CHAPTER IV

THE SOVIETS AND NATIONAL LIBERATION THEORY: CHANGING INTERPRETATIONS, 1954 TO 1965

The emergence and establishment of new states and the compelling ongoing national liberation movement had by the 1950s, already created substantial changes in international politics and socio-economic relations between states. These changes set in motion processes which led to significant changes in the international balance of forces, and necessitated a readjustment of bilateral relations and theoretical understanding of the new realities.

During the latter part of Stalin's rule, some questions had been raised on the validity of the pre-World War understanding of colonial states by Soviet scholars. Though some effort had also been made to modify these theoretical appreciations, they were clearly insufficient and lagged behind the changed reality. It was from this point that the next phase in Soviet assessment and conceptualization of the world situation and especially national liberation movements, was to take off. This changed assessment was to influence Soviet relations with these new states and movements as also their overall international strategy.
Stalin's death necessitated a change in leadership as also a review of earlier strategies. The party officials who were involved in the process of replacing the Stalinist leadership faced arduous and multipronged tasks. While they had to credibly establish themselves at the helm of affairs, they had to also maintain the continuities and traditions of a Marxist-Leninist party and simultaneously introduce some innovations and variations which would distinguish them from the earlier period. The leadership which took over immediately after Stalin, consisted of a 'collective' of the top CPSU leadership, which had achieved their status under Stalin -- there were mainly N.S. Khrushchev, Molotov and Bulganin. This collective leadership sought to provide a collective alternative to the preponderance of a single personality (Stalin) dominated leadership, which had dominated the Soviet political scene for long years since the late 1920s. While the new leadership endorsed with vigour the theoretical framework and mould of Marxism in the USSR as shaped by Lenin and interpreted by Stalin, it made significant changes by emphasizing some new, more flexible and creative applications of the ruling Marxist Leninist ideology in response to the needs of the changed international situation.

The theory of peaceful coexistence which had evolved with the beginning of the Soviet state, had taken on various turns and interpretations, to suit the multifarious international situation -- both at the time of international
crisis or its easement. Peaceful coexistence was to be adapted by the new generation of Soviet leaders to building bridges with the West and guiding relations with the East. Thus peaceful coexistence as a theory was to be interpreted afresh by the changed leadership.

While the most significant realignment of forces had already occurred after the Second World War and the process of national liberation movements and formation of new states had started reshaping the world, the tempo of decolonization accelerated and achieved significant success in the late fifties and sixties. Major wars on redivision of colonial empires had already been fought during the two world wars, but wars for liberation against imperial powers were underway in many subjugated areas. Many questions raised during and after the Second World War remained unanswered and unsolved. Any approach to these issues necessitated a theoretical understanding and detailed study of both the international environment and the specific problems. These were some of vital questions before Soviet policy makers and academics.

**Foundation of the 'Zone of Peace' Concept, 1953-56**

The key to understanding an epoch for Soviet scholars and officials involved the analysis and interpretation of the current nature of imperialism. This had to be linked to an understanding of the international environment _vis-a-vis_ the
forces of socialism. Other related and important issues were assessing the characteristics of the national liberation movements in colonies and ex-colonies and also an evaluation of earlier interpretations and practices.

Some of the pointers which were evident towards the end of Stalin's period of the changed nature of post-war imperialism and the ensuing success of some national liberation movements, now came to be emphasized more or less universally by Soviet scholars, officials and the press. Of course the attacks on imperialism continued to be relentless. There continued to exist a body of literature which propagated that the pre-war kind of colonial grip continued to bind colonies, tying them with political and economic strings and thus rendering them puppets of imperial regimes. There simultaneously arose another opinion in academic literature which questioned this view. Writers whose work indicated the changed and weakened nature of imperialism due to the breakdown of the colonial system, like E. Varga, who was earlier considered controversial, were now accepted as perceptive analysts of the present characteristics of imperialism. 1 Soviet analysts considered that the nerve-centre of imperialism had shifted from Europe to the United States of America, which carried on aggressive policies

with the backing of its western allies. The US aid programmes and military and technical alliances were the methods used in thwarting independence and continuing policies of imperialism.\(^2\) This belligerence was evident in military alliances like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and later in the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) proposed at the 1954 Baguio Conference. Here the USA had sought to enlist Asian countries like Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines.\(^3\)

It was with reference to this changing stage of imperialism and also the changing focus of academic study, that Soviet scholars/officials began to reassess the various national liberation movements and countries which had attained independence.

Soviet assessments of the once discredited nationalist leaders and critical Soviet evaluation of the movements led by nationalist leaders (as in India, Indonesia etc.) was being re-examined in the early 1950s and had undergone substantial changes. This changed assessment was to be given a sound foundation in theory and practice. By 1953, Soviet leaders were convinced that their relations with newly free countries

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\(^3\) Y. Zhukov, "Plotting Aggression in Asia", *New Times*, no. 34, 21 August 1954, p. 3.
like India and others 'undoubtedly will play a positive role in strengthening peace in Asia'.

Soviet scholars and policy makers recognized the strength of ongoing independence movements and believed that they were difficult for colonialists to counter. They recognized the changing character of Asian nations: "The old feudal-ridden and colonially oppressed Asia is becoming a thing of the past." The process of regeneration in Asia was thus considered significant.

The retrogressive characterization of the nationalist leaders which had persisted, though in a somewhat played down form by 1951-52, had given way to more laudatory labels for these leaders, whose worth was now being recognized. Jawaharlal Nehru was in particular favourably quoted in the Soviet press. Even in instances where leaders like Burma's U Nu were critical of the Soviets no harsh editorial comments were made while reporting their speeches.

The earlier prevalent interpretation that these national movements could be classified as real national liberation

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4 G.M. Malenkov [Chairman, Council of Ministers] speech at session of Supreme Soviet, For a Lasting Peace for a Peoples Democracy (Hereinafter referred to as FLPPD) vol. 33, no. 249, 14 August 1953, p. 3.

5 Rogov, n. 2, pp. 11-12.

6 Izvestia, 5 December 1953. Also V. Molotov at the Berlin Conference of Foreign Ministers spoke of Nehru as the "outstanding statesman of Asia", FLPPD, vol. 5, no. 273, 29 January 1954, p. 2.
revolutions only if led by fronts comprising the working classes, peasantry, intelligentsia, etc. with the "peoples democratic state" as a goal, was now being replaced by a more flexible appreciation of these movements. Anti-colonial movements led by the national bourgeoisie with mass support which succeeded in carrying on anti-imperialist struggles, even if they did not establish or were not oriented towards socialism, were now considered as part of the progressive national liberation movements.

There existed a wide variety of liberation movements ranging from revolutionary armed movements to nationalist non-violent ones. The need to welcome this broad spectrum and simultaneously make distinctions between the types of movements, also started being recognised around this time. Scholars stated that there were countries who had a 'substantially changed status'. Earlier subjugated areas in Asia who now wished to uphold their independence from other countries included countries such as Indo-China, Korea, India, Indonesia and Burma. These states were contrasted to nations like the Philippines, Thailand and Pakistan who had acceded to collective security arrangements propagated by the USA like the South East Asian Treaty Organization. These countries were thus identified as 'closely tied with

7 V. Avarin, "The Twilight of Colonialism", New Times, no. 43, 23 October 1954, p. 5. Before 1953, India was generally mentioned as still dependent. (Chapter II).
Washington's aggressive policies. Similarly countries like Turkey, Saudi Arabia and some Latin American countries which had US military ties were linked to this latter category.

Even in these cases, the independence of these states was not denied, but their strong links with Western states were considered as limiting factors on their stage of liberation. The Soviets showed concern for these states. For instance, Pakistan's consent to be party to a military bloc was said to have "aroused deep apprehension among her neighbours" (this statement also being in the context of Pakistan's traumatic relations with India). The Soviets were not alone in believing that Pakistan's present foreign policy "tends to increase tension in the Middle East and South East Asia". The Indian Government expressed extreme concern on these developments in Pakistan, especially in view of the prolonged Kashmir problem. This then became one of the factors which led to convergence of Indo-Soviet views and the later far-reaching friendship.

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8 Y. Zhukov, n. 3, p. 3; also Pravda, 3 November 1954.
9 Pravda, 30 March 1954.
11 Ibid., p. 15.
12 Times of India (New Delhi), September-October 1954.
During this transitional post-Stalin period Soviet scholars started, in some instances, by describing the ex-colonial countries as 'underdeveloped countries' (UDCs). By this characterization, they implied "capitalist countries which are poorly developed economically and especially industrially. It is only in this sense that they can be called underdeveloped".\(^\text{13}\) Soviet economists contrasted their approach to these UDCs from that of Western countries which favoured private foreign capital investments leading to high profits and thus exploitative terms. The Soviet approach forcefully argued for the overcoming of the constraints of lopsided development by advocating development of national capital intensive industries, which would balance the export of just raw materials (which were demanded by the West). This then, Soviet scholars linked to the establishment of extensive commercial relations "with the industrially underdeveloped countries, irrespective of their social systems, on a basis of equality, mutual benefit and respect for one another's sovereignty".\(^\text{14}\) It was on this basis that the Soviets advocated granting of loans, credits, industrial and technical aid etc.,

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14 Ibid. Also see "International Economic Conference" (proceedings), *New Times*, no. 15, 9 April 1952 (Supplement).
and trade agreements were signed with India, Afghanistan, Egypt, Argentina, Iran and other countries in 1953-54. 15

A number of scholars viewed the changing Soviet relations with these countries as an economic rapprochement, meant to cut into areas traditionally reserved for the West. 16 These economic ties were however welcomed by the Third World countries concerned, as they helped them to offset the complete bind the Western states sought to envelop them in.

The changed Soviet perceptions of ex-colonial countries were influenced not just by one single factor i.e. the necessity to cut the chains of imperialism, but also by the changed international positions of these countries, who were taking increasingly independent stances on international questions. These states had not only recognized, but had also attempted to build contacts with the Peoples' Republic of China. Moreover, their attempted neutrality on the Korean question on the one hand and the United States of America's opposition to the participation of Asian countries like India, Indonesia, Burma and Pakistan in the political conference on Korea to be


held in Geneva, on the other, were considered positive features by the Soviets. 17

It was thus, in this phase of theoretical transition in Soviet interpretations that the Geneva Peace Conference was held in April-June 1954. Amongst its various aims were to review the problems of South East Asia, the Korean war and the future of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The Soviets approached the Geneva Conference positively, as a necessary step towards peace, especially in the Asian context. 18 The Soviets, however, indicted USA in blocking unification attempts in Korea and supporting puppet pro-USA regimes in the rest of Indo-China in flagrant violation of earlier agreements and popular opinion.

The Geneva Conference did not solve the Korean question, though a ceasefire was declared and military bases in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were prohibited; the Indo-Chinese governments undertook that they would not enter military alliances; elections were to be held in Vietnam in July 1956 and likewise in Cambodia and Laos. These steps were welcomed by the Soviets and they sought to expose the intra-imperialist disagreements.


18 "...The Geneva meeting will be an event of especial importance one that will go down in Asian History." Y. Bochkaryov, "Geneva and Asia", New Times, no. 13, 27 March 1954, p. 18.
The Soviets reported on "The positive attitude of the French Government" which was more considerate about the interests of Indo-China (and was backed by Britain, China and USSR) in contrast to the negative US attitude. 19

The Geneva Conference was used as an example by the Soviets to illustrate two crucial theoretical issues: firstly, the importance of national liberation and their movements logical victory and secondly, the significance of negotiations as an important strategy of peaceful coexistence. At the end of the Geneva meeting, Molotov while summing up concluded: "This agreement constitutes the international recognition of the national liberation struggle, of its great sacrifice and heroism." 20 This endorsed Soviet support to armed liberation revolutions, along with their support to the non-violent ones.

The Soviets also emphasized "that at the present time all disputes in relations among countries can be settled through negotiations and agreements...irrespective of their social systems." 21 By this the Soviets focused on those aspects of peaceful co-existence which pointed to the co-existence of


opposing economic and political systems. Geneva was then a 'proof of the fruitfulness of international negotiations'. It was more than clear that a changed interpretation of peaceful co-existence was in the offing. The resolution of contradictions in a nuclear world, it was recognized, could take on a 'peaceful' form. The inevitability of wars under imperialism was no longer stressed as before. It was in this manner that the foundations for the concept of 'zone of peace' were laid.

The changing theoretical interpretations had a corresponding impact on Soviet relations with other countries. Bilateral relations between the Soviet and East European nations on the one hand and the underdeveloped countries on the other, were encouraged. Even the growing relations between developing countries and relations based on bilateral and multilateral basis were encouraged by the Soviets. Thus Nehru's visit to Peking and the decision of the Chinese Peoples Republic, India and Burma to base their relations on the 'five principles' or 'Panchsheel' were lauded by the

22 Ibid.
24 The advantages of negotiations were emphasized by academics and leaders at every important occasion, as for example in Bulganin's and Khrushchev's speeches in their visit to Asia. Pravda, 30 November-10 December 1955.
Soviets, especially since some of the points were similar to the Soviet policy of peaceful co-existence. Soviet scholars considered that these principles of foreign policy would make a positive contribution to the relations of these states both with the Western countries and the socialist states, encouraging 'more extensive economic intercourse'. It would moreover have an impact on the internal structure of these states in as much as it would "defend and uphold the right of the Asian peoples to genuine national independence and sovereignty". The article was the forerunner of a series of articles which followed and appreciated the policy of non-alignment which had developed from these initial conferences of Asian states. Some Soviets scholars in fact like Heifets tended to view a state through its foreign policy.

