

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Theme: Africa and (the Other) Europe: Imageries – Discourses – Exchanges

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Artner, Annamaria & Biedermann, Zsuzsánna	2	Hodorovska, Marie	20
Artner, Annamaria	2	Jarošová, Soňa	21
Biedermann, Zsuzsánna	2	Jůnová-Macková, Adéla	22
Czirják, Ráhel	3	Kantoříková, Jana	23
Ginelli, Zoltán	4	Klepárník, Vít	24
Kiss, Judit	4	Koura, Jan	25
Geröcs, Tamás	5	Burton, Eric	25
Marsai, Viktor	6	Harisch, Immanuel R.	25
Pásztor, Szabolcs	6	Holečková, Marta Edith	26
Tarrósy, István & Solymári, Dániel	7	Katsakioris, Constantin	26
Augustyniak, Zuzanna	8	Pešta, Mikuláš	27
Clarke, Olga	8	Kozieł, Patrycja	28
Karamalla, Nagmeldin	8	Krizmanics, Reka	29
Kuraszkiewicz, Kamil	9	Łuksza, Agata	30
Rubinkowska-Anioł, Hanna	9	Mesarič, Andreja	31
Bagdi, Sára	10	Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Sabelo J.	32
Bodie, George	11	Pešta, Mikuláš	33
Buzássyová, Barbora	12	Borovský, Matyáš	33
Dallywater, Lena	13	Marcks, Jakob	34
Fonseca, Helder Adegar	13	Mazanec, Jakub	34
Kocsev, Bence	14	Menclová, Barbora	35
Moledo, Ana	15	Pucherová, Dobrota	37
Moeser, Robin	15	Schmiedl, Martin & Rudwick, Stephanie	38
Saunders, Chris	16	Simuziya, Nsama Jonathan & Rudwick, Stephanie	39
Drwal, Małgorzata	17	Skalník, Petr	40
Frison, Anita	18	Trnovec, Silvester	41
Gasper-Hulvat, Marie	19	Uhde, Zuzana	42
		Vitackova, Martina	43

Artner, Annamaria & Biedermann, Zsuzsánna

(Institute of Economics, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary)

A2 PANEL: „Africa and Eastern Europe in the space of coloniality, decoloniality and neo-coloniality”

Section I. – Similarities and differences

Artner, Annamaria

(Institute of Economics, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Milton Friedman University, Hungary)

Africa and Eastern Europe in the world order

A2 PANEL

Both the similarities of and the differences between Eastern Europe and Africa lie in their position in the hierarchic capitalist world system. Eastern Europe plays the role of the periphery in relation to Western Europe, which is the part of the global centre, and the role of a centre relative to Africa, which is the part of the global periphery. The presentation explains what these relations mean from the viewpoint of the flow of values and the possibility of catching up. The author will also examine the relations of the two regions in retrospect. In the 1960s and 1970 the two regions were much closer to each other than today, due to their mostly similar projects of indigenous development and independence from the global centre. At that time Africa and Eastern Europe could mutually benefit from their relations that is exemplified by the effect of the world system theory, enriched by many scholars in Africa, to the higher Education of Hungary. After the systemic change in 1989 and particularly joining the EU in 2004 Central and Eastern Europe has become an integrated periphery of the centre. This led to a change of relations with Africa. The initiatives to reconstruct the relations are driven by economic interest of the ruling elite of the region, while lack solidarity, which is reflected in the stance of Central and Eastern European governments on the migration from Africa.

Biedermann, Zsuzsánna

(Institute of Economics, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary)

Similarities between Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa

A2 PANEL

What makes Eastern Europe and Africa similar?

Both regions have failed to actively shape their role in world trade.

The Visegrad Four countries have become automotive assembly centres with few manufacturing entities in local hands. After the regime change in the nineties, these countries hoped that foreign direct investments in the automotive industry would have positive spill over effects by contracting local suppliers and spreading cutting-edge technology. However, after thirty years, we can conclude that these hopes proved false: positive spillover effects are minimal and moving up the value chain did not bring about higher added value. However, local governments race to the bottom in providing tax cuts and favourable legal background for potential investors.

Sub-Saharan African hopes have also been shattered: almost sixty years after independence, most countries play an eerily similar role in world trade to that of their colonialist one. They export raw materials and import manufactured goods when successful natural resource-based development requires strong institutional background that most of these exporters clearly lack. Economists see Africa's future in visionary developmental states and strengthening the local small and medium-size manufacturing base.

What can these regions do to promote their development and reap the benefits of trade? How can a government actively shape and change a country's seemingly predestined role in world trade?

This paper is looking for thought-provoking answers to the above questions.

Czirják, Ráhel

(University of Pécs, Hungary)

Examining neo-colonialism through EU-African trade relations

A2 PANEL

The economic subordination of Africa – created by the colonial system – has not ended with the political independence. Although today the sovereign nation states can decide for themselves who they do business with, in many cases, the seemingly advantageous pacts cannot result in the significant economic catching up of Africa with the developed states. Close economic ties with the former colonial powers still exist, meanwhile new actors have emerged and gained significant influence on the continent. All these things raise the question of neo-colonialism, that external actors continue to influence the continent through newer and more sophisticated means than those used during the period of colonialization, that makes them capable to influence the seemingly independent African states' political and economic system. Investigating the existence of neo-colonialism would require a longer and more detailed research, however the resulting economic asymmetries can also be detected from the trade relations. Therefore, the presentation examines the EU-African economic ties, and tries to answer whether there is any asymmetry among them. By giving an answer it becomes clear if there is any justification for a more detailed examination of neo-colonization in these relationships.

Ginelli, Zoltán

(Corvinus University, Hungary)

The 'Ghana Job': Opening Semiperipheral Hungary to the Postcolonial World

A2 PANEL

This paper follows a world-systemic and decolonial approach to investigate Hungarian semiperipheral positioning strategies in global colonial history by looking at the interactions and converging interests of Hungary and Ghana in the early 1960s. The paper focuses on József Bognár, a hugely important but forgotten political figure in socialist era Hungarian economics and foreign economic policy-making. In 1963, Bognár founded a government think tank, the Centre for Afro-Asian Research (CAAR) at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (renamed in 1973 as the Institute for World Economy). The institute evolved out of Bognár's "Ghana job": Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah, on the occasion of his Eastern European round-trip in 1961, asked Bognár to develop Ghana's First Seven-Year Plan. This was followed by various foreign policy deals and assignments, including the monetary expert János Fekete's secret advisory mission. Bognár's associates, including Tamás Szentés, assisted in preparations for the West African diplomatic delegation led by Gyula Kállay in December 1962, which was displayed in the 1963 documentary movie "Four weeks in Africa". Nkrumah's pan-Africanist, African socialist and Non-Aligned path made Ghana into a vibrant transnational hub of planning experts and a contested "development laboratory", where Hungary and Ghana both sought to lever Western economic dependency during Cold War détente. The paper explores how this Ghanaian experience enabled Hungarian entrance into postcolonial export markets and development consultancy assignments (both previously dominated by Western imperialists), and how it influenced an export-oriented focus in the Hungarian economic reformist movement of the New Economic Mechanism (1968).

Kiss, Judit

(Institute of Economics, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary and University of Buckingham, UK)

Same or different? The pattern of ECE-African relationship

A2 PANEL

The main aim of the paper is to introduce the pattern of relationship between East-Central Europe (ECE) and Africa South of the Sahara. The key research question is whether ECE countries basically follow the post-colonialist (neo-colonialist, dependent, unequal, asymmetrically interdependent etc.) pattern of the EU and other traditional partners or based on their historical legacy and past experience they managed to create a different type of less dependent, more equal and mutually beneficial relationship with Africa. At the level of abstraction, the research question raises the issue

whether semi-periphery–periphery relationship differs significantly from the centre-periphery relationship.

As the author is an economist, the research question will be attempted from a political economy perspective, based on facts and figures. In addition, selected aspects of the value system will be incorporated, as well. The assessment of economic relations will be carried out in the field of foreign trade, FDI, aid and remittances in the case of the V4 (Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia). As economic relations reflect the value choice of the partners, the paper pays a special attention to the value transmission in the case of democracy and corruption.

