly followed by the NLC's increasing engagement with the West more generally. When a West German delegation visited Accra on 4 April, they discussed a 20-million-mark loan. They were soon followed by other delegations from the West, including the USA, which offered nearly \$3 million in agricultural assistance.⁵⁴⁶ On 3 June, the NLC groundlessly accused the Soviet Union of supporting a build-up of pro-Nkrumah forces in Guinea. It also excluded it from participating in a discussion held in London on the handling of existing economic aid and commercial credits under the new regime.⁵⁴⁷ With that, the NLC and the subsequent regime (presided over by Ghanaian émigré and St Antony's fellow, Kofi Abrefa Busia) cut itself off from all aid and investment from the socialist world.⁵⁴⁸ Doing so left Ghana burdened with scores of 'bearded', or unfinished, projects. According to the Soviet press, the government had halted eighty construction projects since the coup. Most state-owned enterprises were threatened with closure.⁵⁴⁹ *Pravda* blamed Ghana's financial woes on the coup alone, but as has been indicated, difficulties facing Soviet projects predated this. By Soviet admission, what Ghana required was not another ill-conceived turn-key project or more technical assistance tied to export quotas levied on unmarketable goods,

⁵⁴⁶ 'Аккра: Закрыты представительства национально-освободительных движений', *Pravda*, № 95, 22 April 1966. '美国给加纳政变当局一批粮食 西德政府将给加纳一笔“发展援助”款项' (The United States Gave Ghanaian Coup Authorities a Shipment of Food, and the West German Government Will Give Ghana 'Development Assistance'), *People's Daily*, 4 April 1966.

⁵⁴⁷ AVP-RF, f. 573, o. 10, p. 20, d. 10, ll. 31-7, in «Россия и Африка», 352-6.

⁵⁴⁸ There was also the reality, not acknowledged in the West until a decade later, that the coup had been orchestrated with assistance from the CIA to install a pro-Western government in Accra. There was even an aborted plot to dress up CIA agents in black face and have them massacre everyone in the Chinese Embassy. This was cancelled at the last minute. 'C.I.A. Said to Have Aided Plotters Who Overthrew Nkrumah in Ghana', *The New York Times*, 9 May 1978.

⁵⁴⁹ 'Экономический спад' *Pravda*, № 168, 17 June 1966.

but an injection of capital to save an economy that had been operating at or below bankruptcy since 1965, together with assistance with meeting basic needs.



2 Ghanaian students smashing a bust of Lenin to use as fuel in a bonfire for burning items associated with Nkrumah and socialism.

RGANI, f. 5, o. 30, d. 487, l. 36, 1966.

Chinese Aid and Ghanaian Coup

Due to the anti-socialist stance of the NLC, Soviet-Ghanaian relations were minimal for the remainder of the Cold War. As was discussed, Beijing took minor steps to accommodate the NLC, maintaining cordiality during the coup by taking down only those banners which bore Nkrumah's name and being slow and measured in their press response. Despite this, the Chinese side's reaction to events in Accra and the overall hostility towards

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa

the socialist world on the part of the NLC regime quickly spoiled relations between China and the new Ghanaian government as well. This began with an assault on Chinese aid personnel. On 27 February 1966, three Chinese aid personnel and one embassy staffer found themselves arrested by the new regime's police. The police demanded their identification, at which point the leader, Zhou Jinwen, protested that, according to the Sino-Ghanaian agreement, Chinese personnel were not required to carry identification and that they had none to carry. The police then roughed them up and brought them to the police station, where they assaulted them with whips, gun stocks, fist blows, and kicks for as long as an hour. Zhou Jinwen was beaten so brutally his femur was broken.⁵⁵⁰ On 28 February, the NLC demanded that all Chinese personnel leave immediately. The Chinese Embassy's staff was cut to eighteen.⁵⁵¹ That same day, Beijing lost its patience and gave up on maintaining cordial relations. The Chinese Embassy sent the first of many apoplectic notes to the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs documenting the assault on the Chinese personnel and alleging that the police had not merely engaged in brutality but had been acting on the explicit orders of the NLC.⁵⁵²

On 1 March, the Chinese Embassy issued another note to the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemning the brutalisation of its personnel and bemoaning the NLC's decision to limit personnel at the Embassy. The note explained that the Chinese Embassy understood these measures as a unilateral attempt by the new Ghanaian authorities to 'tear up' the treaties and agreements between the two countries. The note concluded that, 'Therefore, the Chinese Embassy solemnly points out that the Ghanaian side must bear full responsibility for tearing up the agreements and causing the economic losses'. The note

⁵⁵⁰ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Text of Note to the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 28 February 1966'.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid*, 'Text of Aide Memoire to the Embassy of the PRC, 28 February 1966'.

⁵⁵² *Ibid*, 'Text of Note to the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 28 February 1966'.

further reminded the Ghanaian side that the agreements stipulated that Chinese personnel only to depart upon completing their projects, adding, 'But since the Ghanaian side has now failed to guarantee the dignity and personal safety of the Chinese experts and has unilaterally and unreasonably demanded the withdrawal of all the Chinese experts from Ghana, the Chinese side is compelled to agree to recall its experts'. The note demanded that an inventory of items remaining at the sites be carried out and that the Ghanaian side sign receipts 'without delay.'⁵⁵³ On 8 March, the first group of 125 specialists returned to China from Ghana to a hero's welcome. 120 made it to Beijing. Five, including Zhou Jinwen, had to stay in Shanghai to receive medical treatment. The injured were greeted with sympathy by Vice Mayor, Zhang Chengzong, while those that made it to Beijing were met by Foreign Ministry staff and directors of various departments involved in the provision of foreign aid. These included Huang Hua, Fang Yi, and several hundred staff of the relevant departments. On 10 March, the second group of sixty-nine specialists arrived in Beijing. Nothing which could be brought back was left behind. A detailed inventory of their personal items was prepared, down to their cots and linens.⁵⁵⁴ By 15 March, Ghana had made the Chinese Ambassador, Hu Dingyi, and two other Chinese Embassy officials *persona non grata*. The same day, scores of Soviet diplomatic personnel were also made *persona non grata*, and Ghana began repatriating the hundreds of Soviet fishermen working at the port of Tema. The Soviet

⁵⁵³ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Text of Note to the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1 March 1966'.

⁵⁵⁴ '我专家和部分使馆人员撤离加纳回到北京' (Our Country's Experts and Some Embassy Personnel Evacuated Ghana and Returned to Beijing), *PLA Daily*, 8 March 1966; '我第二批专家和使馆部分人员撤离加纳回到北京' (A Second Group of Experts and Some Personnel of the Chinese Embassy Evacuated Ghana and Returned to Beijing), 10 March 1966. SHMA, B32-2-111-21, '关于欢送第二批从加纳回国专家工作的请示' (Some Instructions Regarding the Departure of the Second Group of Experts Returning from Ghana), March 1966.

Ambassador, Gyorgy Rodionov, had to beg the NLC just to keep three staff in the Soviet Embassy while he returned to Moscow for consultation.⁵⁵⁵

On 4 March, the NLC accused China too of covertly supplying arms to pro-Nkrumah forces mustering in Guinea.⁵⁵⁶ The Ghanaian government then accused the PRC of interfering in its internal affairs in contravention of the Non-Aligned Charter by training saboteurs in Ghana. On 19 March, the Chinese Embassy called this accusation 'absurd slander' and said that this was 'obviously an attempt by the Ghanaian side to create pretexts for its recent unjustifiable expulsion of three diplomatic officials of the Chinese Embassy and to shirk its responsibility for deliberately worsening relations between China and Ghana.'

The Chinese Embassy insisted that,

As is well known, the military experts as well as the economic and technical experts sent by the Chinese Government to work in Ghana were dispatched at the request of the Government of the Republic of Ghana.... They always worked in accordance with the arrangements made by the Ghanaian Government. They are beyond reproach.⁵⁵⁷

On the 24 March, the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded:

The so-called military experts employed by the old regime had undeniably trained the so-called freedom fighters in secret camps in Ghana for the purpose of carrying out subversive activities in independent African states with which Ghana enjoys friendly relations. Assuming that they were invited to Ghana by the deposed regime of Kwame Nkrumah does not in the view of the Ministry justify their illegal activities calculated to damage relations between Ghana and her neighbours.⁵⁵⁸

The note asserted that the NLC had 'concrete proof' of Chinese assurances to Nkrumah about providing military assistance to 'overthrow the new regime.' The Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs then threatened to publish its evidence. This documentation was later published by the Ghanaian Ministry of Information in two short volumes titled *Nkrumah's*

⁵⁵⁵ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Text of Note to the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 15 March 1966'; 'List of PRC Personnel PNGed, 14 March 1966'.

⁵⁵⁶ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Text of Note to the Embassy of the PRC, 4 March 1966'.

⁵⁵⁷ TNA, DO 195-232, 'Text of the Note to the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 19 March 1966'.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 'Text of Note to the Embassy of the People's Republic of China 24 March 1966'.

Subversion in Africa: Documentary Evidence of Nkrumah's Interference in the Affairs of Other African States and Nkrumah's Deception of Africa. This evidence proved the worst narratives about Chinese assistance which had been growing since Congolese, Cameroonian, CAR, Nigerien, Tutsi, and Malawian dissidents attempted to overthrow their governments and the governments of their neighbours with Chinese-provided weapons in hand.

Finally, in late October 1966, the Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs suspended relations with the PRC. This began with a scuffle between a Taiwanese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yang Hsi-kun, in transit via Accra's airport and a Xinhua correspondent reporting on a press conference held by the Secretary of the Ghana Trade Union Congress, S. A. Bentum. The correspondent blamed Bentum, saying he had conspired to meet with this representative of the 'Chiang Kai-shek clique'. That spiralled into an allegation by Bentum that the Chinese Embassy in Ghana was harbouring Red Guards. On 1 October, the Chinese Embassy in Accra published a note blaming the NLC for this event and criticising them for allowing the Ghanaian press to repeatedly impugn the Cultural Revolution and Mao himself. On 20 October, the NLC delivered an aide-memoire announcing the suspension of relations.⁵⁵⁹ On 30 October, *People's Daily* said the suspension of relations was the same as 'picking up a stone to drop on one's own feet' and called the NLC 'hysterically anti-China' (疯狂反华).⁵⁶⁰ State-to-state tensions continued ratcheting up even after the suspension of relations. The Chinese press accused the NLC of 'kidnapping' Guinean dignitaries in Ghana

⁵⁵⁹ TNA, FO 371-187000, 'Text of an exchange of notes between Ghana Government and Chinese Embassy in Accra between 28 February and 31 March'.

⁵⁶⁰ '加纳当局片面宣布中断中加两国关系 我大使馆奉命向加纳当局提出最强烈抗议' (The Ghanaian Authorities Unilaterally Announced the Suspension of Sino-Ghanaian Relations, Our Embassy Was Ordered to Lodge the Strongest Protest to the Ghanaian Authorities), *People's Daily*, 30 October 1966.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa on 1 November and labelled them colluders with US imperialism.⁵⁶¹ When Chinese charge, Huang Shixie, and the remainder of the staff of the Chinese Embassy in Accra took their leave from Ghana on 3 November, their flight was grounded for two days, after which they returned to Beijing via Paris where Huang met with Huang Zhen.⁵⁶² Together, they returned to Beijing, arriving 11 November 1966. They were met by Chen Yi and welcomed with their very own copies of the little red book, a sign of the times.⁵⁶³ As will be discussed in the next chapter, they were soon followed by all of their colleagues in Africa.

China's Aid Diplomacy in an Era of 'Coming to Grief and Misfortune'

(吃亏, 倒霉!)

China's Response to the Spate of Coups and Chen Yi's 'China Card'

As noted above, the CPSU adopted a wait-and-see approach to coups after the January 1966 Nigerian coup. It gave the NLC the benefit of the doubt even as relations took a turn for the worse and the blood of Soviet military experts ran in the streets of Accra. Aside from the *Izvestiia* piece noted above, reflecting on how coups could empower progressive forces, the son of Anastas Mikoyan, Sergo, also wrote a piece taking stock of the impact of the coups which had swept the Afro-Asian world in the mid-1960s. Writing for the influential *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Sergo Mikoyan argued that military coups often played a 'patriotic role' in developing countries, and that the coups in Egypt, Burma, Indonesia, Syria, and

⁵⁶¹ '对美帝伙同加纳当局绑架几代表团表示愤慨' (An Expression of Indignation at the Kidnapping of Several Delegations by the United States and the Ghanaian Authorities), *PLA Daily*, 1 November 1966.

⁵⁶² '加纳人民对毛主席和中国的热爱谁也限制不了' (No One Can Restrict the Love of the Ghanaian People for Chairman Mao and China), *PLA Daily*, 7 November 1966.

⁵⁶³ '我驻加纳使馆人员回京受到热烈欢迎' (The Staff of the Chinese Embassy in Ghana Were Warmly Welcomed Back to Beijing), *PLA Daily*, 11 November 1966.

'possibly... the overthrow in Ghana' showed that coups could lead these countries 'onto the non-capitalist path of development'. For Mikoyan, it all depended on the 'political orientation of the officers' corps and the degree of its true patriotism, since true patriotism will in the end lead it to democratic, progressive positions.'⁵⁶⁴ N. G. Scherbakov explains this measured response to coups by noting that, following Khrushchev's removal in 1964, rumours abounded within the Soviet government that Stalin was going to be rehabilitated. To dispel these rumours in preparation for the Twenty-Third Party Congress in 1966, a series of documents were published reaffirming the Twentieth Party Congress' position on personality cults. In this spirit, the coup against Nkrumah was blamed on his personality cult, while the other coups were explained as being manifestations of a global 'crisis of bourgeois parliamentarism'.⁵⁶⁵ Furthermore, Telepneva points to how the 'coup contagion', in addition to experience of the Guinean 'black hole' and the collapse of the Lumumbaist insurgency, was seen as a temporary setback to be remedied by fostering deeper connections with African military leaders, and that the coups illustrated the staying power of military governments as opposed to so-called 'African socialist' governments.⁵⁶⁶

In contrast, the leadership in Beijing saw nothing to redeem the spate of coups which had swept the Afro-Asian world, frustrating Zhou's plans for a Bandung II, and resulting in the loss of a close ally in Africa. Regarding the hastily made decision to support the Algerian coup regime, the Chinese leadership believed it had badly miscalculated. On the eleventh anniversary of the Algerian Revolution, Beijing was exceedingly restrained in comparison with its activities for the tenth. Whereas the tenth anniversary saw an enthusiastic capital-

⁵⁶⁴ NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, 1946-1984, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, Soviet Policy Towards Africa: April 1-30, 1966.

⁵⁶⁵ Щербakov, '«Африка грёз и действительности»'.

⁵⁶⁶ Telepneva, *Cold War Liberation*, 101.

wide celebration with special editorials praising the revolution and a congratulatory message from Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, Zhou, and Mao himself, the eleventh saw nothing of the sort. Press acknowledgement was minimal. Zhou attended a banquet held by the Algerian Ambassador along with Li Xiannian, who was brought along in hopes of carrying on economic links with Algeria despite the fraying relationship between the two countries.⁵⁶⁷ No significant economic cooperation followed, and, by 1971, China was convinced that Algeria was firmly under Soviet influence due to its preference for, and continuous receipt of, Soviet military hardware.⁵⁶⁸ While Zhou still rendered the 'decent minimum reserved for Afro-Asian friends' during the eleventh anniversary celebrations in Beijing, he privately bemoaned the course Algeria had taken since the coup.⁵⁶⁹ In a conversation with his North Korean Foreign Minister, Pak Seong-cheol, and Vice Premier, Ri Ju-yeon, Zhou lamented,

We believed the words of the UAR and assessed it as good. Our assessment was wrong. Leaders of Asian and African countries in London at the time, as well as the leaders of some black African countries had their doubts about Boumédiène and, in particular, Bouteflika. They were right. We should be frank. If we know something is wrong, then we admit it.⁵⁷⁰

Reflecting on the events leading to the indefinite postponement of the Second Afro-Asian Conference, Chen Yi also complained bitterly about China's niche in this period in the Cold War. While there was still some enthusiasm for Chinese assistance in the realm of light industry, in general there was the overwhelming preference for British, French, Soviet, or American aid. African countries, however, did not wish to give up 'the China card'.

Chen took Boumédiène's Algeria as an example of holding onto 'the China card'. It seemed to him that Algeria was both rife with corruption and seeking to apply 'Tito's

⁵⁶⁷ TNA, FO 371-1965, 'Office of the British Chargé d'affaires 5 November 1965'.

⁵⁶⁸ TNA, FO 21-806, '28 April 1971 Letter from Gordon S. Barrass'.

⁵⁶⁹ TNA, FO 371-1965, 'Office of the British Chargé d'affaires 5 November 1965'.

⁵⁷⁰ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-01476-06, 11 November 1965.

experience – worker's self-management'. It looked to France and USA for currency and food in exchange for oil, and to the Soviet Union for everything else. However, despite all this, 'Algeria is also not willing to give up the China card':

Recently Algeria raised with us their desire for a large amount of aid. We are now considering whether or not to give it to them. Their objective is not to take China's aid. They want to use it to haggle with the United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union.⁵⁷¹

He had similar complaints about the UAR and Mali which resonated with his North Korean counterpart. Pak shared this anecdote:

I once talked with persons of the UAR. They said that the United States, the Soviet Union, France, and China all wanted to provide aid. I asked them: Having borrowed so much, what will you do in the future? They said, in the future there will always be a way to resolve it. In any case, once the dam and factories have been built, all of them are on Egypt's land, and no one can move them. I asked if there were some way of handling it. They said that in the future when the regime is changed, the persons involved will no longer be there. We will then not acknowledge the debt. On hearing this talk, I paid no more attention to them.⁵⁷²

Chen listened and responded with his own anecdotes about excessive administrative expenditure and corruption by Western interests in both Guinea and Mali, stressing that this was precisely why the PRC placed a premium on the principle of self-reliance when considering whether to lend a country assistance. He predicted coups in both countries. However, he could not even suggest that the phenomenon of the 'China card' meant China should reduce its foreign aid, as Pak could do, because this would make him guilty of the *sanhe yishao*, or the revisionist foreign policy heresy for which Wang Jiaxiang had been severely criticised in the wake of the Seven Thousand Cadre Meeting. He instead concluded, 'The Asian-African Group, the socialist camp, and the international movement all must

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa undergo a process of recombination.⁵⁷³ This process required China to cease denouncing rightist countries and begin convincing them that China was not a threat.

