



SOCIALIST

(DIS)CONNECTIONS

W O R K S H O P

JUNE 27-28 - 2022

CONVENORS: **THỤC LINH NGUYỄN VŨ & JANNIS PANAGIOTIDIS**



Venue: Erika-Weinzierl-Saal
Main building of the University of Vienna
(Hauptgebäude der Universität Wien)

DAY 1: JUNE 27 /// 2022 /// MONDAY

15.30-16.00

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome by Philipp Ther

Introduction by Thục Linh Nguyễn Vũ & Jannis Panagiotidis

16.00-17.30

Keynote

Artemy Kalinovsky (Temple University)

"Socialist Globalization and its Afterlives: A View from Central Asia"

17.45-19.15

Session 1: Experts

Zsombor Bódy (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

"Everyday Cultural Transformations Caused by Transnational Contacts: Hungarian Experts in Algeria During the Era of Socialist 'Globalization'"

Jakub Mazanec (Charles University, Prague)

"Czechoslovak Cold War Technopolitics in Africa"

Jan Koura (Charles University, Prague)

"Czechoslovak Experts in the Global South during the Cold War"

19.45

Dinner for Workshop participants

DAY 2: JUNE 28 /// 2022 /// TUESDAY

9.00-10.30

Session 2: Economic and Developmentalist Ties

Mikuláš Pešta (Charles University, Prague)

"Cold War Developmentalism: Czechoslovak Infrastructure Building in West Africa"

Rosamund Johnston (RECET, University of Vienna)

"Omnipol as a Window onto Czechoslovakia's Global Arms Sales, 1954–1994"

Anna Calori (RECET, University of Vienna)

"Cigar Socialisms? An Entangled History of Yugoslav-Cuban Relations"

10.45-12.15

Session 3: Eastern European and Southeast Asian Connections

Igor Chabrowski (University of Warsaw)

"Folklore and Cross-cultural Communication: Poland and China in the Early Communist Period, 1949–1966"

Thục Linh Nguyễn Vũ (RECET, University of Vienna)

"Traces of Decolonization: The Case of the Asia and the Pacific Museum in Warsaw"

Sheng Peng (RECET, University of Vienna)

"Reform of the System or Reform Within the System? Intellectual Traditions and the Long Market Debate in China"

12.15-13.45

Lunch break: (Restaurant TBC)

14.00-15.30

Session 4: Local and Global Transfers

Lea Börgerding (Free University of Berlin)

"International Circulation of Sexual and Women's Health Knowledge between Cuba and the GDR (1970s–1980s)"

Márkus Keller (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

"Global Problems in Socialist Setting. Housing for the Old in the Kádár Era"

Márton Simonkay (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

"Worlds Connected by Water: Interstate Relations and Hydropower on the Danube"

15.45-17.15

Session 5: Socialist Mobilities

Jannis Panagiotidis (RECET, University of Vienna)

"Central and Eastern Europe as a Migration Space, 1972–2004"

Constantin Katsakioris (Charles University, Prague)

"Eastern Bloc-trained Algerians: Studies, Politics, and Careers Back Home"

Claudia Martínez Hernández (University of Vienna)

"Temporary Educational Migration under Socialism"

17.30-18.15

Closing Remarks

19.00

Dinner for workshop participants (Restaurant TBC)

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP:

To say that we live in an increasingly globalized world has become a worn-out truism. Yet, despite its obviousness, the fact that the globe is more connected than ever calls for scholarly interventions that historicize and problematize the status quo in ways that go beyond the still-dominant North-West axis. The turn toward global socialism that emerged during the past decade has highlighted the complex and dynamic nature of the global Cold War in which the socialist world was all but immune to regime changes, political tribulations, and postcolonial reconfigurations. This new epistemic framework, which involves the interdisciplinary examination of “alternative globalizations” (e.g. Mark, Kalinovsky & Marung 2020), “global socialism” (e.g. Mark & Apor 2015), “socialist world-making” (Stanek 2020) or “socialist internationalism” (e.g. Babiracki & Jersild 2016), provides new avenues for research on the Cold War as a political and military conflict, lived reality, and visionary horizon.

