CHAPTER 16. South Yemen as the Model Case of a Possible East German Foreign Policy

> "As opposed to the Soviet Union, [the GDR] was a small country, comparable [to South Yemen in size and population.[...] And small countries clearly preferred to follow the example of other small countries."[1]
>
> Hans Bauer, East German advisor to the Yemeni government

After the Suez Crisis and the Six-Day War, the Middle East and its major conflict, the Arab-Israeli dispute, were fully included into the wider frame work of Cold War rivalry. The founding of an independent South Yemeni state in 1967 coincided with the first tentative steps taken by the GDR toward a full-fledged foreign policy. This foreign policy included a variety of strategies, such as those of "focus and low-profile," "socialist orientation" and the "strategy of the honest broker." Not entirely coincidental, all of this happened in the middle of the phase of Soviet expansion in the region:[2] Moscow's policy demanded coordinated action of the Warsaw Pact states under Soviet supervision.[3] East Berlin readily filled this role, while it had to live with the restraints produced by its dependence on the Kremlin and West German policies. As a consequence, the GDR's policy in the Middle East can be characterized as a "fill-in policy" between its two major foreign policy determinants, Moscow and Bonn. But this policy can nonetheless be considered a very creative one.

The following chapter embeds the findings on East German policy in South Yemen into the wider framework of Soviet and East German engagement in the Middle East with regard to the empirical limits of the GDR's policy in Yemen.

1 | Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011.

2 | Halliday, 2005, 99.

3 | Storckmann rightly decries a lack of sound archival findings on the coordination between Moscow and its political orbit of Warsaw Pact states due to lack of access to the relevant archives in Moscow: Storckmann, 2012, 38. Nevertheless, archival documents of the GDR allow for some insights into the processes and thus general conclusions to a certain extent.

Based on these findings, the chapter concludes with the question: Can the case of South Yemen be considered both an exceptional case *and* a model pointing toward a Weberian ideal type of East German foreign policy?

1. Best Friends with Benefits: Soviet and East German Engagement in South Yemen as Part of a Regional Strategy in the Region

> "Now Socialism has taken root on three continents."[4]
>
> (Fritz Balke quoting a member of the SED Politbüro)

In the late 1950s, the Soviet Union had opted to join forces with "progressive"[5] regimes in the Middle East and increased the intensity of its engagement successively from "influence" to "involvement" and "intervention." At the time, Moscow did not hide its claim to political and military control over the Arab states. Especially during the period between the Suez Crisis and the decrease of Soviet involvement in the mid-eighties,[6] the Soviet Union aimed to present itself as a major, if not the dominant, external actor in the region. Motivated by geopolitical considerations of national security, Moscow nonetheless had begun to include ideological justification, such as the concept of "socialist orientation," in its Middle East policy. While Soviet engagement gradually intensified, the rules of the Cold War changed in a way that demanded more restraint with regard to obvious intervention in other's countries affairs.

This change in "Cold War conventions" coincided with the consolidation of the relationship among the allies within the Western and the Eastern Bloc. In case of the Soviet Union, this included the increase of competition among its satellite states for missions and for Moscow's benevolence.[7] The financial and material support coming from the Warsaw Pact states not only eased the economic pressure from engagement in the Middle East for the Soviet Union. Most importantly it eased pent-up political pressure due to the change in "Cold War conventions," as the engagement of other states of the Warsaw Pact aimed to veil the actual intensity of Moscow's engagement. This "low-key strategy," in which Soviet

4 | Interview with Fritz Balke on May 23 2011.

5 | Choueri, 2000, 192.

6 | Halliday even states that as early as 1980 the bloc confrontation as the dominant conflict was supplanted by a regional contention, the Iraq-Iran War, Halliday, 2005, 100.