Chen's 'recombination' would not be straightforward, and it would take years for China to convince the majority of African countries that it was not a threat, especially after the revelations found in the post-Nkrumah Ghanaian publications discussed above. Moreover, while the coup in Indonesia had provided Zhou with the excuse he needed to indefinitely postpone Bandung II and prevent Soviet admission to the Afro-Asian Movement, it was part of a troubling trend which culminated in the coup in Ghana. The anxiety produced by the Ghanaian coup was palpable in China and fed the paranoia of the architects of the then developing Cultural Revolution. The propaganda department of the Shanghai Central Committee put together a report exploring public opinion on the coup. While noting that many people believed the coup in Ghana was 'nothing extraordinary' (没啥了不起), or that it might serve as a cautionary tale for African nationalists against the treachery of their own military, there were citizens and cadres who were deeply concerned. Their concerns centred either around the idea that China had been taken advantage of (吃亏) or, more concerningly for the leadership, that China had found itself on the losing side.

For those concerned about China having been taken advantage of, the issues were that scarce resources were being wasted and that China was being humiliated. One short quote summed up these concerns, 'It's always China which has the bad luck (倒霉). We give them things, and then there's a coup, and then even our experts end up getting attacked.' Another was quoted as saying,

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*

We send experts to support them, make painstaking efforts, pay enormous sums, send all this equipment to build a cotton textile mill in Ghana, and then if the experts run away, they (the Ghanaians) will make off with everything and the sunk costs will be huge. It's loathsome!⁵⁷⁴

Those with these concerns concluded that China should not be too generous with its aid or too friendly with nationalist governments. Their instability posed too much of a risk of subjecting China to further waste and humiliation. More worryingly for the authorities, for those concerned about China being on the losing side, faith in the inevitable victory of socialism was diminishing. A respondent publicly aired their worries in a Jingan District bank, 'Now the imperialist camp is making coups here, making coups there, going against China here, going against China there. Can we compete?' Another respondent said, 'Now the situation everywhere is in chaos, only the capitalist countries are not in tumult....' These respondents all viewed the world as shifting right and not left, and that if things continued this way, this would not be to China's advantage (对我们不利), particularly if it continued squandering blood and treasure in faraway 'nationalist' countries even while circumstances remained difficult in socialist China.⁵⁷⁵

Cadres and the masses were not the only ones worried by the coups. During a CCP-CC Politburo meeting two days after the May 16th Notification, Lin Biao said:

Coups have become a kind of trend. Globally, coups have become the norm.... In our country's history, after the founding of each dynasty, ten years, twenty years, thirty years, fifty years, after a very short time there is always a coup, there are many examples of the usurpation of power.... Lately there are many ghosts, ghostly occurrences, that deserve attention. Perhaps when a coup occurs, there will be killing, power will be usurped, capitalism will be revived, and socialism will be overthrown.⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷⁴ SHMA, A22-1-905-26, '中共上海市委宣传部办公室关于部分干部、群众对加纳政变的反映材料' (Materials of the Propaganda Department Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee on the Reaction of Some Cadres and Masses to the Coup in Ghana), 6 March 1966.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁶ MZDNP, vol. 5, 587.

This statement was forwarded to the rest of the central committee in September 1966. As will be explored in the next chapter, Foreign Ministry personnel had to take particular care in how they characterised their policy preferences surrounding aid, lest they be labelled a 'little Khrushchev' or, worse perhaps, a hidden enemy and saboteur of China's foreign aid, like *On the Docks* antagonist Qian Shouwei.

The Rivalry with Taiwan Takes Centre Stage

There was another factor which prevented the PRC from seeking to reduce its aid during this 'difficult period of recombination'. Following independence, a number of African countries attempted to recognise both Chinese governments, as Malawi had done before the Cabinet Crisis discussed in chapter 4. Many of these were Francophone countries and members of the Brazzaville group, such as Senegal. Ethiopia was special in that it had relations with the Nationalist Party (KMT) which predated the PRC, but also in that it both recognised Taipei and advocated for Beijing's admission to the UN at the same time. Other countries, like Niger, weighed their options before recognising one China or the other, and some, again like Niger, decided in favour of recognising Taipei. The choice was based on three factors: which of the two Chinese capitals their former colonial power recognised; the attitudes of their political parties as well as their own Chinese diaspora population; and the applicability of the aid on offer by either China. As was discussed in the previous chapter, the decision of countries like Malawi, Niger, and the CAR were also tied to the narrative that Chinese assistance functioned primarily to veil subversive efforts and guerrilla struggle against independent African governments. In Niger's case, the stunning accusations against Accra and Beijing regarding commandos and assassination plots should be considered

against the background of its ongoing negotiations with Taiwan for assistance. Others still, like Congo (L) or Cameroon, actually found themselves besieged by PRC-backed rebels at the same time as they accepted Taipei's assistance in agriculture and food-related light industry.

By 1965, there was a constant stream of African visitors to Taipei. At the end of 1965, Taipei was operating agricultural missions in ten African countries. As Sino-African relations were strained by Beijing's relentless quest to prevent Soviet participation in the Second Afro-Asian Conference and the proliferation of freedom fighters trained and equipped by the PRC, the number of countries participating in Taiwanese agricultural programs nearly doubled. Accredited seminars began to be held in Taiwan, and hundreds of farmers and technicians from across Africa, including from countries which maintained relations with Beijing, were invited to attend these on generous scholarships provided by the Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At these seminars, according to a report from the British Consulate in Tamsui, 'Needless to say, the trainees are subjected to a fair amount of political indoctrination, and the failure of communist agricultural systems is thoroughly dinned into them.'⁵⁷⁷

Taiwanese activity in Africa was coordinated with Washington from the very beginning, and the fact that its Minister of Economic Affairs was appointed the Taiwanese Ambassador to Liberia (the informal headquarters of the US presence in Africa) in early 1965 indicated that their efforts in were to be stepped up.⁵⁷⁸ Taipei reached out to the US Department of State about openly carrying out projects together in Africa soon after. Prior to 1965, a portion of the funding for Taiwanese projects was drawn from Operation Vanguard,

⁵⁷⁷ TNA, FO 371-181052, 'The Constant Stream of African Visitors to Taipei, the Tour of West Africa by Mr. Yang, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Presence of Nationalist Agricultural Missions in 10 African Countries 9 March 1965'; 'Efforts of Formosans to gain support of African Countries particularly the Francophone States 19 July 1965'.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

which provided Taipei with \$2 million a year precisely for the purpose of using aid to campaign for recognition in the developing world. In comparison with the offers made by Beijing, which at this point was in the tens to hundreds of millions, \$2 million may seem to be paltry sum. However, by focusing on exporting the technology and techniques used in modernising Taiwan's own agriculture, Taipei was able to make the most of its modest expenditure. Furthermore, under Operation Vanguard, the USA cooperated with Taiwan on 'a covert basis with the (Nationalist) Chinese taking full credit', further amplifying the usefulness of the \$2 million.⁵⁷⁹ The US Department of State rejected Taipei's request to begin open cooperation, saying, 'our aim is to reduce our evident assistance to that country (in this case, Congo [L]) and visibility there by encouraging the maximum assistance from third countries'. It held that such cooperation should remain covert. This was for two main reasons. First, were Taiwanese projects to collapse for whatever reason – with withdrawal of recognition being a distinct likelihood in any given African country at this time – this would lead to a loss of prestige for Washington. Second, Taiwan's standing as an independent and respected aid provider was considered to be to Washington's advantage. The State Department held that Taiwan should be seen as:

strong, resourceful and rich as possible. The Chinats should thus get the full credit for their aid, so that African countries in which Chinat projects are operating will appreciate what they stand to lose if they should expel the Chinats.⁵⁸⁰

After considering Taipei's proposal for several months, the Department of State concluded that it would be best to continue the original covert arrangement. In October, funding for

⁵⁷⁹ NARA II, RG59, Records of the Bureau of African Affairs, Subject Files, China (Nationalist). September-October 1965.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Vanguard was more than doubled to \$5 million dollars a year.⁵⁸¹ It was still a small sum, but in the context of the slump in Sino-African relations and the rightward drift of African politics more generally, Taipei was able to make considerable gains at Beijing's expense.

Yang Hsi-kun's scuffle with the Xinhua correspondent in the Accra airport was a part of this story. Hoping to build on the success of existing projects, Yang spent much of 1965 and 1966 on multiple trips to Africa arranging for the provision of assistance in agriculture. In his first month-long trip, Mauritania signed an agreement for \$1 million in agricultural assistance. This was eligible to be expanded to up to \$4 million. Sierra Leone received a similar agreement. Soon after, delegations from Kenya and Gabon visited Taipei, with the latter signing a technical cooperation agreement on expanding the Taiwanese agricultural mission already operating there. Following Yang's return to Taipei, another Taiwanese technical mission headed by the director of Agriculture and Forestry in the Ministry of Economic Affairs embarked on an extensive tour of Chad, Niger, Togo, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Senegal, and Mauritania. Chad and Togo received extensions even larger than the projects pursued in Mauritania and Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire joined Gabon in expanding the Taiwanese agricultural mission already in operation there.⁵⁸²

It was during this programmatic effort to entrench Taiwanese agricultural teams in African countries with the increased support of the US that Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.* Interestingly, this actually went against the recommendation of US AID which saw Operation Vanguard as too political and unconnected to the 'real' purpose of US foreign aid: expanding international trade and development as a goals in and of themselves.

⁵⁸² TNA, FO 371-181052, 'The Constant Stream of African Visitors to Taipei, the Tour of West Africa by Mr. Yang, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Presence of Nationalist Agricultural Missions in 10 African Countries 9 March 1965'; 'Conversation between Mr. McKeeves and the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yang, about his recent visit to West Africa'; 'Efforts of Formosans to gain support of African Countries, particularly the Francophone States'.

For an exploration of Taiwan's agricultural assistance to Africa from 1961 to the present, see Philip Liu Hsiao-pong, 'Planting Rice on the Roof of the UN Building: Analysing Taiwan's "Chinese" Techniques in Africa, 1961-present', *The China Quarterly* 198 (2009): 381-400.

Affairs contacted the Ghanaian NLC following the February 1966 coup. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had monitored the situation closely. Soon after Ghana declared independence in 1957, Taiwan requested establishing relations but was politely rebuffed by Nkrumah's government. Despite this, Chiang Kai-shek himself maintained polite correspondence with Accra into the 1960s.⁵⁸³ Immediately following the coup in 1966, Taiwanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shen Chang-Huan, took the initiative and extended an offer of agricultural assistance similar to those above. While waiting for an answer, the Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a press release publicising the offer. On 22 March, Taiwanese Ambassador to Togo, P. H. Chang, addressed a letter to the chief of Ghana's goodwill mission to Togo saying, 'In compliance with your request during a brief conversation at a cocktail party given in (William Bedford) Van Lare's honor, Chang offers the details of an agricultural seminary and scholarships for three or four students.' This suggests that officials in the Ghanaian government were considering accepting Taiwanese assistance. From there, Taiwanese offers continued to grow. Taiwan offered industrial and technical assistance in the form of a special mission and the construction of a textile plant. They then invited a mission of 'prominent Ghanaians' to visit Taipei with round-trip expenses and living costs to be paid by the Taiwanese side.⁵⁸⁴

The NLC considered these offers carefully. The Ghanaian Ambassador to Tokyo approached his British counterpart, R. H. Ellingworth, for advice on 10 June 1966. Ellingworth advised him to encourage his government to follow British policy. He suggested that Accra maintain relations with Beijing while allowing Taipei to establish a commercial office in Ghana. Ellingworth reported that,

⁵⁸³ ROC-FMA, 11-05-29-02-01-002, '爭取加納' (Fighting Over Ghana), 104, 25 August 1958.

⁵⁸⁴ ROC-FMA, 11-05-29-02-01-003, '爭取加納' (Fighting Over Ghana), 25-83, 3 March-5 April 1966.

Mr. Abdallah then said that this all seemed rather complicated. Their relations with Peking were now very bad. He was clearly sorry not to be able to take immediate advantage of what appeared to be useful trade opportunities with Taiwan.⁵⁸⁵

Ellingworth's advice was received with gratitude and taken into consideration in Accra. By 21 June 1966, Accra expressed that it intended to maintain a policy identical to Britain. This was part of NLC's intent to maintain its current relationships with Asia more broadly, meaning rejecting South Korea and South Vietnam as well, seemingly in hopes of not isolating itself too much from the rest of Africa following the coup, which was very unpopular across Africa.⁵⁸⁶ Ultimately, the Ghanaian government turned down Taipei's offers of assistance, writing in July, 'The Government of Ghana while highly appreciative of the sympathy shown and grateful for the offer of technical assistance regrets that it is unable to accept the offer owing to the many unproductive projects already on hand.'⁵⁸⁷ When Sino-Ghanaian relations were already on the verge of collapse on 11 October, *The Ghanaian Times* reprinted Chiang Kai-shek's assertion that Beijing is the 'root of evils in Asia'. Nevertheless, Accra has maintained recognition of the PRC to this day.⁵⁸⁸ The scuffle between the Xinhua correspondent and Yang Hsi-kun at the Accra airport was immaterial in the face of the NLC's calculus about its domestic legitimacy and regional standing.

Ultimately, Taipei's success in Africa was largely restricted to Francophone Africa and exceptional cases like Malawi or southern African landlocked countries like Eswatini. Recognition of Beijing both accorded with the anti-imperialist foreign policies of more radical countries and could burnish the non-aligned credentials of more conservative countries. Moreover, there was the fact that, in Banda's own words, 'Red China has to be reckoned with.

⁵⁸⁵ TNA, DO 195-232, 'British Embassy, Tokyo, 10 June 1966 letter from R.H. Ellingworth'.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 'British High Commission, Accra, 21 June 1966, letter from D.G. Reid'.

⁵⁸⁷ ROC-FMA, 11-05-29-02-01-003, 98, 21 July 1966.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 111, 11 October 1966.

You can't ignore 700 million people'.⁵⁸⁹ The PRC also had greater resources and, by 1971, had taken China's seat at the UN. Nonetheless, by using the additional resources furnished to them by the US Department of State and leveraging the wider slump in Sino-African relations, Taiwan became entrenched in a number of African countries, forcing China to devote considerable resources to combatting the growth in Taiwanese influence in the late 1960s. This effectively prevented China from simply disentangling itself from Africa and adopting the selective approach pursued by the Soviet Union, which faced no such challenge.

Conclusion

The two coups disabused Zhou Enlai of the notion that Africa was 'ripe for revolution', as he had said in 1963. The Algerian coup made his imperative to hold Bandung II on time or not at all impossible, and he had failed to block an invitation to the Soviet Union. Furthermore, in standing alongside the coup regime in a vain attempt to salvage the conference, Zhou expended considerable political capital precisely at a time when Chinese relations in Africa were approaching their nadir. If Bouteflika sought to maintain China's support for the new regime by using the conference as leverage, it worked. Even if there had been no foreign interference, as Zhou's 22 June 1965 telegram to the conference summit said, the coup had resulted in the removal of a natural ally of Beijing in Africa. Relations between Beijing and Algiers had been friendly, and Ben Bella's brand of socialism tracked well with China's. Events which followed the first postponement of Bandung II reflected the degree to which Soviet largesse made China's quest to compete through aid diplomacy so asymmetrical as to be characterised as one of no contest. Moreover, this came at a time when,

⁵⁸⁹ Nkhoma, 'Taiwan or China?', 685.

as shown in the previous chapter, not only the quantity but also the quality of Chinese aid was in question across Africa. Those aspects of its assistance which had been so attractive during the halcyon days of anti-imperialism had come to be seen as liabilities by the majority of African countries, and the issue of recognition had been thoroughly politicised on the domestic and regional level. The window for Sino-Soviet competition over Africa on the basis of aid diplomacy had closed.

The Ghanaian coup led to revelations about China's activity in Ghana – revelations which the NLC was only too glad to publicise across the continent – that further contributed to a deterioration of its status which had already begun during the Congo Crisis. With this, not only was the Soviet Union scoring victories at the PRC's expense, but so was Taiwan. The PRC recognised that there was a demand for assistance of all kinds, and that if this demand was not met, there was the likelihood that not only the Soviet Union but also Taiwan would be able to take advantage of its absence. This became an even greater threat to the PRC's international prestige when Taiwan's assistance effort received increased support from the USA and began making multiple forays into Africa in the mid- to late 1960s. While, in reality, only a limited number of African countries were willing to recognise Taipei, the Ghanaian episode shows that Taiwan was still seen as a distinct threat across Africa more widely. Retargeting assistance in the way the Soviet Union had begun to do in 1964 was not possible, as some degree of state-to-state cordiality, largely built as it was on aid, had to be maintained in the renewed competition against Taiwan.

Moreover, a coup against so close an ally as Nkrumah, while he was visiting Chinese soil no less, raised the spectre of coups and dissatisfied public opinion within the PRC. The Soviet Union responded to the spate of coups in an objective way which was congruent with

its overall project of disentangling itself from the continent. It continued to decelerate in terms of its offers of aid, leveraging it to normalise relations with post-Ben Bella Algeria and even offering diplomatic off-ramps to the fiercely anti-socialist Ghanaian NLC. Because of the rivalry with Taiwan, and also, perhaps, for fear of being seen as retreating in the face of adversity by the Chinese public, such an approach was not possible for China, even if Chen Yi recognised the absurdity of the 'China card'. Despite its growing unpopularity, China insistently offered its aid.