This initial Asian Conference, set in motion a series of conferences between members of Asian nation states, which were later to incorporate other members from the emerging Third World. A second conference in Bogor was held condemning colonialism and aggressive acts, and plans for a comprehensive Asian-African conference were discussed, culminating in the

25 The five principles are: Mutual respect for another's territorial integrity and sovereignty; non-aggression; non-interference in one another's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful co-existence.

meeting in Bandung in 1955. The Bandung Conference which initiated the non-aligned movement, adopted the five principles as its banner and voiced anti-imperialist sentiments, was considered historic and pathfinding by the Soviets.

Soviet scholars and policy-makers considered this new Afro-Asian movement an extremely significant development. They paid serious attention to these gatherings, welcoming and encouraging the meetings for their 'independent' positions. The calling of these conferences, they felt, indicated the positive changes that had taken place in Asia in the recent period. Soviet analysts believed that the anti-colonial content in these conferences would be beneficial for the nation states concerned, and so also for the socialist states. Speeches of leaders like Sukarno and Nehru indeed appeared to justify the new found Soviet faith in them and were extensively reported in Soviet press.

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30 Sukarno, for example, stated that colonialism was not yet dead and had its "modern dress, in the form of economic controls, intellectual control". Similarly, Nehru and U. Nu were critical of contemporary imperialism. See International Affairs, no. 1, January 1955, p. 20.
Soviet scholars took note of the fact that the non-aligned movement was "not a uniform movement of revolutionary minded masses". It comprised nations who had at some stage struggled against colonial domination, but were distinct in their socio-economic and political structures, which in turn influenced their overall perspective. They followed distinctively different paths of development, and were thus placed by Soviet scholars at varying levels on the scales of national liberation. Countries like Iraq, Philippines, Turkey, Thailand, Pakistan and others who had signed military pacts with Western nations were classified by Soviet analysts as being tied to imperialism, thus posing a "serious threat to the solidarity of peoples of Asia and Africa" as they spoke "in another's voice". Some of the Middle East countries were felt to be still under the bondage of the West, since large parts of their natural wealth was controlled by Western organizations. These countries were contrasted by Soviet commentators to countries like Indonesia, Burma, India etc. who were said to be traversing along the path of genuine national freedom and economic regeneration. Despite the great differences between socialist societies and Afro-Asian countries, in social, economic and ideological forms, Soviet analysts were convinced that there existed a

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"community of interests" between them. There was an 'objective possibility of formulating the vital common interest of Afro-Asian peoples diametrically opposed to those of the imperialist powers'. It was on this basis that some kind of united front between nations against imperialism could be formed, imperialism being hostile both to the peoples of Asia and the Soviet Union. These then were the themes which went into the 'zone of peace' formulation.

It was in the context of the changing Soviet perceptions of newly independent countries that the Khrushchev-Bulganin trip to India, Afghanistan and Burma was organized. It marked a phase of unprecedented amity and cooperation between the Soviets and these states. The official speeches by the Soviet leaders emphasized the similarities of perceptions of the Soviets and these nations on issues such as colonialism, anti-racism etc. Khrushchev voiced unequivocal support to India in its attempts to oppose Portuguese colonialism in Goa. Similarly, on the question of Kashmir, the Soviet position was that the Kashmir issue had been adequately solved by India, and that the attempt to

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32 Zhukov, ibid., p. 20. Also see Kommunist, no. 9, 1955, pp. 102-4.

33 International Affairs (editorial), no. 12, December 1955, p. 10.

34 N.S. Khrushchev: "The path of negotiations and agreements chosen by the peace loving countries graphically confirms that this is the only correct way of ensuring genuine security for the peoples." Pravda, 20 November-30 December 1955.
'rearrange' the borders was an imperialist play which Pakistan was putting forward. In Afghanistan too, the Soviets had supported Pashtu tribes on the Afghan-Pakistan border question. Some writers consider this as manipulation of the concept of self determination by the Soviets, as they were encouraging Pashtu tribesmen against Pakistan. The Soviets however considered it part of the policy which was to support genuine national liberation struggles against imperialism as they were the "natural allies" of socialism.

By 1955, fairly significant charges had already taken place in Soviet theoretical perceptions and policy. The mould to be cast at the crucial 20th Congress of the CPSU was ready. Here one must note that this phase had not yet cast off the mantle of Stalin in the form of destalinization. The collective leadership though increasingly influenced by Khrushchev's proposals still exercised enough pressure to ensure the continuation of earlier policies. It was evident that Khrushchev himself could not break completely from the past, as that would only deny years of struggle whereby the socialist system was consolidated. What was necessary was an easy balance which would maintain the success of socialist consolidation while adjusting to the changed realities of the emerging new world.

35 Pravda, 11 December 1955.
Endorsing the New Formulations

The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union signalled the establishment of Khrushchev in power and endorsed the trends initiated over the last five years. There remained few doubts about the official position taken by the Soviet leadership and policy-makers on foreign policy issues e.g. theoretical debates on peaceful co-existence and questions of national liberation. The discussions in the Congress outlined broadly the basis on which further details and discussions were to be based and academic micro-studies researched. The Congress ignited discussions on further new concepts, relating to new international and internal issues.

Some of the key issues raised at the 20th Congress were the nature of contemporary imperialism; the response to imperialism by Socialist societies; the strategy of peaceful co-existence; the validity of past strategies, methods and theories which underlay Soviet foreign policy especially to the underdeveloped world; the characterization of newly free countries; the role of the leadership of these countries and other related issues.

The changed nature of imperialism was recognized now, not because the laws of capitalism or imperialism had in any way changed but due to the changed correlation of forces. The strengthened position of the 'socialist system' of states and the breakdown of colonial empires had made the
imperialist system vulnerable. The USA had become the leader of the imperialist camp, and the strategies and methods of imperialism had somewhat changed. Hence this period was now categorized as a "new period in world history". Some Soviet scholars recognized this period as the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism. Soviet scholars making a periodization of Soviet foreign policy distinguished between the pre-1953 period as being a period of the consolidation of the world socialist system, and post-1953 period as the period of the "struggle of the USSR for lasting peace". At this time Airapetyan notes, "outdated methods of work have been rejected by our diplomats and also by our trade and economic agencies in their dealings with foreign countries and citizens". The question which arises here is that was it the changed perception of Soviet foreign policy following Stalin that led to a belief that there were changes in the character of imperialism? Other Soviet scholars who


38 E. Varga, Twentieth Century Capitalism (Moscow, n.d.), edn 2, pp. 85 and 138.


40 Ibid.
participated in this debate did not agree with Airapetyan's views on periodization. 41 Historians like S. Yeshin felt that as far as the post-World War Soviet foreign policy was concerned 1949 onwards was the same stage. 42 In general, however, it would appear to us that the changes in imperialist tactics after 1953 were in response to changes in Soviet foreign policy.

The Soviets believed that in the contemporary international system the forces representing peace — i.e. the Socialist states, the newly free countries and their allies, had been strengthened. It was because of this atmosphere that Khrushchev stated that wars under imperialism were no longer inevitable. 43 He specified that a peaceful transition to socialism was possible, which meant that through the means of a broad united front there could be a possibility to win a firm majority in parliament and turn the parliament from an agency of bourgeois democracy into an instrument of genuinely popular will. This parliament which was a traditional institution of many capitalist countries had the possibility

41 *International Affairs*, no. 5, May 1953, carried a rejoinder on "Periodization of Soviet Foreign Policy", by G. Gendel, p. 73, and O. Nesmelov and D. Feldman, p. 75.

42 S. Yeshin, "Periodization of the History of Soviet Foreign Policy", *International Affairs*, no. 7, July 1953, p. 64.

of becoming "an agency of genuine democracy". Thus a new method of transition was formulated by the 20th Congress. The introduction of the thesis of non-inevitability of wars and the focus on negotiations and peaceful competition did not rule out revolutionary class struggle, and the ultimate necessity of working class hegemony. It was also specified that wars against imperialism for the goal of national liberation were 'just' wars. However, peaceful transition was introduced as another possible form by which the path to socialism could be followed.

The 20th Congress besides proposing a new interpretation of peaceful coexistence, also initiated a debate opposing the 'cult of personality', pointing towards the errors and problems which had risen due to 'deviations' under Stalin. This criticism of Stalin was received apprehensively by many communist parties the world over. The Indonesian, Albanian, Indian and Western European parties debated this issue in their inner-party journals. The positive aspect of these discussions was the revitalization of the concept of self-criticism. This led not only to reassessment and critical appraisal of internal party policies and reorganization of party institutions but also to debates on theory and

44 Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU, "On Overcoming the Cult of the Individual and its Consequences", Pravda, 2 July 1956; and News and Views from the Soviet Union (New Delhi), vol. 15, no. 151, 2 July 1956.
interpretation which influenced appreciation of specific movements, countries and situations especially in the developing countries.  

In keeping with the new changes, the Cominform which had replaced the Comintern after World War II as the bureau to co-ordinate Communist and workers parties was dissolved because it was felt that in the changed international environment this institution "in terms both of its make-up and the content of its activity" no longer met the new conditions. Some authors concluded that the Cominform had never been an effective instrument of Soviet policy, and had no authority over the Communist parties because of an insistence on a single path to communism. It was however during the 'Cominform period' that a large number of anti-imperialist struggles against colonialism had been fought in several countries as Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia etc., with the Communist Party in leadership. Other anti-colonial, anti-feudal struggles had also taken place, as in Indonesia and India under their CPs.

45 Why the CPSU fights Against the Cult of the Individual and its Consequences (New Delhi), Tass Pamphlet, 21 June 1956.


Of course, these struggles were not necessarily victorious. But they had an impact on the masses and had a role in weakening the foundations of Colonialism and feudalism. Dissolution of organizations such as the Comintern and Cominform did not mean that international solidarity and contact between fraternal revolutionary parties had lost its significance. This solidarity and consultation between the Communist parties was to continue by way of international meetings and Congresses. Though the dynamics of these inter-relationships underwent some changes, the solidarity between the CPs continued.

The Communist and Workers parties of Socialist countries meeting (November 1957), the forum most closely resembling the Cominform, further endorsed the positions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Though the fraternal Albanian Party of Labour opposed the proposals of the 20th Congress, a unanimous resolution was passed. The document emphasized the necessity of a united front in the national liberation struggle against feudalism and imperialism, which

48 We have examined the Cominform and Communist Party struggles in Chapter II above.

49 "On overcoming the cult of the individual and its Consequences", n. 44.

was the only method of guaranteeing "victory in the common struggle". While armed struggle was not ruled out, united efforts could lead to socialism by peaceful methods and even by a possible parliamentary path. The local communist parties were called on to adjust their strategies to accommodate progressive forces which could include besides the workers and peasants, "the urban petty bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie and other patriotic forces".

The changes introduced after the 20th Congress and the 1957 meeting initiated a number of debates which had a far-reaching impact on Soviet understanding of national liberation movements. These debates also had in the background the beginning of a discord with the Chinese Communist Party. These discussions threw up interesting formulations and attempts to build more flexible and sophisticated models for studying these movements were initiated. Scholars in trend-setting journals pointed out that the earlier positions on non-socialist liberation movements and their leaders had been 'subjectivist-idealistic'. They had misunderstood the character and seriousness of the contradictions between the forces of imperialism and internal reaction, on the one hand, versus the forces of national progress in the East, on the other. This led to the "inability to comprehend the essence of the

51 Ibid., p. 12.
52 Ibid., p. 6.
objective contradictions which exist between the national bourgeoisie and imperialism."\(^{53}\) Scholars and officials in their critical self reassessment stated that the 'radical change' in power relations which had occurred after the Second World War had not been recognized by Soviet scholarship. Moreover, the national leaders and new sovereign states had not been acknowledged. Soviet scholars felt that the earlier belief in the necessity of working class hegemony as essential to ensure victory of national liberation movements (in countries like India, Burma, Indonesia, Egypt and others) had been overstated. The national bourgeoisie had proved that it could lead an anti-colonial struggle as this benefitted its own interests. The inability of Soviet scholars to recognize the progressive characteristics of the national bourgeoisie had led to sectarian errors which "have been very detrimental to orientology".\(^{54}\) The 'incorrect assessment' of leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sukarno and others were specifically sought to be corrected.\(^{55}\) Some

\(^{53}\) "XX S yezd Kommunisticheskoy Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza i Zadachi izuchenii Sovremennogo Vostoka" (The 20th Congress of the CPSU and Problems of Studying the Contemporary East) Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie, no. 1, 1956, p. 6.

\(^{54}\) Ibid., pp. 4-7.