Studying the Cold War as a fundamentally multipolar and global set of phenomena involves bringing globalization studies, Cold War history, decolonization, and scholarship on Eastern and Southern Europe, Africa, and Asia into conversation. Importantly, this also means recognizing that both the Second and the Third World played an active role in shaping the ebb and flow of the Cold War dynamic on the macro and the micro level. The investigation into global socialism brings to light a history of a dynamic, multifaceted and regionally-diverse (e.g. Kalinovsky 2019) sphere of mutual entanglements. While the history of the GDR’s involvement in the Third World has been relatively well researched (e.g. Slobodian [ed.] 2015; Hong 2015; Schenck 2019), the “betweenness” (Lebow, Mazurek & Wawrzyniak 2019) of Eastern and Southern Europe during the global Cold War is still in need of more systematic analysis.

Building on and contributing to these trends in recent historiography, the “Socialist (Dis)Connections” workshop offers a platform for exploring historical connections and forging academic relationships in manifold ways. Participants will present new research on different aspects of the malleable and pragmatic relations within the socialist world in Eastern and Southern Europe as well as beyond these regions in Africa and Southeast Asia.

ABSTRACTS

Session 1: Experts

Zsombor Bódy (ELTE, Budapest)

Everyday Cultural Transformations Caused by Transnational Contacts: Hungarian Experts in Algeria During the Era of Socialist “Globalization”

In the late 1960s, Hungarian enterprises and highly trained experts began to relocate to and work in Algeria. Around 1980, the size of the Hungarian community in Algeria numbered more than 2,000 people (including the experts and their family members). They were able to pursue work in Algeria on the basis of agreements between the two states and the generally friendly political relations between them. Although their motivations and goals were strictly economic (they were able to earn significantly higher salaries than they would have earned in Hungary), on the whole, Hungarian-Algerian cooperation represented a connection between the “East” and the “South” which functioned independently of the “Western-centered” trends in globalization. The Hungarian experts and their Algerian partners shared a common vision of modernization, and this provided the essential foundation for cooperation among them. However, the routines and culture of everyday life which were familiar to the engineers, doctors, etc. from Eastern Europe differed significantly from Algerian customs, rituals, and

everyday attitudes. In this essay, I examine the challenges which arose for both sides in the course of their day-to-day work and interactions and the ways in which their perceptions both overlapped and differed. I finally consider the ways in which the Hungarian actors' understandings of their roles in this transnational cooperation, gradually shifted due to their intercultural experiences.

Jakub Mazanec (Institute of World History, Charles University)

Czechoslovak Cold War Technopolitics in Africa

This paper will refer about the involvement and motivation of socialist Czechoslovakia in a development of water resources in newly born African states, especially in Ghana. It will discuss an example of technopolitics (using technology and expertise to reach political or economic goals) of a 'peripheral' socialist state towards the Global South.

Jan Koura (Institute of World History, Charles University)

Czechoslovak Experts in the Global South during the Cold War

Czechoslovak socialist expertise created a new form of Cold War transnational interconnectivity between the Second (Socialist) and the Third World. This paper will focus on the origins and aims of this 'expertise' and discuss if it was a kind of socialist solidarity with the Global South and part of anti-capitalist struggle or rather a neo-colonial practice determined by economic factors and an instrument to enhance Eastern Bloc influence in the Global South. The paper will look at Czechoslovak expertise in selected countries of Africa and the Middle East.

Session 2: Economic and Developmentalist Ties

Mikuláš Pešta (Institute of World History, Charles University)

Cold War Developmentalism: Czechoslovak Infrastructure Building in West Africa

This paper explores effects of African decolonization on Czechoslovak strategies in foreign policy towards Africa. In the context of the Year of Africa, Czechoslovak authorities sensed a great opportunity to increase the influence over West Africa, both political and economic. The Czechoslovak take on developmentalism is observed through the examples of the construction of Air Guinée and Air Mali, its purpose and perspectives, but also obstacles and setbacks caused by negligence on both sides or communication problems. The paper reconstructs the image that Czechoslovakia was trying and sometimes struggling to maintain: of a modern and dependable country, not burdened by the legacy of colonialism, well equipped to contribute to development of African infrastructure.

