

The government of the Soviet Union, well aware of South African activity in southern Angola, flew Cuban soldiers into Luanda one week before November 11, , the date on which Angolan nationalists had agreed to declare independence.

Racism is on the rise in the former Eastern bloc. Tajudeen Abdul Raheem looks at the forces driving it - and at the implications for Third World people. An African psychology student recently conducted an experiment. He donned a pair of Levis, cowboy boots and hat and hit the streets of Moscow. People came up to him and asked him questions. This met with a warm, interested response. He was quizzed about Michael Jackson. Lionel Ritchie and other Black American stars. No-one called the student abisyan monkey - the name he was used to on buses and trains, in taxis and bars. As a Black American he was seen first as a superpower citizen, a master of consumerism and creator of popcorn. Big Mac and blue jeans. Cold War propaganda in which the US was the principal enemy, had encouraged awe and an envious interest in Americans in general. Colour of skin was clearly secondary. Had he been Latin American he might have been seen primarily as a revolutionary veteran. As an Arab he might have been seen as a source of hard currency. As an Asian he might have been seen as a Soviet from the far east of the Union. But as an African studying in the Soviet Union, his experience was of naked racism. Advert A quick look at the history of Soviet-African relations provides some of the answers. A Soviet journalist called B Asoyan recently tackled the issue in Komsomol Pravda, the youth edition of the Soviet daily. His article bears the ambiguous title: It tells us that the first time most Soviet people came into contact with Black people was the Festival of Youth to which newly independent Ghana sent representatives. This created uproar among the local population. The US slavers had responded to this myth by hanging hundreds of Black men. The authorities in s USSR responded by decreeing that Black visitors should not go out after 8pm - for their own safety. Like the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe had virtually no contact with Africa until the s and s, when the communist-bloc countries supported Third World liberation movements against colonial domination. The communist bloc, for its part, saw an opportunity to spread its ideology. But in the long term it promoted the image of Third World people as helpless. In fact, the images of Africa that were fed to Soviet and Eastern European people were not essentially different from those fed to Western citizens. It gave rise to a popular feeling amongst Eastern Europeans that their problems of inadequate resources and technology were due to their internationalist obligations. It is not therefore surprising that in the present era of perestroika and glasnost foreigners - and especially Third World people - became the first target of nationalist, isolationist East Europeans. Since the advent of glasnost a can of worms of racism has burst shamelessly across Eastern Europe. So far attention has been focussed on Pamyat Heritage and other neo-fascist groups in the Soviet Union and their activities against the Jews. The problem is not just extremist groups of racists. A disturbing coalition in Eastern Europe between right-wing forces and peresotroika enthusiasts is emerging that is detrimental to the wishes of Black and Third World people. Although they start off from different ideological positions they will both have the effect of reviving European chauvinism, isolationism and xenophobia. Many people now see previous solidarity with the Third World as a stumbling block on their way to being European. Being properly European means being unsympathetic towards other people. At the beginning of this year there were only 7. The main reason for this has been the rise in racist and fascist groups in the East. Students now try to go to India or Cuba instead. Eastern Europeans are going elsewhere too. It seems that they are judging the degree of their democracy by their ability to condone undemocratic repressive and inhuman regimes. There are even reports of Hungarians emigrating to South Africa. There are glimmers of hope on this horizon. This may take the form of racist expression - but by the same token it will make it possible to campaign against racism, which has never been properly addressed as an issue. In this area, anyway, lessons are being drawn from the West. The Immigrants Political Forum, a race-relations campaign group that has become increasingly active in East Germany, has its origins in West Berlin. The opening up of Cold War frontiers also removes some of the causes of resentment against foreigners living in the Soviet Union. Foreign students often enjoyed privileges their Soviet counterparts could not. For example, foreigners were allowed to travel abroad twice a year. This meant they could go to the West