Chapter 6: Putting an End to Comrade Khrushchev's Subjectivism

&

Keeping the Key Points while Proceeding Accordingly

Introduction

This chapter will explore the development of China and the Soviet Union's aid diplomacy in the last years of the 1960s. It will begin with a direct comparison and overview of their aid efforts during this period and then offer a thematic exploration of the most important factors in each of their aid diplomacy efforts. This was the period when the characteristics of Soviet and Chinese aid diverged most sharply and when the recipients of their aid came into armed conflict with one another, so the comparison will be indirect, focusing on different aspects of each countries' engagement with Africa. The period from 1966 to 1971 saw the deepest trough in Soviet aid expenditure to Africa between 1959 to 1980. Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin were focused on extirpating the 'subjectivism' of the Khrushchev era from Soviet politics through domestic economic reforms and a renewed focus on science and technology, and were concerned not to repeat his fraught experiments in West Africa. This period also saw the immense disruption of all of China's foreign affairs work by the Cultural Revolution (desk level officials within the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs referred to the period from 1967 to 1968 as one when China 'had no foreign policy').⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁹⁰ TNA, FCO 21-806, 'Life at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs', June 1971.

The chapter contends that this period is crucial to understanding the legacy of both the Soviet Union and China's aid diplomacy in 1960s Africa. This is for several reasons. For Moscow, the policies pursued and methods adopted for engaging with Africa served as a foundational experiment for Brezhnev's foreign policy for the rest of his tenure. The experience of the late 1960s caused Moscow to retain some aspects and drop others from the foreign policy defined by the Twenty-Third Party Congress in 1966, the first Congress under Brezhnev's general secretaryship. As will be seen, those aspects which were retained foreshadowed Soviet policy in Africa in the 1970s and mark the cleanest break between Soviet aid diplomacy under Khrushchev and that of his successor. Most importantly for China, during this tumultuous time, Zhou Enlai and China's foreign policy establishment arrived at major policy decisions that would shape China's foreign aid and engagement well into the 1970s. By November 1971, following China's accession to the UN, Zhou delivered several talks to the assembled Foreign Ministry staff, directing them to 'keep the key points while proceeding accordingly' (守住重点, 适当发展) to achieve the mission of driving Taiwan out of Africa.⁵⁹¹ The 'key points' were the methods of aid to those countries with which Beijing had already established friendly relations, meaning Tanzania, Zambia, Guinea, and Congo (B). 'Proceeding accordingly' indicated that, for countries with which China did not maintain relations, it was time to bring about 'normal diplomatic relations' through cordial engagement and increased aid modelled on previous successes. For this reason, the Cultural Revolution should not be seen as the blank spot it is usually treated as. Indeed, it laid the foundation of a more successful policy in the 1970s.

⁵⁹¹ '周恩来在全国外事会议上的第二次讲话', 1971年5月31日 ('Zhou Enlai's Second Speech at the National Foreign Affairs Conference', 31 May 1971). Quoted from 蒋华杰, '农技援非 (1971-1983): 中国援非模式与成效的个案研究', 《外交评论》 (Jiang Huajie, 'Agricultural Assistance to Africa [1971-1983]: A Case Study of Chinese Aid Methods and Results', *Foreign Affairs Review*) 30, no. 1 (2013): 32.

For the Soviet Union, the most important developments were previewed in the decisions reached at the April 1966 Twenty-Third Party Congress. The section dedicated to Soviet aid diplomacy will begin with Modibo Keita's visit to Moscow which foreshadowed a reconfiguration of Soviet-African relations, before exploring how Soviet aid diplomacy developed after the Twenty-Third Party Congress. The section dedicated to China will explore the impacts of the Cultural Revolution on the Foreign Ministry in general and on its aid diplomacy in particular. Finally, the chapter will turn to the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) so as to compare the responses in the two countries' aid diplomacy.

A Comparative Overview of Socialist Aid Diplomacy in Africa at the End of the First Decade of Decolonialisation

At the end of the 1960s, Soviet aid continued to dwarf that of China both in sheer volume and in terms of the diversity of projects and countries with which it was involved. Between 1956 and 1970, the Soviet Union had offered approximately \$1.1 billion in aid to Africa.⁵⁹² Most of this was offered to North and West Africa. Between 1966 and 1970, thirty-eight agreements and protocols were negotiated across the continent, including in several countries where the Soviet Union had not previously carried out such work. At different points in the 1960s, it had favoured different regions. North Africa was a primary destination for the entire decade, and West Africa was heavily emphasised from 1959-1963. In the mid-1960s, the Soviet Union began making forays into East and Central Africa as well. In the late 1960s, the scope of Soviet engagement with Africa had abortively broadened to countries with which Moscow maintained only cordial relations, like Ethiopia. While the

⁵⁹² NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, Soviet and Chinese Communist Relations with Africa, no date (sometime between 1970 and 1971).

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa scope had widened, the depth of engagement itself had become shallower. In terms of expenditure and extensions (or offers), Soviet aid had decelerated markedly since the end of Khrushchev's tenure. The bulk of Soviet aid extensions were made before 1964, reaching a total of \$655 million, or almost two thirds of the total of Soviet extensions in the 1960s.⁵⁹³ During the interregnum from 1964 to 1966 (explored in chapter 3), this slowed substantially as Khrushchev lost faith in Africa as a shopwindow for socialism and as Brezhnev came to power. Even as diplomatic relations were established with newly independent countries, extensions during these two years still totalled only about \$150 million per year.⁵⁹⁴ From 1966 to 1970, development aid to Africa was not only spread far thinner but had also come to a practical halt, slumping to less than \$200 million total over four years, or an average of \$50 million per year, less than a third of what was offered per year during the interregnum.

The Cultural Revolution might be seen as an even more violent disruption in Chinese foreign affairs work and aid diplomacy. However, while Soviet aid was massively decelerating in this period, Chinese aid diplomacy during the Cultural Revolution steadily accelerated. Considering the circumstances, agreements between China and African countries continued to be negotiated apace, save for a six-month hiatus from August 1966 to February 1967. In all, seventeen Sino-African agreements and protocols were signed between 1966 and 1969. For comparison, twenty-nine were signed from the end of 1963, when Zhou inaugurated his pathbreaking tour, to 1966, when the low ebb in Sino-African relations had become most evident. The period from 1966-1970 also accounted for as much if not more than half of the approximately \$830 million dollars China had offered to Africa between 1954

⁵⁹³ *Ibid*; An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – And Implications for US Policy, no date (1970).

⁵⁹⁴ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79-00927A004800100005-6, 'Communist World's Economic Relations with Africa', 16 April 1965.

and 1970.⁵⁹⁵ In terms of the sum value of its offers, during this period, China was outpacing the Soviet Union.

The centre of gravity of China's aid extensions to Africa shifted enormously over the course of the decade. During the first half of the 1960s, Chinese aid was concentrated in West Africa, which received extensions of \$226 million between 1954 and 1970. In 1971, Guinea, Mali, and Mauritania received another \$80 million in total offers, so despite the February 1966 coup against Kwame Nkrumah, this region retained some importance.⁵⁹⁶ Tanzania and Zambia alone (partially but not entirely because of the massive TAZARA enterprise), though, received offers totalling \$473 million, or twice the amount offered to all of West Africa before 1971. This was nearly half of the total of China's aid in Africa concentrated in two countries alone.⁵⁹⁷ While the Soviet effort had broadened, the Chinese one had deepened and become focused on the parts of Africa closest to ongoing anti-colonial struggles against Portugal in Mozambique and Angola and struggles against the settler regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa.

⁵⁹⁵ NARA II, RG 59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, Soviet and Chinese Communist Relations with Africa, no date (sometime between 1970 and 1971); An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – And Implications for US Policy, no date. This was nearly \$100 million more than China's aid to Asia for the same period, and this massive influx into Africa may have been in part made possible by the disappearance of Indonesia from China's aid roster in 1965. TNA, FCO 65-900, 'Worldwide Disbursement of Chinese Aid', 23 November 1971.

⁵⁹⁶ Work remains to be done to examine more closely Beijing's competition with Taipei for aid projects in Mauritania in the late 1960s, especially irrigation and agricultural projects. It is possible that Beijing's success in this particular competition served as a template for its efforts after its admission to the UN, explored in Jiang Huajie, 'Agricultural Assistance to Africa (1971-1983)'.

⁵⁹⁷ TNA, FCO 65-900, 'Worldwide Disbursement of Chinese Aid', 23 November 1971; FCO 21-807, 'Increase of Chinese Influence in West Africa', 7 September 1971.



Mozambique freedom fighters studying Chairman Mao's works

15 Peking Review, No. 50, 8 December 1967.

It is especially important to acknowledge the distinction between aid extended (or offered) and aid drawn upon (or received/fulfilled) when discussing Chinese aid diplomacy, particularly in this period. By 1970, only a quarter of China's aid to Africa had been drawn upon. Some countries, like Guinea, Mali, and Congo (B), accounted for the bulk of what was drawn upon, with each of these accepting at least half of the sizable offers extended to them. Others, most notably the UAR, accounted for a larger proportion of the unfulfilled extensions,

with Cairo only ever taking a tiny fraction of what had been on offer to it since 1956.⁵⁹⁸ In comparison, by 1970 a third of Soviet extensions had been drawn upon, and as extensions slowed and implementation caught up, the gap between Soviet aid extended and aid drawn upon narrowed rapidly.⁵⁹⁹ The opposite was true of Chinese aid during this period. From 1966 to 1970, the gap between aid extended and aid drawn upon widened. It did not narrow significantly until the fulfilment of the TAZARA project and then the end of the Mao era.⁶⁰⁰ Nonetheless, these empty extensions are crucial to understanding Chinese aid to Africa in the Mao era and served a concrete role in Sino-African relations. It was expected that these countries only accepted these offers so they could continue to hold onto what Chen Yi called the 'China card'.⁶⁰¹ In this way, China's offers still stood to buy it political capital, even if they were never drawn upon. In 1968, the 1962 UAR-PRC economic and technical cooperation agreement was renewed, as were numerous other agreements involving outstanding extensions. Such renewals were an easy way for China to ameliorate strained relations with African countries during this sensitive time.

While Chinese aid proceeded as normally as possible considering the extraordinary circumstances, a major shift was occurring in Soviet aid diplomacy which, while not as dramatic as the Cultural Revolution, meant a sharp decline in its activity in Africa. Soviet

⁵⁹⁸ TNA, FCO 21-807, 'Increase of Chinese Influence in West Africa', 7 September 1971. By April 1968, only £4 million of the £34 million on offer by Beijing in a single agreement had been drawn on by the UAR. ROC-FMA, 11-05-01-02-01-023, '中共與埃及關係' (Chinese Communist Relations with Egypt), 19 January 1969, 11.

⁵⁹⁹ NARA II, RG 59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, Soviet and Chinese Communist Relations with Africa, no date (sometime between 1970 and 1971); An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – And Implications for US Policy, no date (1970).

⁶⁰⁰ As I have explored elsewhere, some of these empty extensions were not drawn upon until the Deng era, when they were renegotiated and rolled into multilateral development packages. See Thomas Burnham, 'Supping with a long spoon in the Indian Ocean: The negotiation of the 1972 Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between Mauritius and the People's Republic of China', *Cold War History*, ahead of print. DOI: 10.1080/14682745.2021.1997990.

⁶⁰¹ WCDA, PRC-FMA 106-01476-06, 'Record of Second Conversation of Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Chen Yi with Foreign Minister Pak Seong-cheol', 11 November 1965.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa extensions had slowed substantially since the beginning of Brezhnev's tenure, and by the end of 1971 there were reports that China alone had extended more aid to Africa than the rest of the Soviet bloc combined (regardless of the fact that a larger fraction of this aid was not drawn upon).⁶⁰² This decline formed the prelude to what would be the return of the Soviet Union to the Horn of Africa in the 1970s. However, as will be seen, during this decline, there were a number of noteworthy developments in the character of Soviet aid diplomacy.

The Brezhnev Years Before the Soviet Return to the Horn of Africa: Soviet Aid Diplomacy in Africa at the End of the 1960s

Modibo Keita Visits the Soviet Union

As discussed in the previous chapter, Chen Yi's 1965 visit to Mali caused a rupture in Sino-Malian relations just as the CPSU was reaching out to the US-RDA. Having waited eight months, Modibo Keita finally answered a standing invitation from the CPSU to the US-RDA to visit Moscow after Chen's troubled visit. As he assembled his delegation, *Izvestiia* published a piece reintroducing its Soviet readership to Mali and its history on 21 September 1965, taking the five-year anniversary of Mali's independence as the reason for the article's publication. It emphasised that 'Maliens speak kind words about our doctors and teachers'.⁶⁰³ The next day, *Pravda* characterised relations between the CPSU and US-RDA as being of 'brotherly cooperation'.⁶⁰⁴ On 2 October, Keita's visit was formally announced to the Soviet public.⁶⁰⁵ He and his delegation arrived the next day. The next day, Keita and his

⁶⁰² TNA, FCO 21-974, 'China's Long Term Motives in Africa', 3 March 1972.

⁶⁰³ 'Навстречу Солнцу', *Izvestiia*, № 224, 21 September 1965.

⁶⁰⁴ 'Братское Сотрудничество', *Pravda*, № 265, 22 September 1965.

⁶⁰⁵ 'О предстоящем визите в Советский Союз Генерального секретаря партии Суданский союз – РДА товарища МОДИБО КЕЙТЪ', *Pravda*, № 275, 2 October 1965.

delegation were greeted on their arrival by Leonid Brezhnev himself as well as a number of other State Committee members and military officials. *Izvestiia* documented Keita's arrival with a photograph of him towering over his hosts upon disembarking from his plane. On his second day, he received a profile complete with a flattering headshot in *Pravda*.⁶⁰⁶ He returned the favour, providing the Soviet press with an example of an African leader praising the fruits of Soviet development. During his visit, he visited an automobile factory in Moscow and was quoted as saying, 'It is impossible to talk about the achievements of world science and technology without mentioning the achievements of Soviet labourers, workers, and specialists.'⁶⁰⁷



2 Modibo Keita arriving in Moscow in October 1965. *Izvestiia*, № 235, 4 October 1965.

⁶⁰⁶ 'Генеральный секретарь партии Суданский союз-РДА Модибо КЕЙТА', *Pravda*, № 277, 4 October 1965.

⁶⁰⁷ 'В обстановке дружбы и взаимопонимания', *Pravda*, № 279, 6 October 1965.

In contrast to Chen Yi's belligerent manner, Keita was pleased with Brezhnev's moderation. As discussed in the previous chapter, Chen had insisted Mali keep up the pace of collectivisation and openly criticised the Malian government, calling it corrupt and accusing it of using Chinese aid for profiteering. Chen had even told Keita that it would be no surprise if he was overthrown in a coup.⁶⁰⁸ Brezhnev advised the US-RDA delegation to slow down collectivisation in the interest of political stability and provided them with ample media coverage, enhancing their prestige and domestic legitimacy. Moreover, over the course of a series of face-to-face meetings, the Soviet leadership offered to reduce Mali's debt burden further and to offer additional assistance in the form of technical training both for Malian trainees in Moscow and from Soviet specialists to be deployed in Mali. In exchange, Keita unreservedly endorsed the Test Ban Treaty in the joint-communiqué, reversing his country's position as it had been established on his last visit to Beijing.⁶⁰⁹ With this modest success built on aid diplomacy and attention to the US-RDA's concerns about domestic legitimacy, the visit of Keita provided a preview of an attempted reconfiguration of Soviet-African engagement on the basis of relations between the CPSU and non-communist parties.

The Twenty-Third Party Congress

Soon after, Keita and the US-RDA were invited to the landmark Twenty-Third Party Congress. The Twenty-Third Congress was the first of four congresses under Brezhnev. It was the first time – with very a few exceptions – that non-communist parties were invited to

⁶⁰⁸ WCDA, PRC-FMA, 106-01476-06, 11 November 1965. Chen vindictively joked to his interlocutor that he looked forward to visiting again after a coup attempt actually occurred. Keita was indeed overthrown in a coup in 1968, but not until well after Chen Yi was himself the target of vicious criticism in the Cultural Revolution.

⁶⁰⁹ NARA II, RG59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, 1946-1984, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, October 1-31, 1965; November 1-30, 1965. 'Совместное Советско-Малийское Коммюнике', *Izvestiia*, № 241, 11 October 1965.

attend. Party congresses were exclusively reserved for 'fraternal' parties of the CPSU, as they served to affirm their leadership over the world communist movement. Those exceptions were all from Africa and had been invited to the 1961 Twenty-Second Congress. They were the US-RDA, the Ghanaian Convention People's Party (CPP), and the *Parti Démocratique de Guinée-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (PDG-RDA). These three pan-Africanist parties were invited as observers because of the central role they played in Khrushchev's early attempts to export socialist development to Africa, the central theme of that congress. It advanced a project to reveal as bankrupt the 'aid' of the West through Moscow's own projects in these countries.⁶¹⁰

Beginning in early 1966, invitations were drafted for the Twenty-Third Congress. In addition to the three exceptions invited to the Twenty-Second Congress, representatives from a further eight parties were also invited. The eight other parties were the Algerian FLN, the *Mouvement national de la révolution* (MNR) of Congo (B), TANU, KANU, the Afro-Shirazi Union, the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA), the *Partido Africano para la Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (PAIGC), and a delegation led by Somalian opposition politician Osman Samatar. The communist parties from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, and South Africa as well as the Workers and Peasants Party of Nigeria were all also invited.⁶¹¹ With the eight new parties in addition to the three pan-African West African parties, most of the African representation to the congress were nationalist in character rather than communist.⁶¹²

⁶¹⁰ «Материалы XXII съезда КПСС» (Москва: Государственное издательство политической литературы, 1962), 13-25, 34.