7 | Until the states of the Warsaw Pact finally agreed on the basic principles of coordination for military relations with the Global South, in: Protokoll 11. Sitzung Komitee der Verteidigungsminister TS des Warschauer Vertrages vom 4 bis 7.12 1978, Ost-Berlin, in: BArch DVW 1/71035, 318-357; Protokoll 12. Sitzung Komitee der Verteidigungsminister des Warschauer Vertrages vom 2 bis 6.12 1979, Warschau, in: BArch DVW 1/71036, sine pagina.

engagement was sometimes mediated through secondary actors, such as the ČSSR or the GDR, was applied in cases of significant military support and conflict intervention in the region in Soviet interest. Moscow hoped to be able to deny its active involvement if necessary so as to minimize the impact of its on action on the superpower relations.[8]

When Moscow's good relations with Egypt successively deteriorated in the early 1970s, the Kremlin began to shift its attention to other allies, old and new, to uphold its power status in the region. During this period of consolidation in the Middle East, Moscow also began to expand its footholds, such as Aden, mostly through the advancement of the revolutionary nationalist movements. However, this policy of Marxist-Leninist expansionism in the "Global South" in the end clearly exceeded Moscow's economic abilities: When the Soviet star in the Middle East was on the wane after the mid-1980s, its allies were among the poorest and most isolated in the region. As a consequence, the Kremlin's interests transformed from long-term involvement to "more immediate benefits"[9] – such as the use of military, naval, or political bases at the most important strategic locations.

In Yemen, still one of the poorest countries today, Moscow had made an extraordinary long-term commitment, hoping for a reliable and stable ally that could serve as one of the major Soviet bases in the Middle East. The Kremlin's strategy in South Yemen can be subsumed under its wider policies in the Middle East the Global South in general, as it rather simply aimed at expansion of influence, if possible at a cost to the Western powers. Politically, Moscow's strategy mainly relied on ideological arguments, for the large part the support of "liberation movements" against the "imperialist West," combined with financial and military incentives, either directly or mediated through local henchmen.[10] Even though the support policy of the "liberation movements" and the communist parties became less aggressive and obvious, Moscow did never fully discard the option until the late 1980s.[11] The neighboring conservative states in the region were well aware of this role of South Yemen as the original "troublemaker" and a possible duplicate of the Soviet system.

Among all of the Soviet Union's allies in the Middle East, the Aden-Moscow relationship has to be considered a special one. This relationship has long been neglected by analysts or relativized in comparison to Soviet ties with Cairo or

8 | Chubin, Adelphi Paper No.157, 1980, in: The Intl. Institute for Strategic Studies (Ed.), 302.

9 | Yodfat, 1983, 115.

10 | The support of the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG) and its cause to remove "the monarchies in the Persian Gulf" is one of the major examples of joint foreign policy projects between Moscow and Aden. Chubin, 1980, in: The International Institute for Strategic Studies (Ed.), 301.

11 | As the participation of the Saudi Communist Party in the leftist Party Conference in Cyprus of 1985 had shown, in: Cigar, 1985, 784.

Bagdad. However, Soviet presence in Egypt never reached an extent comparable to that in South Yemen, in what Cigar calls a "qualitative difference": The PDRY's "socio-political system was [...] remolded on a Marxist-Leninist pattern."[12] In addition to that, Halliday argues, "[d]espite the undoubted divergences between Moscow and Aden, and the enduring nationalism of the South Yemenis, there had not been the kind of break that had occurred in [...] Egypt and Iraq."[13] All in all, South Yemen has to be considered "the closest [and most loyal] of [the Kremlin"s] Arab allies."[14] Even though there never was agreement on all fields between Aden and Moscow, the common ideological basis and growing dependence on Soviet support and safekeeping without doubt had created a basic congruence of interests.

Commentators at the time described South Yemen an "ideological model," an "ideological victory"[15] for the USSR – a view shared by Moscow. The external view of these witnesses comes close to what can be concluded today, but misses the actual conditions just as often: This perception simply elevates the Soviet-South Yemeni relations beyond their actual significance and exaggerates with regard to Soviet engagement. In 1985 Norman Cigar, an Officer of US Department of Defense, summarizes: "The Soviets have sought to establish their presence in as many sectors as possible."[16] However, and especially in the beginning, Moscow rather focused on those sectors which immediately benefited its policy in the region. Then, its policy was combined with the GDR's activities: Moscow advanced to become Aden's primary "source of political and socio-economic guidance," while East Berlin served as Aden's "role model" of a socialist state led by a Soviet-style vanguard party.[17]

Current research on Soviet foreign policy, as well as its goals, reasons, and even the intensity of engagement, remains a mere approximation due to lack of archival access to this day. South Yemen, a country where the GDR intensified its activity on behalf of the Kremlin, is a case study in which at least some features of Moscow's regional policy during this time are revealed through both secondary literature and the archival material. Halliday, not only one of the few researchers who occupied themselves with South Yemen and its foreign relations, but also the only one who also devoted extensive interest to the USSR's presence in the country, advocates for the relevance of the Aden case for the Soviet Union's Middle East policy. And rightly so. Despite the lack of any extra-territorial status, and even though the USSR officially never maintained the number of forces in the PDRY as they did in Egypt and Somalia,[18] Moscow enjoyed full access to South

12 | Cigar, 1985, 793.