Rosamund Johnston (RECET, University of Vienna)

Omnipol as a Window onto Czechoslovakia's Global Arms Sales, 1954–1994

Czechoslovakia ranked among the top ten global dealers in weapons annually during the Cold War. Each deal was brokered by human contact and cross-border exchange. To pinpoint the dynamics of this, my paper focuses on the work of state arms export monopoly, Omnipol. Drawing on ministerial and secret police documents, as well as oral histories with former Omnipol employees, this paper shows how the connections employees fostered, intentionally or unintentionally, extended beyond guns. With staff describing their motivation simultaneously as “ideological” and profit-driven, their narratives challenge a binary often invoked by historians explain-

ing Second-Third World relations during the Cold War. Not everything was justifiable, however, by a combination of ideological appropriateness and economic benefit. I therefore offer a reconstruction of which methods and practices were deemed beyond the pale by Omnipol staff and their overseers, and thus delegated to third parties dealing in Czechoslovak arms. Ultimately, this paper maps Omnipol's changing relationships with other state institutions, arms producers, and the ballooning number of actors involved the weapons trade following the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia in 1989.

Anna Calori (RECET, University of Vienna)

Cigar Socialisms? An Entangled History of Yugoslav-Cuban Relations

The diplomatic history of the Non-Aligned Movement is marked by an important and seemingly irreconcilable internal fracture: that between Yugoslavia and Cuba. Both countries aspired to gain, or maintain, leadership of the movement, while advocating for very different visions of non-alignment, non-proliferation, and peaceful coexistence.

Underneath the surface of strained diplomatic relations, however, lied a seabed of prolific economic and technical cooperation between enterprises of the two countries. Propelling this exchange, was a fundamental question that lay at the core of the non-aligned economic strategy: how to achieve economic de-colonization and self-reliance, without compromising aspirations to global integration.

Through the history of the economic networks underscoring the diplomatic ties of these two non-aligned members, the article argues that their seemingly incompatible approaches to fostering internationalism and self-determination were rather malleable in the face of questions of economic development. Yugoslavia's and Cuba's own aspiration of re-balancing the North-South development inequalities, gave shape to "nested hierarchies"

of development, trade, and aid within the Non-Aligned Movement. Exploring closely the history of non-aligned entanglements as part of the history of global socialism, this article reflects further on multiple reconfigurations of spheres of influence within the global socialist world.

Session 3: Eastern European and Southeast Asian Connections

Igor Chabrowski (University of Warsaw)

Folklore and Cross-cultural Communication: Poland and China in the Early Communist Period, 1949–1966

My paper analyzes efforts taken between 1949 and 1966 of constructing a cross-cultural communication between Poland and China through the means of folklore (or, as it was conceived, the true people’s art). These efforts took a form of large scale, highly prestigious, and lavishly sponsored exchanges of the representative song-and-dance as well as Chinese opera troupes. Yet, apart from the artistic content presented to more or less preselected audiences, these exchanges involved a mental leap into a dreamworld of the “natural” and exhilarating unity of once suppressed, now liberated, peoples of the planet; a unity that overcame divisions made by the rotten, old, and reactionary social formations of race, nation, and class. The folklore assumedly had the sole ability of bursting through these borders and communicating the common message of development and peace as well as a transformative power of recreating the old (thus segmented and falsified) culture into united humanitarian endeavor.

My questions are how and why it came to be? There were two fundamental reasons for this development: first, in a surprisingly parallel development, both Chinese and Polish intellectuals invested much effort in revamping folk culture into national artistic paragon. Second, both sides, already en-

gaged in forming national arts on the basis of their popular cultures, could hardly identify any better material to use in the cultural exchanges with other countries. The cultural exchange was implemented through top-down art organizations that through institutional networks linked national communist party leaders to the performers and their artistic products. Not only the organization of performance was structured, but also the very art form became institutionalized gaining a new cultural and socio-political form. In result, recreated folklore filled with an anti-imperialist, anti-fascist, anti-feudal, socialist, progressive, and masses-oriented discourses, validated the cross-continental exchange under a flag of humanism and progress.