during vacations, earn some money, buy Western consumer items, take them back and sell them to their less fortunate Soviet fellow students. It is hard to tell what will happen. But the greater pluralism which is currently throwing up so many bad things, could throw up some good ones too. Soviet people may now, for example, have the opportunity to meet Black people who are not students - perhaps entrepreneurs or people who have come to settle. One thing is clear, though. Anything can - and does - happen. Which means the Blacks and non-racists of Eastern Europe are going to have to organize themselves - and fast. Now immigrant workers in Europe - and the families they support back home - know the news is bad. Already braving a rising tide of racism, they now face the prospect of job losses and deportation. Where will they go? Whose jobs will they take? Those of the Turks, the Moroccans and the Algerians, most likely. Now there are just 1, For Third World workers who stay in their own country the prospects are not too hot either. International investment is tipped to go East rather than South. The attractions are manifold. Not least - for a Europe where racism is on the upsurge - Eastern Europeans are white, and in the case of the Germanies, share a language and a history. The shattering of the Soviet bloc raises different problems for Third World liberation movements. They have reacted to this in two ways. On the one hand, liberation movements have found themselves having to soften their demands and modify their position. This has been particularly true of the ANC over the last few months. This cannot but be healthy and it may lead Third World socialists to draw upon their own resources and experiences instead of mimicking Soviet models. But for refugees - both political and economic - the doors to both Eastern and Western Europe are more tightly closed than ever. This article is from the September issue of *New Internationalist*. You can access the entire archive of over issues with a digital subscription. Please support us with a small recurring donation so we can keep it free to read online.

Chapter 2 : Black In The Ussr | New Internationalist

On Friday, October 13, the Jordan Center hosted a conference entitled, "Africa and the Soviet Union: Technology, Ideology and Culture." The conference brought together historians and anthropologists from different intellectual backgrounds - in both geography and theme - to explore the contemporary significance, direct impacts, and legacies of Soviet-African relations.

Technology, Ideology and Culture. From the s onwards the Soviet Union invested in technical aid, economic development, military assistance, political and academic education, cultural and diplomatic ties with the developing world, including with Africa. At the same time, many Africans saw the USSR as a source of expertise and political inspiration for their emerging states. Yet analysis of these critical connections—as well as their political and material afterlives—remains nascent. Institutional and political divisions, coupled with the practical difficulties of mastering the languages and visas required for multi-sited research have largely prevented scholars trained in the study of Russia and Africa from convening and shaping collaborative research agendas. Deliberately bridging academic centers and combining scholars from different communities, this conference sought to create an environment in which these myriad relations could be brought into view and establish networks for future work, including a potential journal special issue based on the conference. Taken together, the conference papers discussed cameras, radios, nuclear physics, varied collective work traditions, diplomatic visits, schemes of knowledge, political activism, development aid, and language policies, among other things, and make clear the breadth of activities taking place in this transnational or international space. Thus, ideology was useful but not central to these practices. A question presented by all three papers — and the workshop as a whole — was whether or not using the Cold War as an analytical lens is productive or problematic in assessing Soviet-Africa relations during this period. Brandon Schecter of NYU was the panel discussant. The author argues that the Ghanaian state largely created its own diplomatic and ideological path during the Cold War, in spite of pressure from international forces. Black liberationist and black socialist thought played significant roles in shaping political attitudes in Ghana during this period. This film explores the lives of Ghanaians living near a nuclear research facility that was the intended site for a Soviet nuclear reactor that in fact, has never been installed. The vibrancy of the communities and networks — of scientists, students, transport routes, and traders — that have build up around the absence of the nuclear reactor invited all to consider what Soviet-African connections have created, even when their ostensible main goal — the nuclear reactor — is missing. The panel discussant was Elidor Mehilli of Hunter College. The Soviet Union engaged in economic activities with these African regions in order to promote a Soviet model of development, even when this ran counter to any commercial logic. The panel discussant was Gregory Mann of Columbia University. Siddiqi focused his analysis on two main components: While the power to acquire knowledge is distributed unevenly in different sociopolitical contexts, in this case, the physical position of African scientists endowed them with critical importance on a world scale. Aqua provided a personal story to complement the discussions that had continued throughout the day, and at least one presenter made plans to interview him in the future.