13 | Halliday, 1990, 217.

14 | Ibid. 1990, 178; also see: Brehony, 2013, 81; Cigar, 1985, 775.

15 | Cigar, 1985, 782.

16 | Cigar, 1985, 777.

17 | On the GDR's "model character" for the developing countries, also see: Howell, 1994, 328.

18 | Halliday, 1990, 204.

Yemen's military facilities and Aden advanced to "the port most frequently visited by the Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean."[19] South Yemen provided the USSR with a military base and all necessary privileges in all but name.

All in all, Halliday considers the "alliance with the USSR [...] the most important component of the PDRY's foreign policy"[20] and emphasizes the political benefits and dependencies of both sides:[21] On the one hand, South Yemen clearly played the dependent part. The Soviet Union promoted itself as South Yemen's external security guarantor in the region. The survival of the radical NF/YSP regime hinged on this Soviet guarantee, just as the SED regime in East-Berlin did. This clear commitment by Aden to the Eastern Bloc only added to the radical state's isolation in the region. At times, Aden even opted against the consensus of the other Arab states in support of the Eastern Bloc.[22] On the other hand, small, isolated, and unimportant Aden had emerged as Moscow's only Marxist-Leninist "model state" in the Middle East. No wonder the Kremlin was ready to go to great lengths to secure "socialism on three continents," even after the shock of the "1986 crisis," and to keep its incarnated model and symbol of Marxist-Leninist expansion alive and healthy.

2. Advocacy for an East German Foreign Policy in its Own Right

For the GDR, the scope of action for its foreign policy was considerably small, as East Germany had to maneuver between three restricting determinants: the Soviet Union, West Germany, and the demands from within the GDR. But to simply consider the GDR's policy in the Middle East as a "residuum of Bonn's action or non-action"[23] does not do justice to international relations at the time. A comprehensive assessment of East German foreign policy cannot rely on a restricted view that defines East Berlin's policy as a mere reaction to Bonn alone. Rather, one has to acknowledge the fact that – despite Bonn's early internal and external political strength – both Germanys had to maneuver within the determinants of the Cold War. Even though Bonn was able to acquire an actual degree of sovereignty toward the Western allied forces, the FRG was no fully sovereign state either before German reunification in 1990. Thus, the argument

19 | Cigar, 1985, 781.

20 | On the intensifying relationship between Moscow and Aden, See: Halliday, 1990, 178; Dresch, 2000, 134.

21 | Similar to other analysts of the time like Cigar, 1985.

22 | E.g., the formal recognition of the Afghan regime opposed the common Arab position.

23 | Wippel, 1996, 27.

that no East German foreign policy existed due to its restricted sovereignty alone does not hold.

Beyond West Germany, the Soviet Union – the GDR's midwife and the guarantor of its existence – always remained the major determinant of East German foreign policy. However, within the staked out field of international action, the GDR incrementally established itself as an international actor. Regardless of its lack of full sovereignty and thus its limited autonomy in the international sphere, East Berlin had to act on its own accord. At a certain point Moscow was neither willing nor able to watch and guide each and every step of the GDR. Rather, the Kremlin was sure that the SED would act in anticipatory obedience and embrace Soviet interests as part of its own foreign policy. East Germany had to become active itself. In the beginning, this meant copying Soviet policies as far as possible. However, the GDR had to realize that it had very different prerequisites in resources and the GDR's national interests, or at least its foreign policy priorities, were not even close to being identical to the Soviet agenda.