\(^{55}\) Y. Zhukov, "Gandhi's Role in History", New Times, no. 6, 2 February 1956, p. 16. A. Guber, in International Affairs, no. 3, March 1956, p. 62. Also N. Mukhitdinov, Speech at the All Union Conference of Oriental Studies Specialists, Tashkent, 11 June 1957, Pravda, 14 July 1957. The necessity to rectify the assessment of the national bourgeoisie was emphasized.
analysts tend to feel that Soviet writers had misjudged the political character of anti-imperialist movements as they overemphasized the class interest of its leadership, relating it too closely to economic considerations. We would however put forward the view that while Soviet scholars correctly related leaders to particular classes, they underestimated the antagonism between these classes and imperialism in the pre-World War II anti-colonial movements. Thus to some extent the class interests of the national bourgeoisie coincided with the interests of other classes like the working class, peasantry and intelligentsia during the nationalist movement. There hence existed a possibility of a broad united front to fight against imperialism. This assessment of nationalist leaders was sought to be put into a correct perspective by Soviet scholars during this period.

Theoretical Constructs for National Liberation, 1956-1959

The discussions after the 20th Congress signalled a more realistic appraisal of countries of the national liberation zone. The economic structure of these states were sought to


57 V.I. Lenin had advised this, but unfortunately this advice was not followed with regularity. See Chapter II.
be studied acutely. The socio-political and foreign policies were subjected to analysis. A crucial question to be raised in this phase was "What should be the attitude in particular to the national bourgeoisie". Zhukov declared that in most of the countries of the East, the national bourgeoisie was capable of playing a revolutionary role in upholding democratic principles. Thus the Communist parties and working classes should support the 'bourgeois liberation movements in the colonial countries, whenever these movements are really revolutionary'. These statements of Zhukov and other scholars who advocated similar propositions, were qualified by an important rider. The support of the communists and working classes to the national bourgeoisie did not amount to a merger of Communist parties with the national bourgeoisie, nor the rejection by the CPs of an independent political line and revolutionary programme. The CPs had to continuously distinguish themselves from the parties of the national bourgeoisie, while simultaneously supporting democratic measures taken by them.

58 E. Zhukov, "The October Revolution and the Rise of the National Liberation Movements" (emphasis in original) International Affairs, no. 9, September 1957, pp. 40, 41. Zhukov uses Lenin's attack on Rosa Luxemburg to argue that "even in our times some comrades have committed Luxemburg's errors of underestimating political independence recently gained by a number of countries".

Some scholars were extremely optimistic about the position of the newly independent countries under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie. They attempted to build a model for transition and development of these countries. This model or path of development namely "the non-capitalist path of development" was to highlight the possibility of some underdeveloped countries undertaking a transition to socialism. While this model was initially designed to show the development routes of some of the Soviet Central Asian Republics where capitalism had not developed, some Soviet scholars now attempted to adapt it to the newly free countries, as a step in the process of national liberation. It was believed that "pure socialist revolutions" were no longer essential, as there were various ways by which a country could opt for socialism. The initial articles on the concept of non-capitalism were somewhat ambiguous. They stated that newly free countries who did not follow the capitalist 'line' but accepted "planned integrated development" had the possibility of following a non-capitalist path. Rubinstein named countries such as India, Burma, Indonesia and Egypt as following planned integrated development, specifying that foreign and monopoly capital was still entrenched in these countries' economies and it would be

60 M. Rubinstein, "A non-capitalist Path for Underdeveloped Countries", New Times, no. 28, 5 July 1956, p. 3; and no. 32, 2 August 1956, p. 7.
"naive to expect these forces to strive for socialist reconstruction". The arguments put forward by Rubinstein were ambiguous and flexible and were not immediately taken up by fellow researchers.

Fellow communists reacted adversely to this model: "The general trend of this article is wholly misleading and the main theses that they put forth is without foundation." Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the CP of India considered non-capitalism an historical model and cautioned that it was incorrect to come to the conclusion that the non-capitalist path was in any way being followed in India just because the government was developing a state sector. Rubinstein himself wrote other articles during this period which incorporated a critical overview of the Indian economy and its problems. He noted that agrarian reforms were scarcely being implemented leading to hardly any changes in the predominantly semi-feudal model of agrarian relations. Linking this to the low level of industrial production, Rubinstein categorized India as a predatory capitalist system with ensuing problems of

61 Ibid. India's and Indonesia's efforts at building independent economic was lauded. Also A. Baturin, "New Economic Trends in Indonesia", New Times, no. 37, 6 September 1956, p. 11.

unemployment, exploitation and underdevelopment. 63

It was felt by some academics that Rubinstein's article of non-capitalism was due to "official constraints and pressure to follow a line of generally praising the Indian system". 64 We would but suggest however, that Rubinstein's article was an examination of a heuristic model being discussed in Soviet academia, in an attempt to build a theoretical construct at a macro level which Soviet analysts could use in examining post-colonial societies.

Along with the concept of non-capitalism other concepts were also put forward during this time. E. Varga felt that the model of state capitalism was being developed in these societies though this development was a new phenomenon and as yet little studied. 65 This implied that the state was making large scale capital investments for creating a heavy


65 E. Varga, "Ob Ekonomiki Poclevoennogo Kapitalizma", (On the Economics of Post-War Capitalism) Kommunist, no. 4, March 1956, pp. 12-32. Also R.A. Ulyanoksky, "India V Bor'be za Ekonomicheskuiu Nezavisimost (O Gosudarstvennom Sektore V. Ekonomike Indii)" (India's Struggle for Independent Economic Path of Development - About the State Sector in Indian Economy) Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie, no. 4, 1957, pp. 9-26. This article describes the development of state capitalism in India.
industrial base. This would assist creating a heavy industrial base and would assist development of private capitalism also. This form though more progressive than complete private bourgeois ownership, was nonetheless within the capitalist mode of production. 66

Diverse opinions and vigorous debate on the role of the national bourgeoisie in national liberation movements continued amongst Soviet academics and commentators, as a correct assessment of the ruling classes in the newly free states would logically lead to a clear strategy that the Soviets and the local CPs could adopt vis-a-vis these governing classes. While retaining the traditional characterization of the bourgeoisie as being dual in nature, the question being raised was to what extent could this national bourgeoisie which had carried on anti-imperialist struggles in the colonial context, now rid these states of the remnants of colonialism and carry on anti-feudal struggles?

Some orientalists felt that steps taken by the ruling national bourgeoisie in some countries to develop their economies — such as partial nationalization, formation of planning bodies, limited land reforms etc. were indicative of

their radicalization. Other analysts of newly free societies felt that the national bourgeoisie took progressive steps only as far as it benefitted their own class interests. Thus they warned that one must not overestimate their commitment to completing the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist reforms or even stepping towards socialist ideals. On the other hand, the national bourgeoisie’s capacity to make deals with monopoly capital should not be underestimated.

Soviet scholars when studying specific ruling classes were more severe in their assessment since they could lay bare instances of alliances and policies made by this national bourgeoisie. An interesting debate on the issue appeared in World Marxist Review in 1953 and 1959. Here the characteristics of the national bourgeoisie were discussed.

67 E.M. Zhukov, "The October Revolution and the Rise of the National Liberation Movement", International Affairs, no. 9, September 1957, pp. 33-42. Zhukov quotes Lenin to show that the working classes should support the national bourgeoisie in anti-imperialist anti-feudal struggles; also K. Ivanov, "International Relations and the Collapse of Colonialism", International Affairs, no. 5, May 1957, p. 13. A. Guber, "The Crisis of the Colonial System", International Affairs, no. 12, December 1957, pp. 31-32.

68 A seminar held on these problems records the discussion on the national bourgeoisie. Though there is a focus on India, the general debate on the national bourgeoisie is also clear. "Dokumenty Vsemirno-Istoricheskogo Znacheniia" (Documents of Universal Historical Significance), Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie, no. 1, 1957, pp. 8 ff; also "Diskussia Ob Ekonomicheskikh i Politicheskikh Pozitsiakh Natsional: noi Burzhuazii V Stranakh Vostoka" (Discussion on the Economic and Political Position of the National Bourgeoisie in Eastern Countries), pp. 174-84.

69 For a summary of Soviet analysis of the Indian national bourgeoisie a large variety of works exist as by A.I. Levkovsky, Capitalism in India: Basic Trends in its Development (Delhi: PPFH, 1964).
by Soviet and other Marxist leaders. Y.A. Yudin analysing the policies and ideology put forward by Nehru, while appreciating Nehru's outstanding role as a statesman and the progressive role of the Indian Congress Party, simultaneously criticized the philosophy of anti-communism underlying Nehru's writings.  

Yudin remarked on the severity of the Indian economic and agricultural crisis and Nehru's and the ruling party's approach to its solution: "...Mr Nehru's concept of socialism has very little likeness to real socialism".  

Yudin's attack on the Indian bourgeois state is unequivocal: "In India, the bourgeoisie and the landlords use the state machine as an instrument of violence against the people, the workers and peasants in the first place...".

Other writers like Levinson while appraising positively the gains of anti-imperialist struggle, lamented that even in the more "progressive states" where the national bourgeoisie were in power like Indonesia, Burma, UAR and others, the hold of foreign monopoly capital was still enormous. In fact this had "compelled the national bourgeoisie to

70 Yudin was referring to Jawaharlal Nehru, "The Basic Approach", All India Congress Committee Economic Review (New Delhi), 15 August 1953.


72 Ibid., p. 47. Yudin said that social relations in India remained unchanged - the peasants were still landless and the land belonged to feudal lords, p. 50.
compromise with the foreign monopolies. This kind of compromise could in fact lead to a sharpening of class contradictions leading to a possibility of an alliance between the national bourgeoisie and feudal landowners and imperialism. Levinson stated that in Indonesia, Burma and Pakistan, foreign capital was on the increase due to abrogation of laws restricting foreign investment. Sections of the Indian bourgeoisie were similarly putting pressure on the Nehru Government to favour foreign investment. As far as land reforms in these countries led by the national bourgeoisie were concerned, there were hardly any changes. Whatever slight changes were introduced only assisted in changing semi-feudal relations into capitalist ones. The national bourgeoisie were interested in maintaining an alliance with the landlords.

Most Soviet writers who showed the importance of the national bourgeoisie in anti-imperialist struggles also pointed to their deceptive characteristics. The national bourgeoisie while fighting for national independence, suppressed progressive

74 Ibid.
75 Ibid., p. 76. Similarly other non-Soviet Marxist writers expressed these views in the debate, "experience has proved" in India, Indonesia and UAR "the national bourgeoisie are unable to solve the agrarian problem fundamentally". Idris Cox, in ibid., p. 78.
and radical workers and peasant movements, using repression against communist and workers' organizations. There had been attempts at using force or banning communist parties in almost all non-socialist countries of Asia and Africa, which was a violation of the newly won freedom. 76  

These severe critiques of the national bourgeoisie raise the question that why did Soviet scholars and officials despite their distrust continue to support the national bourgeoisie? And why did local communist parties in these newly free countries support parties headed by this bourgeoisie? This issue debated since the initial Congresses of the Comintern, deserves the same answer, adjusted for the current historical circumstances. Soviet characterization of the national bourgeoisie encompassed simultaneously praise and criticism to fit in with the duality of the bourgeoisie itself. The achievement of political independence did not remove the tasks of national liberation from the agenda. History showed that often liberation movements were abandoned and reactionary coups or foreign-inspired rebellions against progressive regimes had and could take place. Thus the Soviets and local CPs were advised to follow the line that the appraisal of a government/ruling class should be based on its role vis-a-vis

76 A.A. Guber, "Distinctive Features of the National Liberation Movement in the Eastern Colonial and Dependent Countries", International Affairs, no. 3, March 1959, pp. 72 and 74.
the internal reactionary forces and imperialism. In this context the national bourgeoisie still had a role to play.

In keeping with current interpretations and historical realities, Soviet scholars drew up classifications to categorize newly free states which came within the zone of national liberation, yet differed vastly from each other.\textsuperscript{77}

A large number of Soviet theorists and orientalists such as Y. Zhukov, O. Kuusinen, R. Ulyanovsky and others, with slight modifications generally agreed with the scheme of classification put forward by Semyonov in \textit{Kommunist}.\textsuperscript{78} Here post-colonial states had been grouped into three broad categories according to the degree and states of national independence they had achieved. The first lot were those states which after winning independence had succeeded in establishment of communist/socialist republics like China, Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea and Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The second group comprised new states who had broken from imperialism, achieved sovereignty and withdrawal

\textsuperscript{77} National Liberation Movements had been classified at earlier phases of Soviet interpretations also. See Chapters I and II above.

\textsuperscript{78} V. Semyonov, "Raspad Kolonialnoi Sistimii Impiralizma : Voprosy Mezhdunarodnuikh Otnoshenii" (Disintegration of Colonial System of Imperialism and the Question of International Relations) \textit{Kommunist}, no. 18, December 1956, pp. 97-100. An earlier editorial in \textit{Kommunist} in 1955, had given a similar framework, n. 32.
of foreign troops from their territory. They were not part of the new military blocs formed by imperialist states. This group included India, Indonesia, Egypt, Syria, Burma, Afghanistan and others. Kuusinen in his later classification includes Cambodia, Laos, Ceylon, Iraq, Algeria, Syria, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya etc. 79 This category itself was extremely varied in its political and socio-economic structures and institutions. There were some countries in which foreign capital still retained a strong hold and preserved strong contacts with the comprador sections of the bourgeoisie, the officials and intelligentsia - leading to some "internal colonialism". However this category of states had travelled further along the path of national liberation and had greater possibilities of radical development. 80 Soviet theorists laid much hope in these countries and developed a number of models to examine their development.