Chapter 3 : Soviet Unionâ€™United States relations - Wikipedia

The Rise and Fall of Soviet-African Relations. Part of the reason why the Soviets experienced such difficulty transforming African countries into socialist states was that the Soviets largely lacked an understanding of the continent.

However, on the other hand, post-Soviet Russia has partially inherited the image of the USSR, up to now associated for many Africans first and foremost with the support of their struggle against colonialism, neocolonialism, apartheid, and economic backwardness. An independent image of present-day Russia in Africa is rather absent than negative, and it has objective opportunities for constructing its image as positive by making African policy more active, mutually beneficial, and taking into account the specific features of African culture, including political and business. In the meantime, it is important to remember that these opportunities are diminishing as the generations of people who remember the Soviet Union in leave the public scene. In all the cases communication was carried out with representatives of the African elite political, business, intellectual, cultural, religious, etc. Let us start with the analysis of the answers of the Internet query participants to the direct questions: To the first question, the positive answer was given by However, it may be reasonable to diversify these generalized data in order to get a more detailed and hence clearer picture. In particular, the query participants were divided by us into three categories: So, those who enjoyed the socialist reforms personally are of much better opinion of the Soviet Union and much empirical evidence in our disposal confirms this argument. Our questionnaire allows diversifying of the general picture in one more respect: A comparison of these results with those got on the questions, basically the same but formulated more generally, strengthens statistically and stresses the earlier revealed tendency: But there were not so few cases when the economic and military aid of the USSR was used by the local authorities for consolidating a dictatorship against the people. The opinions on economic non-effectiveness or mistakes in realization of a number of Soviet projects in Africa, the negative consequences of the attempts to build up non-market economy in the Soviet style, the heavy ideological bias of the Soviet-African relations have also been expressed. Attention to the internal economic and social problems the USSR faced was paid sometimes too. A Rwandan university student put it aptly: As for me, I like capitalism. At the same time, the situation with the Soviet image is not so simple even in the former prosocialist states, as quotations from some other interviews show: The idea of the importance of keeping continuity in the Russian-African relations despite the fall of the USSR and world socialism was expressed vividly by an Anglican priest: I think we have something in common what should not disappear. Now we must unite again in another form. Even if we have transited to another type of political system, we anyway need each other in cultural, political and economic respects. Many respondents relate this progress to the activities of Vladimir Putin during his first two presidential terms â€™ The role Russia is playing in the international arena is also criticized when compared to the role the USSR played: The Soviet Union was always stronger. It was a strong country in the Soviet time. At present Russia is not a superpower as it was before, able to compete with America. But it still can resist America in the military sphere. And today Russia is seen as a country defeated in the struggle against capitalism and a country that has lost her ideal. She is seen as a country that is suffering under the pressure and influence of the West, like the other countries that are under the same pressure. It goes without saying that as one more, and immense, shortcoming of Russia compared to the Soviet Union our respondents see the outburst of racism of which these people are very well aware, as well as of other displays of xenophobia and extremism in contemporary Russia. Consequently, the attitude is also changing. As for the present-day situation, our analysis made elsewhere Bondarenko et al. As the Internet query shows, Africans are eager to get more support from Russia, including economic aid: The evidence of other kinds collected by us proves it, too. If we trade with each other, we know about you. The role of the Russian Federation for their country was estimated positively by Clearly, the future diplomats were impressed by political support of their country by Russia from the Soviet time on, while the young managers paid more attention to the weakness of the present-day Russian- Tanzanian economic ties and to the fact that in the recent past the non-market economy strange for them was imposed in their country with the Soviet help. Want we it or not, Russia is a great power, and it is important that it finds