Due to the modest tools at its disposal, East Germany began to create its own foreign policy strategies to further its national interests. East Germany indeed developed several strategies for the Global South in general and the Middle East in particular, which together can be considered a "Middle East Policy." While East Berlin rather passively followed Moscow's orders during the first phase of its foreign policy, it was already beginning to frame bilateral relations where possible. After international recognition of the GDR, Moscow gave assignments rather than orders and left the details to East Berlin. In the 1980s, the Kremlin, due to its own emerging weakness, even tolerated single-handed decisions and strategies like Honecker's aloofness toward the new PDRY regime after the "1986 crisis." Toward Bonn, the GDR tried to react proactively to any blank spots of West German international engagement, with South Yemen being the prime example. Thus, the GDR's policy in the Middle East may be characterized as a restricted "fill-in policy" between the two determinants, Bonn and Moscow. This has to be considered more than a "residuum of Bonn's actions" though. It was a framed foreign policy based on specific strategies to pursue the interests of the state. All three of the determinants mentioned above more or less could turn into either a guarantor for or threat to the existence of East Germany as a separate state under SED leadership. Thus, East Berlin did not simply move within the given limits, but *consciously worked with* them. East Berlin's engagement in the Middle East in general and in South Yemen in particular clearly show that the SED developed several strategies aiming to first ensure the survival of the GDR as the SED's state and second to secure its acceptance as an international actor by expanding East Germany's international position.

3. The GDR in South Yemen: A Phase Analysis of Foreign Policy

Moscow's official reading of politics in the Middle East had dominated the GDR's foreign policy approach throughout the state's existence.[24] Not surprisingly, the Kremlin's high times of engagement in the region from the 1970s to the early 1980s coincide with the GDR's most active phase in the Middle East and its engagement in South Yemen. However, in the very beginning it had been East Germany's initiative THAT promoted the connection to the future leaders in Aden. Just as in other countries of the developing world, this was part of the GDR's "low-profile strategy" to achieve international recognition through the intensification of contacts "from below the governmental level." The major target countries of the GDR's early policies were often led by strong leftist liberation movements, which were considered promising candidates for "socialist development," especially in the Middle East.

3.1 Toward Diplomatic Relations: The First Phase of Engagement

In 1965, a "fundamental resolution" on the support of the African and Arab people in their struggle for liberation with "non-civilian materials" was presented.[25] After South Yemen's declaration of independence in 1967, Aden still was merely one piece in this East German foreign policy puzzle, but this was to change soon enough. In the following years, the political measures taken by East Berlin to further its goal of recognition in South Yemen laid the foundation for cooperation. During this first phase of East German engagement, lasting until 1970, East Berlin was able to build upon personal contacts, leading to the establishment of diplomatic relations between East Berlin and Aden in 1969. When the GDR and South Yemen jointly developed a new South Yemeni constitution in 1970, East Germany was able to squeeze "a foot in the door" to get involved in a variety of other policy fields. After delegating its first advisory group to South Yemen to support the draft of a new constitution, East German consultancy became the catalyst for future cooperation. These relations of cooperation, which grew in the early days of South Yemeni state-formation, emerged as the basis of trust for East Germany's policy of socialist state- and nation-building in the years to follow. From then on, East German engagement intensified continuously until the caesura of 1986.

24 | For further elaboration on these concepts see Chapter 8. The GDR and the "Arab World": A Small State's "Fill-In Policy."

25 | Otto Winzer and Willy Stoph, May 28 1965, in: BArch, DC 20/13001, Bl.28-33. Also see: Storckmann, 2012, 108; Politbürositzung January 10 1967, Annex 5, in: BArch SAPMO, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1093.

3.2 Policy Change toward State-Building: The Second Phase of Engagement

Until the early 1970s, the dominant motivation of East Germany's foreign policy had been securing international recognition as an equal member of the international society of states. South Yemen is one of the earliest examples where this goal was achieved. As a consequence, the SED was able to leave behind its "policy of recognition" and to introduce a new comprehensive bilateral policy toward South Yemen: With Soviet blessing and at South Yemen's request, the GDR developed a policy of socialist state- and nation-building. Whether East Germany believed itself to be able to introduce its own version of Soviet "system export" at the time is certainly debatable. Nonetheless, this is exactly what East German engagement was to become in scope and intensity: A supportive state- and nation-building policy close to neo-colonialist aspirations. Thus, one may also question whether the GDR truly wanted to serve South Yemeni needs better than Moscow. But South Yemenis apparently tended to see it that way, preferring the small GDR as a role model to the overpowering Soviet Union, as it was more comparable to its own size.[26] Also, East Berlin had invested more and earlier in its bilateral relations with Aden than Moscow, so when the Soviet Union induced a policy change in the region in the mid-1970s, the Kremlin was able to use the GDR's good relations with the Aden regime for its own purposes: Over the next decade there clearly existed a "division of labour" between the superpower and its "first officer of foreign policy." While East Berlin promoted inner stability of state and society and aimed to secure the rule of the YSP and its "progressive regime" on the inside, Moscow provided for military training and equipment to guarantee security for the future Socialist state on the outside.