⁶¹¹ RGANI, f. 4, o. 18, d. 994, ll. 133-41. No date (Sometime in early 1966).

⁶¹² *Ibid*, ll. 142-51. No date (Sometime in early 1966).

Of course, many of these governing parties professed socialist or otherwise leftist positions, even explicitly modelling many of their policies on those of the Soviet Union and/or China. However, they would never be considered to be

Invitations were generally written according to a template so they could be finalised by the embassies tasked with delivering them. After a salutation, the invitations to the six communist parties expressed the following: 'Comrades' would be given the opportunity to enjoy free medical treatment, 'get acquainted with the life of the Soviet people, the work of party and public organisations, and, if they wish, to acquaint Soviet workers with the situation in their country and the activities of their Communist Party.' This meant they had the opportunity to address the congress. The template then continued to instruct its recipients to identify delegates and begin working to acquire visas (even if, as was frequently the case, this had to be done illegally through Soviet embassies in third countries, for instance, in the case of the South African Communist Party which had to work through Dar es Salaam).⁶¹³ The invitations for the nationalist parties, as stated above, were almost all specially tailored rather than written according to a template. Keita, because of the recent burgeoning of Soviet-Malian relations, was given a specially tailored invitation and allowed to nominate larger number of delegates than the other parties. None of the nationalist parties were expressly invited to address the congress in the invitations themselves. However, this

socialist, let alone communist, by the Soviet leadership (or the Chinese leadership, for that matter). This was for a number of reasons, not least the 'backwardness' of these countries. African countries were seen as pursuing different 'socialisms' defined more by their particular national characteristics than by Moscow's definition of scientific socialism. These local 'socialisms' were simply shorthand for 'vague phrases about a society of "social justice"' and often arose in response to regional politics, not the progression of class struggle or economic development. For instance, Moscow considered Senegalese socialism to be 'the safest "socialism" for the West', as it was informed by the 'social opportunism' of Léopold Sédar Senghor and had emerged primarily to compete with the more radical politics of neighbouring Mali and Guinea. Even Kwame Nkrumah was considered to maintain socialism only 'on paper', in the words of a 1961 report by the director of the Novosti Press Agency after a tour of Africa. The report used the words of a Ghanaian magazine as testimony against the socialist content of Ghana:

Nkrumaism, like Leninism and Titoism, is a way of life, a new philosophy created by the leader in such a way that it corresponds to the common conditions and living conditions of his people and race....
Nkrumism, although inspired by Marxism, is African in content. Like Titoism, it expresses the goals and aspirations of the great leader, his people, nation and, above all, Africa. (Italics added).

The report took this quotation as representative of African socialisms more generally and interpreted it in this way: Thus, the ideological interpretations of the concept of socialism in African countries are as different as these countries are different in their level (of development) and traditions. Most of them put up a veneer socialism and communism, above all those who seek to spread their influence to kindred countries under the guise of popular slogans.

RGANI, f. 5, o. 33, d. 181, ll. 99-100, 22 December 1961.

⁶¹³ RGANI, f. 4, o. 18, d. 994, ll. 133-51. No date (Sometime in early 1966).

time, the African parties were not invited as mere observers as they had been in the Twenty-Second Party Congress. A number addressed the congress and had their speeches reproduced in *Izvestiia* and *Pravda*. Among them was the Afro-Shirazi Party, which was even given the impromptu, fraternal privilege of addressing the congress on behalf of Zanzibar, which had merged with Tanganyika two years earlier.⁶¹⁴

Interestingly, the CPSU could not bear *disinviting* parties that had previously attended. Most importantly, it still invited the Algerian Communist Party despite clear warnings by the FLN not to do so. This provoked the FLN delegation to storm out of the opening speech of the conference. This was omitted from the Soviet press and subsequent documentation of the event. It is possible that this was the result of a mistake. The CPSU had also invited the Afro-Shirazi Party to represent Zanzibar alone despite the merger of Zanzibar and Tanganyika. After issuing its message of greeting (recorded in the Soviet press on 8 April 1966) the delegation was quietly absorbed into the TANU delegation which had arrived to represent Tanzania as a whole. The TANU delegation also replaced it on the final programme of the congress. It was in this way that the Afro-Shirazi Party evaporated from the congress after having the prestigious opportunity of giving a speech to it. The fact that such a misunderstanding could occur might explain the incident with the FLN.⁶¹⁵

⁶¹⁴ 'Приветствие партии Афро-ширази XIII съезду коммунистической партии советского союза', *Pravda*, № 98, 8 April 1966.

⁶¹⁵ NARA II, RG 59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, Soviet Policy Towards Africa, March 1-31, 1966, 6 May 1966.

It is also possible that not disinviting the Communist Party of Algeria was a deliberate message of some kind to the FLN or to observers of Moscow's comportment to the oft ill-fated North African communist parties. It may have been intended to indicate that Moscow would look poorly upon any moves by the post-Ben Bella FLN to eliminate the remaining membership of its fraternal party, which under Ben Bella had been allowed to operate freely despite being illegal. The fact that the Sudanese Communist Party was the other African party which issued a message of greeting might have indicated Moscow's continuing support for African communist parties despite the special makeup of this congress.

The Twenty-Third Congress was different from the Twenty-Second in terms of who could attend, but there was some continuity between the two in terms of the content of Brezhnev and Kosygin's speeches. In addition to doubling down on the line established at 1960 Moscow Meeting of Communist and Worker's Parties that non-capitalist development was the only way forward for the post-colonial world, Brezhnev's report gave a detailed account of the projects the Soviet Union had rendered to Africa and the developing world in order to help them overcome what he called their 'age-old backwardness'. He rhapsodised about how Soviet technicians had toiled away in 'jungles and sun-scorched deserts... selflessly, conscientiously, and without sparing themselves'.⁶¹⁶ With this, Brezhnev swiftly changed the focus of the speech. For him, it was in the Soviet Union's efforts to provide education to the developing world that the 'proletarian internationalism' of the Soviet Union was 'manifested'. He accounted in detail the number of students in attendance in the Soviet Union as well as the educational institutions and research centres which it had constructed and contributed equipment to around the world. The number of teachers which the Soviet Union had deployed to Asia and Africa had increased fourfold since the Twenty-Second Congress. He noted with pride that the number of students studying in the Soviet Union had doubled in the past five years and that the number was continuing to grow. He further noted that the number of countries involved had quadrupled and would continue to grow as more countries became independent.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁶ «Материалы XXIII съезда КПСС» (Государственное издательство политической литературы: Москва, 1966), 21.

⁶¹⁷ «Материалы XXIII съезда КПСС», 19-23.



3 The first group graduates from Lumumba University celebrating their graduation at the Kremlin and applauding Kosygin's speech. Pravda, № 181, 30 June 1965.

This emphasis on education echoed a speech delivered half a year before the congress by Kosygin. In June 1965, following the postponement of the Second Afro-Asian Conference, Kosygin had congratulated the first group of 228 students on their graduation and announced the construction of a new faculty complex for Lumumba University. He told the students that by establishing the university, 'the Soviet people had again confirmed their sincere desire to help the people of those countries which have embarked on the path of independent development' by training national cadres and technicians of all races from around the world. He said that the Soviet Union hoped to provide the developing world with 'specialist patriots' trained in the fields of engineering, medicine, pedagogy, and

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa economics to help realise national development.⁶¹⁸ In Brezhnev's speech to the Twenty-Third Party Congress, and in the context of the 'rightward drift' of African politics, this had a new resonance. Because of Soviet efforts to render development assistance and education to the developing world, according to Brezhnev, countries which had taken the 'road of social progress' were 'evoking the special hatred of the imperialists', a nod to the spate of coups which had erupted in the previous months, most notably the one in Ghana which made the attendance of the CPP impossible.⁶¹⁹ By the time of the congress, Nkrumah's fall was blamed not only on his maintenance of a cult of personality but also on the extensive presence of Western educators and Western-educated officials and commercial elites in Ghanaian society. This was seen as having swayed the opinion of Ghanaian civil society against the non-capitalist path. To prevent this from happening again, in addition to offering more resolute opposition to Western machinations in Africa by other means, the Soviet Union had to step up its educational efforts.⁶²⁰

This commitment to expanded educational opportunities was where the similarities with the Twenty-Second Congress ended. Unlike the Twenty-Second Congress, the Twenty-Third's acknowledgement of Soviet aid proved to be an indication of less aid to come, rather than more as had been the case in 1961. Brezhnev first laid out what the Soviet Union would continue to do. He promised 'all-sided cooperation' in helping with the development of national economies through the training of cadres, and he promised to 'strengthen the fraternal links of the CPSU with the communist parties and revolutionary democratic organisations' of the developing world.⁶²¹ This was why the speeches at the Twenty-Third

⁶¹⁸ 'Речь товарища А.Н. Косыгина', «СССР и Страны Африки», Часть 1, 221-227; *Pravda*, № 181, 30 June 1965.

⁶¹⁹ «Материалы XXIII съезда КПСС», 22.

⁶²⁰ Щербаков, '«Африка грёз и действительности»'.

⁶²¹ *Ibid*, 23.

Congress had stressed education, as this was the sort of assistance the Soviet Union would continue to expand upon even while it decreased its expenditure for other kinds of projects. The central thrust of Brezhnev's report was that the CPSU was focused on increasing living standards within the Soviet Union. Subsequent speeches picked up this emphasis on increasing domestic living standards. Kosygin detailed a number of issues with the implication that the Soviet Union would have to focus on domestic development as opposed to foreign aid. The most glaring issue was that Vietnam War necessitated growing and expanding Soviet military expenditure. The Soviet Union's role in arming Vietnam meant that there was 'no room, and cannot be any, for subjectivism' if the expansion of the Soviet economy was to be completed.⁶²² Another problem was that, again because of Khrushchev's 'subjective approach', harvests were poor in 1963 and 1965.⁶²³ The meaning of the speeches was clear: with the prioritisation of improving the standard of living within the Soviet Union in the context of the expanding Vietnam War, the developing world was to become a market 'above all' (прежде всего), not a place to where socialist development was to be exported at the Soviet Union's expense.⁶²⁴ Aid for the purposes of enabling countries to export commodity agriculture and raw materials would continue, as would the export of equipment and replacement parts to those countries. In terms of what the Soviet Union would continue to provide, education and the training of local technicians would take priority. This was the message the nationalist parties had been specially invited to receive at the Twenty-Third Party Congress.

⁶²² *Ibid*, 114-79.

⁶²³ *Ibid*, 107.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid*, 281.

Expansion of Educational Opportunities

Immediately after the Twenty-Third Congress, the Soviet Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education offered to expand its work in thirty independent countries and students in one country still under colonial status.⁶²⁵ The UAR's teaching staff was reinforced with five additional university instructors capable of teaching a range of disciplines and another half dozen Russian language teachers, all on contract for two years and paid by the Soviet Union. Having just accepted 130 university instructors the year before, Algeria received another 198 teachers and other specialists on three-year contracts and ten internship fellows for the University of Algeria. In addition to this, the Ministry of Education of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) sent 130 Russian teachers to teach at lyceums across Algeria. Guinea received eighty instructors in various disciplines to staff its new Soviet-constructed polytechnic institute as well as two language teachers and two philosophy and political economy teachers. The RSFSR also sent two physics professors and fifteen others for various disciplines, and the Ministry of State Agriculture another nine. All of these were on three-year contracts paid for by the Soviet Union. In sum, immediately after the Twenty-Third Congress, eleven African countries received hundreds of new university professors and language instructors. Another twenty received samples of textbooks and other educational materials with the intent of opening classrooms in the immediate future.⁶²⁶

Resources were also allocated for African scholars and trainees wishing to study in the Soviet Union. Over 1000 scholarship positions were made available to students from across Africa in 1966 alone. Fifty of these were destined for two years at the Moscow

⁶²⁵ For context, in January 1966, there were forty-one independent African countries aside from South Africa.

⁶²⁶ RGANI, f. 4, o. 17, d. 239, ll. 9-159, 1966; d. 240, ll. 2-96, 1966.

Cooperative Institute, while the remainder were to take on university or technical training at Lumumba University and elsewhere for up to six years. Scholarships were even made available to countries which were not yet independent, like Angola. In all, students from twenty-four countries made use of these scholarship opportunities in 1966, and the number of African students doubled between then and 1970. Between 1954 and 1970, more than 13,000 academic students and 2000 technical trainees had studied in the Soviet Union, with just under half that number enrolled in 1970 alone.⁶²⁷

The Soviet Union also began building entire polytechnical schools and universities abroad. This took significant coordination across its own ministries and required drawing on experience gained from work done both within and without the Soviet sphere of influence. The task of actually designing and constructing these institutes was placed in the hands of a specialised body attached to the Central Research and Design Institute (ЦНИИЭП) which reported to the State Committee, the Central Scientific Research Institute for Standardisation and the Experimental Design of Educational Buildings (ЦНИИЭП учебных зданий). The Ministry of Education was called upon to coordinate with its counterpart ministries in the Soviet republics to prepare and provide final approval for curricula and pedagogy at institutions designed and constructed by this specialised body.⁶²⁸ In the pursuit of such projects as the construction of technical colleges and universities, the interconnectedness of aid and trade was key. There were significant obstacles to completing these complex projects bound up with the very problem they were meant to resolve, i.e., the insufficient volume of trade. As discussed in chapter 3, this problem was never overcome. Nonetheless, the

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.* NARA II, RG 59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, Soviet and Chinese Communist Relations with Africa, no date (sometime between 1970 and 1971); An Evaluation of Chinese Communist and Soviet Aims and Activities in Africa – And Implications for US Policy, no date (1970). Constantin Katsakioris, « Creating a Socialist Intelligentsia », *Cahiers d'études africaines* 57, no. 2 (2017): 259-88.

⁶²⁸ GARF, f. 5446, o. 102, d. 1290, ll. 34-8, September 1968.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa expansion of educational opportunities had a lasting impact. The first graduating class of 228 students from Lumumba University were followed by tens of thousands of others. The number of Soviet university instructors in Africa also grew, with nearly 1000 in Algeria alone by 1980. While Moscow's educational outreach to these countries met with mixed results, this expansion of educational opportunities stood as one of the means by which it waged its competition against Western influence in the developing world until the end of the Cold War. The number of foreign students who studied in China was considerable, and the fact that visitors from around the world continued to pay their respects to Mao during the Cultural Revolution is important, but the educational opportunities it offered did not begin to approach the scale of those on offer by the Soviet Union.⁶²⁹

Tempering the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Chinese Aid Diplomacy in Africa During the Early Cultural Revolution

Returning by Stages and in Groups

Despite facilitating the posting of big character posters in the Foreign Ministry and calling for the entirety of its staff to undergo criticism (下楼洗澡), in a July 1966 big character poster, Chen Yi was accused of the crime of 'viciously attacking' (恶毒攻击) the Cultural Revolution as 'tyrannically arbitrary' (乾纲独断), and thus of impugning the leadership of

⁶²⁹ Between 1956 and 1974, only 795 technical trainees and 1030 academic students studied in China, and only 310 of these trainees and students were from Africa. For the same period, 20,075 technical trainees and 37,790 academic students studied in the Soviet Union, and 22,695 of these trainees and students were from Africa. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79S01091A000400030001-4, 'Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1974', March 1975.

The number of African students studying in China only surpassed Moscow's 1990 peak in the mid-2000s. See 李安山, 沈晓雷, '非洲留学生在 中国: 历史、显示与思考', 《西亚非洲》 (Li Anshan, Shen Xiaolei, 'African Foreign Students in China: History and Reflection', *West Asia and Africa*) 2018(5): 61-89.

Mao Zedong.⁶³⁰ As the Cultural Revolution spiralled into chaos, Chen was subjected to months of severe criticism for everything from his family background to his role in the training of the new elite as head of China's Foreign Affairs University. His previous remarks about 'the China card' – with the implication that China should cease its approach to aid diplomacy – became a liability. In January 1967, he delivered a short self-criticism to the Great Hall of the People in which he admitted to the heinous crime of implementing the bourgeois Deng Xiaoping-Liu Shaoqi line in foreign policy work. This self-criticism met with the approval of Jiang Qing but not the Red Guards or the staff of the Foreign Ministry itself. Both continued to struggle against him.⁶³¹ This provoked an outburst on 16 February 1967 in which Chen directly criticised Zhang Chunqiao and Kang Sheng:

Your aim is exactly to do in us old cadres (整掉老干部)... This time is the cruellest struggle in the history of the party, greater than any other time in the past!... In Yan'an, in the past, there were those who savagely rectified old cadres. In Yan'an, the rectification movement made many mistakes, and even now there are those with objections. This lesson from history cannot be forgotten.⁶³²

In alluding to lingering objections, he had questioned not only the Cultural Revolution, but also a foundational moment in party history and in the history of the paramount authority of Mao himself.

Two days later, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Li delivered a report to Jiang Qing attacking Chen Yi (as well as Li Xiannian, Ye Jianying, and others who had played key roles in China's foreign aid and commerce), which spurred a renewed drive to root out 'little Khrushchevs in the midst of the Foreign Ministry'. This was called the Huarentang Incident (怀仁堂事件), and Chen Yi became known as a leader of the 'February Adverse Current' (二月逆流). Among the criticisms levied against him was that he was part of a

⁶³⁰ CYNP, 1158-9.

⁶³¹ Ma Jisen, *The Cultural Revolution in the Foreign Ministry of China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2004), 46-8.

⁶³² CYNP, 1184.