its place in Africa and strengthens its relations with African countries in the economic, social and cultural spheres. Russia can help Africa. One of the interlocutors put it openly: And each of them tried to give more than its rival. And Africa was making use of that for a long time, sometimes even forgetting that it must develop itself. If Russia had no strength and might, Benin could be colonized again. My Africa, , They like Russia for political 8 reasons! The quotation from one of our Benin interviews reflects vividly the essence of the image aspect of the African countries economic relations with non-African states including Russia: This is our psychology â€” of an underdeveloped country: It is noteworthy that the image of Russia in Africa is positive from the economic standpoint: Precisely by lack of positive information they explain the loss of many positive features previously characteristic of the image of the USSR by the image of Russia. In this respect the statement of a young rather well educated woman from Lagos is characteristic: That Russia is former Soviet Union is the only fact I know about it. But few people know Russia. Russia did not provide information about itself. The comparisons of the Russian media activities in Africa with those of other countries our respondents draw are characteristic: At the same time Russia does not conduct such propagation. We agree with a respondent from Ghana: Some respondents have raised the example of China as a country which cultural policy in Africa is now very active what is really so: All our respondents are unanimous in arguing that like in the Soviet time, Russia should support the Russian language departments in African universities, restore the quotas for African students in Russian universities and take care of the African graduates, send teachers to African schools and universities, and following the present-day tendencies, establish scholarships for African researchers and state servants, 10 develop student exchange programs. It must be pointed out that in many African countries qualitative education got in the USSR was one of the backgrounds of its positive image. For example, if you were trained in the USA, America will support you this or that way. Canada, many other countries support their alumni too. Due to this the image of contemporary Russia is loosing more and more to that of the USSR created by the Soviet propaganda that was able to compete with Western. Contrary to the USSR, Russia is represented to Africans as a country of high social tension, unpredictable economic and political cataclysms, extremism and human rights violations, in which all possible forms of xenophobia are permissible, which is waging an open or latent war in the Caucasus, as a nation of wholesale alcoholism whose life is controlled by the mafia, etc. Now the public learns about Russia from news programs in connection with the Caucasian issues or when another African is shot on racist motives. Alas, small number of such publications is defined by small number of relevant examples. Stressing the continuity of the Russian policy from the Soviet is usual in such cases. But it was pointed out in them that since the Soviet time Russia has demonstrated respectful attitude to Mali and contributed to its progress by training qualified specialists, helping at acts of nature and so on. Naturally, the more occasions for such publications Russia will give and the more publications appear, the more positive and less amorphous and dependent on the Western propaganda its image in Africa will become. However, on the other hand, there are grounds for arguing that post-Soviet Russia has partially inherited the image of the USSR, up to now associated for many Africans with the support of their struggle against colonialism, neocolonialism, apartheid, economic backwardness and dependence, first and foremost. The analyzed evidence testifies that the majority of Africans being dissatisfied with the present-day state of the Russian-African relations yet do not have prejudice to Russia. Its independent image in Africa is rather absent than negative, and it has objective opportunities for constructing its image as positive. These storages may not exhaust for about twenty years more only: The author is grateful to the colleagues who participated in collecting field evidence together with him: Vladimir Shilov and Maxim Stepanov, in Rwanda: Oleg Kondakov and Elena Kondakova, who helped 12 in collecting the evidence. Last but not least, many thanks go to all the respondents who were kind enough to let us take their time. NOTES 1 All the quotations without references are from the field evidence in the possession of the author. Our previous research in this country in and testify to its presence among a part of Tanzanians, too. However, most often the reason for their disappointment was lack of strengthening of the Russian-African relations but not his internal policy or foreign policy in general. They have heard more than one or two stories about racism in Russia, and that is why they worry. Usacheva, , ; Bondarenko, , â€”, note 4. Korotayev and Ekaterina B. Trudy rossijskoj kompleksnoj ekspeditsii v Objedinennoj Respublike Tanzanija sezon g. Institute for African Studies Press.