The hypothesis – and the preliminary conclusion – is that the pattern of the ECE relationship with Africa does not differ significantly from that of the EU in the case of trade, FDI and aid, all the more as being EU members V4 should align with EU principles, rules and regulations. As far migration related remittances, building democracy and fighting against corruption is concerned, the ECE countries differ from the EU in a negative way; they are not the most supportive and credible partners, though the ECE is not a homogenous block. Unfortunately, the long-lasting Corona-virus pandemic might have a detrimental impact on the two regions' relationship.

Section II. – Expanding towards Africa

A5 PANEL

Geröcs, Tamás

(State University of New York at Binghamton, USA)

Russian economic presence in Africa

A5 PANEL

The purpose of this paper is to critically examine Russia's growing political and economic reorientation in some Africa countries. Despite the rich historical legacy of the decolonization period, the Russian Federation's economic presence today is hardly comparable to its Soviet past. Since the late 1990s economic ties between many Africa countries and Russia have been reorganized and strengthened, although Russian trade and investment lags behind not only to Western countries, but also behind the rapidly expanding China. Nonetheless there are a growing number of Russian business activities in many African countries. Russia needs to broaden its export markets not only for its traditional products, but also for its capital. Most of the Russian investments concentrate on mineral extraction, but in the last few years other types of investment appeared as well, amongst which financial and industrial, e.g. in the telecommunication, nuclear or defense industries, are the most visible ones. The paper argues that in the changing international environment Russian-African economic ties might deepen in the future as the economic, trade and investment affairs seem to develop asymmetric complementarities. It is still an open question whether African countries and Russia benefit from the deepening economic ties,

or Russia's growing presence leads to neo-colonial relations that are comparable to European imperialism. The aim of the research is to provide a theoretical framework for the trajectory of the deepening economic, political and in some cases military ties between Russia and some African countries. These developments on the one hand might be part of new imperialism in which rising great powers in a multi-polar world-system race to conquer African resources. On the other hand, global multi-polarity might support African comprador elites to loosen old post-colonial ties in exchange for new ones, as it is the most visible in the case of Russia's engagement with the Central African Republic.

Marsai, Viktor

(Migration Research Institute in Budapest and University of Public Service, Hungary)

Two Opening Towards the South – the Hungarian Diplomacy in Africa in the 1950s and the 2010s. Similarities and differences

A5 PANEL

Hungary had two rounds of opening towards Africa in the last 70 years. In the late 1950s and the early 1960s, it was a response to the transformation of the international system, and an attempt to break out from the political isolation after the military defeat in the WWII, and, the revolution and reprisal in 1956. Furthermore, important economic factors also motivated the move and Budapest built up significant presence in the African continent. Nevertheless, the regime change and the collapse of socialism brought a long decay in the relations.

Sixty years later, Hungary also tried to react to the changing international landscape and shaped her foreign policy and trade to the new realities. In this context, Africa gained important position again which was well demonstrated by the Southern Opening Policy in 2015 and the new Africa Strategy of the Hungarian government in 2019.

In my presentation, I will analyse and compare the circumstances of the two policies. I will show the similarities: at the beginning, the lack of necessary knowledge and experiences in the African relations, the competition between different Hungarian agencies, and, sometimes the reluctances to act in the continent. And, I will analyse the differences: the changing position of Hungary in the international system, the tools and assets which were used in the expanding connections by Budapest, and the transforming nature of African attitude towards Hungary.

Pásztor, Szabolcs

(University of Public Service, Hungary)

Central and Eastern European Diplomatic Missions in Africa - Growth Opportunities or Useless Efforts?

A5 PANEL

Several countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) have been rediscovering their old political and economic relations with Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Following and sometimes copying the enlarged engagement of some emerging countries (for example China, Turkey, Russia), an increasing number of CEE embassies and trading offices have been opened. After many years of political and trade inaction, the two regions seem to be committed to foster closer economic and commercial ties. Namely, the SSA and CEE countries are keen on diversifying their export structure, and the geographic proximity seems to be a huge asset for both sides. Measuring the effects of the CEE opening is of crucial importance for the foreign policies and by better understanding the impacts the necessary adjustments can be made also. This paper tries to evaluate the effects and consequences of the increased engagement of the two regions by finding the relationship between the number of new diplomatic missions and the trade relations. The central question is whether the establishment of an embassy or a consulate has a direct effect on exports and imports. By answering this question, we can shed more light on the effectiveness and success of the opening of CEE countries and the role of embassies played in fostering closer economic ties.

Tarrósy, István & Solymári, Dániel

(University of Pecs, Hungary)

Pragmatic Hungarian foreign policy towards Africa in the 1960s: Educational exchanges, cultural transfers and their rebirth in the 2010s

A5 PANEL

The paper draws upon ongoing archival research and a series of qualitative interviews to construct the analytical narrative of a pragmatic Hungarian foreign policy towards African countries from the early 1960s. Following the first ‘Africa tours’ of Communist Prime Minister Gyula Kállai in 1962 and 1966, a focussed governmental Africa-strategy was launched, which contributed to a thorough (not ad hoc!) series of educational and cultural exchanges, which came along with more hard-power collaborations, in particular, in the context of bilateral trade deals and investment schemes. The authors present several case studies – for instance, as far as the first group of government scholarship-holders from Africa fostering university studies at the then University of Pécs is concerned – in a yet scarcely researched field of study, which will shed light on the ‘positive’ heritage of the immediate past offering ground to the rebirth of another pragmatic approach towards the continent in the form of the ‘Opening to the South’ foreign policy chapter of the Hungarian government of today.

Augustyniak, Zuzanna

(University of Warsaw, Poland)

A7 Roundtable: Poland and the Post-colonial Africa

Although Poland, like other Central and Eastern European countries, did not have previous colonies on the African continent, the country was able to build relations with most African countries on variety of fields. The lack of colonial history and common denominators in social sphere helped Poland in building bridges of communication with African societies.

The panel will analyse different aspects of Poland's bonds with Africa (engagement of archeologists, collectors, economic cooperation and situation of West-African diaspora in Poland) in the context of post-colonial debate.

Clarke, Olga

(University of Warsaw, Poland)

In neoliberal promise of better life: soccer players turned entrepreneurs, celebrities, students and trophy wives. African diaspora in Poland and illusion of inclusion.

A7 ROUNDTABLE

Contrary to the colonial powers of France and England and the countries with stronger economies (i.e. Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway) Poland occupies a peripheral position in terms of migration from Africa. The structure of the African diaspora in Poland is similar to that of the Hungarian, Czech, Ukrainian and Russian. The paper will discuss the landscape of the African and Afro-Caribbean diaspora. From students to entrepreneurs and members of mixed families, it is based on emphasising cultural distinctiveness and conscious self-exoticization. Suspended between the hostile Polish migration policy and the difficult labor market, hoping to look at the richer economies of Western and Northern Europe, the African diaspora tries to negotiate with the homogeneous shape of the Polish national structure expressed in language by questioning words such as „murzyn" (untranslatable term describing black people/Africans).

Karamalla, Nagmeldin

(University of Commerce and Services, Poland)

Economic cooperation of Poland with African countries in post-colonial perspective

A7 ROUNDTABLE

From the economic point of view, there has been a marked increase in the level of trade exchange between the continent and Poland in recent years. The main reasons are: increase in economic growth of some African countries and Poland's strong desire to find new markets in contrast to

Russia and the usual eastern European countries. This process can be analysed in the context of post-colonial tendencies, i.e. the bridges of communication between Poland and the countries of the African continent may be much easier than the countries that used to have colonies in Africa. The aim of the presentation is to discuss political and social conditions which would allow for the development of economic cooperation of Poland with African countries.

Kuraszkiewicz, Kamil

(University of Warsaw, Poland)

Problems of post-colonial archeology in Egypt

A7 ROUNDTABLE

There is an ongoing discussion on ancient Egyptian artefacts that are kept in museums abroad — including whether or not should they be returned to Egypt. This issue is closely related to the problem of the (colonial and post-colonial) exploration and exploitation of African cultures. While the problem cannot apparently be solved in any simple way, the discussion may (and should) lead to finding mutually advantageous solutions that would take into consideration all the possibilities and expectations. Should countries having no colonial past, and — on the other hand — strongly involved in archaeological research in Africa stand on the sidelines of the discussion? Or might they help in reaching an agreement?