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privileged stratum in the Foreign Ministry secretly implementing three capitulations and one annihilation (*sanxiang yimie* 三降一灭, capitulating to imperialism, revisionism, and reactionaries and annihilating the national liberation movement), a crime even greater than the *sanhe yishao*.⁶³³ Between February and October 1967, the period when Chen was facing widespread denunciation, Zhou Enlai quietly endeavoured to defend him, but the drive to overthrow him spread worldwide, producing factional struggles at every level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and even in China's embassies abroad.⁶³⁴ If one was to survive this period of fierce criticism in the Ministry, one had to avoid being labelled in the same way as Chen had been: as a member of a privileged stratum secretly surrendering to China's enemies and abandoning the continued worldwide struggle for national liberation.

Huang Hua was China's most senior ambassador left abroad during the struggle against Chen Yi and the February Adverse Current. He was stationed in Cairo, and his role was pivotal to maintaining China's diplomatic presence during the most radical years of the Cultural Revolution.⁶³⁵ Just as Jiang Qing received the report drafted by Kang Sheng and

⁶³³ 首都红代会北外红旗革命造反团, '彻底砸烂以陈毅为首的外交部特权阶层' (1967年8月11日), 《文革风云》, 1967(13), 中国当代政治连动史数据库 (Capital Red Congress Beijing Institute of Foreign Languages Red Flag Revolutionary Rebel Group, 'Completely Smash the Privileged Strata in the Foreign Ministry Led by Chen Yi' [11 August 1967], *Winds and Clouds of the Cultural Revolution*, 1967[13], Chinese Contemporary Political History Digital Archive [CCPHDA]).

Kang Shang and Chen Boda elevated the accusation of *sanhe yishao* to *sanxiang yimie* in their criticisms against Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi. The former term was subsequently replaced with the latter. '康生陈伯达接见外事口单位时谈河南问题及抓叛徒问题', 1967年7月11日, 北京医学院《战报》, 以及其他材料 ('Kang Sheng and Chen Boda Discuss the Henan Issue and the Issue of Arresting Traitors while Receiving the Foreign Affairs *Danwei*', 11 July 1967, Beijing Medical School *War Report* and other materials), CCPHDA.

Among the substantiating claims of this accusation was that Chen Yi had been insufficiently critical of Wang Jiaxiang in 1962. See: Niu, '1962: The Eve of the Left Turn in China's Foreign Policy'; and Wang, *From Enmity to Rapprochement*.

⁶³⁴ 黄华, 《亲历与见闻》(北京: 世界知识出版社, 2007) (Huang Hua, *Personal Experience and Knowledge* [Beijing: World Culture Publishing House, 2007]), 135-9.

⁶³⁵ Huang is often remembered as the only ambassador who remained behind at his post abroad during the exodus and reshuffling. In fact, there were others, especially ambassadors stationed at key locations, such as Qin Lizhen, who remained in Zambia. Nonetheless, Huang was indeed the most senior and most important ambassador of the era.

Chen Boda attacking Chen Yi, Huang received a telegram instructing him and his staff to prepare to return to China to undergo 'tempering' (得到锻炼):

The Cultural Revolution is a great revolution in thought, all comrades at embassies and consulates must be tempered by this revolution. It is the belief of the Central Committee that it is not possible to carry out the revolution in embassies abroad. Embassy party committees must arrange for staff to return by stages and in groups to participate in the Cultural Revolution.⁶³⁶

Some twenty leading diplomatic staff from the UAR were sent back in the first group.

Huang was originally to be in the second group. Soon, over 2000 Chinese embassy staff from around the world had been summoned to China. Upon their return, they were formed into squads according to their *danwei*, subjected to struggle sessions, and made to have their 'souls touched' (触及灵魂). Huang knew they were subjected to torture and beatings, and he dreaded his own return.⁶³⁷

When Huang received notice that he too was to return in June 1967, this order was personally overturned by Zhou Enlai. Zhou said that China needed at least one ambassador in the outside world, otherwise the Chinese government could be entirely without accredited

He joined the party in 1936 as a student. He spoke impeccable English with an American accent. He told his British counterparts that he had learned his English at 'an American Mission School in Peking', which was Yanching University (The Yenching University was later dissolved and its different departments were absorbed into Peking University and other institutions). In part thanks to his language facility, Huang was Edgar Snow's interpreter at Yan'an, Snow himself having been a part-time instructor at Yenching. There, he was also an assistant to Zhu De and secretary for Ye Jianying. Huang's language skills and extensive knowledge, connections, and experience proved invaluable time and again after the founding of the PRC. During the 1950s, he was instrumental in the Korean War armistice talks, after which he accompanied Zhou Enlai to Bandung in 1955. From 1960 to 1965, he was China's Ambassador to Ghana. His posting with Kwame Nkrumah indicates his importance to Sino-African relations in the 1960s. He was reassigned to the UAR in March 1966, just after the coup against Nkrumah and just before the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution. TNA, FCO 21-47, Memo from A. G. Banks, 5 June 1968.

⁶³⁶ Huang, *Personal Experience and Knowledge*, 135-9.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.* How well African governments and publics understood this process was uneven. In some cases, as in the case of He Ying's post in Tanzania, it was quickly announced whether or not an ambassador should be expected to return to the government and local press in question. In most cases, however, governments were in the dark on the matter and could only speculate as to when Chinese representation would be restored. ROC-FMA, 11-05-16-02-01-006, '但尚尼亞與中共之外交關係' (Tanzanian Foreign Relations with Chinese Communists), 185, 29 May 1967.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa representation during an important event.⁶³⁸ Huang Hua remembers that during this time staff at the UAR Embassy quickly began carrying little red books. The Party Branch Secretary in the UAR Embassy organised meetings to criticise Chen. Everyone raised their fists and yelled, 'Down with Chen Yi!' except Huang. Huang was questioned about this, to which he answered, 'I don't know what mistakes comrade Chen Yi has committed'. His refusing to criticise Chen made him a target for the rebels within the Embassy. The rebels monitored Huang's activities, observing his meetings with foreign-born Chinese, and attempting to supervise his interactions with foreign dignitaries.⁶³⁹ The radicals among Foreign Ministry staff worked alongside students and other Chinese personnel abroad, contravening orders of their supervisors and seniors. In one instance, a group of Chinese students studying Arabic in Cairo saw the statue of a Greek goddess in the yard of the Cairo Embassy as representative of the four olds. They demanded that it be removed. Huang rejected their demand on the grounds that it was not theirs to dispose of, but one night, several embassy staff assisted the students in removing the statue and burying it.⁶⁴⁰

Seemingly on the way to recovering his standing by July 1967, Chen silently attended a meeting between Mao, Zhou, and 'interns' from Congo (B).⁶⁴¹ Beginning in August 1967, Chen was brought back into the fold of foreign policy decision making, and Zhou was put back in command of foreign affairs. At that time, Mao 'candidly' (性情直爽) critiqued a Red Guard-edited collection titled *A Collection of Chen Yi's Doubletalk* (陈毅黑话集), saying, 'Chen Yi is a good comrade. He must be first criticised and then defended' (陈毅是个好同志, 对陈毅要一批二保). He went on, acknowledging that he had fought alongside Chen Yi for forty

⁶³⁸ Huang, *Personal Experience and Knowledge*, 135-9. Just such an important event was occurring at the time with the Six-Day War.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴¹ CYNP, 1193.

years, and adding that Chen Yi had lost twenty *jin*, making it embarrassing to take him to meet with foreign guests. Mao wrote, 'The Foreign Ministry has no one left to do the job, we still need him' (外交部长现在没人搞, 还要他来搞).⁶⁴² By October, Mao had ordered that 'The rebels must listen to Premier Zhou', saying, 'If the rebels don't listen to Premier Zhou, what kind of rebels are they! Whoever aims a spear at Premier Zhou is aiming a spear at me and is aiming a spear at Lin Biao'.⁶⁴³ With that, Chen and Zhou could begin the long struggle to excise foreign affairs work from the scope of the Cultural Revolutionary fervour and to bring the Foreign Ministry back into its normal functioning.⁶⁴⁴ Diplomatic and other personnel began to return to their posts in late 1968. Most embassies were completely restaffed in the summer of 1969.⁶⁴⁵ That was when Huang Hua finally returned for his turn at 'tempering' in the Cultural Revolution. Upon his return, he was sent down to the countryside where he remained until he was made China's first ambassador to the UN in 1971.⁶⁴⁶

After the reshuffling was complete, the staff of the Foreign Ministry had been reduced dramatically. By 1971, the number of diplomatic officers in the Foreign Ministry had been cut in half.⁶⁴⁷ A number of personnel were never seen again. Organs of state aside from the Foreign Ministry had it as bad if not worse. Most infamously, Liu Shaoqi was subjected to years of cruelty and deprivation until his death in 1969. Julius Nyerere directly and

⁶⁴² '关于陈毅的几点指示', 《毛泽东思想万岁》 ('Regarding Some Instructions About Chen Yi', *Long Live Mao Zedong Thought* [hereafter, MZDSXWS]), vol. 5, 325. *Collection of Chen Yi's Doubletalk* was never published. A similar quotation appears here: '张春桥接见上海市革命委员会工交财贸组时传达毛泽东指示' (Zhang Chunqiao Shares Mao Zedong's Instructions while Meeting with the Industry, Transportation, Finance, and Trade Group of the Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee), *Chunqiao Records*.

⁶⁴³ '造反派要听周总理的话' (The Rebels Must Listen to Premier Zhou), MZDSXWS, vol. 5, 339.

⁶⁴⁴ See Barbara Barnouin and Changgen Yu, *Chinese Foreign Policy during the Cultural Revolution* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1998) and Ma, *The Cultural Revolution in the Foreign Ministry of China*.

⁶⁴⁵ Due to the suspension of relations precipitated by the China's subversive activities during the Second Congo Crisis and its radicalism of the Cultural Revolution, a number of embassies were not restaffed until after Beijing assumed China's seat in the United Nations in late 1971.

⁶⁴⁶ Huang, *Personal Experience and Knowledge*, 135-9.

⁶⁴⁷ TNA, FCO 21-806, 'Life at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs', June 1971.

repeatedly expressed his concern for his 'friend' and counterpart in his own visits to Cultural Revolution China, but to no avail.⁶⁴⁸ Liu was not the only one. While Finance Minister, Li Xiannian was put under Zhou's protection, the 'Red Manager', Ye Jizhuang, primary architect of the economic statecraft of the Ministry of Foreign Trade since 1949, already partially debilitated by a 1961 stroke, died bedridden in 1967 while his wife was subjected to struggle sessions in his stead.⁶⁴⁹ A number of other Foreign Ministry personnel were subjected to abuse and imprisonment. Ma Jisen has described the life and fate of Meng Yongqian, 'the first major victim of the Cultural Revolution in the Foreign Ministry', who was physically abused and paraded before the all the Ministry staff before being locked in a 'cow shed' and then imprisoned for eighteen years. Made mute by the trauma, he died a year after the charges were dismissed against him in 1985.⁶⁵⁰

'New Ambassadors'

Most Foreign Ministry personnel survived their 'tempering' and were reassigned to positions at their previous bureaucratic level. Their assignments suggest the direction Chinese foreign policy was envisioned to go in those countries. Before the Cultural Revolution, the corps of ambassadors to Africa was defined by senior party members and revolutionary veterans with post-1949 ties to municipal governance, infrastructural development, propaganda work, the Chinese Federation of Trade Unions, or the Communist

⁶⁴⁸ TNA, FCO 21-62, 'President Nyerere's Visit to China', 10 July 1968. He also criticised the ideology of the Cultural Revolution in a "lecture" to his hosts. He told them that Tanzania intended to continue availing itself of all sources of aid (mentioning the Soviet Union and Europe explicitly) and that it would make as much use as possible of local labour. He even said Tanzania would avoid 'the dangers of placing unqualified men in crucial positions', a clear comment on the Cultural Revolution's imperative of 'putting politics in command'.

⁶⁴⁹ Zhao Ziyang, *Prisoner of State: The Secret Journal of Zhao Ziyang* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2009), xvi. 宋凤英, '“红色管家”叶季壮', 《党史纵览》 (Song Fengying, '“Red Manager” Ye Jizhuang', *Overview of Party History*), 2011(03): 41.

⁶⁵⁰ Ma, *The Cultural Revolution in the Foreign Ministry of China*, 28-31.

Youth League. After the struggle against Chen Yi, many of them remained, but the newly promoted or newly arrived ambassadors either had post-1949 military experience or experience in resource extraction.⁶⁵¹ Most notably, after being promoted to Vice Foreign Minister and Head of the West Asian and African Sector of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador to Tanzania, He Ying was replaced by Zhong Xidong, a military man who had trained North Korean soldiers during the Korean War and had been a political commissar at the PLA Military Academy. Such a substitution reflected the more militant composition of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after the Cultural Revolution.

The new ambassadors faced an uphill battle in their new posts. Someone took advantage of the exodus and reshuffling to spread fear about China's foreign policy in the Cultural Revolution. An article, forged in the style of a Xinhua press release and purportedly written by Jiang Qing, described China's 'new ambassadors'. She was quoted as telling the new revolutionary diplomats that 'Chairman Mao's teachings that seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of issues by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution.' She allegedly told them that they should 'do all in their power to help these African organisations achieve this aim under the glorious banner of Mao Tse-tung's revolutionary principles.' The forgery went on to quote Zhou Enlai as praising the 'liberation armies and guerrilla fighters' of Angola, Congo, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and (Equatorial) Guinea as well as the peoples of Somalia and Tanzania. It also named the Kenyan People's Union (KPU), as having 'the red sun of Mao Tse-tung in their hearts'. In an echo of events which had led to the collapse of Sino-Ghanaian relations in October 1966, the article went so

⁶⁵¹ As pointed out by Peter Martin and others, it was standard for Chinese ambassadors to have a military background. The change that occurred here was that these new ambassadors had military connections from *after* the establishment of the PRC. See Peter Martin, *China's Civilian Army: The Making of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

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far as to claim that Zhou had instructed the new revolutionary diplomats to form 'militant local red guard units to purify the revolution in Africa as the Chinese Red Guards have purified and perpetuated the glorious Chinese Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.'⁶⁵² Xinhua quickly refuted the forgery. It pointed out that while it had emulated its letterhead with a fair degree of accuracy, there were clear inconsistencies. The refutation was repeated by Ministry of Foreign Affairs personnel in Africa. An embassy spokesperson in Kampala issued the following statement to the Ugandan national press: 'Judging from the context, we know this is a forgery.... It does not represent Chinese policy.' He added that while China certainly supported anti-imperialist struggles, revolution was for the peoples of Africa to decide for themselves, and it was useless to 'export' it in the manner suggested by the forgery. When questioned on the recent departure of Chen Zhifang, the Chinese Ambassador to Uganda, the spokesman explained that the other embassy staff would also return to Beijing eventually. He emphasised that their participation in the Cultural Revolution 'had nothing to do with the countries in which they were serving.'⁶⁵³

It was suggested that the forgery was Soviet doing, an explanation which found purchase within the British government.⁶⁵⁴ This was in part because the forgery provided African leaders and parties who were hostile to China – such as Jomo Kenyatta and KANU – fodder to continue the suppression of their own left opposition – Oginga Odinga's KPU – precisely at the time when Brezhnev was connecting with leading African parties through the Twenty-Third Party Congress. If it was in fact fabricated by the Soviet Union, it was not its only attempt exploit the situation. Sometimes, in the context of the Cultural Revolution,

⁶⁵² TNA FCO 21-74, 'New Diplomats Will Bring the Great Chinese Proletarian Cultural Revolution to Africa', 17 March 1967.

⁶⁵³ TNA, FCO 21-47, 'Chinese Diplomats in Africa', 20 March 1967; FCO 21-74, Memo from P.J. Weston, 29 March 1967.

⁶⁵⁴ TNA, FCO 21-74, Memo from J.S. Champion, 27 April 1967.

frustrating Chinese foreign affairs work could simply be a matter of refusing to hold dinners for the diplomatic corps in those countries where the Soviet Union ambassador had such authority. The Soviet Ambassador to Equatorial Guinea did just that. Doing so prevented the newly arrived Chinese ambassadors from (re)introducing themselves, reconnecting with other ambassadors, and clarifying the foreign policy of their country.⁶⁵⁵ The article was also considered to be a forgery because British accounts of China's new ambassadors did not line up with their characterisation in the article. The character of the new ambassadorial corps was a question that concerned the Foreign Office. When Chinese embassies started being restaffed, the Foreign Office began requesting reports on these new ambassadors.⁶⁵⁶ After collecting them, it appeared that, rather than being the sort of 'new ambassadors' found in the forged Xinhua article, most were attempting to burnish China's image after an unbroken series of setbacks that had begun in 1965. There was an increased openness to consultation with Western counterparts, a tentative attempt by lower-level staff to return to normal diplomatic life, and an increased cooperativeness with local governments. Accounts from British staff around the world noted that 'they (the newly arrived Chinese ambassadors) seem in general to be somewhat less rude both to us and to other countries with whom they are in diplomatic relations.'⁶⁵⁷ The new ambassadors certainly exhibited hostility to their Western counterparts, but they also created opportunities to reconnect. Western ambassadors who could tolerate superficial displays of hostility had real opportunities to interact with their Chinese counterparts.

When a new Chinese consulate was opened in Alexandria, Huang Hua invited British diplomatic staff to attend. At the entrance to the consulate, there was a large poster

⁶⁵⁵ TNA, FCO 21-974, 'Chinese (and other) Activities in Equatorial Guinea', 26 February 1972.

⁶⁵⁶ TNA, FCO 21-47, Memo from J.B. Denson, 13 October 1967.