The third category which included countries like Philippines, South Korea, some Latin American countries etc., were considered almost as appendages of colonialism. 81 Though

79 Otto V. Kuusinen, Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism (English Edition) (Moscow, 1963), Chapter 16. In the first 1959 edition Laos, Mali and Algeria were not included.

80 Semyonev, n. 78.

81 Semyonev does not specify Pakistan amongst this group, but Kuusinen includes Pakistan. Kuusinen praises Iraq as his work came after the Iraqi revolution. Kuusinen, n. 79.
these nations had formal state independence, Soviet scholars believed that their links with imperialist countries by way of unequal treaties, military pacts and economic dependence had obstructed their overall independence. Soviet scholars cited these states as examples of the continued threat of colonial hold in a new form. Thus they emphasized the need to strengthen the national liberation movement by reinforcing independent development.

Most Soviet analysts continually stressed the unevenness of national liberation movements, which are in different stages of development. This stage "depends primarily upon the degree of activity of the mass of people, the nature of the leadership...and local social and economic conditions. However, at all stages it was a progressive movement". 82

Soviet strategy towards national liberation movements and states which fell in this second zone was thus logically linked to this assessment. Soviet programmes were designed to assist the success of this movement. Economic and political support was to be given to these states to facilitate their independent development. The local communist parties were to support "the progressive foreign policy measures of the government" and simultaneously attempt "to mobilize the

masses" into radical positions. The task of the Communist Parties was to build up a united front with democratic forces (which included the national bourgeoisie). They were to call for the establishment of national economies, as against feudal relations and foreign imperialism. This would thus coincide with Soviet efforts at economic and political support of national liberation areas.

Issues in National Liberation Movements, 1956-60

Theoretical interest of Soviet scholars in national liberation movements coincided with the special interest in the realities and issues of these movements. Since the mid-fifties the ideological debate on issues involving national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America, was followed by increasingly active Soviet official support to them. This included besides friendship and cultural treaties, economic aid, technical and military support as also active political support in various forums. National liberation movements themselves often had divisions, contradictions and even movements in opposition. There were conflicts between newly free states in this zone of liberation. Soviets generally took sides with the movement or country that they considered as 'progressive' which implied that it should be anti-imperialist as well as an ally of the Soviets.

83 International Affairs (Editorial), no. 6, June 1956, p. 63. The CPs of India and Indonesia were specifically mentioned in this regard.
The Case of Egypt

During the mid and late fifties, the Soviet evinced keen interest in the Middle East. This region classified as a troubled area since the partition which established Israel in 1947, was the cause of continuous skirmishes between the Arabs and Israel. The Soviets on various occasions supported the Arab cause. The revolution in Syria and their joining Egypt to form the United Arab Republic was given Soviet support. Socialist bloc sympathy towards Egypt was evident early in the 1950s when the Soviets signed commercial and credit agreements with them in 1953 and 1954. Czechoslovakia signed a commercial agreement with the Egyptians, which included a supply of arms in return for Egyptian products.

In mid 1956, Nasser proclaimed a new constitution for Egypt which was to be of a "socialistic nature" with a republican and democratic system of government. This was accepted in a national plebiscite and Nasser was consequently elected as President. Under these circumstances the USA and UK withdrew their aid offers in financing the Aswan Dam project.

84 Slusser and Triska, n. 15, pp. 299 and 309.

85 Col. Nasser while announcing the deal specified that this had been carried through because of Egypt's "repeate failures in talks with the West. He emphasized that this decision would not open the door to communist influence in Egypt. Times (London), 2 October 1955. Keesings Contemporary Archives (London), vol. 10, p. 14449 (hereinafter referred to as Keesings).

86 Ibid., p. 14991.
in Egypt, arguing that recent developments in Egypt "did not favour the success of the project". In response, Nasser announced that the Egyptian government had nationalized the Suez Canal and would use the income yielded to build the Aswan dam. 87

British and French protests against the nationalization were backed by financial measures against Egypt and also by naval manoeuvres around UAR. Khrushchev countered Western criticism and praised the idea of nationalization, ensuring Soviet support to any movement for freedom from colonial enslavement. 88 The Soviet press declared that they were ready to give "favourable consideration" to Egyptian requests for aid in carrying out industrialization and developing agriculture. 89 Other third world countries supported Egypt's actions and were critical of the Western position. 90

During the London conference on the Suez Canal in August 1956, the Soviets opposed the plans of the three powers -- Britain, France and USA -- who questioned the legality of

87 Nasser gave the details and reasons for nationalization. Ibid., p. 15001.
88 Pravda, 1 August 1956.
89 L. Vatolina, "The Egyptian Republic takes the Road to Independence", International Affairs, no. 6, June 1956, p. 71.
90 Nehru, for instance, stated that Western military manoeuvres aroused 'colonial memories', Times of India (New Delhi), 1 and 2 August 1956.
nationalization of the Suez. The Soviets argued in support of Egypt that nationalization would not effect navigation.\footnote{Pravda, 10 August 1956.} The American's proposal of the "Dulles Plan" for internationalization of the Suez, was opposed by the Third World states and the Soviets who gave counter-proposals, asking for recognition of Egyptian sovereign rights and an acceptance of the proposal that the canal be operated with a consultative body of international assistants.\footnote{This Plan was proposed by India, the Indonesians, Soviets and others unilaterally supported the Plan. Pravda, 26 August 1956.}

Despite Egypt's appeal and appeals from the Security Council, troops movements by the British and the French continued. Israel initiated direct attacks on Egyptian positions followed by the British and French. The matter was taken up in the Security Council with complete Soviet support to the Egyptians. Though USA asked for an end to aggression and withdrawal of troops from Egypt, the ambivalence of their position as chief of NATO was clear.

The Egyptian-Soviet alliance after this was logical. Soviet foreign aid for the Aswan project was one of the main supports in its completion. The Soviet theoreticians used it as an ideal case to contrast the aggressive nature of neo-colonialism with the open Soviet support to national liberation movements.
UAR was classified amongst the 'progressive' states in the Third World by Soviet scholars. The later Egyptian policy of repression against their own communists was criticized in the 21st Congress as 'reactionary' and it was argued that it would 'weaken the common fight against imperialism'. Khrushchev stated in his report: "We do not conceal the fact that we and some of the leaders have divergent views in the spheres of ideology. But our position coincides with theirs in the question of the struggle against imperialism." However, despite oblique critiques of the Egyptian leadership, Soviet scholars tended to give laudatory labels to the Egyptian system. And UAR during this phase was one of their firmest allies.

**Forms of Soviet support to Liberation Movements**

Soviet active support to liberation movements followed the theoretical premises set forth by official policy and Soviet scholars.

In 1957, the Republic of Guinea formed after independence from France, was faced by an economic boycott by the French, which could have severely affected its economy. The Soviets and Socialist East European countries stepped in.

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93 N. S. Khrushchev, Report, Extraordinary 21st Congress of the CPSU (Moscow); also in Pravda, 28 January 1959.
with aid and trade agreements and provided justification of Sekou Toure's anti-colonial tirade and policies.\textsuperscript{94} Soviet action gave impetus to Sekou Toure's aims for the establishment of a pro-socialist regime. Toure's visit to the USSR and the Soviet honours given to him, gave momentum to economic and political ties with the Soviets and moulded Guinea's pro-socialist foreign policy.\textsuperscript{95}

The Soviets concluded technical and aid agreements with Sudan, Yemen and Ghana; supported the Cyprus liberation movements; and aided Lebanon and Jordan in their opposition to USA.\textsuperscript{96} Similarly, the Soviet Union supported Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian liberation movements.

The July 1958 revolution in Iraq which overthrew the monarchy, abolished feudal titles and advocated land reforms and democratization, was welcomed by the Soviets. Iraq's opting out of the Baghdad Pact was hailed by Soviet commentators as a step towards positive neutrality.\textsuperscript{97}


\textsuperscript{96} \textit{Pravda}, 17 February 1959 (Cyprus); \textit{Izvestia}, 16 April 1959 (Sudan); \textit{Pravda}, 18 and 31 July 1958 (Lebanon and Jordan).

In Asia, Soviet support to states involved in armed struggle under Communist and workers parties fronts against colonial or pro-imperialist governments, was substantive. Aid as well as political and economic support to North Vietnam, North Korea, and to liberation movements in Cambodia were well known facts.

Besides these liberation movements which aimed for socialist states, the Soviets also assisted in their moments of crisis, states where the national bourgeoisie was in power like in Indonesia, India and Burma. Thus Indonesia was assisted by Soviet credits when Western response to their development projects was poor. Soviet assistance was especially forthcoming when the Indonesian's demand for integration of West Irian to Indonesia (it was still held by Netherlands) led to combined Western opposition.

Soviet bilateral relations with India, which were strengthened after the Khrushchev-Bulganin trip, continued to achieve new heights. The large number of economic and technical agreements concluded by the Soviets with India, especially in promoting the state sector, provided case material for innumerable studies of Soviet aid to underdeveloped

98 Slusser and Triska, n. 15, commercial agreement between Indonesia and Soviet Union, August 1956, p. 366; Political Negotiations, September 1956, p. 376.

countries.  

At the political level, Soviets gave consistent support to the Indian government. Soviet theorists in academic journals and books had mixed opinions on the Indian political and socio-economic system. Though their perspective coincided with the general paradigm on national liberation movements, most scholars while appreciating some of the progressive aspects of the Indian government such as its foreign policy, role of the state sector etc., simultaneously warned about the reactionary aspect of these ruling classes and criticized their ineffectiveness with regard to land reform; their curbs on Communist activity, etc.  

Soviet works on India specifically bring out the wide-ranging debate amongst Soviet scholars in analysing nation states, as also the importance of their detailed micro studies on various areas.  

The importance of India as an ally for the Soviets was manifested during the Sino-India border dispute which led to armed clashes in 1959. The Soviets, at the risk of bringing into open the ongoing ideological dispute with the Chinese,


101 R. Ulyanovsky, n. 65; also G.G. Kotovsky, "India" in Agrarnye Otnoshenia V Stranakh Vostoka (Agrarian Relations in Eastern Countries) (Moscow, 1958), pp. 7-133.

102 Anuradha Malik, Soviet Scholars Views of India (Unpublished M.Phil Dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 1977).
expressed regret on the issue. Some analysts considered the Soviet position on the Sino-Indian War as being neutralist, in that they were not openly against the Chinese attack. The Soviet reprimand of the Chinese was clear a year later, when the Chinese critically quoted the Soviet position on the issue. The Soviets had assessed China's quarrel with India as due to "China's incorrect, distinctly nationalist policy". To this the Chinese responded that the Soviets "are in effect siding with Nehru, a bourgeois statesman" and the Soviets were thereby "revealing the differences between two fraternal countries".

The discussion between the Chinese and the Soviets carried into the Indian Communist Party. Here factions which had been forming over the years on the question of strategy and tactics vis-a-vis the bourgeoisie and landlord classes and parties, took harder lines. A 'pro-Moscow' group and one supporting the Chinese line of thinking almost came to a situation of breakdown on the Sino-Indian issue. However,

103 Pravda, 10 September 1959. Also N.S. Khrushchev, "On the International Situation and Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union", Pravda, 1 November 1959.


105 Chinese Representatives Speeches at the 1960 Meeting of Workers Communist Parties (Archives of Contemporary History, P.C. Joshi Archives, Jawaharlal Nehru University), p. 29.

after much discussion the Central Executive Committee of the CPI approved a draft resolution which affirmed the MadMahon Line as the Indian border with China and simultaneously accorded support to Nehru and non-alignment. The National Council of the CPI however remained divided and Nehru had sections of the 'pro-Chinese leaders' of the CPI imprisoned. The Chinese were critical of the CPI positions. The Soviets in later literature attacked the Chinese position of "aggression in India" and their tension-creating position in the Third World.

Thus it is evident that the theoretical interest of Soviet analysts in national liberation movements coincided with their special interest in the realities of these movements.

Afro-Asian United Front

The Soviets played an important role in mobilizing an Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference, in continuation of their earlier efforts to forge a broad united front against imperialism. The Afro-Asian movement was to be an extension of the Soviet-backed world Peace Movement (embodied in the World Peace Council) which echoed Soviet foreign policy and

107 Times of India, 9 and 10 November 1959.
108 Ibid., 14 and 15 November 1959.
mobilized for peace. The first Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference was organized in Cairo in 1957 and was followed by regular sessions and meetings of the executive. While this organization was backed by some national leaders, it was not an official inter-governmental organization. It took the form of a broad and loosely federated movement and appealed for unity on issues such as peace and disarmament; support to ongoing national liberation movements; appeals for anti-racism; anti-neo-colonialism, etc. The attempt of the Afro-Asian solidarity movement was to become a forum for Third World demands, backed by the Soviets.