Rubinkowska-Anioł, Hanna

(University of Warsaw, Poland)

Korabiewicz's collection from National Museum in Warsaw in post-colonial discourse

A7 ROUNDTABLE

Wacław Korabiewicz (1903-1994) was an acknowledged Polish collector of African artefacts and specialist on Ethiopian crosses. Nowadays, National Museum in Warsaw houses one of the biggest and most important collections of the crosses in the world. It is a permanent deposit offered by Korabiewicz to the Museum in 1970s. Korabiewicz's collection included artefacts of special religious and cultural value including Ethiopian tabot (the most sacred object in Ethiopian Orthodox Church). In contemporary post-colonial debates the question of how the collection was constructed and how it is presented is of great importance, both to the Museum and in more general terms. These issues will be addressed in the presentation and discussion.

Bagdi, Sára

(Kassák Museum in Budapest, Hungary)

Representing the "other" in the Hungarian workers' movement

B1 SESSION

Proletarian Culture Movement, African themes and songs were included in the repertoire of worker choirs and other collective performances. In this talk, I will discuss the role of African tropes in Hungarian workers' culture with the 100% journal (1927-1929) in focus. As a progressive, communist journal, its editorial team considered non-western groups as important agents of the international workers' movement and claimed that solidarity among workers must transgress the ethno-nationalist models.

Authors of 100% also criticized European primitivism (including primitivism in the Hungarian avant-garde) for its sentimentalism and they advocated for a critical reading of the colonial Africa but the socialist deconstruction of primitivist themes did not necessarily result in a more subtle reading of non-western cultures, African tropes still remained simple tools for discussing the invasive politics of western imperialism.

These representations of the imagined "other" both contained regressive and innovative aspects; they provided an opportunity for progressive, socialist and communist authors to tackle issues such as human rights violations and racial inequality but the discourse was also always linked to a process of constant appropriation of non-Western cultural elements which never abandoned general prejudices towards the "other".

Bodie, George

(University College London, UK)

Distant Relatives: Depictions of Mozambique in the German Democratic Republic

B2 SESSION

The German Democratic Republic is often depicted as an isolated state, thanks in large part to the restrictions it placed on citizens' movement and the arrival of potentially dangerous ideas from the West. But such isolation was not replicated in all directions; at home, GDR citizens were bombarded with depictions of the revolutionary world beyond their borders as part of the state's solidarity regime. In the 1970s, Lusophone Africa was a central focus of this solidarity regime, as leftist-inspired movements fought for national liberation in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. This paper will explore how these struggles were depicted in the GDR via an exploration of the work of Ulrich Makosch, the GDR's most prominent foreign news journalist. A prolific travel writer and broadcaster, Makosch spent much of the 1970s travelling to Mozambique to document areas under the control of FRELIMO, and his outputs included books, a documentary film, and several articles in the GDR press. Analysing these outputs, this paper will argue that depictions of Mozambique in Makosch's work sought—paradoxically—to both other Mozambique while portraying it an intimate and close to the GDR by virtue of the two countries supposedly shared struggle. By doing so, it will shed light on depictions of revolutionary Africa from the other, socialist, Europe, exploring how these depictions either reinforce or upend our notions of the Western gaze.

Buzássyová, Barbora

(Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia)

Tractors, Trainees, Teachers: Czechoslovakia and the quest for African “development” (1960s-1970s)

A4 SESSION

Many scholars refer to the decolonization era beginning in the mid-1950s as the period of developmentalist imperialism, marked by the superpowers’ contest over the best “development model” for the emergent independent states. The development aid soon became a new arena where representatives from both sides of Cold War world could test their machinery, development theories and education reforms in the conditions entirely different from the environment they were originally designed for. So how was Czechoslovakia linked to this newly-formed system of international development aid? Using Czechoslovak development programmes as a lens, the paper aims to analyse the Czechoslovak strategical positioning towards African post-colonies within a larger framework of international development aid policies. I focus on the roles of Czechoslovak experts in bilateral and UNESCO-sponsored development projects and the ways they helped to shape the official discourse of “Africa” in popular imagination. Drawing on the concept of semiperipheral postcoloniality, I try to illustrate what motivations drove the political-economic relations with the decolonized states and in what ways the Czechoslovak development projects countered and, conversely, replicated the colonial discourse commonly reserved for western colonial states. The presentation thus aims to contribute to the current debates on the East-South relations during the Cold War and shed some light on the international dimension of Czechoslovak state-socialism.

Dallywater, Lena

(Leibniz-Institut für Länderkunde, Germany)

A3 PANEL: 'Eastern Europe and the Decolonisation of Southern Africa: Some Reconsiderations'

Many different actors outside Africa supported the struggles for liberation and processes of decolonisation in the countries of Southern Africa, ranging from non-governmental organisations, the United Nations, country governments, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of African Unity, and liberation movements in other parts of the globe. The aim of the Southern African liberation movements to keep open connections to all supporters, be it in the West, East, North or South, entangled their various agendas. Recent scholarship has emphasized the complexity of the concept of the Cold War, which cannot be seen in bipolar terms, as “West” against “East”. The question of which side of the ideological divide between the superpowers in the Cold War was more successful (or lucky) in impacting actors and societies in the Global South is still relevant, yet a Cold War perspective falls short in unfolding the complex geographies of connections and the multipolarity of actions and transactions, some of which continue to influence relationships today. Inspired by the spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences and the growing field of global and transregional area studies, a promising body of work has been developing in the last ten years to encounter this lacunae, with more and more archives become available. Still, too little is known about the networks that were shaped through the movement of individuals and ideas from Southern Africa to the “East” and from the “East” to Southern Africa. Following up on the presenters’ research on actors and archives in both Anglophone and Lusophone contexts, and connecting these new sources and materials to previous dialogue and scholarly exchange on the manifold ties of Eastern Europe and Southern African decolonisation which, among others, led to the publication of *Southern African Liberation Movements and the Global Cold War ,East’* (2019), this panel seeks to tease out more of these networks, movements and connections. From an interdisciplinary, transregional perspective, the panel aims to reconsider aspects of Eastern Europe’s role in the decolonisation of Southern Africa. A thematic focus is placed on the diversity of relations between the “Other Europe” and African/South African independent countries and liberation movements from 1960 to 1990, while also acknowledging the role of scientific exchanges and transfers in this dynamic process.

Fonseca, Helder Adegar

(University of Évora, Portugal)

The „Other Europe“ and the „Angolan Revolution“ (1960-1970): connections and agency

A3 PANEL

The historiography of the Liberation struggles in Southern Africa can benefit from a research based overview on the connections and agency of the „Other Europe" with the liberation movements of Southern Africa. Focusing on the case of the „Angolan Revolution“, the paper proposes to trace the course of such connect or competitive action during the Decolonization War. This extensive historical analysis consider the „Other Europe“ countries involved, the variety (types) of the action, the arenas (types) where they took place, as well as the „CONCP“ and Southern African Liberations Movements who sought to benefit or excluded. The main documental corpus, covering the period from January 1962 to October 1974, consists of 652 weekly reports of Angola Portuguese Military Intelligence services (SCCIA).

Kocsev, Bence

(Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe, Leipzig, Germany)

Hungarian-African relations before and after African independence, with special attention to scientific exchanges and transfers

A3 PANEL

Seizing on the opportunities triggered by the Khrushchev thaw, a great variety of economic, political, cultural, and academic relations had been developed between the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the newly independent countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin-America. In this context, from the early 1960s onwards, Hungary made significant efforts to gain positions particularly in Africa. The strong Hungarian interest in Africa was based on three dimensions: economically, Africa was regarded as both a huge export market and a source of important raw materials the Hungarian economy desperately needed; politically, the continent grew significantly in diplomatic importance as it was expected that the Hungarian presence in those countries could strengthen the international latitude of the country; and thirdly, Africa was considered as a region where Hungarian experiences in planning and plan implementation might be utilized. Against this background, Hungarian experts and academicians rapidly established contacts with their African colleagues. The paper particularly focuses on Hungarian economists who were of the utmost importance in forging relations with the Africa countries. These experts not just provided substantial added value to the global understanding of development problems in post-colonial countries, but managed to maintain regular exchanges, build academic connections and develop institutional connections with their African colleagues. The paper furthermore aims to contextualize the development of these relations and hence also focuses on how the shifts in Hungary's political-economic integration impacted these relations.