⁶⁵⁷ TNA, FCO 21-47, 'Chinese Missions Abroad', 23 August 1968.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa displaying a 'most abusive message in English' directed against 'the running dogs of Imperialism'. Propaganda material, including little red books, was laid out in stacks on a large table in English and Arabic. Despite this surface-level hostility, though, Huang Hua still spoke with his British counterpart frankly about the issues of the day. He advised him of the measures which might be taken to secure the release of a recently jailed Reuters correspondent (namely, the release of several Chinese journalists arrested in Hong Kong). He spoke amiably with the British diplomat of Sino-Egyptian trade in rice and cotton, lamenting that he knew Beijing was overpaying in order to give Egypt a chance to even their trade balance. He even spoke, if carefully, about the nature of the Cultural Revolution, filling his counterpart in on what details he could about the chaos which had broken out.⁶⁵⁸ Zhong Xidong, the former high-ranking political commissar who became Ambassador to Tanzania, provides another representative case of how the 'new ambassadors' comported themselves. British diplomats found him 'intelligent and urbane, anxious to be affable and give a good impression of himself'. Zhong spoke some English, as would be expected for an Ambassador to Tanzania, but preferred to use his interpreter.⁶⁵⁹ He was more than happy to argue with his British counterparts on matters of political theory and the Cold War battle of ideologies, and 'there was no doubt about the condescension in his smile at my remarks about British socialism.' He was wont to 'fall back on dogma – as if rehearsed during his recent time in the (Cultural) Revolution.' According to Zhong, only China and Albania remained 'pure' in terms of their Marxism-Leninism. He was 'vitriolic' about the USA and the Soviet Union equally, which is no surprise considering the impending publication of Chen Yi et al.'s 'On the Preliminary Evaluation of the War Situation'. He argued that even though the two Cold

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid*, Memo from A.G. Banks, 5 June 1968.

⁶⁵⁹ This was normal. Foreign dignitaries often continue to use interpreters so as to maintain protocol and a sense of mutual equality.

War superpowers were now working in combination, China would stand firm against them.⁶⁶⁰ Against the Cold War giants, Zhong regarded ninety percent of the world as good, and he thought Britain was 'by and large' among them.⁶⁶¹ When asked about continuing problems between London and Beijing, he again raised the issue of the arrested journalists in Hong Kong. To him, on this matter, it all depended on whether the British government expressed good will to China: if it stretched out a hand of friendship, China would take it; but if it raised a clenched fist, China would repel it.⁶⁶²

As new ambassadors made cordial overtures to the outside world, Chinese personnel involved in aid provision became even more effusive in their anti-revisionism than they had been previously.⁶⁶³ In 1969, a Soviet journalist lamented that the Zanzibari Ministry of Health 'came under the total influence of Chinese medical specialists.' To add insult to injury, the Chinese specialists had taken control of the premier medical institution in the country, a hospital named after Lenin himself. The Chinese doctors and other personnel manning the hospital had hounded all Indian and European personnel out of the hospital. They then subjected any local doctors who had been trained in the Soviet Union to insults and abuse, accusing them of lacking proper training. The Chinese personnel also insisted on the cancellation of new contracts with Bulgarian doctors. Being pro-China, the Zanzibari Minister of Health, Ali Sultan Issa, was amenable to the demands of the Chinese doctors. He also preferred them, as they took a wage which was half that of their Soviet counterparts. However, Zanzibari officials themselves only took treatment at a hospital in Pemba, where

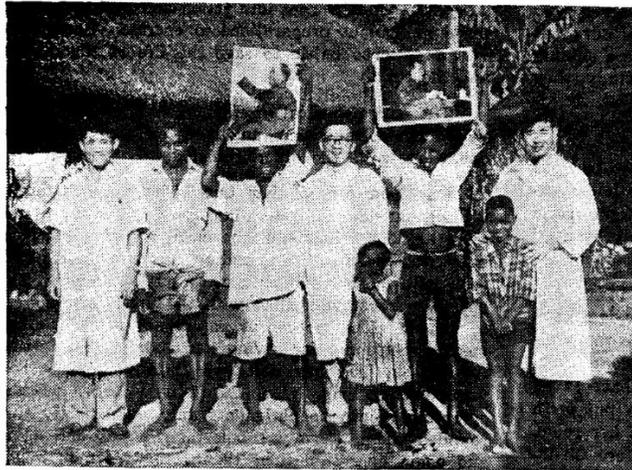
⁶⁶⁰ TNA, FCO 31-441, 'Chinese diplomatic representation', 5 August 1969.

⁶⁶¹ This is an unsurprising observation considering Mao's recontextualisation of the more developed of the 'two intermediate zones' from 1963 on into the 'second world' in his theory of three worlds.

⁶⁶² TNA, FCO 31-441, 'Chinese diplomatic representation', 5 August 1969.

⁶⁶³ George T. Yu explores how Chinese aid personnel and diplomats in Tanzania tolerated the parallel pursuit of projects by countries in the second world, especially Sweden, as it had no colonial history in Tanzania and no projects directly challenging China's efforts, while at the same time vociferously opposing the presence of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc. See Yu, *China's African Policy*.

Cuban and German doctors continued their work after having been driven out of the Lenin Hospital. When Karume fell ill, he too refused to be treated by Chinese doctors.⁶⁶⁴ When they could afford it, ordinary locals preferred to pay for house visits by non-Chinese doctors rather than receive healthcare for free at the hospital. This was because a number of local residents had died during elementary medical procedures performed by Chinese personnel. The number was difficult to verify, as the pathologist at the hospital had himself been driven out and replaced with a Chinese doctor. Moreover, the Chinese personnel not only opposed 'revisionists', but went as far as to badger Karume into ending a World Health Organisation malaria eradication project, replacing it instead with homeopathic methods drawn from Traditional Chinese Medicine.⁶⁶⁵



Deeply grateful to Chairman Mao for sending such fine doctors, a Zanzibar peasant and his children excitedly hold aloft our great leader Chairman Mao's portraits for a photograph with the Chinese doctors. This peasant had been quickly healed by the Chinese doctors' meticulous treatment and care.

16 Peking Review, No. 24, 1969.

⁶⁶⁴ As Lenin once wrote, 'The saints preserve us from comrade-doctors in general, and Bolshevik-doctors in particular!' Lenin, 'To Maxim Gorky', November 1913, *Collected Works*, vol. 36 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1966), 265.

⁶⁶⁵ TNA, FCO 31-441, 'Chinese anti-Soviet Propaganda', 6 October 1969. GARF f. 4459, op. 43, d. 9444, l. 70, early fall 1969. ROC-FMA, 11-05-16-02-01-001, '中共在尚西巴島之活動' (Chinese Communist Activity on Zanzibar), 48, 13 March 1969.

The top-down effort by the ministry was then to bring these personnel abroad back under control. Both aid personnel and diplomats had to find a way to walk the line between fulfilling their tasks and participating in the Cultural Revolution. Chinese embassy staff had to perform their function for Beijing as a central arm of China's revolutionary foreign policy and maintain affable relations with the governments of the countries in which they were stationed simultaneously, and by the late 1960s, these governments had come to view China's militant line with suspicion and concern. Moreover, the Soviet Union and others were able to take advantage of this situation in a variety of ways, producing propaganda which harmed China's prestige and placing obstacles between its ambassadors and their goal of normalising relations in the wake of the reshuffling. Meanwhile, Chinese aid personnel in Africa had to foster Afro-Asian solidarity and, at the same time, demonstrate to their peers their steadfast opposition to imperialism, revisionism, and the forces of reaction. This was all despite the fact that the governments which hosted them resented any move on their part that might inhibit the acquisition of further aid from other quarters.

The Continuation of Chinese Aid Diplomacy in the Cultural Revolution

During the Cultural Revolution, African heads of state and official delegations continued to visit Beijing, and, as noted in the overview above, the Chinese leadership continued to negotiate new aid agreements. Among these were the agreement, protocols, and subsequent notes concerning the construction of TAZARA. As discussed in chapter 4, Zhou Enlai had already expressed interest in supporting the project in 1965 at the end of the Congo Crisis. After requesting assistance for the project from the West and multilateral development agencies, Tanzania and Zambia settled on accepting PRC assistance in the

middle of the Cultural Revolution, signing a formal agreement in September 1967.⁶⁶⁶ In the agreement between China, Tanzania, and Zambia, China agreed to lend the two countries 1-billion-yuan interest free and without any conditions attached. Repayment would begin five years after the completion of the project and had a thirty-year repayment period. China also committed itself to deploying experts to carry out the construction, management, necessary training of local labour, and maintenance of the railway.⁶⁶⁷ It was a generous agreement. Other African leaders took note of the way that China had stepped in to build a project previously turned down by other providers.

In May 1968, a Guinean-Mali Friendship delegation were invited to visit Beijing. They had arrived with a list of projects they hoped China might fulfil. They were met by Chen Yi, Li Xiannian, and a group of Red Guards who shoved little red books in their hands and pinned Mao badges on their jackets. The joint delegation prudently waved their red books in return.⁶⁶⁸ They were then taken to see a performance of *War Drums on the Equator* and given a tour of Beijing. Their itinerary included an audience with Mao Zedong, Lin Biao, and Zhou Enlai as well as a visit to the Great Wall and an inspection tour of a rolling stock plant.⁶⁶⁹ Despite inviting the two delegations together, the Chinese side tried to keep the negotiations bilateral by meeting with each delegation separately. However, the two groups in the joint delegation remained in close consultation with one another. Their interest lay in negotiating a second TAZARA, this time between their two capitals, Conakry and Bamako.

⁶⁶⁶ Monson, *Africa's Freedom Railway*, 23-4.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 30. '中华人民共和国政府和坦桑尼亚联合共和国政府、赞比亚共和国政府关于修建坦桑尼亚——赞比亚铁路的协定', 《中华人民共和国条约集》第十五集 (1966-1967) (北京: 法律出版社, 1968) ('Agreement Between the Government of the People's Republic of China, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Government of the Republic of Zambia on the Construction of Tanzania-Zambia Railway', *Collection of Treaties of the People's Republic of China*, vol. 15, [Beijing: Law Press, 1968]), 199-201.

⁶⁶⁸ CYNP, 1202-4. ZELNP, 1220-1. TNA, FCO 21-58, 3 June 1968 Memo from D. C. Hobson.

⁶⁶⁹ During this time, China was facing a dire lack of foreign currency and sought to offset as much of the costs of its projects as possible by making use of resources and products it itself produced. This was also a feature of the TAZARA project.

This was a project which the Soviet Union had already turned down. After several difficult rounds of negotiation, Chen Yi agreed in principle on 25 May 1968 to construct a railroad on the same terms as TAZARA. During the negotiations, no sum was determined, but it was likely to cost not much less than the TAZARA project. It was highly improbable that China could afford to pursue both projects at the same time.⁶⁷⁰

The agreement was made with the expectation that the joint delegation would make clear statements in support of the CCP's line on two issues. The first was on the negotiations that ultimately led to the 1973 Paris Peace Conference that brought an end to the war in Vietnam. In 1968, the PRC held that no negotiations could be held. The second concerned Mao's statement on the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. This was contentious within the African diplomatic corps in Beijing, as it conflated the event with China's narrow interests in Africa. Furthermore, both the Guinean and Malian governments were recipients of significant US aid and were therefore reticent to endorse Mao's vociferously anti-American statement.⁶⁷¹ The Chinese side bargained poorly. The statements made by the delegations on the Paris negotiations were omitted from Chinese press reproductions of their speeches. While Chen Yi had called the Paris negotiations a 'peace talks swindle' on the part of the USA, and while the two delegations had told Mao behind closed doors that they 'held no illusions', the Guinean Foreign Minister stated at the banquet that he hoped they would be successful. The Malian delegation confessed that it held no hope for the negotiations, but added, to the dismay of their hosts, that if they were successful, 'so much the better'. These remarks were stricken from the reproduction of the delegation's speeches in the Chinese press. Their engagement with Mao's statement on the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr

⁶⁷⁰ CYNP, 1202-4. ZELNP, 1220-1. TNA, FCO 21-58, 3 June 1968 Memo from D. C. Hobson.

⁶⁷¹ TNA, FCO 21-58, 3 June 1968 Memo from D. C. Hobson.

was also lack-lustre. The joint communique stated that the delegation only 'highly appraised' Mao's statement on the Afro-American Struggle. The Guinean delegation pointedly neglected mentioning it at all at any point during their visit.⁶⁷²

The rail link between Guinea and Mali never materialised, and the agreement signed in 1968, like other such ephemeral projects, does not appear in the official compendiums of the Chinese government's agreements with other countries or in the *Chronicle of Events in Sino-African Relations* assembled by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Just half a year after the signature of the agreement, Keita was overthrown in a coup led by Moussa Traoré, as Chen Yi had predicted in 1965. Much like the NLC had done in Ghana, Traoré then dismantled the socialist policies of his predecessor. Soon after that, China reneged on the agreement, deciding instead support the more modest project of retracking the existing Guinean rail extending towards the Malian border.⁶⁷³ Sino-Guinean relations remained good and improved further following Portugal's 1970 invasion of Guinea in Operation Green Sea, which drew Mao's personal attention back to Touré's active support of freedom fighters against Portuguese colonialism.⁶⁷⁴ Meanwhile, by 1971, the PRC related to the Malian government that it would receive no further aid unless it became more 'progressive' in its foreign affairs. Although some symbolic attempts were made by Traoré's government, no new tranches of aid were made available after that.⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷² *Ibid*, 3 June 1968 Memo from D. C. Hobson. '乌斯曼·巴部长在几、马联合访华友好代表团告别宴会上说毛主席的接见具有崇高意义 中、几、马人民团结牢不可破 周总理陈毅副总理应邀出席宴会' (At the Farewell Banquet of the Guinean-Malian Friendship Delegation to China, Minister Usman Ba said that Chairman Mao's Reception Was of Great Significance, the Unity of the Chinese, Guinean, and Malaysian People is Unbreakable, Premier Zhou and Vice Premier Chen Yi Were Invited to Attend the Banquet), *People's Daily*, 25 May 1968.

⁶⁷³ TNA, FCO 21-806, 'China/Africa', 20 April 1971.

⁶⁷⁴ MZDNP, vol. 6, 353.

⁶⁷⁵ TNA, FCO 21-806, 'China/Africa', 20 April 1971.

Another Katanga? The Short-Lived Sino-Soviet Dual in Biafra

A chance for the Soviet Union to adopt a more resolute stance against Western machinations in Africa came soon after the Twenty-Third Party Congress. As discussed in the previous chapter, the January 1966 coup in Nigeria was lauded by the Soviet press and intelligentsia as a model of how military coups could play a progressive role in African politics. In May-July of 1966, another coup was staged against the predominantly Igbo leadership of the January regime. This time, the countercoup leaders were criticised as reactionaries. The Soviet Union looked on in horror as pogroms were waged against Igbos in the north. In preparation for a then upcoming Soviet mission to the majority Igbo Eastern Region, Igbo military general Odumegwu Ojukwu openly espoused socialist politics. Just before the arrival of the mission, he gave a speech to the Nigerian Council of Trade Unions saying that socialism was the only philosophy fit for a developing country.⁶⁷⁶ Seeing this, Soviet press reported on the developing Biafran War in a relatively neutral fashion.

Less than a year later, the Soviet leadership changed its mind. In late July 1967, the Soviet government decided to make arms transfers to the Nigerian Federal Government in Lagos so it could carry out its war against Biafra and Ojukwu. In August 1967, Moscow sold fifty MiG-15 and -17 fighters to the Federal Government. To help train pilots for these jets, they deployed a large number of military technicians under cover of a cultural agreement. Twenty-five of these jet fighters had already arrived by November 1968. The Soviet Union also gave seven Ilyushin-28 jet bombers and a large quantity of 500-lb bombs to Lagos free of charge. These were piloted by foreign mercenaries (mostly Egyptian, but some British). Soviet officers provided technical support and even took part in the military command of the

⁶⁷⁶ TNA, Colonial Office 1027-124, Memo from D.F. Hawley, 1 April 1967.

Federal Government.⁶⁷⁷ This combination of military aid and arms transfers, while dwarfed in comparison to huge quantity of military equipment sold to Nigeria by Britain, was key later in the conflict. MiG-17s were used to run interdictions and interceptions of Biafra's last remaining supply line at the end of the brutal war, which were night-time airlifts from Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. Moreover, while Moscow provided a steady stream of arms and military vehicles just weeks after fighting broke out, Nigerian civil servants and military leaders complained about the slow speed on Western deliveries until the end of the war.⁶⁷⁸

Outgunned and outmanned, the Biafran regime was quickly encircled and subjected to a blockade by the Federal Government. Biafra then came to Western public attention due to the mass starvation of Biafran civilians which inevitably followed the blockade. Nonetheless, Moscow decided to support the Federal Government for the entire duration of the horrific war for three reasons. First and most straightforwardly, the pre-existing Soviet-Nigerian relationship was seen as promising. The labour movement represented by the Nigerian Trade Union Congress was largely pro-Soviet, and the Soviet Union saw Nigeria as on the way to industrialisation and therefore potentially pro-socialist. Despite the socialist rhetoric of the Biafran leadership, Nigeria as a whole was seen as having a proletarian class-character and was therefore worth defending, especially in the context of its then ongoing project to reinvigorate relations with existing African governments.

Second, considering the position taken on the Sand War and the Ogaden (discussed in chapter 2), the attitude of the OAU towards Biafran secession was easy to anticipate. Since the secession of Katanga in the Congo Crisis, the line on separatism in Africa had been

⁶⁷⁷ TNA, FCO 21-58, Memo from G.G.H. Walden, 8 October 1968. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00975A012600050001-6, Central Intelligence Bulletin, 22 November 1968.

⁶⁷⁸ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00975A013900070001-0, Central Intelligence Bulletin, 22 November 1968.

clearly drawn: post-colonial Africa was to follow the principle of *uti possidetis*. Having had the unnatural and illogical borders of the colonial era foisted upon them, there were concerns that separatism could be a contagion capable of infecting any country in Africa if it was allowed to infect one. Supporting Biafran independence would set a government at odds with the majority of African governments, and for that reason only a handful of African governments ever did so. The Soviet Union's choice to support Lagos therefore placed it among the majority in Africa.