During the second phase of East German foreign policy from 1970 to 1978, the "Phase of Expansion," the GDR diversified its engagement and continuously increased the intensity from "involvement" to "intervention" until the end of the third phase. Through consultancy, East Germany ensured its influence on a wide range of policy fields of the young state: Education, the media, economy, agriculture, even foreign policy and finally the establishment of a jurisdiction and security apparatus, including security policy and South Yemen's secret service, KfS. The latter played a central role in East Germany's policy of socialist state- and nation-building. In Aden, East Berlin cooperated closely with the security services of the USSR, and later on the ČSSR, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, and Hungary,[27] but the MfS of the GDR considered itself the "the most important partner" of the PDRY's KfS.[28] From 1970 onwards, the East German Security

26 | Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011.

27 | Zu den Beziehungen des MfS der VDRJ mit dem MfS der DDR und mit Sicherheitsorganen anderer Länder, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 234, Part 1 of 2, 105.

28 | Ibid.,102.

Service MfS continuously expanded its engagement and advisory presence in South Yemen, even reaching into other policy fields such as legislation and legal affairs in general.

The GDR's high level of engagement during this time in almost all social and political fields was furthered by two dynamics that appear to contradict on first glance. On the one hand, the PDRY had publicly aligned itself with the Eastern Bloc, while the US and Bonn for the time being had given up any aspirations in South Yemen. In addition to that, the Kremlin not only acquiesced to East Berlin's concrete engagement in South Yemen, but even integrated it into its own, more active policy in the region in the mid-1970s.[29] On the other hand, the GDR had to cope with other competitors from outside the Eastern Bloc who sought Aden's attention and trust and thus this smallest sphere of influence: Western experts, UN envoys, and representatives of the World Bank and the IMF. This was one of the major reasons why East Berlin would continually work on South Yemen's behalf, such as by presenting itself as the "honest broker" as opposed to the representatives of the Western world: Within GDR diplomacy, but also among the Yemeni public, it was the GDR's declared goal to ward off these "advances of imperialism."

3.3 Founding of the Vanguard Party and Consolidation: The Third Phase of Engagement

For Moscow and its East German henchman, the most pressing topic in the PDRY's domestic politics during the 1970s was the establishment of a Soviet-style vanguard party. Thus, the founding of the Yemeni Socialist Party in 1978 turned out to be the catalyst event that further intensified the commitment of the Eastern Bloc. This event also initiated the third phase of East German activities, the "Phase of Continuity and Consolidation." Moscow clearly had aimed for the establishment of this vanguard party and kept entertaining a high level of engagement. Furthermore, Moscow added technical assistance to its two major fields of activities, military and ideology. The Kremlin's policy was complemented by the highly diversified East German engagement: East Berlin continued its involvement in the crucial civil fields of law, governance, economy, education, and the media and significantly intensified cooperation with the security apparatus. Nonetheless, it was also time for Soviet and East German engagement to yield concrete results. Evaluation of the performance of the KfS, for example, indicated that the secret service so far had not produced much valuable information. Also, the majority of state institutions were not working efficiently, and despite the early successes in installing "democratic centralism" as the major structural principle,

29 | Letter Scharfenberg and Grünheid, Ministry of Planning, January 1 1974, in: PA AA, MfAA, 166276, 79.

socialist state- and nation-building was far from being accomplished.[30] Personal political conflicts and internal social obstacles seemed to prevent profound improvements and the PDRY's regime was searching for the reasons for failure outside its borders rather than within. Moscow and East Berlin had invested a lot to create a secure foothold and a dependent ally in the region that would follow their guidance. But as the events of 1986 were about to demonstrate, these investments were not to obtain much success.