Moledo, Ana

(Leipzig University, Germany)

Between actual assistance and mere lip service: A glimpse into the relations of Luso-African liberation movements with “communist front organizations”

A3 PANEL

A considerable body of literature has studied over the last decade the connections and (material, political and cultural) support that the Soviet Union as well as individual countries within the Eastern bloc provided to different Southern African liberation movements during the Cold War. Official assistance was usually channelled through party structures as well as national institutions and committees that cared for the bilateral relations between partners but it was not exclusively limited to national means. International organizations located within or closely associated with Eastern European countries, such as the World Federation of Trade Unions or the International Organization of Journalists (both based in Prague) and the World Peace Council, were also arenas in which the cooperation between Eastern Europeans and southern African revolutionary movements acquired a distinctive character. These settings, which also included Western European and international delegates, were of particular importance for the liberation movements to strengthen their international legitimacy and recognition while enabling the mobility and circulation of its militants. Although these organizations had created solidarity funds and initiatives to support the struggle against colonialism and apartheid, the relations with those that should have been their beneficiaries were exposed to misunderstandings and tensions that sometimes hindered more practical assistance. Yet, in some cases, the liaison of these institutions with specialized international agencies became a fundamental bridge to extend the affinities and cooperation from East to West. This paper relies on primary sources collected in French archives and documents published by Luso-African liberation movements to unveil the undertakings of these international bodies and, in particular, of certain delegates on behalf of decolonization in the former Portuguese colonies and more broadly southern Africa.

Moeser, Robin

(Leipzig University, Germany)

Apartheid South Africa's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Influence of Soviet Diplomats, 1987-1991

A3 PANEL

In mid-1991, the South African Government signed the NPT and subsequently concluded a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). After more than two decades of defying non-proliferation norms coupled with the parallel development of six nuclear warheads, between 1988 and 1991, South African delegates attended four high-level meetings at

the IAEA in Vienna with officials from the three NPT Depository Powers, the US, the UK and the USSR. During these encounters, the South African position on NPT accession and nuclear safeguards changed tremendously, ultimately promoting a regional initiative attempting to establish an African-wide Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ). What stands out as most astonishing from these meetings are the roles played by the Soviet Union's representatives, who were very eager to establish close personal relations with their South African counterparts. This was despite the absence of official diplomatic relations between Moscow and Pretoria since the mid-1950s. Research carried out in multiple archives using hitherto untapped primary sources and interviews with South African and Russian diplomats, show how Pretoria's position on NPT accession was subject to secret domestic as well as regional political considerations. In the process, the last Apartheid government managed to skilfully connect South Africa's NPT accession with that of the neighbouring Frontline States Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Recently declassified archival records shed light on the transnational dimension, encompassing the exchanges and entanglements between South Africa, the Soviet Union and the Frontline States in the region.

Saunders, Chris

(University of Cape Town, South Africa)

Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and the End of Apartheid in Southern Africa: Some Reconsiderations

A3 PANEL

Thirty years on from the collapse of the Soviet Union, and over thirty from the breaching of the Berlin Wall, the relationship between what happened in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and the ending of apartheid, first in South Africa's de facto colony of Namibia and then in South Africa itself, remains relatively little explored in the relevant academic literature. Perhaps the leading general account, Vladimir Shubin's *The Hot "Cold War"* (2008), is the work of a former activist and hardly a dispassionate assessment. While the assistance that the two main liberation movements, the South West Africa People's Movement and the African National Congress, obtained from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union over some decades is now well-known, the two armed struggles are no longer considered key in bringing about the ending of apartheid in either country. This paper seeks to place the support given by Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union to the anti-apartheid cause in the context of pressure applied on the South African government from elsewhere, both internationally and, in particular, from within South Africa. While the paper will give some consideration to the earlier relationship between the Soviet Bloc and South Africa's liberation, it will focus especially on the key years 1988-91, years that saw both the ending of the Cold War in Europe and the decisive move away from apartheid in Southern Africa.

Drwal, Małgorzata

(Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland)

Soviet socialist realism in South African working-class theatre in the 1940s

B1 SESSION

This contribution discusses the cultural transfer of Soviet socialist realism to South African working-class theatre of the Garment Workers' Union. This trade union, established in 1930 in Johannesburg, consisted predominantly of unskilled white (Afrikaner) women workers from a rural background. Presenting the drama 'Die Offerande' ['The Sacrifice'] (1941) by the worker-playwright Hester Cornelius, this paper demonstrates how this borrowed aesthetic was grafted onto an Afrikaner cultural setting. To outline the context in which the play was created and performed, this presentation traces the paths of transfer and elaborates on the representation of the Soviet Union and Soviet socialism in the trade union periodical *Klerewerker/Garment Worker*, where the play was published.

I argue that this Afrikaans drama drew from the repertoire of Soviet propaganda literature, adapting it to the realities with which the Afrikaner worker could identify. This was achieved due to the socialist realist principle of *narodnost* (i.e. inclusion of a national folk element). Thus, the play, propagating a transnational idea of workers' unity, incorporated references to the Afrikaners' national founding myth and characters representing 'typical' Afrikaners. Moreover, the play's plot is reminiscent of the socialist realist novel master plot, which illustrates the protagonist's transition from political immaturity to political and class awareness.

Frison, Anita

(Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy)

A Russian Gaze on Africa: the Role of the Journal Vokrug sveta between the End of the 19th and the Beginning of the 20th Century

B2 SESSION

This paper intends to provide an overview on the politics deployed to depict African peoples and countries by the popular Russian journal Vokrug sveta (Around the World). Articles and travel memoirs written by Russian journalists and cultural figures will be taken into account (for example V. Nemirovič-Dančenko, A. Munsikij, N. Mamontov, E. Cimmerman), along with European colonial literature provided in Russian translation (among others, Pierre Loti, Auguste Terrier, Gaston Leroux, John Russell). The aim is to highlight how the European colonial discourse influenced Russian narrative on Africa, even though Russia often took Africa's part. As far as the timeframe is concerned, the discussion will deal with late Imperial Russia up to 1917, since after the Revolution the anti-imperialist paradigm became more obvious and stressed in all of the media. The materials will be analysed through the lenses of postcolonial theory, and especially the works by Edward Said and Homi Bhabha. They will also be considered in the broader context of Russia-Africa relations and the Russian construction of Africa as an Oriental other.

Gasper-Hulvat, Marie

(Kent State University, Ohio, USA)

“Deti Negrov and Negritionki: African Bodies in Early Soviet Children's Book Illustration.”

B5 SESSION

This paper focuses on Soviet interpretations of blackness and Africanity through illustrations of black bodies in Soviet children's picture books from the late 1920s. In an era of aspirations towards the internationalization of Communism, representations of diverse nationalities appear in books that would prepare Soviet children for the imminent, worldwide, multicultural proletarian revolution. Many of these volumes presented common racialized tropes of *“negritionki* (little negroes),” with naked bodies topped by exaggeratedly large heads possessing protruding lips. Nonetheless, others provided more nuanced exposure to the concept of diverse, particularized nationalities.

For example, one volume depicting ten extra-Soviet nationalities included two scenes labeled “AFRICA,” with one identified as “Arab” in the accompanying text and the other illustrating a grass-topped hut associated with sub-Saharan tribal architecture. But even on the cover of this multinational work, a black-skinned boy is depicted with bulging eyes and a wide smile that recall nineteenth-century Western racialized depictions of black children. The back cover shows a black child holding aloft a picture book, evoking the one held by the reader. The visual elision between the reader and the depicted child served to promote the Soviet ideal of internationalism. It encouraged the reader to empathize with the child whom they might in any other circumstance consider an unambiguous other. Furthermore, though a fanciful illusion, the depiction of the book-reading African nonetheless encouraged the Russian reader to imagine that Soviet picture books might also bring socialist enlightenment to the peoples of the world.

Hodorovska, Marie

(Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia)

Africa in the Global Education Discourse

B5 SESSION

The paper aims to contribute to postcolonial debate by problematising the context of Global Education in Slovakia. Given a recent trend of incorporating the Global Education in school curriculum, attention is paid to general patterns and practices developed by the Slovak Third Sector in knowledge-building that introduces and proposes novel approaches to the education system. The paper contains a critical reflection on discourses on Africa in the Global Education. By testing the discourse, the paper is supposed to seek for an answer of what is being taught under the promising term “Global Education” and how this is connected to politically contested theme of global justice. Thematically, the quality of paper consists in contesting the impact of colonial heritage of systematic hierarchies and inequalities by building on the postcolonial critique of Global North-Global South dichotomy in knowledge production. Empirically, by elaborating on post-structural and critical epistemological paradigms, the Critical Discourse Analysis uncovers the ways of how civic actors in the Slovak Third Sector write about global topics. The main aim is to search for general practices in knowledge- building and to make a gap between the pedagogy of global problems and postcolonial thinking closer.