Third, Soviet support for the Federal Government fit into the overall bipolar dynamic of the Cold War. Despite initially welcoming the January 1966 coup, Ironsi was later understood to be a literal flag carrier for the British Crown, while Yakubu Gowon was evaluated in a more positive light because he had been trained in Nkrumah's Ghana.⁶⁷⁹ The Soviet government also perceived that there was interest among large American and British oil conglomerates in supporting Biafran independence. Western oil conglomerates, scandalously for London and Washington, continued to pay out royalties to the separatist government in the early days of the fighting. This drove the call of the Soviet-leaning Nigerian Trade Union Congress to nationalise all Nigerian oil.⁶⁸⁰ Support for Lagos therefore lined up with the longstanding foreign policy of opposing Western monopolistic interests in Africa. Moreover, the Soviet government recognised that the slow pace at which American and British aid and arms transfers arrived in the hands of the Federal Government was exacerbating concerns in Lagos that the West was acting behind the scenes in favour of their oil conglomerates in Biafra. There were even rumours that, in addition to the West 'dragging its feet', British advisors to the Nigerian army and US intelligence agents were engaged in

⁶⁷⁹ Щербачков, '«Африка грёз и действительности»'.

⁶⁸⁰ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79-00927A005900060001-3, Directorate of Intelligence Weekly Summary, 28 July 1967.

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa covert sabotage.⁶⁸¹ As the war wore on, American relief aid to Biafra was increasingly seen by Lagos as 'aid and comfort for the enemy' and as cover for military support. The fact that Biafra's sole bomber was an American-made B-26 further irked Lagos.⁶⁸²

For these reasons, the Soviet Union and its press treated Biafra as another Katanga. This began even before the declaration of the Republic of Biafra. Following the conclusion of their mission in early March 1967, Soviet officials directly analogised Ojukwu to Tshombe and Shell-BP to the *Union Minière*. They ignored the socialist rhetoric of Biafra's leadership, characterising them as 'extreme nationalists', not socialists or progressive forces.⁶⁸³ In this way, the Soviet Union cast itself as standing against the balkanisation of Africa through its support of a unified Nigeria. Furthermore, the relative speed with which the Soviet Union made its deliveries played a major role in what Maxim Matusevich calls the 'triumph of pragmatism'. As he explores in a chapter called 'Strange Bedfellows', Soviet-Nigerian connections proliferated rapidly during the war.⁶⁸⁴ The Soviet Union's steadfast support for the federal government led to Lagos' decision to sign a long-term technical and economic cooperation agreement in addition to the aforementioned cultural agreement signed in March 1967. These agreements not only firmly established Soviet economic interests in

⁶⁸¹ AVP-RF, f. 0579, p. 11, p. 13, d. 4, l. 48, 50-2, in «Россия и Африка», 500-1.

⁶⁸² CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79-00927A006800050001-4, Directorate of Intelligence Weekly Summary, 3 January 1969.

⁶⁸³ TNA, Colonial Office 1027-124, Memo from D.F. Hawley, 1 April 1967. 'Нигерийский узел', *Pravda*, № 74, 15 March 1967.

⁶⁸⁴ Maxim Matusevich, 'Strange Bedfellows: An Unlikely Alliance Between the Soviet Union and Nigeria During the Biafran War', in *Postcolonial Conflict and the Question of Genocide: The Nigeria-Biafra War, 1967-1970*, eds. A. Dirk Moses and Lasse Heerten (New York: Routledge, 2018), 207-208.

S. V. Mazov argues that calling this a 'triumph of pragmatism' is a vast oversimplification, and that the integration of Soviet personnel and expansion of its presence in Nigeria resulted from it having 'learned the lessons' of its experience in Guinea, Algeria, and Ghana. In this respect, prioritising direct connections between Moscow and partners in Africa and elsewhere rather than outward regime orientation was perfectly compatible with Soviet ideology at the time. See Мазов, 'Советско-нигерийские отношения и в начале гражданской войны в Нигерии'. Something which goes unaddressed by both Matusevich and Mazov is that Soviet Union did covertly hedge its bets. Before the declaration of the Republic of Biafra, there were clandestine discussions over the provision of military and police equipment to Biafra should it achieve independence. TNA, FO 181-1203, 'Soviet Military Aid to the Eastern Region of Nigeria', 3 March 1967.

Nigeria but also granted the Soviet Union an additional Consulate General in Nigeria's north as well as three new cultural establishments across the country.⁶⁸⁵ According to Gowon himself, they also facilitated further military support by the Soviet Union throughout the war.⁶⁸⁶ At the close of the war, Lagos signed a scientific cooperation agreement with the Soviet Union as well as the protocol governing the economic and technical cooperation agreement.⁶⁸⁷ As a consequence of this rapid improvement in relations, Nigerian students made up the largest proportion of Sub-Saharan African students in the Soviet Union from 1967 to 1975.⁶⁸⁸ One of Africa's most important countries – one which had resisted socialist advances for the entirety of its independence to that point – drew close to the Soviet Union for the first time primarily thanks to the Soviet Union's decision to provide limited military support to the Federal Government in a time of need, not a massive programme of development aid.

The Chinese government's experience of the Nigerian Civil War was very different. Having barely emerged from the struggle against Chen Yi, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hastily took a position diametrically opposed to that of the Soviet Union. Chen Yi personally attacked the Federal Government on 18 September 1968, on the eve of the OAU meeting which decided in the Federal Government's favour against the Biafran separatists. He accused the Soviet Union of 'going as far as openly working with American and British imperialism to support the Nigerian Federal Military Government in carrying out the

⁶⁸⁵ So much so that Moscow was content to ignore Gowon's continuation of his predecessor's arrests of communists and leftists in Nigeria. NARA II, RG 59, Program Files on Soviet Foreign Policy, Africa – General Pre-1970 Chronology, Soviet and Chinese Communist Relations with Africa, no date (sometime between 1970 and 1971).

⁶⁸⁶ John J. Stremiau, *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 80.

⁶⁸⁷ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79T00936A007900130001-6, The President's Daily Brief, 16 January 1970.

⁶⁸⁸ Katsakioris, « Creating a Socialist Intelligentsia », 259-88.

largescale massacre of the Biafran people'.⁶⁸⁹ China's support for Biafra was backed up by arms. This was carried out via a scheme whereby Tanzania directly gave its own arms to Biafra while Beijing committed itself to replacing those arms in Tanzania with its own for free.⁶⁹⁰ Nyerere's government was the first government in the world to recognise the Republic of Biafra, and he called on the rest of the world to help it. From then on, Chinese arms were shipped in significant quantities to Biafra via Tanzania. The Biafran leader Ojukwu openly praised China's help in this regard, leading to the speculation that China was directly involved in gun running. Zhou later claimed no aid was being provided to Biafra, but also stated that as it was waging a war of liberation, it could not be ruled out entirely.⁶⁹¹ Just a day prior to Chen Yi's statement, Zhou had already elaborated on this policy. When questioned on the current situation of liberation movements in Africa by a sceptical Zambian delegation, Zhou raised the situation Nigeria specifically, stating:

Our position is certain. Wherever there is oppression, or wherever the progress of popular liberation is being trodden upon, we will provide support. If Nigeria can adopt a method of national unity based in equality between the peoples (of Nigeria), we will respect the policy of non-interference from before... as this is what we announced our principles were when we visited Africa.⁶⁹²

While Zhou might have believed China's 'position was certain', it did not appear to be so.

Unlike the Soviet Union's resolute support for the Federal Government, China's support for Biafra was ephemeral and unproductive.

⁶⁸⁹ '陈毅副总理设宴热烈欢迎南也门代表团' ('Vice Premier Chen Yi Hosted a Banquet to Warmly Welcome the Delegation of South Yemen'), *People's Daily*, 19 September 1968.

⁶⁹⁰ TNA, FCO 65-251, 'China/Guinea', 22 April 1969. CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79-00927A007100070002-7, 'Communist China's Presence in Africa', 20 June 1969. This must have been a convenient way for Nyerere to update his army's weaponry. This also explains the arrival of Czech and East German arms noted by early British reports on the situation.

⁶⁹¹ TNA, FCO 65-251, 'China/Guinea', 22 April 1969. It was also noted by this report that, because China was not a member of the UN, it would not be bound by the arms embargo imposed by the UN.

⁶⁹² ZELNP, 1232.

The Chinese position was unpopular in Africa, even with its closest allies aside from Tanzania. Guinea resolutely endorsed the OAU line on secession as inimical to African interests. Guinea also held that Biafra was primarily supported by what it considered to be reactionary governments in Africa.⁶⁹³ While receiving a Guinean delegation in October 1968, Chen Yi was chided by his guests, who told him that the ‘Sino-Soviet rivalry should not be obtruded into African domestic affairs’, meaning Biafra. Chen Yi was then apologetic for his statement the previous month. He told his guests, ‘In Africa the struggle of the anti-imperialist revolutionary forces against imperialism, modern revisionism and their lackeys is very complicated.’⁶⁹⁴ China was largely silent on the issue of Biafra after this. China never recognised Biafra. US observers at the time believed that China’s odd stance was the result of Julius Nyerere’s support of the movement, not any deeply held commitment to the Biafran cause.⁶⁹⁵ However, just as the Soviet Union’s position on the successive coups in Nigeria was undergirded by its pre-existing relationship with Nigeria, regional politics, and the bipolar dynamic of the Cold War, there were several clear political and ideological reasons why this is not a sufficient explanation.

Most obviously, until it found itself largely isolated from the West as a result of its brutal blockade of Biafra, Nigeria still recognised Taipei, not Beijing. As observed by Alaba Ogunsanwo and later Bruce Larkin, China’s support for separatist and other ‘freedom fighters’ was reserved for two types of movements in this period. The first were those in open struggle against white-minority regimes. The other was limited support to movements within countries which still recognised Taipei. Such support ended whenever those

⁶⁹³ In addition to South Africa and Rhodesia, this included Gabon and the Ivory Coast, two pro-French governments. Gabon in particular participated in the covert provision of French weapons to Biafra. French meddling in Nigeria was no doubt also on their minds.

⁶⁹⁴ TNA, FCO 21-58, Memo from G.G.H. Walden, 8 October 1968.

⁶⁹⁵ CIA-ERR, CIA-RDP79-00927A007100070002-7, 20 June 1969.

countries switched recognition, as Nigeria did in 1971 in a bid to ameliorate its own growing isolation following its brutal prosecution of the Biafran War.⁶⁹⁶

The Biafran War also provided a context in which China might directly confront the Soviet Union. While Nigeria held no relations with Beijing aside from commercial ones, it was becoming closer and closer to the Soviet Union. Moreover, Biafra had become vocally anti-Soviet following Moscow's decision to arm the federal government in 1967. Its anti-Soviet stance eventually evolved into Ojukwu making open appeals for support from Beijing as the sole communist country which might understand its plight. Moreover, following Chen Yi's chiding by the Guinean delegation in October 1968, while Chinese press largely fell silent on Biafra, it did continue to mention Biafra whenever the opportunity to criticise the Soviet Union's particular brand of foreign aid arose.⁶⁹⁷

Concurrently, the ambient radicalism of the Cultural Revolution and pressure on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prove fealty to Mao's line cannot be ignored. Biafra was engaged in a veritable people's war, and in Zhou's words, '(w)herever there is oppression, or wherever the progress of popular liberation is being trodden upon, we will provide support'. In the context of the Cultural Revolution, this should be taken literally, as to do otherwise might result in being accused of the *sanxiang yimie*. Previously held principles of non-interference and respect for sovereignty had been overturned in favour of anti-revisionist radicalism and adventurism. A member of the Chinese leadership arguing *not* to support the

⁶⁹⁶ See Ogunsanwo, *China's Policy in Africa* and Larkin, *China and Africa*.

⁶⁹⁷ See this for a characteristic example of Biafra being lumped in with a laundry list of 'revisionist' military adventures: '大肆进行对外扩张和武装侵略 – 勾结美帝妄图重新瓜分世界 – 苏修疯狂玩弄军事冒险绝没有好下场 全世界人民和苏联人民愤怒反对苏修的狂妄侵略野心' (Wantonly Carrying Out Foreign Expansion and Armed Aggression – Colluding with US Imperialism in an Attempt to Divide the World – The Soviet Revisionists Are Madly Toying with Military Adventures Which Will Never Come to a Good End, People All Over the World and the Soviet Union Angrily Oppose the Arrogant Aggressive Ambitions of the Revisionists), *People's Daily*, 22 March 1969.

Biafran struggle for liberation against the revisionist arch-nemesis of the CCP would be akin to a Qian Shouwei, sabotaging China's support for its friends abroad and thereby revealing oneself to be a hidden enemy.

In October 1968, following Chen's chiding by the Guinean delegation, a British report mused, 'It will be edifying to see whether the Chinese put their hands in the fire again after burning their fingers once.'⁶⁹⁸ It was concluded three and a half years later that 'The sort of thinking which characterised Chou En-lai's remark that Africa was "ripe for revolution" is now tacitly recognised as a mistake.'⁶⁹⁹ For the second time in less than five years, China had found itself impotently providing assistance to a distant conflict through the narrow avenues provided by its few friends in Africa, all while putting the gains it had made elsewhere in the continent at risk.

Conclusion

At the end of the 1960s, Soviet and Chinese aid diplomacy had totally diverged from one another. The value and quantity of Soviet aid projects on offer was dwindling rapidly. The Soviet Union retained an emphasis on educational aid as it reached out to a larger number of countries than ever before. Meanwhile, its largescale economic assistance was largely eclipsed by its role in arms transfers. In contrast, China was extending more and more offers of larger and larger proportions, but to a limited number of countries and with an increasing gap between extensions and fulfilments. The centre of gravity of the two countries' provision had also diverged. China's was lopsidedly split between West and East

⁶⁹⁸ TNA, FCO 21-58, Memo from G.G.H. Walden, 8 October 1968.

⁶⁹⁹ TNA, FCO 21-974, 'China's Long Term Motives in Africa', 3 March 1972.

Africa, with vanishingly little involvement in North Africa. The Soviet Union had simultaneously retrenched itself in North Africa and spread the rest of its engagement more or less evenly across the rest of the continent.

In his *The Price of Aid*, David C. Engerman notes that a large factor in the reduction of large state sector aid projects for India after 1964 was the move to rapidly bring about improvements in the day to day lives of Soviet citizens, something which had been stymied by Khrushchev's optimistic attempt to export non-capitalist development to the rest of the world.⁷⁰⁰ This chapter has discussed how this was officially established in the Twenty-Third Party Congress in 1966. Similarly, Mazov contends that after Khrushchev's removal, Soviet engagement with Africa became more targeted and that even prior to his removal, there had been repeated attempts to reconnect Soviet aid to Soviet ideology in order to avoid the kind of debacle brought on by competition with China in Guinea.⁷⁰¹ Alessandro Iandolo echoes the contention that the problem of 'ideological unreliability' shaped Moscow's aid to Africa after Khrushchev, adding that in the face of the growing cost of aid as well as the growing risk of open confrontation with the West, Soviet aid recipients had to be explicitly Marxist.⁷⁰² Indigenous rebrandings of socialism, particularly ones which relied on the maintenance of a personality cult like Nkrumah's, would not suffice. The argument is that the simple fact that there were few governments in Africa which met this requirement curtailed the amount of resources the Soviet Union was willing to deploy abroad for the rest of the decade. As shown here, however, this demand for greater ideological affinity 'in principle' in exchange for continued aid was accompanied by a renewed attempt at fostering direct friendships with African governments which was more inclusive of non-communist parties rather than less.

⁷⁰⁰ Engerman, *Price of Aid*, 292.

⁷⁰¹ Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War*, 253-8.

⁷⁰² Iandolo, 'The Rise and Fall of the 'Soviet Model of Development in West Africa'', 704.

Moreover, as shown in chapter 3, this quest for greater ideological loyalty also began prior to Khrushchev's removal, for instance, in his scolding of Arif, meaning it was not the only factor after 1964. Factors on the ground and issues generated by processes independent of the leadership are as pertinent to this story as the changing of the leadership itself. While expenditure decreased enormously, there was also a widening of Soviet engagement made possible by the low ebb in Sino-African relations explored in previous chapters. Specifically, Modibo Keita's visit to Moscow, right before the Twenty-Third Party Congress, provided a template for Brezhnev to renew Soviet-African relations on the basis of interparty engagement at the same time as he drastically cut expenditure. The first congress under Brezhnev was the point when a project of rationalisation, closely paired with Kosygin's concurrent economic reforms, was brought into full swing.

While the Soviet Union set about enhancing its relations with all governments and leading parties in Africa, Chen Yi's 'recombination' occurred against the background of the chaos of the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution threw the Chinese Foreign Ministry in to utter turmoil. This turmoil only came to an end once Zhou and Chen were brought back under the protection of Mao towards the end of the most radical months of the period. Their return coincided with the end of a massive purge of the Foreign Ministry. Following that reshuffling, work remained for the new Foreign Ministry hierarchy to reimpose order on Chinese students and other personnel abroad even as it had become imperative for it to perform its fealty to Mao's line in the context of the Cultural Revolution. The reshuffling was followed by a continuation of Chinese aid along the lines of the changes set in motion prior to the Cultural Revolution, particularly in the context of the Congo Crisis. This meant expanding the scope of aid to include not just light industrial and agricultural aid

but also major infrastructural projects which China intended to facilitate protracted struggle. Following the collapse of the Lumumbaist insurgency, the PRC also hoped to repair its standing in Africa. Yang Kuisong emphasises that scholars have neglected the role of the Maoist ideology of class struggle in informing China's foreign relations work. He identifies a torsion between the profession of diplomacy in the ideal and the reality of being a diplomat in Mao's China, where domestic governance and foreign policy work were confused, especially in the wake of the Seven Thousand Cadre Conference.⁷⁰³ This torsion was most keenly felt in the Cultural Revolution, when, in order to avoid being labelled a hidden enemy, the Chinese leadership involved in aid work became overzealous in their new offers, exacerbating the gap between Chinese extensions and draw downs, and inflating their country's involvement in the continent to an enormous scale.