3.4 Aden's Crisis and East Berlin's Cold Shoulder: The Final Phase of Engagement

In January 1986, the GDR's cooperation and steady intensification of relations with South Yemen were brought to an abrupt end. The internal coup among the leadership of the YSP caused the removal of the principle political actors – the leaders and "heroes" of the revolution – from their posts. Both external actors, the Soviet Union and the GDR, had to accept the unpredictability of the PDRY, but drew quite different conclusions. Moscow, on the one hand, picked up right where its engagement had been interrupted by the "1986 crisis," explicitly tightening its grip on its outpost at the Bab al-Mandab and clearly aiming to further increase control over what was left of the PDRY. The GDR, on the other hand, fully terminated its civil activities. Long-term personal friendships had nourished the relations between the GDR and the PDRY, which had yielded advantages such as unofficial channels of communication. These personal relationships were particularly important to the GDR's ties with the PDRY, as foreign-policy-making of the 1980s was mostly focused on the person of Honecker, who rejected any rapprochement with the new regime right away. The stable base of relations disappeared and left a diplomatic-political vacuum that the rigid political system of the GDR prevented from being filled again in the few years the two states had left. Especially due to Honecker's irrational foreign policy, which followed his personal preferences rather than the GDR's national interest, this fourth and last phase from 1986 to 1990 simply was too short for relations to recover.

30 | Operative Einschätzung des GMS "Leonhardt" – Vorg.-Nr.XV 3481/82, August 28 1986, HV A/III/AG/018, in: BStU MfS AGMS Nr. 10208-88, 67; Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011.

4. South Yemen as the Exceptional Case and an Approximation to the "Ideal Type" of East German Foreign Policy

> "For the GDR, South Yemen was all about erecting a bastion of socialism. Regardless of its size, there was the hope that [the model of] South Yemen would radiate into the Arab world."[31]
>
> (Fritz Balke, East German diplomat assigned to the policies toward both Yemens in the Section Near and Middle East of the MfAA in the 1980s)

The GDR's activities in South Yemen were by no means the rule but were rather the exception of East German foreign policy in the Global South. But due to the intensity and diversity of engagement, this study concludes that this exceptional case can also serve as a theoretical "ideal type,"[32] a model case that laid beyond West German restrictions and within a scope of action approved by the Soviet Union. This leads to the major hypotheses of this study: In the sense of a paradox,[33] the case of South Yemen may not only be the "exception of the rule," but also a model pointing towards the possible "ideal type" of the "general," a "utopia" of East German foreign policy towards the Global South.

Following Kierkegaard's notion of the general, it may be concluded that this exception carries a meaning beyond its own, as the exception defines the normal situation as well as itself.[34] Only in relation to the "normal condition" we may detect the deviation, the "exceptional case." When reconsidering the "normal condition" of East German foreign policy, two factors, or determinants, create the lion's share of what is considered the scope of action of foreign policy for the GDR: The Soviet Union and the "other" Germany, the Federal Republic in the West. Both major determinants of the GDR's international activities manifested in different ways than they usually did for East German foreign policy: First, South Yemen is one of the few cases where West Germany and West German presence did not play an immediate role in determining the GDR's foreign policy beyond the general question of international diplomatic recognition of East Berlin. Thus Bonn did not have a direct impact on the GDR's activities on the ground and was absent as one of the major determinants of East German foreign policy. Secondly, Moscow

31 | Interview with Fritz Balke on May 23 2011.

32 | Weber, 2002, 10.

33 | This paradox may be resolved as a "dialectic." "Das reinere dialektische besteht darin, daß von einem Prädicat eine Verstandesbestimmung aufgezeigt wird, wie sie an ihr selbst ebenso sehr das Entgegengesetzte ihrer selbst ist, sie sich also in sich aufhebt," Hegel, 1961, 214. On the benefits and limits of the concept of "dialectic" in modern thought in general and the social sciences in particular, especially with regard to the differences between the "three-step" of Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis" and the so-called "Hegelian Dialectic" and its misinterpretations, see: Burch, 2004; Mueller, 1958; Popper, 2009 (1963), 180ff.