Jarošová, Soňa

(Independent researcher, Czech Republic)

Czech military involvement in Mali – where does it come from and where is it taking us?

A6 SESSION

There are very few topics in the Czech Republic on which there is such a wide national consensus – altogether in the media, in the public opinion and among political representatives – as the Czech military involvement in Mali. The positive arguments are multiple: our troops are proudly fighting in the African front line of the global war against Islamist terrorism, while gaining a valuable and professionalising military experience on the ground as well as (re-building) prestige within the European community.

Yet there is little scientific effort to analyse the origins of the decisions leading to such military involvement. Who has taken the decisions of committing and staying? Through which political calculations and motivation/justification? What does the Czech Republic have to gain (and lose)? Voices posing such questions and questioning (not to say criticizing) the eight-year long presence of Czech soldiers and officials in the western Sahel are rare. Although this participation – and its costs – is constantly growing, there is a lack of an informed public debate about the motives, achievements so far, and the overall purpose of this engagement.

This paper aims at raising some of these questions and providing elements of response through political-scientific analysis. How to explain the unshakable political and public support of sending and maintaining troops in the Sahara desert? What can be so far said about what the success of the Czech Republic and its allies in achieving the goals officially claimed, i.e. combating the jihadi movements in the region? Are the causes of the emergence and prosperity of these movements in the Sahel in line with the arguments and instruments that the Czech military intervention is putting forward? Building on literature, analysis of political discourse and of geo-political dynamics in the Sahel, the asymmetry between public goals and reality on the ground is described.

Jůnová-Macková, Adéla

(Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic)

Czechoslovak Scientists in Developing Countries – Official and Private Sources. Professor Zdeněk Charvát in Nigeria (and Elsewhere) in 1960s and 1970s.

A4 SESSION

Czechoslovakia played a significant role in the Eastern Bloc's policy regarding developing countries of Asia and Africa. Economic, political, and cultural relations with individual countries that had already started before the Second World War were soon continued with now independent states. Political and economic agreements, often accompanied by extensive export of arms, were followed by cultural agreements. An important part of these were student and scientist exchanges. The purposes of scientists' trips abroad can be divided into studies, attendance of congresses, and work, which was usually connected to scientific research of a given country or teaching at university. In this paper, I would like to focus on the sources documenting organised sending of scientists to work abroad – the export of experts – both from institutional and private funds, and on the use of images and oral history in this subject. As an illustration, I would like to present the work with sources on the example of Zdeněk Charvát, a doctor who for several years in the 1960s and 1970s worked in Iraq and Nigeria.

Kantoříková, Jana

(Eur'ORBEM at Sorbonne University/CNRS, France)

Neither Black nor White: Interracial Characters in French Literature translated into the Czech Lands

B3 SESSION

The 19th century see an increase in research focused on dominated but still relatively unknown populations. However, this scientific research is frequently tainted by the eye of the beholder and the filter of the *white man's burden* paradigm. The scientific approach is not disconnected from culture and makes a foray into literature as well. The fiction thus participates not only on dissemination of racial terminology, but also on spreading of stereotyped imagery often associating interracial characters with monstrosity (in a racial and sexual way). An important part of this knowledge (re)production is literary translation. I aim to address this specific kind of encounter between colonies and countries without them, which implicated confrontation with the strangeness of racial terminology increasingly occurring in the "colonial" literature. In the center of my interest are questions linked with the lexical issues of naming as an act of appropriation and distinction. How much lost these interracial characters in Czech translations are? Analyzing examples such as Victor Hugo's *Bug-Jargal* (1826), Eugène Sue's *Les mystères de Paris* (1842-1843) and *Juif errant* (1844-1845) or Pierre Loti's *Roman d'un spahi* (1881), I will discuss the Czech position oscillating between scientific precision, discomfiture and complete ignorance. Given the three-sided language context of the Czech lands, German translations will be also taken into consideration.

Klepárník, Vít

(Africanist, Czech Republic)

The unfinished revolution: Czechoslovakia, USSR, and the building of Arab socialism in Egypt (1961–1973)

A4 SESSION

The most remarkable phase of the post-colonial era in Arab North Africa and the Middle East, from the mid-1950s to early 1970s, is usually labelled as “Arab socialism”. The growing interest in this historical phase in Western historiography frequently transcends the traditional meanings of the “Cold War” at the advantage of broader transnational social-economic and cultural program and the concept of modernization. Following this thread of pioneering agenda of the last fifteen years, this paper inquiries into the Czechoslovak activities and influence in the Nasserist Egypt. By utilizing the documents of the several Czech archives as well as some foreign sources, it pays attention to the peak phase of the bilateral relations in the middle 1960s and symptoms of their waning, especially in the time of the inauguration of Sadat’s policy of “openness” (infitah) (1973). The main focus is here on the perception of Egypt’s social-economic transformation by Czechoslovak officials and the role they subscribed to itself in the process. Czechoslovakia’s policies enjoyed considerable political autonomy within the so-called Eastern bloc and possessed some distinctive features.

Koura, Jan

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

B6 PANEL: African Students in the Socialist Countries: Training, Politics, and Careers

More than fifty thousand African students attended universities in the socialist countries during the Cold War and several thousands more received technical, political or military training. The renewed interest by historians about this past, the burgeoning memorial and fictional literature, and the rediscovery of prominent Eastern-bloc graduates in Africa and the Global South testify to importance of these educational connections. This panel will revisit this history focusing on selected case studies and highlighting a number of issues such as: the diverse types of training, the students' experiences, their political activity and views, integration into the host country and, last but not least, the destinies of returnees or graduates who did not return. Examples will come from South Africa, Ghana and Algeria. Simultaneously, attention will be paid to host institutions including the International Union of Students, the University of the 17th of November and the Institute for Foreign Students at the Fritz Heckert trade union college in Bernau, East Germany.

Burton, Eric

(University of Innsbruck, Austria)

The pen and the gun. African liberation movements and two types of education in the socialist camp

B6 PANEL

This paper aims to approach African liberation struggles from a global history perspective. It will do so by investigating connections between African liberation movements and Eastern European countries with a special focus on mobilities of members of liberation movements (or their armed wings). In a first step, it will differentiate between two typical trajectories – university education and military training – and discuss how both of these were related to liberation struggles.

Following a brief overview of these varied educational trajectories towards Eastern Europe, the paper zooms in on efforts of functionaries of the South African African National Congress (ANC) to channel these mobilities. Functionaries tried to mobilise and discipline students abroad and also dealt with issues arising out of their “return” (which usually meant sojourns in other African countries such as Tanzania and Zambia providing refuge to liberation movements).

The paper builds primarily on documents from the liberation archives at the University of Fort Hare University (Alice, South Africa) and the George Padmore Research Library (Accra, Ghana), complemented by archival materials from other countries and memoirs.

Harisch, Immanuel R.

(University of Vienna, Austria)

South-East Entanglements in the international labour movement: Africans at trade union colleges in Eastern Europe with a focus on East Germany during the Cold War 1960s

B6 PANEL

During the early Cold War 1960s, trade union federations in both East and West rapidly institutionalized colleges to train labour leaders and functionaries for the African labour movement. This presentation will focus on the Institute for Foreign Students at the Fritz Heckert trade union college in Bernau which educated roughly 400 African trade unionists between 1960 and 1967. The emphasis is on the rapid institutionalization of the college driven by the aim of the East German Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (FDGB) to train a “class-conscious workers’ vanguard” to further socialist world revolution. As Africans made use assistance and scholarships from the communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and its national affiliates e. g. the FDGB, I demonstrate that the transfer of knowledge was by no means unidirectional from the European college staff to the African students but that the first-hand experiences as well as primary materials sent to the college by its African alumni were crucial for the constant re-evaluation of the course content and its practical lessons. I will also emphasize how the Bernau trade union college did not act in isolation since FDGB functionaries and staff were connected to similar trade union colleges of WFTU affiliates in Moscow and Prague through correspondence, study visits as well as a major WFTU experience exchange on African trade union education in the year 1963 – emphasizing the joint efforts of state socialist unions to provide trade union education for Africans within heretofore often neglected South-East entanglements in the international labour movement.