The war in Biafra highlights many of these issues. The Soviet Union's opportunistic decision to back the Federal Government was ultimately advantageous to it, and that success was built on arms transfers and the prestige of its educational opportunities. Both of these enabled it to make linkages with a relatively developed African country with a thriving labour movement, and did so at a far lower cost than its troubled connections with West Africa. At the same time, China's support for Biafra occurred against the background of the most radical months of Cultural Revolution, when the Foreign Ministry was just emerging from the reshuffling. The choice to support Biafra did place it on the same side as its closest ally in Africa, and there was the practical concern that Nigeria still recognised Taipei, but it is

⁷⁰³ In the ideal, according to Yang, diplomacy would be characterized by the Confucian principle attributed to Ran Qiu in *The Analects*: 'In carrying out the rules of propriety, ease of manner is to be prized' (礼之用，和为贵). Yang Kuisong, 'The Theory and Implementation of the People's Republic of China's Revolutionary Diplomacy', *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 3, no. 2 (2009): 133-6.

more likely that support for Biafra had more to do with adhering to the domestic politics of the time by performing an opposition to Soviet revisionism.

Conclusion

Over the course of the 1960s, the trajectory taken by the two socialist countries' aid diplomacy diverged drastically. This was despite the fact that their ideologies and foreign policies had common roots. It was also despite the fact that, as has been shown, they encountered a number of similar problems in leveraging their disparate resources in Africa in the pursuit of their aims. At the outset, Soviet aid to Africa was tied to the momentous changes brought about in Soviet politics following the Twentieth-Party Congress in 1956. Under Khrushchev, Soviet economic and technical assistance to Africa made its debut as a comprehensive replacement for the development aid of the West. Its vision of development for the post-colonial world promised enormous economic growth through the generous provision of the vast resources and extensive expertise of the world's preeminent socialist state. Chinese aid to Africa, by contrast, was conceived as an extension of its own revolutionary vision of armed struggle and was informed both by its experience with providing military aid and economic support to Korea and Vietnam, and by its own experience as a recipient of Soviet aid in the 1950s. It was therefore able to offer a critique of Soviet aid under Khrushchev that was based on experience. Despite high hopes, complaints about the conditionality, complexity, and delivery of Soviet aid quickly surfaced. Chinese aid, by contrast, was seen favourably thanks to the small scale of its projects, its flexible approach to negotiations, and the egalitarian way that its personnel interacted with the people of recipient countries.

By 1963 and 1964, the situation had changed significantly. The Sino-Soviet dispute was reaching its apogee. Both countries were vying for influence over the Afro-Asian Movement, which was in danger of splintering. At the end of 1963, Zhou travelled to Africa to formalise the successes of China's aid diplomacy by announcing the Eight Principles, as well as to mitigate the damage done to Beijing's prestige by its outlier positions on the 1962 Sino-Indian Border War and the 1963 Test Ban Treaty. In early 1964, Khrushchev travelled to the UAR to celebrate the completion of the first stage of the largest aid project in Africa at the time, the Aswan High Dam. He did so at precisely the time when Soviet provision was encountering a number of difficulties which undermined the long-term feasibility of his ambitious approach. During their respective visits, it became clear that African leaders like Somalia's Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, Ethiopia's Haile Selassie, and Kenya's Vice President Oginga Odinga all sought to take advantage of the Sino-Soviet dispute and leverage Moscow and Beijing's offers of aid against one another. In such situations, the Soviet Union had the clear advantage insofar as its capacity for provision was so much greater. It further became clear that divisions within the local and regional politics of African countries complicated their relationships to both providers. For example, Kenyatta's public rejection of aid projects from the two countries is explicable in large part not by the merits of the aid projects themselves but by his drive to isolate Odinga.

In the mid-1960s, these complications became even more pronounced as the initial enthusiasm for aid from the two countries diminished and as events in Africa turned the attention of its leaders away from the straightforward issue of national liberation towards the multiplicity of issues that came with independence and nation building. In particular, the Congo Crisis polarised the continent. China's approach to supporting anti-neo-colonial

fighters like the Simbas through regional actors was thwarted by the reliance of these actors on aid from other providers. Because of the intimate connection between its support for freedom fighters and its promotion of 'self-reliance' through economic assistance, all of China's aid became suspect. Countries which continued to accept its aid were wont to remind it insistently and publicly of their independence and of their willingness to accept aid from other providers. The Soviet Union faced similar challenges in acting through economically underdeveloped regional partners in the Congo Crisis but was able to avoid the implication that it was involved in anti-government activities. As was the case with the deterioration of Sino-Malian relations, certain developments benefitted the Soviet Union at China's expense. Others, like the spate of coups from 1964-1966 which swept the developing world in the mid-1960s, posed distinct challenges for both – challenges which were met in dramatically different ways.

It was in the context of these challenges that the most pronounced divergence occurred in the overall trajectory of the two countries' aid diplomacy. This divergence was not, as is conventionally argued, exclusively the result of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution in China. The divergence can be summarised in four points. First, while the Soviet Union had begun to reduce aid expenditure in the wake of the first Congo Crisis, China deepened its engagement with Africa, even expanding its operations into the kind of large projects which had been characteristic of Soviet aid. Second, in recognising that the political orientation of an African regime was less important than establishing direct connections, Soviet aid diplomacy under Brezhnev was spread more widely across African states and was refocused on building connections with political leaders and social elites. In the late 1960s, the work of deepening cooperation with all countries in Africa (including coup regimes) shifted from

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providing comprehensive development aid towards finalising previous commitments and achieving specific aims opportunistically by targeting Soviet largesse through debt relief (cf. the reinvigoration of Soviet-Malian relations, burnishing support for the Test Ban Treaty, or attending Bandung II) and other measures.⁷⁰⁴ In contrast, as Chinese military aid and economic assistance became ever more entwined, the PRC deepened its engagement with a select number of countries that were most committed to the continued struggle against imperialism and settler colonial regimes. Third, the gap between the number of Soviet projects which were fulfilled and those which were still outstanding narrowed, while the sum value of Chinese aid extensions ballooned beyond what it could feasibly afford. Fourth and finally, China was forced to confront Taiwan, which was making strides to take advantage of the low ebb in Sino-African relations that preceded the Cultural Revolution. The Soviet Union faced no such challenge.

In addition to the challenge posed by Taiwan, the heightening of Chinese radicalism during the Cultural Revolution foreclosed the possibility of it disentangling itself from Africa as the Soviet Union had done. The Cultural Revolution produced an enormous disruption of China's foreign affairs work, but it also saw the *sanhe yishao* upgraded to the *sanxiang yimie*. The entirety of the Foreign Ministry was subjected to criticism. This included Chen Yi, who was accused of leading a secret group of foreign policy elites seeking to sabotage China's foreign aid work. At a time when the Soviet Union was expanding educational opportunities and leveraging arms transfers in a calculated way, Chen and the Foreign Ministry clambered

⁷⁰⁴ As discussed in chapter 5, the Soviet Union began to use debt relief to ameliorate the strains placed on the Malian economy by the particular implementation of its economic cooperation agreements there. This formed a basis of its reconnection with the Malian government following a poorly received visit to Bamako by Chen Yi, and, in return, the Soviet Union was able to acquire more unambiguous support from Mali on the Test Ban Treaty. Furthermore, through agreeing to restructure the debt incurred by the Aswan High Dam project, the Soviet Union was able to receive the UAR's endorsement for its participation in Bandung II.

for avenues to provide continued support for national liberation movements, throwing resources at another doomed struggle in Nigeria. With the Twenty-Third Party Congress in 1966, the Soviet Union officially turned its focus to the development of socialism within, rather than without, the Soviet Union. The PRC, on the other hand, never departed from its original mission, even when it appeared Africa was not ripe for revolution, and even when Chen Yi had come to resent the curse of the 'China card'. China's support for the Simbas was a tragedy, and its support for Biafra a farce driven entirely by the need to perform loyalty to the official ideology of the most radical phase of the Cultural Revolution. Chinese aid expenditure grew into the 1970s, when it peaked, but after 1971, it was primarily directed at eliminating Taiwan's persisting presence in Africa. Thereafter, it was wielded with greater subtlety than it had been in Biafra.⁷⁰⁵ Meanwhile, Soviet arms transfers and cultural engagement came to define the Soviet-Nigerian relationship, providing a preview of the decade to come. Where Biafra was the end of an era for the PRC, it was the beginning of one for the Soviet Union.

By comparing Chinese and Soviet aid diplomacy to Africa in the 1960s, it is possible to draw several conclusions. On a superficial level, the disparate scale of the two states' projects meant that each faced distinct sets of issues. That a country like China was providing aid at all, let alone at such a large scale, was both unprecedented and deeply symbolic. In contrast, Soviet aid was seen as competing to provide a comprehensive alternative to the West, and it was judged on that metric. This is part of why the initial enthusiasm for Soviet aid quickly became muddied by disappointment, since it was as complex and hedged with conditions as the Western aid it aspired to supplant. Moreover,

⁷⁰⁵ For China's mission to drive continuing Taiwanese aid efforts out of Africa in the 1970s, see Jiang, 'Agricultural Technical Assistance to Africa'.

the scale and complexity of Soviet aid led to delays in the delivery of key components or shortages of materials due to factors like insufficient volume of trade. Chronic delays undermined the repayment of loans on which aid projects depended, creating a vicious circle which prevented it from ever measuring up to the expectations of its recipients. While Soviet aid was evaluated according to its capacity to serve as a comprehensive alternative to that of the West, African governments assessed its junior competitor in terms of its capacity to strengthen bargaining positions with other providers. In this regard, China had a short-term advantage, especially since it was well placed to offer a convincing critique of precisely those aspects of Soviet aid with which African leaders and citizens had been dissatisfied.

Relatedly, the period when China and the Soviet Union competed on the intrinsic merits of their aid – rather than according to its impact on a given country's bargaining power – was short. It began after China's debut as an aid provider to Sub-Saharan Africa in 1959 and ended with the coup against Ben Bella and the collapse of the Lumumbaist insurgency in 1965. More than anything else, it was the special character of Chinese aid in comparison with the Soviet Union that made it competitive in the first place. However, by the mid-1960s, complaints emerged about China's aid of a different kind than those made against Soviet aid. By this stage, for African leaders, Chinese aid, comparatively small in scale, had to compete with aid from larger, more comprehensive providers, the Soviet Union prime among them. Moreover, China's foreign policy, paired with its radical pronouncements, cooled enthusiasm on the part of African leaders, as they often found themselves exasperated by China's insistent anti-Americanism and the growing din of Sino-Soviet polemics. Some, at least, also found themselves at the other end of the weapons putatively provided by Chinese aid. With this development, as the larger of the two, and

representing as it did *the* alternative to Western modernity, the Soviet Union was able to wield aid more effectively in pursuit of its long-term aims.

While never running in parallel, the Chinese and Soviet projects bore a number of similarities by virtue of their shared politics and histories and the fact that they both faced similar conundrums in extending aid to distant countries in Africa. In pursuit of their distinct but related revolutionary strategies, both states sought to detach African countries from the Western orbit by promoting economic self-sufficiency, and for that reason, both were committed to the economic development of African countries. However, both also found that the reception of their aid – and, consequently, their ability to utilise aid as a foreign policy tool – was often influenced much more by local and regional politics than by any vision of development they sought to implement or by the nature of the aid they provided. This was most clearly shown in the way that Chinese aid got caught up in the question of diplomatic recognition of the PRC as opposed to Taiwan. It was also evident in Odinga's short-lived attempt to balance between Moscow and Beijing in order to improve his position in Kenyan politics.

Both powers had to adjust to realities on the ground for which their levels of understanding and ideologies did not prepare them well, and their ability to adjust to these realities proved vastly unequal. In the last analysis, however, their different strategic and ideological orientations towards political developments in Africa, especially from the mid-1960s onward, did prove more important than factors that stemmed from circumstances or the practical experiences of implementing aid projects. The reaffirmation of the line established at the Twentieth Party Congress on Stalin's cult of personality in the lead-up to the Twenty-Third Party Congress gave the CPSU a means by which to understand the coup

Comparing the Aid Diplomacy of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in Africa against Nkrumah and to elaborate an elite-focused approach to Africa at a time when the continent was divided by the polemical question of neo-colonialism. The official ideology of non-capitalist development was never discarded, but the Brezhnev leadership deprioritised it in favour of returning the Soviet Union to the pre-Khrushchev emphasis on economic development within the Soviet Union itself. Non-capitalist development was conceived as still possible for the developing world, but the Soviet Union had, in Mazov's words, 'learned the lessons' of Guinea, Algeria, and Ghana, namely, not to squander limited resources on unreliable allies.⁷⁰⁶ The rejection of Khrushchev's 'reign of arbitrariness' as heterodox and erroneous thus served to justify a dramatic reduction in aid expenditure under Brezhnev, facilitating a refocusing of the Soviet Union's resources towards the extension of educational opportunities and opportunistic arms transfers for the purposes of making powerful friends on which Moscow could count. By contrast, as Yang Kuisong argues, China proved unable to extricate itself from what he views as a wasteful brand of revolutionary diplomacy.⁷⁰⁷ China's aid diplomacy was dictated to a greater degree by a rigid official ideology than that of the Soviets, and policy makers and even low-level personnel had to demonstrate their fealty to this ideology. Specifically, China's rubric of the *sanhe yishao* foreclosed the possibility of any reorientation and reduction of aid for the duration of the Mao era. This foreclosing of possibilities by the rubric of the *sanhe yishao* helps to explain why histories of

⁷⁰⁶ Мазов, СССР и повстанцы восточного Конго.

⁷⁰⁷ Yang, 'The Theory and Implementation of the People's Republic of China's Revolutionary Diplomacy', 143-4. Yang's argument does not account for what continuities there might be between the Mao era and today and erases how Chinese revolutionary diplomacy developed after 1971. Regarding the first point, additional work needs to be done to explore these continuities. Regarding the second, Pippa Morgan finds that Chinese aid to Africa in the Mao era was primarily ideological insofar as it was furnished to 'African socialist' countries, or countries with ideologies which were compatible with the PRC's. However, she also finds that there was a major difference between its early and late periods, in that following accession to the UN, China's aid offerings were widened to more and more states. That major difference is in part explored by Jiang Huajie (see this chapter, footnote 2), whose work recognises the importance of neglected figures like Hua Guofeng in reconciling major changes in Chinese foreign aid work after 1971 with Cultural Revolution-era ideology. Pippa Morgan, 'Ideology and Rationality: Chinese Aid in Africa Revisited', *Asian Perspective* 42, no. 2 (2018): 231.

Sino-African relations emphasise ideology so much more than histories of Soviet-African relations.

In sum, by adopting a comparative approach to understanding the use of aid as a diplomatic tool by the two socialist countries in 1960s Africa, the issue of ideology is cast in a new light. Earlier scholarship on Soviet engagement with Africa largely affirmed Roger Kanet's influential argument that the Soviet Union increasingly moved away from ideology towards realism over the course of the 1960s, although more recent scholarship has sought to refute or complicate this rationalisation hypothesis.⁷⁰⁸ In the case of China, Marina Rudyak is one of the few Western scholars to explicitly challenge the prevailing 'ideology argument' for explaining China's foreign aid in the Mao era, arguing that it was practical economic interests that dictated China's engagement.⁷⁰⁹ Undoubtedly, economic and strategic interests are part of what induced China and the Soviet Union to wield aid as a 'diplomatic weapon' in the first place; but over the course of the 1960s, it was the respective abilities of the two countries to reconcile the complexity of developments on the ground with the tenets of their official ideologies that became crucial. The primary differences between Soviet and Chinese aid diplomacy in the 1960s resulted from their differing capacities to respond to factors on the ground in ways that were amenable to independent developments in their respective official ideologies. In the case of China, an inflexible doctrine trumped economic and strategic

⁷⁰⁸ Roger E. Kanet, 'Soviet Attitudes Toward Developing Nations Since Stalin', in *The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations*, ed. Roger E. Kanet (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 50.

While highlighting geostrategic questions and the Soviet Union's limitations as an interventionist actor in faraway Africa, Yordanov also connects these questions to the evolution of Soviet ideology since the Khrushchev era. See Yordanov, *The Soviet Union and the Horn of Africa*.

Rather than accepting a vision of rationalisation detached from ideology, Scherbakov charts how serious theoretical discussions were held in the wake of the major political developments in mid-1960s Africa. See Шчербаков, '«Африка грёз и действительности»'.

Building on the above, Mazov argues that, rather than being a 'triumph of pragmatism', the Soviet push to bring post-1966 Nigeria into its orbit was entirely commensurate with these theoretical discussions. See Мазов, 'Советско-нигерийские отношения'.

⁷⁰⁹ Rudyak, *Becoming a Donor*, 75-9.

interest, at least as defined by realist notions of national interest. For the Soviet Union, certain tenets and core interests remained unquestioned, but its ideology proved far more flexible and mutable. Despite the fact, therefore, that the effectiveness of aid diplomacy on the part of both powers was determined much more by African political and military realities on the ground than by the initial, revolutionary vision, it was the capacity of both powers to adjust their ideologies to those realities that mattered. In the case of China, dogmatic zeal was allowed to override the common wisdom of her foreign policy establishment, so that it lost the advantage in relation to the Soviets that it had had at the start of our period.

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