The Western Press and analysts were extremely skeptical about the Afro-Asian solidarity movement. The Cairo Conference was seen as "a communist masquerade in the borrowed colours of Bandung". The organization of the movement was perceived as an attempt by the Soviets to 'enter' into the Afro-Asian bloc. The conference was categorized as a 'channel' through which the Soviets could approach, influence and win over the delegates from Asia and Africa, many of whom were

110 "The Peace Movement, the Greatest mass Movement of Our Time is growing in strength and number each passing day". N.S. Khrushchev, Djakarta, 21 February 1960; New Times, no. 9, February 1960, p. 7.


112 The Times (London), 24 December 1957.
leading nationalists. 113 Egypt's active interest was branded as a "deal between Nasser and the Soviets to enable Cairo to become the nerve-centre for a vast campaign of subversion and rebellion against all Western interests in the area". 114

The regular meetings of the Afro-Asian movement broadened its mass base. Meetings were held in African and Asian cities with a large number of delegates from the Third World and the Soviet Union. Up to the 1960s it proved to be a fairly strong mobilizer of opinion. In the early 1960s however, because of Chinese criticism of Soviet perspectives and change of leadership in some of the African countries, the Afro-Asian movement lost some of its strength, though it continued to meet and formulate demands and pass resolutions.

Attempts by the newly free countries to form regional alliances and to hold regional conference received Soviet support. Thus the Accra Conference of April 1958 organized by Nkrumah, in which independent African states came together for the first time and spoke for regional co-operation, anti-colonialism and anti-racism, was heralded in the Soviet press


as nationalism which would "open up for these nations new, radiant vistas". 115

The second Conference of African nations looked for concrete measures for strengthening the economy on the basis of internal resource mobilization, mutual assistance and economic co-operation. Soviet analysts termed these as positive steps towards economic liberation. 116

Soviets supported all non-military regional associations in Africa. 117 Because of their past history, most of the African states were inclined against the concept of colonialism and the West, though they also maintained ties with the West and continued to host foreign private undertakings. The Soviets believed that these inter-regional conference, besides strengthening solidarity amongst newly free countries on issues such as anti-imperialism, would render support and assistance in the liberation of other African countries, thereby imparting a psychological strength to the anti-imperialist forces. 118


117 The Soviets gave support to the African Peoples Conference and Conferences of African leaders in Monravia (1959), Addis Ababa and Conakry (1960), Leopold Ville (1960) etc.

Similarly, other Asian and African regional movements like that of the Arabs were backed by the Soviets. The Arab solidarity movement was classified by Soviet scholars as a national movement led by the Arab national bourgeoisie for the establishment of a common Arab market for the sake of its class interests, though it also served the tactical purposes of anti-imperialism. 119 Thus the Soviets supported the non-aligned movement from its inception, and its development was one of the most analysed features in Soviet writings about the Third World.

Soviet support to these Third World movements was due to their keen awareness of the increasing role of newly free countries in the world balance of forces. The anti-imperialist history of these nations brought them on a platform similar to that of the Socialist states. A consolidation of these anti-colonial ideals and sentiments would be mutually beneficial to both the Soviets and the countries involved. Thus an all out effort was made by the Soviets to support these countries, but not only on an individual or bilateral basis. They also supported regional co-operation between Third World countries themselves. This co-operation could, they felt, "maintain unity of purpose and action in international affairs". 120 This was the main reason for consistent Soviet


120 V. Nikhamin, n. 118, p. 37.
support for Third World organizations and movements. As long as they formed some kind of broad front against imperialism, they were progressive allies of the Soviets.

By the end of the fifties important changes had taken place in Soviet national and international policy. Khrushchev and his group were firmly established in power. The changes that had been introduced by way of reform for internal policies and for foreign policies had yielded substantial results. Khrushchev's drive to achieve technological and economic parity with the West had sped along at a fairly rapid pace, giving the Soviets the international status necessary for detente. The interpretation of peaceful co-existence had facilitated international negotiations and had helped create the climate for detente between the Soviets and the Western states, especially the USA. Innovations in the theoretical interpretation of national liberation movements had led to a policy and strategy which brought the Soviets close to newly free countries and made them allies of ongoing liberation movements. It was necessary at this stage to sum up and endorse past achievements, and enunciate and emphasize concepts to fit ongoing trends. It was for these reasons as also for showing the solidarity of international communism, that the 1960 meeting of communist and workers parties was called.
The 1960 Conference and Trends in National Liberation Theory

The 1960 conference was very much part of the trends signalled by the 20th Congress. It was theoretically related to the interpretations of the period as symbolized at the 21st extraordinary Congress of the CPSU and the later 22nd Congress in 1961. The debates in the Congress reflected some of the problems in the international Communist movement and had in the background the developing Sino-Soviet differences. Though underplayed at this stage, the Sino-Soviet dialogue was taking on a path of confrontation. The 1960 conference was thus a crucial one, inasmuch as it set a course for Soviet scholars attitudes and policy formulations.

The importance of national liberation movements for the Soviets was clear in the resolutions of the 1960 conference since these movements were equated along with the Socialist camp as allies of the working class movement. During this time, the task of the national movement was specifically defined as one in which it was necessary to complete national democratic tasks which would lead to the formation of the 'national democratic state'.

The tasks for achieving a national democratic state were: the necessity of eradicating all remnants of imperialism;

opposition to military blocs and military bases; anti-feudal measures by way of carrying on agrarian reforms and democratic social change; and ensurance of broad democratic rights (freedom of speech, press, demonstration, formation of political parties, etc.) which meant opposition to dictatorial and despotic methods of governance. Included in the tasks necessary for the national democratic state were steps for building the foundations of a national economy, which incorporated measures such as restrictions on foreign monopolies, planning, building up some amount of state sector, etc. National democratic tasks meant the pursuance of an independent and peaceful foreign policy along with co-operation with socialist and other free countries. 122

The communist parties were to assist in this national democratic revolution, as these tasks necessitated an alliance of the working class, peasantry and other "national-patriotic forces" which included the progressive sections of the bourgeoisie -- namely the national bourgeoisie.

In this document unlike earlier statements, the hegemony of the local Communist party was not considered essential in carrying out the national democratic revolution and programmes. The Communists were to be part of a united front or broad national alliance. The CPs however were to distinguish themselves from the other groups and parties. They

122 Ibid., pp. 42-43.
were asked to advocate their own specific programme for mass action and guidance of the movement. They were to support the progressive measures of the national democratic front and oppose the reactionary ones. Other documents and articles of this period also emphasized the dual nature of the national bourgeoisie. The documents explicitly cautioned the CPs that they should note and be wary of the bourgeois tendency to reconcile with reactionary forces, especially when the strength of communist forces or social contradictions in society increased.

A number of Soviet specialists felt that there already existed in the Third World several states who were carrying on the national democratic revolution, and could thus be categorized as national democratic states. Ghana, Mali and Guinea were named as states of national democracy. States such as India, Indonesia, Ceylon, UAR and others were considered by many Soviet scholars to have adapted some aspects of national democracy, like creation of a state sector, nationalization of some foreign assets, etc., but these states were not yet considered capable of solving all anti-imperialist tasks. In some of these states there were no

123 Ibid., p. 44.
124 Programme of the 22nd Congress of the CPSU (Moscow, 1961), p. 47. Also B. Ponomarev, "O Gosudarstve Natsional'noi Demokratii" (Concerning the National Democratic State), Kommunist, no. 8, May 1961, p. 33.
broad democratic rights, in others, the united national democratic front did not exist while some others had a strong foreign monopoly capital base. Hence these states could not be regarded as 'pure' national democracies, though they had some features which were characteristic of the national democratic state. 126

Soviet official documents and scholars were critical of those states which while they carried on certain democratic measures, at the same time curbed and oppressed workers and Communist movements. 127

The characterization of specific states varied and several Soviet scholars shifted a state from one category to another, depending on the particular socio-economic and political situation. Some scholars noted that Egypt, Algeria, Ghana and Burma in their reforms went beyond traditional capitalist measures but had not yet achieved any form of realities. 128 While national democracy could go in the direction of socialism it was 'not yet socialism, but a transitional stage on the road to socialism'. 129 A number

126 Ibid. Also B. Ponomarev, n. 124.

127 21st Extraordinary Congress of the CPSU, n. 93, and 22nd Congress of the CPSU, n. 124; B. Ponomarev, n. 124; O. Kuusinen, n. 79, etc.


129 A. Arzumanyan, "Novyi Etap Obscheso Krisiza Kapitalizma", (New Stage in the Crisis of Capitalism), MEIMO,
of important scholars considered states such as Ghana, Guinea, Mali, etc. as national democratic states but these remained in the capitalist system of economy. 130

Commentators considered that, the concept of national democratic revolution being used by Soviet scholars, was based on Mao's 'new democratic revolution' and the formulation of the national democratic state was taken from Mao's "state of new democracy". 131 The formulation of national democracy though emphasized specifically at the 1960 Communist and Workers meeting and around that time, was however clearly an extension of older debates. Like other Marxian concepts, its roots can be traced to Lenin and to discussions within the Comintern. Clearly at this time, the ongoing theoretical debates with the Chinese were a backdrop to concepts being formulated, but the link with traditional debates and the necessity to adapt this to the emerging reality was very much part of the Soviet academic methodology of this phase.

Some Western scholars interpreted the concept of national democratic revolution as a strategy by which the Communists could enter into a united front ruling alliance. 132

130 O. Kuusinen, n. 79, ch. 16.


However, Soviet scholars saw the united front as a way to achieve national tasks as part of an inevitable and necessary historical trend. Soviet writers stated that the concept of national democracy answered an important question posed before the newly free countries -- "of what path to take to be politically, economically and socially free?"\(^\text{133}\) The concept of the national democratic stage was an important theoretical construct by Soviet theorists, in which to fit states and to provide a model for developing societies.

Many of the Communist parties in the newly free countries incorporated the ideas of national democracy and non-capitalist path in their party programmes. The communist parties were asked to work with flexibility -- "only the party that is operating in the country concerned can apply this experience correctly and determine correctly what kind of policy should be pursued".\(^\text{134}\) Thus, the local communists were to support the general democratic measures of their national governments and distinguish these from scientific socialism. They were to adapt to the specific economic, political and cultural life of their individual environment, in the task of

\(^{133}\) Ponomarev, n. 124, p. 33.

carrying out revolutionary change.

The CPs of India and Indonesia had in their programme stated the task of carrying on national democratic revolutions. The CPs of Algeria, South Africa, Morocco, etc. aimed for the non-capitalist path of development. They stated that this transition was not self-evolutionary but was to be conditioned by historical factors. Besides imperialism, domestic factors and class correlations had to be handled. Thus "only an active struggle of the working class and of all other democratic forces can ensure the transition to the non-capitalist path". The Communist parties were essential in this struggle.

Some Western scholars feel that in Soviet academic debate after 1962, there was a moderation in the usage of the term national democracy. The concept of non-capitalist path which conceptually implied similar characteristics, became the more popular category. A number of Soviet scholars however continued to use national democracy in preference to the concept of non-capitalism. Non-capitalism was more


136 E. Valkenier, n. 132, pp. 955-6; also Remnek, n. 64, p. 195.

137 Authors as G. Starushenko, Avakov, Mirsky (cited earlier) and others.
closely identified with the socialist path of development. It encompassed more than the "national tasks" of national democracy as it necessarily incorporated the tasks of a social revolution. Hence national democracy was assumed as a transitory path towards non-capitalist development.

The formation of "state capitalism" was seriously taken up by several Soviet scholars during this time as a valid category applicable to various Third World states. Earlier proposed by important theorists such as E. Varga and R. Ulyanovsky as an increasing phenomena in newly free states, this concept was now studied in further detail. Scholars carefully distinguished state capitalism in the Third World from "state-monopoly capitalism" used for classifying Western systems. The posited difference was that in underdeveloped countries state capitalism arose as an "instrument of struggle against imperialism and colonialism, as a means for creating an independent national economy".

139 E. Varga, n. 65; pp. 16 ff; Ulyanovsky, n. 65, pp. 10-20.
The state sector could be created by developing infrastructure industries controlled by the state, organizing the state resources by way of planning and regulation of the economy, and by nationalization of foreign and private industry and capital. Soviet economists considered state capitalism a "complex and contradictory process" as it could lead a state to different directions. State regulation and creation of a state sector could serve as a material prerequisite for economic liberation. Yet in other instances, it could lead to the consolidation of the position of private capitalism or even create a 'favourable climate for foreign monopoly capitalist investment'. This in turn, would depend on the ruling class and its tendency, or more specifically, on which section of the national bourgeoisie exercised control. V. Tyagenenko in an important article showed instances that in Pakistan, Thailand, Philippines and Turkey, the state sector mainly assisted the native and foreign capitalists; whereas in some countries like India, state capitalism helped develop the national economy. Even in India however, the Government simultaneously made concessions both to local and foreign


142 V. Tyagunenko, "Sovremeniya Epocha i Puti Razvitiya Cocobogirshukhaye Stran" (The Tendency of Social Development in the Liberated Countries in the Contemporary Era) MEMO, no. 3, March 1962, pp. 20-49.
capitalists by way of tax concessions, assistance etc. Similarly, in Egypt where socio-economic reforms were being instituted "from above by decrees", the progressive forces were denied participation in the process of developing the national economy. Only a handful of the biggest financiers, traders etc. benefited from state capitalism. Thus in UAR, India and Indonesia, the states' economic interventions while solving some problems, "by their essence...did not transcend the bounds of state capitalist measures". 143

State capitalism was however considered as a progressive step. It could if the ruling classes opted, lead to the path of non-capitalism. But in no way could state capitalism be equated with socialism. In fact it might not lead to socialism either. 144 States such as Ghana, Guinea and Mali were categorized as State capitalist in character, with conditions favourable for non-capitalist development. Writers like R. Avakov and R. Andreasyan felt that the capitalist relations in these states were in an extremely embryonic form, with hardly any bourgeoisie or feudal class existing there. Hence the potentiality to transform the mixed economy and state capitalism into a non-capitalism


144 Tyagunenko, n. 142, and Rozaliyey, ibid. Also R. Ulyanovsky, n. 65, pp. 9-26.
path existed there. Tyagunenko considered that these states -- Ghana, Guinea and Mali -- were "still staying within the world capitalist economy" and here "an acute class struggle around the problem of further development" was being carried on. Similarly, Y. Bochkarev in a series of articles, noted the increasing amount of class differentiation in Guinea and implied that while Guinea was prone towards non-capitalism, Sekou Toure's socialism was specifically related to African conditions, and as such was an African experiment.