Holečková, Marta Edith

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

African students in Prague in the 1960s

B6 PANEL

Since the beginning of the 1960s, students from Africa have come to Czechoslovakia to an increasing extend, specifically from countries that have gained independence in the past few years. In my paper I will focus on the approach to their everyday life, integration into the local student community and also on their image in the contemporary press. Special attention will be paid to the student community, which has been hit by a distant military conflict raging in their homeland. I mean the Nigerian-Biafran war, which has resonated essentially throughout the world, including Czechoslovakia.

Katsakioris, Constantin

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

Eastern bloc-trained Algerians: Studies, politics, and careers back home

B6 PANEL

Socialist Algeria (1962–1988) was one of the African countries that trained thousands of students and pursued an extensive cooperation in the fields of education and research with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. This paper will first draw the big picture of this cooperation focusing in particular on the training of students at universities, schools of art, and technical institutes. It will examine who these students were, in which generations they belonged, and how they were admitted in educational institutions across the socialist countries. It also will briefly refer to the political conflicts within the student movement. More importantly, the paper will examine the trajectories and careers of graduates showing that many of them played important roles back home and rose to prominence. Prominent Algerian graduates include filmmakers and men of culture, ministers and managers in state enterprises, influential economists and other academics. The paper will argue that these graduates marked the political, social and cultural life of Algeria in many ways.

Pešta, Mikuláš

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

Africans in the International Union of Students and Cold War Internationalism

B6 PANEL

The International Union of Students (IUS) was one of Prague-based Cold War international organizations. It represented student unions from all over the world and communicated student rights, but it also engaged in political campaigns against war or colonialism. The organization was under a strong influence of the Eastern European socialist countries, even though its members came from diverse backgrounds. Over the years, many Africans passed through the IUS organs in Prague and represented the organization at world forums. This paper examines the role of delegates of African member organizations and their position in the IUS – especially how they contributed to shaping the policy vis-à-vis the socialist power structure and how their presence helped promote the internationalist content. Based on examples of specific delegates, we will also observe their personal development– how the work in a prestigious and well-connected international organization trained them and helped their careers. The paper will also briefly introduce their social position in the IUS. It is based on archival research and on interviews with former IUS officials.

Kozieł, Patrycja

(Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland)

Disinformation discourse on contemporary events in Sub-Saharan Africa based on media content in Poland. Dynamics and rhetoric of existing cultural relations.

A1 SESSION

Media and press discourse are undoubtedly valuable means of migrating thoughts, knowledge, and mutual perceptions. According to social science, information in the media is a kind of experience built on the exchange of ideas. Importantly, this exchange is not full-fledged, it usually occurs unilaterally. In the local social discourse, and contrary to some historical sources, Poland as a country is not strongly correlated with colonialism in Africa, therefore the image of various countries and societies shaped in the media remains highly orientalist even today. Moreover, my research shows that the information about current cultural and socio-political events on the African continent is usually incomplete, stereotyping, and often questionable. Where does this challenge arise? Has the dynamics of content changed in recent years? Is this another voice in the postcolonial debate? And how did this discourse develop in the face of the pandemic? The aim of the speech is to identify the problem of the image of Sub-Saharan Africa – not only as a continent but also as individual and highly specific countries – in informative Polish media content. The subject of my analysis is a collection of online media information that appeared from March 2020 to March 2021 in press services in connection with the pandemic and the most important events in several nations, including South Africa, Nigeria, and Tanzania. The preliminary analysis indicates a conscious lack of inclusion of the subject of other African countries in the context of the pandemic.

Krizmanics, Reka

(Central European University, Hungary)

“One Can Hardly See a Woman Who Would Not Carry a Heavy Load – They Are Toiling As Beasts of Burden”: The State Socialist Female Gaze in Travelogues about the Global South 1960s–1980s

B1 SESSION

Travelogues are considered essential deposits of imageries, allowing historians of all ages to partially reconstruct perceptions of distant lands prompted in travelers of all kinds, spanning through the ages. Published and unpublished travelogues alike are prime sources of exoticization and further practices of othering. My article joins this rich travelogue-based scholarly discourse and creates a juncture with the burgeoning literature on the encounters of the state socialist bloc and the Global South. Singling out female voices, which have not been investigated as distinct authorities in these discursive practices yet, my intervention will shed light on gendered perceptions of the lives of different African and Asian societies, with a particular focus on other women’s lives.

I base my investigation on a series of published travelogues, authored by Hungarian women of various background (ranging from artist to journalist) with diverging focus of interest. The texts inspired the creation of a code system denoting discourses around the women’s question, self-positioning, socialist internationalism, race and postcolonial heritage among others. I argue that the authors of the travelogues engage on various levels with the comparison of their domestic experience as women and what they see on the ground, which leads them to formulate ideas both pertaining to gender regimes and the building of socialism.

Łuksza, Agata

(University of Warsaw, Poland)

The Concepts of „Blackness” in Polish Society at the Turn of the 20th Century – A Contribution to Polish Colonial History

B3 SESSION

Poland’s ambiguous position as the coloniser of its Eastern neighbours and the colonised by neighbouring imperial powers has defined postcolonial research on Polish culture (Janion 2006). While this recognition is of crucial importance for understanding Polish mentality, I would like to pose questions about Polish „colonial complicity”(Vuorela 2009) and „colonial mind” (Palmberg 2009), that is about Polish colonial fantasies and ambitions which had been overridden by a convenient narrative of an innocent bystander.

In my paper I recognise Włodzimierz Perzyński’s comedy *Aszantka* (1907) as a meaningful remnant of „blackness” in the history of Polish theatre, and I use it as a point of entrance into a broader inquiry about the entanglement of Polish society into European colonial project. The aim is to investigate how in the Polish context, and particularly in the Warsaw context of a capital city subjugated to the Russian Empire and longing for the „West” identified as a „surrogate hegemon” (Thompson 2010), „colonialism without colonies” (Lüthi, Falk & Purtschert 2016) developed. Similarly to Lenny A. Ureña Valerio (2019), I would like to ask about Polish colonial entanglements and thus reframe Polish history as a transnational history.

That is why in my paper I attempt to reconstruct possible concepts of “blackness” which Warsaw dwellers might have shared in the end of the 19th century by analysing the reception of the performances of alleged representatives of Ashanti people in the Warsaw circus in 1888. I point to “savageness” and “nakedness” as constitutive traits of “blackness” which I understand as a specific human condition, experienced both by overseas colonized societies as well as subaltern social groups in European societies.

Mesarič, Andreja

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

Slovene missionaries in Sudan: Reflections of their work in mid-19th century Carniola and present-day Slovenia

B2 SESSION

The paper explores Slovene engagement in Catholic missionary activity in Sudan in the mid-19th century through the perspective of the Carniolan newspaper *Zgodnja Danica*. Focusing not just on the activity of the missionaries but on how their work was reflected back to domestic audiences helps us to trace how missionary discourses deployed in Africa shaped Slovenes' understandings of their place in global hierarchies of race. The Catholic weekly published first-hand accounts of missionary work and encouraged its readership to get involved by raising donations for the purchase of enslaved children in Sudan. Some were later brought to Carniola where they endured elaborate public baptism ceremonies and trained as future missionaries. A breakdown of the donations raised shows that money for the purchase of enslaved Africans was being collected by men and women of various professional backgrounds across Carniolan towns and villages. This reveals how deeply into Carniolan society missionary discourse and activity reached and clearly implicates the region into European imperial projects. Furthermore, missionary discourse on the pages of *Zgodnja Danica* often blended into ethnography as reports from the missions included detailed descriptions of local customs. Missionaries collected objects that formed the beginnings of the African collection of the Carniolan Landesmuseum and still feature in the collections of the Slovenian Ethnographic Museum today. This problematic legacy of Slovene missionary work is often celebrated rather than engaged with critically, a trend this paper aims to challenge.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Sabelo J.