Thục Linh Nguyễn Vũ (RECET, University of Vienna)

Traces of Decolonization: The Case of the Asia and the Pacific Museum in Warsaw

Due to the global Cold War dynamic, Poland's decolonial moment could not but involve the previously "insignificant" Vietnam. In this talk, I excavate the mutually entangled histories of Poland and Vietnam during the global Cold War through the lens of the history of the Asia and the Pacific Museum in Warsaw that was founded in 1973. The life of the museum's founder Andrzej Wawrzyniak and the largely forgotten collections of Jerzy Chociłowski's and Monika Warneńska's documentary photography from Vietnam held in the Asia and Pacific Museum in Warsaw, encapsulate Poland's involvement in decolonial Vietnam – with all its ambivalences and limitations. By retrieving and contextualizing the history of the museum, the paper argues that the museum is one of the unexpected institutions enabling the transfer of material artefacts and knowledge, even if limited, between Vietnam and Poland. Wavering between conflicting commitments, the museum, its founders and the photographs it stores has the potential to sensitize the Polish audience to the calamities of the seemingly distant war of decolonization. Focusing on these mediations, enabled by such un-

expected institutional brokers, allows us to develop a more complex view of these histories that keep on resonating in contemporary Poland and its Vietnamese community.

Sheng Peng (RECET, University of Vienna)

Reform of the System or Reform Within the System?

Intellectual Traditions and the Long Market Debate in China.

This paper studies how the market debate in China was influenced by both indigenous as well as foreign intellectual traditions. Chinese market reformers cherry picked lessons that they regarded as useful for China's economic reforms but are often outdated or controversial in different contexts. Those lessons include market debates in Eastern Europe, Japan's Post-War Industry Policy, as well as the western Neoliberal school of economic thoughts. Chinese pro-market economists and economic reformers, this study suggests, have never dared to completely marketize China's planned economic system and have always limited themselves to introducing selective market elements into the planned economic system. This limited reform has achieved some success and played a role in limiting inflation after the high growth period of 1990s, but nevertheless paved the way for the market stagnation in later period and the retreat of private entrepreneurs in economic activities during our current time.

Session 4: Local and Global Transfers

Lea Börgerding (FU, Berlin)

International Circulation of Sexual and Women's Health Knowledge between Cuba and the GDR (1970s–1980s)

This paper explores the international circuits of sexual and women's health

knowledge between Cuba and the German Democratic Republic during the 1970s and 1980s. Existing histories of global socialism have so far paid little attention to state-led exchanges on questions of sexuality, sexual practices, and their connection to women's rights. In turn, feminist historiography on women's internationalism during the Cold War period usually more closely associates those themes with Western, second-wave feminism and its global circulation (Davis, 2007). Drawing on the correspondences between the Federation of Cuban Women (FCW) and the SED Women's Section, this paper highlights the extent to which sexual politics played a role in socialist internationalism on women's issues through the translation of health manuals, sexual education books and films as well as exchanges between health experts. At the same time, this paper is also interested in the power relations, exclusions, and tensions of East-South relations, putting at question the idea of a "global socialist feminism" (Ghodsee, 2019; Zeng, 2013). For the latter part, this paper critically engages with the writings of Monika Krause (1941–2019), an East German citizen who migrated to Cuba, maintained close relations to the FCW, and in the 1980s, became one of Cuba's most important sexual educators – better known as "La Reina del Condóns", the queen of condoms.

Márkus Keller (ELTE, Budapest)

Global Problems in Socialist Setting. Housing for the Old in the Kádár Era.