There was much debate on the concept of state capitalism amongst Soviet scholars and a large number of studies on individual countries emerged from these debates. The concept was retained by many Soviet analysts, especially economists in analysing a number of newly free states. This concept was linked not just to the public or state sector but characterized the entire politico-economic system, Soviet analysts used it to categorize a political system and by analysing the performance of a state sector, often came to characterize the nature of the ruling classes, thereby judging the character of the state. Thus state capitalism provided

145 R. Avakov and R. Andreasyan, n. 140.
146 Tyagunenko, n. 138.
one of the most important theoretical formulations in analysing national liberation movements.

Sino-Soviet Differences and National Liberation Movements

The differences between the Chinese and Soviets were complex, numerous and historically deep-rooted. These differences were latently manifest until the late fifties as they had taken the form of friendly though vigorous theoretical debates under the banner of Communist fraternity and socialist understanding.

The debate between the Chinese and Soviet leadership in the post-Stalin period, arose on a variety of issues: characterization of leaders, international development plans, building of socialism, problems of strategy and tactics with capitalist countries, strategy and theory of national liberation movements, and other theoretical concepts. 146

Soviet writers argued that the disruption of normal socialist production started around 1955 in China because of Mao's influence. They traced the Sino-Soviet discord to the events following the Chinese Communist Party's (CPC) 8th

Congress. Chinese theorists contended that they had "co-operated very closely" with the Soviets until 1957 despite various differences. Clearly the concepts formalized by Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the CPSU were considered objectionable by the Chinese. Though there were elements of continuity in the new formulations put forward at the 20th Congress of the CPSU such as peaceful co-existence, peaceful transition etc., these nonetheless also marked a break from the past. On the face of it, these new concepts seemed to downplay class struggle and revolutionary warfare. They also propagated a broader alliance of class force. While certain elements of these theories were rooted in earlier theories, taken as a whole they were new. Under the circumstances therefore, particularly taken together with the sharp denunciation of Stalin, the new theories of national liberation were bound to ruffle the feathers of traditional elements in the Communist parties. The dissatisfaction of the Chinese and Albanian parties was just such a reaction.

At the 1956 Congress and after, the Soviet official attempts at de-Stalinisation at every level and open attacks on the Stalinist method of functioning, were resented by the Chinese, though it was the Albanian party which directly

149 The Soviets did not openly criticize the Chinese in the early years of the dispute. Y. Bogush, Maoism and its Policy of Splitting the National Liberation Movement (Moscow: Progress, 1970), p. 15.
rejected de-Stalinization. Chinese theorists warned that "the struggle against the cult of the individual can replace the entire Leninist teaching about the masses and their leaders". Commentators believed that the Chinese defence of Stalin was to safeguard their own adaptation of Stalinism and especially to protect Mao from the charge that he was following Stalin's footsteps, and other such charges. The Chinese criticism of de-Stalinization however encompassed a large ideological position in that they were not ready to accept the formulations of peaceful transition to socialism of a national democratic front in alliance with the national bourgeoisie, negotiations as an instrument of peaceful co-existence; nuclear test ban etc. Thus confrontation at the various meetings of fraternal Communist parties was bound to arise.

The theory of "Great Leap Forward" and "People's Communes" put forward by Mao at the 8th Congress of the CPC in an effort to quicken the pace of development in China, was opposed by the Soviets. Soviet theorists likened these theories to Trotsky's ideas on permanent revolution. The "Great Leap Forward" debate had important similarities with the earlier Stalin-Tito debate on the possibilities of Yugoslavia directly building socialism. At this time with

151 Zagoria, n. 148, pp. 43-44.
152 Bogush, n. 149, and other Soviet works on China.
the Soviet rapprochement with Yugoslavia, the Chinese were vary of the Yugoslav model of development and opted for building socialism according to the Chinese method. Soviet writers thus considered the theories of "Great Leap Forward" and others as the first and foremost expression of the Mao group's "aspiration to leadership and hegemony in the world revolutionary movement". 153

By 1959, the low ebb in Sino-Soviet relations was demonstrated by the exchange of notes and letters of disagreement between the CPC and CPSU and instances such as the repudiation by the Soviets of their agreement to assist China in the development of new technologies like nuclear technology. Commentators believe that since the Soviets possessed nuclear technology and were aware of its ramifications, they had a desire to control the risk of any kind of war which might lead to a nuclear war. On the other hand, the Chinese were keen to adapt this technology for the sake of expanding their influence. 154

The dispute between the two fraternal countries carried over into the 1960 conference, though a unanimous

153 Ibid., p. 15.

resolution was passed. At the 22nd Congress of the CPSU in 1961, the rift between the two was more than evident. The Albanian party delegate criticized the "anti-Marxist slanders" of Khrushchev and welcomed Chou en-Lai's critique of the CPSU. The Italian, French and other Communist party leaders referred to the divergences while pleading for autonomy for action by Communist parties and backed the position of the CPSU. The Chinese did not withdraw any of their criticisms and in their polemics wrote that the CPSU's "revisionist line began exactly with the 20th Congress and became fully systematized at the 22nd Congress".

The Differences in Sino-Soviet World View and Characterization of the Dominant Contradictions

A crucial difference between the Soviets and the Chinese which was to determine their relations with each other, the capitalist West and national liberation movement, was related to their world view. The characterization of the contemporary epoch was interpreted in a different light by both. Soviet theorists continually repeated that in the present historical conjuncture, the world socialist system was the "decisive factor in the development of society" and


powerful enough to avert nuclear war. Thus wars could be avoided and the socialists could engage in peaceful competition with imperialism. Following from this was the possibility of peaceful transition to socialism in a number of capitalist and developing countries.

The CPC and Mao recognized that the international situation had changed but could not accept this formulation by the CPSU. They countered the Soviet argument by identifying the main contradictions of the contemporary epoch through formulations which opposed Soviet theoretical conceptions. Mao in speeches and in an article in 1957, formulated that the "East wind is prevailing over the West wind, that is to say the socialist forces are overwhelmingly superior to the imperialist for us". Here while Mao recognized the shift in the balance of forces in favour of socialism, yet at the same time he stressed the importance of the East as a focal point in this relationship. Thus, in an ambiguous manner, the Chinese played down the role of the Soviet Union while recognizing the importance of socialist forces.


159 Mao Tse Tung, Imperialism and all Reactionaries are Paper Tigers (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1958), p. 28.
Soviet theorists such as Suslov viewed the slogan of East wind over the West "as a nationalist slogan, substituting the geographic and even racial approach for the class approach". By this kind of theoretical formulation Soviet analysts felt, the Chinese were attempting to minimise the role of the world socialist system in general and the Soviet Union in particular.

Besides pointing to the contradiction between imperialism and socialism, the Chinese emphasized the increasing contradiction between imperialism and the 'oppressed'. Asia, Africa and Latin America were identified as the 'oppressed' by Chinese theoreticians. Various contradictions were 'concentrated' in these areas and newly free states: "these are most vulnerable areas under imperialistic rule and the storm centres of world revolution dealing direct blows at imperialism".

It followed from here that since these national liberation struggles were most 'decisive', the 'fundamental task' before the international Communist movement was to


support these as the "revolutionary cause of the international proletariat as a whole hinges on the outcome of the people's struggles in these regions". The Chinese advised the proletarian parties of the metropolitan countries not to "flaunt their seniority". They viewed the Soviets as 'hegemonistic' and 'nationalistic' and stated that Soviets would not support national liberation movements. These nations should fight their own revolutionary struggles as no one could help them in this. With this critique of the Soviets, the Chinese highlighted the importance of their own revolution: "The experience of the Chinese Peoples' struggle has a practical significance for the peoples' liberation struggle...." The Chinese were putting forward the line that instead of the international proletarian movement, the national liberation movement was the vanguard of the international revolutionary movement. In fact, the Western revolutionary movements "must study the revolutionary experience of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America" as this was the only way to break

163 Contemporary Problems of Leninism, n. 161, p. 36.
164 Ibid., p. 38.
166 Contemporary Problems of Leninism, n. 161, p. 32.
down the barriers of nationality, colour, geography and location. 167

Soviet writers reacted strongly to these theoretical innovations of Chinese 'contradictions theory'. They stated that since the time of Lenin, Soviets had placed national liberation movements as allies of the proletarian movements. Now the Chinese were counterposing the two, thereby rejecting the collective experience of fraternal communist parties as also creating antagonisms within the natural alliance of national liberation movements and world socialism. 168

The path of development as outlined by Soviet scholars for newly free nations i.e. the national democratic revolution and non-capitalist path were viewed askance by the Chinese. The Chinese felt that the national bourgeoisie could not complete the tasks of the national democratic revolution. At the 1960 meeting, the Chinese representative emphasized that the united front for the national democratic revolution would have to be headed by the proletariat and peasantry. 169 The Chinese agreed about the dual nature of bourgeoisie but they

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167 Ibid., p. 13.
169 The national bourgeoisie could in alliance also form a part of the united front. See Chinese speech at 1960 conference, n. 105.
felt that socialist institutions could not be developed by the bourgeoisie. ¹⁷⁰ The Chinese thus outlined the path of "peoples democracy" for national liberation movements, which would necessitate the dictatorship of the working class. The united front to achieve "peoples democracy" could include along with the proletariat, peasantry and national bourgeoisie "even certain kings", princes and aristocrats who are patriotic. ¹⁷¹ The working classes would exercise hegemony in this alliance, which would be one of "unity and struggle". Only then, could the national democratic tasks be solved and the path to socialism embarked upon.

The Soviet leadership and scholars perceived the Chinese critique and alternate path of development for the national liberation movement, as diversionary; as a refusal to face the new reality of the world situation; and as substituting a geographic and racial approach for the class approach. The Soviets also rejected the Chinese focus on the hegemony of the peasantry and considered this an attempt to replace the proletariat. As far as the national bourgeoisie was concerned, Soviet scholars stated that their evaluation of the national bourgeoisie was in terms of a 'possibility'. ¹⁷² The Soviets

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.


¹⁷² Pravda, 11 May 1964; also Kommunist, no. 5, March 1964, pp. 13-52.
argued that the Chinese criticism that the post-20th CPSU formulations involved giving up the historic role of the working class was misdirected. The new international situation had created "new possibilities" for the working class, and a broad united front could be created without working class hegemony.

The Question of Peace

Given their understanding of irreconcilable contradictions, the Chinese rejected the Soviet formulations on the possibility of peaceful transition and decline of wars in the present epoch. Mao and the CPC propagated that there should not be a call to halt all wars, as long as imperialism existed. Peaceful co-existence should be interpreted in terms of class struggle, and could under "no circumstances replace the line of peoples' revolutionary struggle in the capitalist world". 173

The Chinese could not therefore accept the Soviet disarmament and peace campaigns. They labelled the atom bomb a "paper tiger" and said there was nothing to fear from this. On the contrary, the Chinese stated that "the socialist countries must achieve and maintain nuclear superiority, only this can prevent the imperialists from launching a nuclear

173 Chinese speech at 1960 meeting, n. 105, p. 18. (This was also stated by the Chinese at 1957 workers meeting.)
They thus rejected the Soviet peace movement and mobilization of anti-war forces. At the 1960 session of the Soviet backed World Peace Council (WPC), and at the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee and other mass fronts, the Chinese opposed Soviet positions on peace. Similarly, at the 1961 session of the WPC and WFTU in Peking, and at other sessions the Chinese declared that Soviet positions on peaceful co-existence "can only make imperialists happy" as war cannot be averted.

The Chinese while disapproving Soviet attempts at negotiations with the West stated: "We favour negotiations with imperialist countries. But it is absolutely impermissible to pin hopes for world peace in negotiations." The Soviets considered the Chinese convictions as distortions of the real picture of the international situation. They felt that the Chinese saw the contemporary epoch as only one of imperialism, wars and revolution, whereas the reality was different and

174 "Two Different Lines on the Question of War and Peace", n. 165, p. 21.