(University of Bayreuth, Germany)

*African Studies in the Context of the Cognitive Empire and Global Economy of Knowledge
Reflections on Decolonial Turns*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

African Studies is imbricated in the cognitive empire and global economy of knowledge. To rethink this situation of African Studies this keynote address deploys the concept of decolonial intellectual turns to map out the key moments in the unfolding of African Studies. While there are numerous turns in humanities and social sciences, this lecture is focused on the colonial, nationalist, Marxist, and postcolonial turns as part of the decolonial intellectual movement in African Studies. The long decolonial turn has various other turns within it, and this keynote address examines four of those that have directly impacted and shaped African Studies, beginning with the colonial turn that enabled the cognitive empire that continues to compromise the liberatory potential of African Studies. The turns not only help to capture complex internal ambiguities, ambivalences, contestations, and contradictions in the writing and rewriting of Africa but also to flesh out the key questions underpinning the unfolding of African Studies as a field of study. These questions range from does Africa have a history, does Africa have development, to the implications of postcolonialism for Africa. To frame the issues, the keynote address introduces the concept of the cognitive empire, which enables the unmasking of invisible epicolonial dynamics in African Studies, ranging from colonial imbrications and global imperial designs, the straitjacket of “Area Studies,” to the current global economy of knowledge and its resilient, uneven intellectual division of labor. The entry point is the launch of the African Studies Association of Africa (ASAA), whose mission is to advance Africa’s specific contributions to the advancement of knowledge about the peoples and cultures of Africa and the Diaspora on the 25th of October 2013 (after over 60 years since the dawn of political independence in Africa) by African scholars. What does this tell us about African Studies in Africa? The keynote address concludes with reflections on resurgence and insurgence of decolonization of the 21st century and its implications for African Studies.

Keywords: colonial turn, cognitive empire, decolonial turn, nationalist/Marxist turn, postcolonial turn, insurgent and resurgent decolonization of the 21st century.

Pešta, Mikuláš

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

B4 PANEL: Socialist Expertise and Development in Africa – Czechoslovak and East German Perspectives

Following decolonization, the modernization and development of newly independent African states became an increasing priority of socialist states in the Global North. Like their Western counterparts, actors from European socialist states aimed at filling the gap left by the departure of former imperial powers. Depending on place and time, socialist European actors' motivations ranged from predominantly economic interests to the understanding of African societies as a testbed for the socialist modernization and development model. Recent research highlights not just the ambitions of smaller socialist states in this regard, but also the role of African actors, which was often one of agency, or of “negotiated imposition” at least.

Tracing the modernization attempts of architects, engineers and military experts from socialist Europe in Africa, this panel seeks to explore in particular the role of Czechoslovak institutional stakeholders in the development of young African states. For this purpose, the panel showcases three projects of Czechoslovak modernization in countries of foreign policy priority at the respective time (Ghana in the 1960s, Libya and Angola in the 1970s and 1980s). It juxtaposes them with East German experts' activities in Tanzania in late socialism – serving as a third perspective that highlights the context-specificity of socialist modernization and development cooperation in Africa, i.e. that there was not the one socialist approach, but that the activities mirror their national foreign policy context.

Borovský, Matyáš

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

Code name LITOMYŠL – Czechoslovak military experts in Qaddafi's Libya

B4 PANEL

Military expertise was an essential commodity during the Cold War. Czechoslovakia, a state with a lot of experience in arms production and military training, was capable of and willing to provide this service to recently decolonized, independent Third World countries. In the early 1970s', a fresh potential customer surfaced – Libya, with its newly established leader, Colonel Muammar Qaddafi. Libya posed an excellent opportunity for Czechoslovakia, not only for economic but also political, ideological, and cultural reasons. The Tripoli government was short of equipment, personnel, and know-how, it was paying in cash and willing to cooperate with the Eastern Bloc countries. Czechoslovak activities in Libya became a part of a larger struggle between capitalist and socialist modernity in the Global South.

This paper argues that the military cooperation of Czechoslovakia and Libya was an important part of Libyan development. Prague provided not only a number of experts to train Libyan troops, but the Czechoslovaks also built infrastructure and military schools for that purpose. In this paper, Czechoslovak-Libyan relations will be shortly introduced, while concentrating on the period of 1977 to 1986, which was the most fruitful time regarding mutual efforts of Prague and Tripoli. Furthermore, the role of military experts concerning possible ideological connection and influence will be discussed. Special attention will be given to operation LITOMYŠL, through which the biggest expert and student exchanges were completed.

Marcks, Jakob

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

Tanzania: GDR architects and the UN International Year of Shelter for the Homeless

B4 PANEL

The United Nations declared 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH). Bauakademie, the GDR's institute for architectural science, pursued several activities under the label IYSH at home and abroad, such as a contribution to the construction of a refugee camp for exiled members of South Africa's ANC in Tanzania. Here, architects from East Germany introduced a lightweight panel construction system which has been adjusted to local building conditions. At the building site, GDR architects cooperated with volunteers of the GDR's Socialist Party's youth movement and ANC members trained for this specific panel system in the East German city of Bautzen. While GDR officials presented these activities as an act of solidarity, bringing four decades of GDR housing expertise and urban planning to developing countries, their actual motivation was much more multifaceted. On the one hand, they followed specific political interests both at home and in the international arena. On the other hand, economic motifs played a crucial role as well, with these projects being a relevant part of their fiscal export planning. This case is a prime example of the diffuse delineation between aid and economic interests common to such projects, not just by the GDR, but by most socialist states. Simultaneously, it mirrors the emphasis on prestige and solidarity in the GDR's policy towards the Global South and shows how the GDR employed IYSH and other UN projects for their propaganda purposes – despite the UN's claims of universal expertise and neutrality.

Mazanec, Jakub

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

Taming Nkrumah's rivers – Activity of the Czechoslovakian Hydroprojekt in Ghana

B4 PANEL

During the Cold War, great waterworks became iconic projects that played a crucial role in strategies of economic development of Africa's states. In contemporary discourse, these projects meant a key technological innovation bringing a modernization of society and the environmental changes. Due to the lack of own experts, finances, and technologies, the development of water resources and hydro-energetics depended on the import of foreign know-how and money from countries of the global north – either from the socialist East or the capitalist West.

This paper will bring a brief insight into Czechoslovak-Ghanaian relations in the era of Kwame Nkrumah's presidency (1960–1966). Special attention will be given to the activity of Czechoslovak experts, mainly hydro engineers from the state company Hydroprojekt who were sent to Ghana to help with the development of water resources.

Kwame Nkrumah's ambitious economic development plans consisted of large-scale industrialization inspired by the Soviet pattern for which enough (hydro) energy was a crucial condition. Czechoslovakia was interested in the development of Ghanaian water resources practically since the establishment of diplomatic relations. During bilateral talks, this topic repeatedly resonated – even on the highest political levels. In 1961 the first group of experts from Czechoslovak Hydroprojekt traveled to Ghana with the main goal – find and explore suitable locations for future dams. The paper will also focus on the work of this group.

Menclová, Barbora

(Charles University, Czech Republic)

The case of Alto Catumbela: Czechoslovak experts in socialist Angola

B4 PANEL

The declaration of independence of Angola in 1975 served as a milestone in the country's relations with Czechoslovakia. A new socialist-oriented government in Angola was eager to deepen the cooperation with European socialist states, not only in the military but also in the economic area, which was devastated by the former colonial war and the departure of the majority of Portuguese settlers after decolonization. The most requested assistance was the renovation of Angolan agriculture and industry. In the last one, Czechoslovakia, a traditionally industrial country, could and wanted to offer its help. Numerous trade contracts were closed, and various groups of Czechoslovak experts started to work there.

This paper deals with Czechoslovak experts in Angola in the years 1977 to 1983, the most dynamic period of this cooperation. A particular focus on the paper company in Alto Catumbela as a model example of Czechoslovak expertise enables us to understand more profoundly the nature of this cooperation, the motivation of participants, and the role of this policy on the development of not only bilateral relations. These issues are represented in the broader context of the mutual relations

influenced by the Cold War. It makes it possible to answer the following questions: why did this area become a priority for both states, what were its benefits and costs, and to what extent did Czechoslovak projects help in the modernization of Angola?

Pucherová, Dobrota

(Institute of World Literature of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia)

African and Western Feminism: Encounters, Exchanges, Interfaces

B3 SESSION

The history of relations between African and Western feminism has been marked by colonial and postcolonial history. This paper will analyze its development from the 1970s to present. “African feminism” and “Western feminism” are not seen here as any homogenous entities, but rather as working frames that enable the historicizing of the interconnectedness of the histories, experiences and struggles of African and Western women. My own “in-between” position as a scholar from the former “Eastern Europe” helps me complicate the “African vs. Western feminism” dichotomy that dominated 20th-century postcolonial discussions as inaccurate and unhelpful in analysing African women’s emancipatory struggles, and allows a reading of African women’s writing as part of global feminism. A trans-continental and trans-historical analysis such as this makes it possible to recognize the common concerns of African and Western women, instead of only their differences, and the mutual interaction and inspiration that have blurred postcolonial boundaries. My main contribution to the debate lies in the comparative and diachronic perspective that makes it possible to situate Anglophone African women’s writing as an integral part of Anglophone women’s literary history. This allows me to identify the major epistemic, discursive and figurative shifts in African feminism which, I argue, represent a transcendence of 20th-century postcolonial discourses towards African feminism becoming part of global feminism.