By the middle of 1960, Hungary had become a society of the old. The paper examines the challenges presented by the ageing population in the context of another global burning social problem – that of housing. An answer is sought to the question of how the Kádár regime, which simultaneously recognized the problems raised by an ageing society and a lack of housing, tried to satisfy the mass need for housing that emerged particularly among the ranks of the older generations. How have global responses to these problems been implemented in a socialist setting? What needs

were acknowledged as legitimate by the government? What kinds of housing were offered in response to the problem? In what ways were old people talked about in public parlance in relation to the appearance of such housing? These are the major issues treated in the paper. The answers that are proposed bring us nearer to an understanding of the self-image of socialist Hungary as well.

Márton Simonkay (ELTE, Budapest)

Worlds Connected by Water: Interstate Relations and Hydropower on the Danube

In 1984, the government of Austria planned to start building a hydropower plant and a dam on the Danube river, in Hainburg, next to the border of Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Czechoslovakian leaders and also local groups in Austria and Hungary protested against the construction. These protesters from Socialist and Capitalist countries shared a common goal, based on a mixture of various ideological, practical, and environmental approaches.

Session 5: Socialist Mobilities

Jannis Panagiotidis (RECET, University of Vienna)

Central and Eastern Europe as a Migration Space, 1972–2004

Migration and freedom of movement are topics that have received significant attention in the study of post-1989 transformation in East Central Europe. Most research places emphasis on migration from the former socialist states to Western Europe, in particular in the context of the 2004/2007 EU eastern enlargement and the (delayed) integration of the new member states into the EU free movement area. Less attention has been paid to

the regulation and reality of cross-border movement in the period of time before accession, both during and after state socialism.

This paper suggests an approach straddling the caesura of 1989 to investigate the transformations of mobility and migration under different mobility regimes. 1972 marks the year when the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Poland introduced an open border regime for visa free travel. Liberalized travel co-existed with increased labor migration, which often came from the Global South, but also happened within the region. Even so, mobility was never fully liberalized, even as attempts were made to deepen economic integration among COMECON countries.

After the end of state socialism, mobility among the – by then former – COMECON states of Central and Eastern Europe, including the former Soviet republics of Belarus and Ukraine, was liberalized, resulting in increased movement and economic activity across borders. Meanwhile, mobility to the West was facilitated in the sense that there were no longer any restrictions on emigration. However, western erected obstacles against large-scale East-West migration, thus limiting mobility options for citizens of former socialist states. With EU enlargement in 2004, CEE borders with the former Soviet republics of Belarus and Ukraine became external EU borders, thus putting an end to free circulation among former COMECON states.

By focusing on the period of time from 1972 until 2004, this paper tries to overcome some of the teleology inherent of narratives of CEE migration history that center on EU accession and integration into the free movement area. Instead, it takes CEE and the western (former) Soviet republics as a migration space with its own history, which was most intense during the years between the end of socialism and EU eastern enlargement.

Constantin Katsakioris (Institute of World History, Charles University)

Eastern Bloc-trained Algerians: Studies, Politics, and Careers Back Home

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, to which generations they belonged, and how they were admitted to 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.

Claudia Martínez Hernández (University of Vienna)

Temporary Educational Migration under Socialism

This contribution presents a specific form of State and State Party led temporary migration: the Cuban educational migration to the European member states of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). By questioning the supposed immobility, inwardness and constraint of socialism highlighted after the end of the self-denominated Socialist World System, I address the strategic conception and implementation by the Communist Party of Cuba of the circulation of students in Eastern Europe during the last two decades of the System Competition during the Cold War. The effort to create Cuban structures of self-government abroad

to provide the students with a Cuban life environment reveals a new edge of socialism in 'national colors'. Interesting (dis)connections occurred in practice: between Cubans and their authorities abroad, Cubans and the authorities of the host countries, Cubans and locals, Cubans and people of other nationalities. These relations, sometimes in conflict and sometimes in collaboration, highlight the intensity of socialist development programs in the training of human resources. Socialist development, globalization and migration are to be related in my research. The content of this presentation is based on the work with Cuban and German archives, as well as on interviews with direct participants in the program of temporary migration of Cuban students to Eastern Europe.



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