175 "Open Letter from the Central Committee of the CPSU to Party Organizations and all Communists of the Soviet Union", Pravda, 17 July 1963; and Soviet News, no. 4872, 17 July 1963, pp. 32-34.


177 Two Different Lines on the Question of War and Peace, n. 165, p. 27.
It was thus clear, as some of Sino-Soviet watchers observed that the Soviets felt that the peace campaign was a priority task, while the Chinese wanted to turn to militant forms of action and in fact subordinate the question of peace. Chinese opposition to the "pacifist moves" of the Soviets and their opposition to Soviet support of the nuclear test ban treaty, led several writers concluding that the Chinese position was biased and limited to their interest in attaining a nuclear capability. Isaac Deutscher commented: "Initially, the Chinese denied the very possibility of a policy of relaxation of international tension and seemed to underestimate the danger of a nuclear war. Today, they limit themselves to running down the Moscow Treaty for the prohibition of atomic tests."

The Soviet leadership and theoreticians repeatedly clarified that peaceful co-existence never meant preservation of the status quo or armistice with imperialism against


180 Isaac Deutscher, "On Moscow Peiping Rift", l'Espresso (Italy), no. 14, 5 April 1964, p. 3; Joint Publication Research Service (JPRS), no. 24, p. 598.
the process of social and national emancipation.\footnote{N.S. Khrushchev, "Replies to Interview in Ghanian Times", \textit{Information Bulletin (Peace and Socialism)} (Prague, 1964), pp. 11-14. Also M.A. Suslov, "Struggle of the CPSU...", n. 160, p. 283.} They underlined that they were against the peaceful co-existence of exploiters and exploited, between oppressors and oppressed. What they stressed here was, that at this conjuncture in history, it was economic competition which was the crucial political and ideological task. To defeat capitalism economically would make it easier for revolutionary forces to fight against imperialism. The Soviets were thus to continue to propagate their position on peace despite Chinese protests.

\textbf{The Question of Wars of National Liberation}

Together with emphasizing the importance of a peaceful international environment, the necessity of alleviating wars and carrying out negotiations for peace, the Soviets continued to stress the importance of national liberation wars wherever they were necessary. Soviet scholars adhered to the Leninist distinction between imperialist wars, local wars and national liberation wars.

'Local wars' were wars waged by imperialists for territorial, strategic or imperialist gains to strengthen their position in different parts of the world and to weaken
the revolutionary liberation movements\textsuperscript{182} In contrast, national liberation wars were uprisings and struggles of colonial and dependent people against imperialists and colonizers for their right to self-determination, independence and national development. Colonial and neo-colonial policy was the source of popular uprising and wars of national liberation.\textsuperscript{183} Thus liberation wars were since Lenin categorized as 'just' and 'progressive' wars.

The change in the Soviet approach towards liberation wars, was the recognition that colonized peoples had and could win their independence 'both through armed struggle and by nonmilitary methods', depending on the specific conditions of individual countries.\textsuperscript{184} Non-violent methods of achieving liberation had occurred in India, Egypt etc. and were an acceptable alternative: "Marxists do not doubt the sincerity of those who favour non-violent methods; they know that many of them are frequently subjected to repression by the colonial authorities."\textsuperscript{185}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{183} Ibid., p. 88.
\bibitem{184} 1960 Statement of Communist and Workers Parties, no. 121, p. 41.
\end{thebibliography}
In an implicit critique of arguments calling for arms, Soviet theorists believed that in conditions where national governments had assumed power in many countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, to advocate a slogan of armed struggle as a universal category was to 'disorient' the forces of national liberation. Moreover, 'stereotyped tactics based on the dogmatic application of any one form of struggle, without regard to specific results' would be harmful to the cause of liberation. The Chinese leadership insisted that the Soviet attitude towards liberation struggle was a "passive or scornful or negative one, and that they [Soviets] serve as apologists for neo-colonialism".

The claim that the Soviets were not supporters of national liberation movements and active struggles including liberation wars, remained mostly unsubstantiated. The accusation that Soviet support to the Algerian liberation was tempered because of Soviet alliance attempts with France was refuted by Khrushchev himself who asserted that "USSR dispatched large quantities of weapons to the Algerian


188 Khrushchev himself stated that the Soviets were aiding liberation movements as in the Middle East, Indo-China and Africa, etc., n. 181; also Suslov, n. 160.
Soviet officials and writers emphasized that they had "rendered concrete aid" to the revolutions in Indonesia, Algeria, Yemen and others. Similarly, anti-colonial movements in Congo, Guinea, Ghana etc. received Soviet assistance. The Soviet support to Egypt at the time of the Suez crisis and after; to Indonesia for its plea of reunification of West Irian; and to India on the need to liberate Goa from Portuguese colonialism; were all well documented positions.

In the case of Vietnam, Soviet criticism of the American attempt to "suppress the national liberation movement in South Vietnam" was however interpreted by both the Chinese and some American analysts as an instance of Soviet 'hedging' from armed struggle and direct confrontation.

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189 N.S. Khrushchev, ibid.

190 Suslov, n. 160. Also editorial, Kommunist, no. 8, 1964, pp. 3-4.

191 An article in Kommunist stated that liberation armies in these states "know well whose weapons helped them in the struggle against the colonizers for freedom and independence", n. 186, pp. 45-50.

192 For official treaties see Slusser and J. Triska, n. 15, p. 445, (Egypt); p. 383 (Indonesia).

193 These statements were made specifically in the context of US retaliatory air strikes at North Vietnamese coast installations and other such moves, which received strong USSR denouncement. Pravda, 9 August 1964.
Continuous Soviet support and commitment to 'its friend and allies' were important factors in the Vietnamese liberation movement. Khrushchev's assertion that it was the 'duty' of the socialist states to support liberation efforts, and that liberation movements "can definitely count on the same support in future" showed the importance the Soviets attached to national liberation movements.

The Sino-Soviet dispute had an impact on Soviet relations with several liberation movements and Third World states. Some major instances were the following:

**Cuba:** Fidel Castro’s successful revolution against the pro-US Batista regime in 1959 received Soviet support. The abortive US attempt at intervention in the Bay of Pigs in Spring 1961, drew Castro closer to the Soviets. The installation of Soviet missiles in Cuba, and the attendant

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194 Ibid.
195 N.S. Khrushchev, Replies to Interview, n.181, pp. 11-14.
196 Some Western commentators believe that Soviet support was low key at this time and increased only later.
197 Castro stressed that Cuba would follow the scientific and revolutionary socialism and that the Cuban revolution had been successful due to aid and support from the world Socialist movement. F. Castro, "On Marxism-Leninism", in R.V. Daniels, A Documentary History of Communism (New Delhi: D.K. Agencies, 1986), vol. 2, p. 292.
crisis and threat of war with the USA, not only led to Khrushchev's withdrawal of the missiles, but simultaneously ensured the continuation of the Castro regime and US non-intervention. 198

Though the Chinese officially supported the Soviet stand on the question of Cuba, it was an issue in their dispute. According to the Chinese the Soviets had committed "the error of adventurism and then capitulationism". 199 The Soviet support to Cuba in their liberation movement ensured a steady alliance and long term consequences for the national liberation struggles the world over, and particularly in Latin America.

The Soviets and the Sino-Indian Politics: In the renewed Sino-Indian hostilities on the border question in early 1962, the Soviets officially called for peace in the region. 200 Given the context of Soviet-Indian relations and the developing Sino-Soviet schism, many analysts felt that Soviet position

198 The Soviets stated: "We will give the Cuban people and their Government every assistance necessary to repulse the armed attack on Cuba." Pravda, 18 April 1961.


200 In their immediate statement, the Soviets assumed a strictly neutral position, regretting the border conflict between socialist country and a friendly non-aligned state and at the same time regretted the arrest of some Indian Communists on this question. N.S. Khrushchev, Report to the Supreme Soviet, 12 December 1962, Pravda, 13 December 1962.
on the dispute was not strong enough and that the Soviet had "let down" the Indian side. 201

The Chinese, however, condemned the extremely neutral position taken by the Soviets on the issue, who they felt were "regarding the Indian reactionaries as their kinsmen". 202 Later Soviet statements which stated that armed clashes "created a nourishing soil for the harmful germs of nationalism and military fever" were more positively analysed by Indian commentators. 203

As the Sino-Soviet debates grew more intensive, the Soviets were more critical of the Chinese position vis-a-vis India. Suslov as an important theoretician of the CPSU, propounded that in the midst of the Caribbean crisis "the CPR Government extended the armed conflict on the Sino-Indian frontier". 204 The Chinese thus could not escape the 'responsibility' for encouraging reactionary circles in making use of the situation in this context. Suslov indicted that the Chinese leadership "actually leagued together with

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203 Here though the Soviets might have implied chauvinism on both sides, they also added that the Chinese were withdrawing from their forward positions. Pravda, 25 December 1962. Also Soviet News, nos. 4896 and 4894, 23 and 24 September 1963.

204 Suslov, n. 160.
Pakistan, a member of SEATO and CENTO, effecting the peace and security of Asia.

Soviet theoreticians were convinced that as far as the national liberation movements were concerned, the Chinese strategy was one of attempting to obtain hegemony over the movement. It was in this perspective that they viewed Chinese premier Chou En-lai's trip to some African countries. A Soviet theorist wrote: "The Chinese leaders are striving to assume the position of leadership in the zone of the national liberation movement." The Soviets indicted the Chinese of acting in the name of the Afro-Asian movement by taking advantage of it for their own hegemonistic designs. The Chinese were labelled 'adventurists' and 'splittists' who were trying to alienate the national liberation movement from the Socialist movement.

The Soviets were bitterly critical of the Chinese for splitting the international communist movement, and for

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205 Ibid.
206 Ibid.
207 N. Pastukhov, "Nepresoedhunivshicya Gosudarstvo i Bor'ba za Mir" (Non-aligned States and the Struggle for Peace), Kommunist, no. 9, June 1964, pp. 101-2.
208 "Marksizm-Leninizm Osnova Eginsthya Kommunisticheskovo Ovizenia" (Marxism-Leninism is the Basis for the Unity of the Communist Movement), Kommunist, no. 15, October 1963, pp. 15-17. There were innumerable articles of this theme. Izvestia, 7 June 1964; Pravda, 11 May 1964; Kommunist, no. 5, March 1964, etc.
campaigning against fraternal parties. Soviet scholars felt that the Chinese had rejected the "Marxist-Leninist principle of concrete analysis of the concrete situation" as they had not only adopted subjectivist positions in analysing social development, but had also 'juggled' with Marxism-Leninism to suit Chinese 'nationalist aims'.

Many Western writers viewed the Sino-Soviet split as a break on the question of hegemony over the international communist movement, particularly on the Third World. There was also a view that the split occurred due to the inability of Marxism-Leninism to cope with current international developments, national developments within the socialist bloc and the phenomenon of nationalism.

Analysts like Paul Baran felt that the Chinese position on liberation wars and their harder, more intransigent attitude towards imperialism was because the Chinese were convinced that this would help revolutions in underdeveloped countries. The Soviets on the other hand, were keenly aware of the tense and disaster ridden international environment. Peace was essential for the

209 Ibid.
210 Zagoria, n. 148; Wolfe, n. 154.
211 Griffith, n. 154, p. 23.
development of socialism and for the national liberation of underdeveloped countries. In fact no development whether social, economic or political, could be carried through in conditions of war. Thus peace had to be linked to all development, and so Soviets emphasized peace and peaceful co-existence.

It is conclusive that the Sino-Soviet split had an extremely damaging effect on the Communist movement, putting it back in time and cutting into the advantages gained during its united period. The split had important international consequences, in that the balance of forces were changed in favour of the Western bloc, as the international anti-imperialist movement was split. The consequences on the national liberation movements were also negative. Many of the states fighting national liberation wars were temporarily divided on the positions they were to take, and the Afro-Asian movement was to some extent disrupted. Many local communist parties faced a split — sometimes a major one as in the Indian CP or minor ones elsewhere, where pro-Maoist groups left to form splinter parties. The Sino-Soviet split shook up the Communist movement, as also the national liberation movement, and had important theoretical and practical consequences in later years also.
The Debate on National Liberation Movement
towards the end of the Khrushchev Period

Partly in response to debates with the Chinese, though mainly in continuation of the earlier theoretical framework, discussions and interpretations of the realities of national liberation struggles, Soviet theoreticians and officials continued to analyse the current nature and ramifications of national liberation movements and the state of the Third World.