Schmiedl, Martin & Rudwick, Stephanie

(University of Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic)

"It's not our problem...": Czech discourses on Black Lives Matter and Kneeling

A1 SESSION

European discourse has a long history of the perception that if one acknowledges 'race' and racial differences as a topic, one might implicitly promote racism. The Holocaust left a certain 'evasiveness' to speak about 'race' which has permeated most European countries. Hence, scholars have conceptualised the lack of attention given to the subject as a "disavowement of race" (Migliarini 2018), "race as an absent presence" (Balkenhol & Schramm 2019), or a shunning of race (Foner 2018). The murder of George Floyd in the USA, however, has sparked protest movements against systematic racism and police brutality all over the world, including Europe. But European countries and their population have not responded with the same level of solidarity to the Black Lives Matter movement and related acts of solidarity against systematic racism such as Kneeling during sports events. This paper focuses on the Czech Republic and is part of a larger project examining dynamics of language and race in the country which aims to raise critical questions about how race is dealt with as a socio-political variable. In this paper, we examine the multiple social media discourses among Czech citizens in relation to Black Lives Matter and Kneeling. Focusing on the recent controversial soccer events involving Slavia Prague players, we offer a preliminary analysis of the multifaceted reactions and comments among Czech people on social media and other internet platforms. We also focus on the Czech geo-political position and examine the country as a place with a rather semi-peripheral position from a global perspective and with little colonial history in comparison to the UK or France. The paper argues, among other things, that a multi-disciplinary approach which includes historical, sociological, political and anthropological considerations is best suited to explore this vast and under researched field of racial politics in the Czech Republic towards people of African origin.

Simuziya, Nsama Jonathan & Rudwick, Stephanie

(University of Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic)

Being Black in Czechia: Narratives of Linguistic and Racial Struggles

A6 SESSION

Although Czech society has remained more linguistically and racially homogenous than most other European states, there is now a noticeable presence of African people living in the country (CR). This preliminary qualitative research project examines individuals who have moved from sub-Saharan Africa to the CR several years ago and who have varying degrees of Czech competencies and multiple life trajectories. Theoretically grounded in an approach which sees language and race as co-constituents in dynamics of Othering, this project examines the lived realities of Africans in CR through a multidisciplinary lens. To this end, the paper relies on primary sources such as biographic narrative interviews with people of African descent in Hradec Králové and Prague. The study brings to the fore complex racialization processes and linguistic challenges among African residents in the country. The findings suggest that while there are many instances of racism in the Czech Republic, knowledge of Czech also requires close attention due to its capacity to mitigate the challenges in racial discourses. The findings further suggest that experiences of racism among African residents are, in many ways, fueled by the language barrier – which by extension often entails a lack of knowledge of the local cultural nuances embedded in language. The paper ultimately argues that paying attention to research-based information and a bottom-up approach could yield fruitful results in informing strategies for a better integration of African foreigners in the Czech Republic.

Skalník, Petr

(University of Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic)

The logic of democratic underdevelopment after 1990: political culture in post-colonial Africa and post-communist Eastern Europe

A6 SESSION

By 1990 most African one-party states and European communist totalitarian countries embarked on the course of pluralist democracy. Regular free elections were seen as the main indicator of democracy. In the countries under scrutiny the governing personnel may have changed but the pre-change ethos, which I call political culture, continued to influence political life. In other words, the emergence of political pluralism did not prevent the practice of treating the state as a monopoly asset of those in power. The state has been perceived as a goose laying golden eggs to those who rule.

Political culture concentrates in itself attitudes to politics and power which refer to the past. In Africa and ex-communist Eastern Europe the substance of politics is determined decisively by political culture and political /economic interests, presented as parties. These are in fact personal or group formations that have their roots elsewhere than in political programmes. The dominant recruitment principles are from kinship and from leadership of monarchic, autocratic type. Both in ex-communist Eastern Europe and in post-colonial Africa modern political parties copy only superficially characteristics of partisanship common in pluralist Europe and North America. Political culture of solidarity and equality is missing. Instead it is non-participatory subject political culture which is dominating both in Africa and the eastern part of Europe of today. The rulers, now 'democratic', had to ensure that they are repeatedly elected. The proceeds from the wealth were not ploughed into economy benefiting all but used privately.

Trnovec, Silvester

(Institute of Oriental Studies of the Slovak Academy of Science, Slovakia)

Bolshevism and colonial Africa. The case of Tunisia and French West Africa in 1920s-1930s.

B1 SESSION

This paper discusses the impact of the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 and the establishment of communist state in Russia on colonial Africa. On the example of French West Africa and Protectorate of Tunisia, the aim of this paper is to revisit communism as a significant issue for Africa long before the era of decolonisation and Cold War. By 1920, the colonial schools both in French West Africa as well as in Tunisia produced a significant group of educated “natives” who used their western education to challenge the French colonial rule on the political arena. In 1920s communism became one of the global ideologies that spread across the colonial world and opened new perspective for francophone African intellectuals. It provided them with a powerful discourse of self-determination and antiimperialist rhetoric. It also offered an international institutional base within the Comintern what many educated Africans regarded as a unique opportunity to be part of the global anticolonial debate. As a result, communism – in French reports referred to as “bolshevism” - became the prime security issue in French colonial Africa in 1920s. Based on the security reports of the era, this paper shows how the colonial authorities in Dakar, Tunis and Paris treated bolshevism as a new perilous subversive ideology with a great potential to overthrow the colonial rule.

Uhde, Zuzana

(Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic)

Towards decolonization of migration debates in Central Europe

A1 SESSION

Echoing Achille Mbembe, we can argue that as colonial expansions have been a planetary project embedded in a claim to the earth in its totality, decolonization has to be a planetary project as well. For Mbembe, decolonization is not a return to precolonial world arrangements or indigenous knowledge but rather a dialectical cosmopolitan reconstruction. Yet as the conference call proposes we can see tendencies to downplay political responsibilities for decolonization in the countries which did not directly colonize other parts of the world. I suggest that a recent debate about migration sheds a clear light on this dynamic. In the paper I will discuss contradictions in migration debates in Central Europe which tend to present the region as an innocent bystander. It not only abstracts from indirect economic or geopolitical benefits stemming from colonial exploitations for the whole macro-regions linked to colonial empires, but also obscures how categorisation of migrants and in particular representation of economic migration mobilise the racial category of blackness, which is a product of transatlantic modernity shaped through colonial expansions and the advent of capitalism and reshaped through global capitalism. I will argue that this is possible only if migration debates abstract from today's broader context of global political economy and the extractivist logic of global capitalism to which also a bulk of migration research in Europe contributes. And I will propose a shift in focus of research and debate on migration on basis of which we can start drawing contours for decolonization of migration debates in Central Europe.

Vitáčková, Martina

(Ghent University, Belgium)

Our very own #tintingate. The representation of Africa and Africans in Maxipes Fík

B5 SESSION

The canonical comic book Tintin in the Congo (1930, second version 1946) received in the beginning of the 21st century a lot of criticism for its racist stereotypical representations of the African continent, and people. The criticism of, in the words of Henri Mova Sakanyi, "racism and nostalgia for colonialism" as represented in Tintin in the Congo caused a massive upheaval all around the world. The wave of protest, trending on social media under the header #tintingate, resulted in a number of law suits in 2007. Such representations are, however, hardly singular occurrences; the Euro-American society and culture still contains historically racist stereotypes and racist popular imaginary. One of the examples is the representation of Africa and Africans is the beloved Czech animation series about a huge dog named Fík (1975, second series in 1978) by screenwriter Rudolf Čechura and animator Jiří Šalamoun. The episode Maxipes Fík v teplých krajích (Maxipes Fík in the south) includes depictions of the racialised other that are similarly problematic as the depictions of Congolese people in Tintin in the Congo.

My paper analyses the visual, audio and textual representations of Africa and African people in the abovementioned episode, illustrating that racist imaginary operates in multiple media.