34 | Kierkegaard, in: Schmitt, 2005 (1922), 15.

apparently had assigned East Germany to get involved with South Yemen in the 1960s, even though the Soviet Union did not develop a special interest in South Yemen until the mid-1970s. By the time Moscow aimed at establishing Aden as its new unofficial military base in the region, East Berlin was a well-acquainted and respected ally of the radical South Yemeni regime. Within the granted room of maneuver, Moscow had left East Berlin to its own devices for almost a decade, during which the GDR had developed a self-confidence different from its typical dwarfed self-perception. In this, South Yemen, without doubt, was the "exception to the rule" of East German international performance.

However, this "exceptional condition" may not only be considered the exception from the norm. The "exceptional case" of GDR foreign policy in South Yemen may also be considered a model case pointing the way towards a Weberian "ideal type,"[35] a "utopian" idea of East German foreign policy. With his "Idealtypus," Weber first of all introduced an instrument to analyze singular cases, but at the same time it expands the view of the analyst towards the general phenomenon, formed by the sum of singular cases. By "generating [one or several] 'ideal types' from limited empirical material [one may] compare further empirical material with it"[36] and draw conclusions from the similarities and differences between material and ideal type. So this "utopia," though it never existed in reality, may be derived from the singular case of East German foreign policy as it was planned and implemented in the PDRY: Aden was one of many possible foreign policy futures that were realized nowhere else.

How does the "exceptional case" of East German foreign policy, the case of South Yemen, point toward an "ideal type" then? On the one hand, the two major determinants of East German foreign policy allowed for foreign policy activities and self-direction well beyond the regular East German scope of action: The Soviet Union assigned East Berlin to actively engage in the stabilization of the new state in south Arabia as well as its regime, while the Federal Republic of Germany was conspicuously absent from Aden. Bonn's foreign policy simply had no immediate impact on East German activities in South Yemen. On the other hand, South Yemen more than welcomed East German help as a fellow "small country,"[37] and thus accommodated East-Berlin's intended engagement in any

35 | On the ideal type see: Weber 2002, 10; Swedberg, 2005, 119; According to Weber, limited empirical material is analyzed to generate this ideal type, by an "einseitige Steigerung eines oder einiger Gesichtspunkte und durch Zusammenschluss einer Fülle von diffusen und diskreten, hier mehr, dort weniger, stellenweise gar nicht, vorhandenen Einzelerscheinungen, die sich zu jenen einseitig herausgehobenen Gesichtspunkten fügen, zu einem in sich einheitlichen Gedankenbilde," in: Weber, Max, Die "Objektivität" sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis, in: Weber, 1991, 73.

36 | Pohlig, 2013, 304.

37 | Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011.

imaginable way. Clearly, East Germany's diversified activities made the difference for Soviet engagement, such as in Iraq or Syria. In Bagdad and Damascus, East Germany also served as an immediate supporter of Soviet military and technical engagement, as well as the security apparatus. However, activities never achieved a comparable level of intensity or diversity, not in the realm of security, and especially not in the civil sphere: Due to lack of willingness of the host states, in this case Iraq and Syria, no policy could be implemented that approached the level of engagement of the socialist state- and nation-building policy in Aden.

In conclusion, conditions in South Yemen were as close to "ideal conditions"[38] for East German foreign policy making as they could ever be under the rules of the Cold War: An exceptional room for East German maneuver allowed for a high intensity of engagement. South Yemen advanced not only as one of the few East German focal countries, but also achieved one of the highest levels of East German foreign policy engagement outside the Eastern Bloc.[39] Thus Aden is one of the few, if not the only case, where the GDR was able to design and apply an at least partly self-directed comprehensive foreign policy. Based on this observation, one may consider the policy designed for South Yemen a model policy, a kind of blueprint suggesting a theoretical "ideal type" of East German foreign policy toward states of the Global South. In other words: If East Germany had had the autonomy, scope of action, and the resources to do so, its foreign policy towards other countries in the Global South could have looked pretty much the same way as it did in Aden – if the host state cooperated.

38 | "Ideal conditions" in this context means the most positive conditions imaginable. The meaning of "ideal" in the term "ideal conditions" does not correspond with Weber's idea of the "ideal type" as a theoretical notion in any respect.

39 | Apart from Cuba and Nicaragua, other intense engagement usually was focused on certain phases and did not increase continuously from the mid-1960s as it did in South Yemen.