The achievement of political freedom did not mean that the national liberation struggle was over. The necessity of gaining economic independence, political stability and social and democratic freedoms were a continuing part of the agenda of national liberation movements. Thus in the current stage the struggle to fulfil the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution had to be carried on. National democratic revolution was necessary for this. This was the underlying theme of the Soviet theory of national liberation. 213

The united front advocated in the state of national democracy envisaged an alliance of the working class, peasantry, democratic intellectuals and anti-imperialist sections of the national bourgeoisie. The flexibility of this front was

213 R. Avakov and G. Mirsky, "O Klassovoy Strukture V Slaborazvitykh Stranakh" (On Class Structure of Eastern Countries), NEIMO, no. 4, 1962, pp. 81-82. Also G. Starushenko, n. 125, pp. 72-74.
particularly suitable to many newly free states where such an alliance existed as in Cuba, Ghana, etc. Scholars like I.I. Potekhin and V. Tiagenko found it applicable to some African states, whose leaders advocated "african socialism". Though this concept of socialism was not considered scientific, these scholars felt that African leaders were attempting to find some ways of transition to socialism which would correspond to African realities. 214

The purpose of the national democratic states was to transcend bourgeois democracy and to attempt to undertake the non-capitalist path of development. National democracy was a transitory form which was to be "a weapon" for the accomplishment of general-democratic programmes. 215

The provinces of Soviet Central Asia and Mongolia were cited as examples of non-capitalist development. 216 Several Soviet writers maintained that the non-capitalist path was more than a theoretical model, it was a historical

214 I. Potekhin, "Nekotorye Problemy Afrikanistiki V Avete Reshenii XXii S'ezda KPSS" (Some Problems of Africa and Decisions of the 22nd Congress of the CPSU), Narody Azii i Afriki (Hereinafter referred to NAIA), no. 1, January 1962, p. 16; also Tiagunenko, n. 142, pp. 20-30.

215 A Arzumanyan, "Itogi Mirovogo Razvitiia za 100 Let i Aktual'nye Problemy Mezhdunarodnogo Revoliutsionno-Osvoboditel'nogo Brizheniia" (World Historical Development and the International Revolutionary Liberation Movement), MEIMO, no. 12, 1964, pp. 94-95. Also R. Avakov and G. Mirsky, n. 213, pp. 81-82.

reality as countries such as Algeria, UAR, Mali, Guinea, Ghana and Burma had adopted this path. That there existed divisions and discussion on these concepts, is also clear in Soviet writings. Non-capitalist path was considered "a type of change of social formation" in some countries and very different from 'skipping' stages in the pre-Socialist period. Scholars added the caveat in their writings on non-capitalism that this form did not imply that socialist production relations were being laid but only that some foundations for the transition to socialism were being laid down. Simoniya emphasizes that though the existence of socialist states may assist in the adoption of the non-capitalist path, yet the basic prerequisite must come from within the country and its people. Non-capitalist way was "impossible without a mass revolutionary movement in the developing countries themselves, without a revolutionary democratic regime, or without a socio-political force ready to head the revolutionary transition towards new society". Some of the elements necessary for determining a state of non-capitalism were: a strong state sector,

217 N. Simoniya, "Nekapitalisticheskii Puth Razvitiya Progressa" (The Non-capitalist Way of Development is the Way to Progress), Kommunist, no. 8, June 1985, p. 122.

218 Ibid. Also National Liberation Movement, Vital Problems (Novosti, n.d.), p. 74. However two later volumes of the book reveal that this work was a 1965 publication. Also reviewed in Link (New Delhi), December 1965.
socialist aid, mass revolutionary movement, a revolutionary democratic regime, a pro-Socialist foreign policy, state planning, etc. While many of these prescriptions were similar to the national democratic state, perhaps the state of non-capitalism was further along the road of transition to socialism. In this state, both the internal socio-political requisites and external factors (aid and support from Socialist countries) were essential. 219

The discussions on the non-capitalist path also included debates on the role of the national bourgeoisie. Some Soviet writers were of the view that the national bourgeoisie having succeeded in establishing its hegemony over the national liberation movements, actually collaborated with the feudal classes, and was attempting to save these feudal elements from destruction in the face of mass and peasant movements. The national bourgeoisie moreover, was not interested in the implementation of large-scale land reforms, as several examples showed. However, this collaboration of the national bourgeoisie with feudal elements, some scholars insisted, was not a general trend. There also existed instances where the national bourgeoisie had accepted radical slogans such as 'land to the tiller', and joined the 'national front alliance'. This was done mainly because the national

219 Ibid., pp. 122-3.
bourgeoisie was interested in maintaining itself in power.\textsuperscript{220}

Clearly, many Soviet scholars perceived the national bourgeoisie as a group who shifted their alliances as and when necessary, to maintain themselves in power.

In order to distinguish the nationalist leaders of countries in the non-capitalist bracket, from other nationalist leaders, the term 'revolutionary democrats' became popular amongst some Soviet scholars in the post-1960 period. Then leaders of countries such as Cuba, Guinea, Mali etc. were identified as revolutionary democrats as "they sincerely advocate non-capitalist methods for the solution of national problems and declare their determination to build socialism".\textsuperscript{221} Soviet writers were aware that these leaders' break with capitalism was not the consequence of any previously thought out doctrine, but was part of the logic of their struggle against imperialism. This 'impelled' this leadership increasingly to the left.\textsuperscript{222} These revolutionary democrats were carrying out tasks which "could have been

\textsuperscript{220} Avakov and Mirsky, n. 215.

\textsuperscript{221} N.S. Khrushchev, "Replies to questions by Ghanaian Times", n. 181, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{222} Arzumanyan, n. 215, pp. 91-92.
performed by the proletarian vanguard", if they had come to power. Thus tasks such as nationalizing foreign enterprises, carrying out agrarian reforms, establishing close ties with Socialist states, etc. were being carried out by these leaders. As these revolutionary democrats had emerged due to pressure from the Western-imperialist camp, rather than because of mass revolutionary uprising, they needed support from the socialist camp.

Many Western analysts felt that the concept of "revolutionary democracy" and "revolutionary democrat", was designed to label and praise leaders of non-communist countries in order to attract them into building a pro-Soviet socialist society. This kind of view is in itself biased in that it is based merely on 'strategic' thinking, i.e. who influences whom; whereas the real criticism of concepts such as revolutionary democrats should probably be in terms of class theory. This kind of criticism interestingly came in an article in the book National Liberation Movement, Vital

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223 Ibid.


Problems by V. Ostrovityanov who expressed the view that the belief that the anti-colonial revolution could develop into an anti-capitalist revolution under the new social forces, revolutionary or national democrats, was an interpretation which could only 'evoke objection'. By this kind of analysis national liberation revolutions were -

regarded apart from the mutual relation of the classes, apart from the class nature of the power and state, apart from the class struggle which, in the final count, exerts a decisive influence on how, where, and when the leaders of one or another state of Asia and Africa will turn the helm. Secondly, the young working class, which is a most important political force in the national-liberation revolution, is not taken into consideration. 226

This was indeed a serious criticism coming from within Soviet academic circles. Similarly, several Soviet academics warned that the ideology of socialism being professed by a wide variety of leaders from non-socialist countries should not be equated with scientific socialism. Socialist phraseology was used to cover up an independent capitalist line of development. 227

This kind of criticism was further strengthened by the coups against and the fall of several 'progressive' regimes.

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227 Ibid, and other Soviet writers as well.
as the Kassim government in Iraq. Somewhat later in June 1965, Ben Bella was overthrown from the leadership in Algeria. The oppression of local communist parties in some of these countries such as Algeria, UAR and Burma, led to some doubts as to how progressive these regimes really were. While this issue was raised at the 22nd CPSU Congress, and the anti-communist policies criticised, the general observations seemed to endorse the foreign policies of these nations as being progressive and thus necessitating continuous Soviet support.

Commentators considered this a 'let down' by the CPSU of the local communist parties. In fact, some equated this to the Soviets 'sacrificing' the local communist parties in favour of the ruling elites representing the middle and upper classes. This picture was however somewhat out of focus as the Soviets undoubtedly had to act in a complex situation. They had to balance between official support to

228 A military coup d'etat on 8 February 1963 led to this removal of Kassim.

229 Still later in February 1966 Nkrumah was ousted in a military coup and M. Keita of Mali, was ousted in November 1968.

governments in power and at the same time criticize policies of repression against the local Communist parties. The Soviets were clear about the lack of strength of the local CPs in the face of government repression. Moreover, many of the CPs were facing divisive tendencies within themselves because of the pro-Maoist elements. In this situation the Soviets could only advocate united front tactics, and commend the heroism of the various CPs. 231

Conclusion

In the midst of multifarious discussion and events, the Soviet system saw a change in the political leadership, with the replacement of Khrushchev's leadership in October 1964 by Brezhnev and Kosygin, marking a new phase in Soviet policies, after the 23rd CPSU Congress.

The years 1954-1965 were witness to a series of dramatic international events which had far-reaching consequences on Soviet international policies. The break-up of colonial empires, a process which had started after World War II was accelerated. From 1956 to 1960, twenty four countries were liberated and from 1961 to 1963, twelve

231 M. Kudachkin and N. Mostoveto, "Ocvobodithelno Dvizeni V Latiniskoi Amerike" (The Liberation Movement in Latin America) Kommunist, no. 11, July 1964, pp. 121-30.
countries achieved freedom.\textsuperscript{232} The Soviets supported the anti-colonial movements in these areas, and established strong bilateral relations with the newly free states. The relationship between the Socialist bloc and the West underwent substantial changes in this period. While during Khrushchev's trip to the USA the signing of the 1951 anti-nuclear treaty led to some thaws in the cold war atmosphere, the Cuban crisis, the Indochina crisis and US positions on East Europe led to renewed tensions between the Great Powers.

The most traumatic event in this phase was the growing dissension between the Chinese Communists and the Soviets which ultimately led to a break in the relations between the two, causing a split in the united communist movement. Besides breaking the fraternity between the two leading socialist nations, there were retrogressive repercussions on the world communist movement, divisions in their support to national liberation movements, and thus changes in the correlation of forces.

The Soviet Union like any other nation state, had to constantly act and react within a large number of social, political and economic processes, in a changing international environment. Soviet officials and policy makers moreover had

\textsuperscript{232} From 1946 to 1950, thirteen countries had achieved independence and from 1951 to 1955, three countries.
to function within the theoretical framework of Marxism-Leninism, carrying forward the policies of a revolutionary past adjusted to the constraints of a changed historical conjuncture. This necessitated a flexible policy which could adjust to the international commitments of the Soviets and link these with their domestic compulsions.

Lenin had firmly laid the foundations of Soviet foreign policy, both in theory and practice, in the formulation of peaceful co-existence. Stalin had utilized this in guiding the Soviet Union through the difficult years of isolation and world war. In the changed environment of the fifties, Khrushchev while dutifully proclaiming his adherence to Marxism-Leninism, interpreted peaceful co-existence in a way to accentuate the peaceful and conciliatory aspects of the formulation while playing down the theses on "the inevitability of wars under imperialism". There was a focus on the expansion of the zone of peace which included the newly free countries, bringing together in a common united front, nations who had differing socio-economic and political systems but had a common platform of opposing imperialism and racism and stood for development and change.

To attract these newly free countries into the camp of peace, Soviet scholars and theoreticians put forward models of development like the "state of national democracy" and "non-capitalist path of development". These models coincided with
some characteristics in selected states and included other characteristics from Soviet experience in developing their own backward regions in Central Asia. They thereby developed constructs and paradigms of 'possibilities' or possible paths of development which the newly free countries could follow. Categories such as state capitalism and revolutionary democrats were used to describe some existing instances of states and their leaders, and were also used as models for 'progressive change'. Soviet theoreticians and scholars propagated that these paths of development would help in bringing about the quickest and most satisfactory changes in these Third World states, leading to national development, self-sufficiency and self-reliance, thus ensuring political stability as well as the necessary environment for radical socio-economic transformations. This kind of state, the Soviets felt, would naturally be inclined towards progressive systems such as socialism and would favour peace and change.

The Soviets combined their theoretical sympathy for newly free countries with support to Third World movements. They meted out special support to the non-aligned movement and while welcoming the non-aligned movements' resolutions, they also initiated a solidarity movement in alliance with Afro-Asian states. They also concluded wide ranging economic and cultural treaties of a bilateral variety, directed towards
development of major sectors in the national economy of many Third World states. The Soviets assisted anti-colonial movements by way of moral and physical support, leading to a far-reaching understanding between them and the ex-colonial nations.

Many Western scholars view the special relations of the Soviet Union with the Third World States as attempts of Soviet 'expansionism'. They do not take into account the bilateral nature of Soviet Third World relations. They view Soviet relations with newly free countries as one-way imposition, whereas we have shown above, Soviet support was important for the efforts of Third World states to stave off their dependency on Western countries which had entangled them in new colonial bondage.

Many newly free countries accepted Soviet aid and bilateral ties but did not follow Soviet models of development. Many of the ruling classes and leaders in these countries wanted development under their own hegemony. They had to thereby indulge in tightrope walking between the Soviet and other world forces, so as to keep both at a distance, to gain as much as possible from all sources for incremental development without necessarily disturbing the existing power structure.

Soviet theories and practices during this phase skilfully combined theory with practice to suit the changing international situation. They successfully supported a large number of liberation movements and allied themselves with the
emerging states. Certainly there were lapses and setbacks, and many of their attempts at establishing closer relations with some states and moving them away from the "Western Camp" proved unsuccessful. Some of the theoretical formulations and interpretations they presented had to be changed and withdrawn. There were debates amongst Soviet scholars themselves on these formulations. The break with the Chinese took the Soviets several steps backward in their search for unity of all Socialist and progressive states.

However, on the whole this phase was a crucial one both in developing theories of national liberation movements and for building relations with these liberation movements.