Grinin and Andrey V. Philosophy and Society, Lagos: Russian State University for the Humanities. Trudy uchastnikov rossijskoj ekspeditsii [Muslims and Christians in Contemporary Tanzania: Publications of the Russian Expedition], Moscow:

Chapter 4 : Technology, Ideology and Culture: Legacies of Soviet-African Relations - NYU Jordan Center

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Dmitri Bondarenko This article was downloaded by: To cite this article: Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material. Bondarenko This article is based on evidence collected by a group of researchers headed by the author during the period to The evidence includes responses received via the Internet from individuals who are citizens of 44 different African countries; transcripts of 107 extensively structured interviews in Nigeria, Tanzania, Benin, 1 and with Africans now living in Russia, as well as of six round-table discussions and informal talks held in educational and research centres in these countries; questionnaires completed by Tanzanian university students and 29 more wide-ranging questionnaires filled out by Egyptians. In all cases, interaction were with individuals representative of the African elite- political, business, intellectual, cultural, religious, and so on- that is, with people able to form and transform an image of Russia in the minds of their compatriots. Moreover, the evidence includes eight expert interviews with Russians permanently living in Africa; analytical reviews by representatives at Russian cultural centres in the Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia; analysis of the mass media in Egypt, Mali, and Morocco; field notes of the research participants; as well as other sources of information. The research team believes that the nature and scope of the garnered evidence allow us to come to firm conclusions on how Africans perceive the Russia of today, and what influence the positive and negative aspects of the image projected by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics USSR has in the minds and collective memory of Africans. A simple comparison of the result may lead one to hypothesize that the image of the USSR is more positive than that of its successor-state, Russia. However, one should disaggregate this generalized data in order to get a more detailed, and hence, clearer picture of the situation. For that purpose, the query participants were divided into three categories: Of these respondents, So, those who have personally experienced the socialist period have a much better perception of the Soviet Union -and empirical evidence at our disposal confirms this. It is, therefore, quite logical that it is exactly these people who are more critical of the role of the Russian Federation in their countries - Our questionnaire also allowed differentiating the general picture in one more respect because, among others, it contained very specific and pointed questions: A comparison of these results with those obtained from the previous set of questions- both sets are basically the same, but the previous set is formulated in more general terms- statistically strengthens and confirms the earlier trend: An analysis of the distribution of responses in the three abovementioned categories confirms the same trend. *Africa Review* 2, 1 20 The Image of Post-Soviet Russia in Africa I 3 It is clear that what informs the figures gleaned from the Internet query is the fact that Russia politically and economically retreated from, some might say abandoned, the African continent, a trend that began during the period of perestroika from to and was solidified when the Russian Federation came into existence. In the words of a respondent from Ethiopia: Today, Russia can really and profitably Some respondents from former pro-socialist states directly related the political and economic liberalization of their countries to the break-up of the USSR. Also expressed were strong opinions on the economic inefficiency and mistakes made in the implementation of a number of Soviet projects in Africa, the negative consequences of attempts to build Soviet-style, non-market economies, the heavy ideological bias in Soviet-African relations, and the internal economic and social problems faced by the USSR. As one of our interlocutors asserted: Probably, this influenced the image of Russia negatively. Another interviewee had this to say: The common socialist past is yet People accept what was good in it and I think it can be said that there

is a positive image of what took place in Russia long ago - of socialism. Yet, what really outweighs all the negative aspects that might enter the minds of respondents is the fact that the Soviet Union joined the fight against the political and economic dominance of the West on the African continent, as well as the struggle against apartheid. As a Nigerian economist opined: Downloaded by [Professor Dmitri Bondarenko] at Most countries would have been colonies up to now. The Soviet Union supported African countries in the liberation struggle and imposed the principles of collectivism. I think we have something in common that should not disappear. Now we must unite again in another form. Even if we have transited to another type of political system, we anyway need each other in cultural, political and economic respects. Educated Africans do not idealize the USSR but also do not demonize post-Soviet Russia, even while recognizing the problems present-day Russia is facing, from corruption to keeping up with innovative computer technology development. Such a perception of Russia encompasses not only its image as the successor-state to the Soviet Union, but also a country that has managed socio-political progress after the break-up of the USSR. Many respondents relate this progress to the actions of former President and now Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. There is criticism of the role of Russia in the international arena, when compared to the role of the former USSR: The Soviet Union was always stronger. Russia is occupying a smaller place [in the international arena] than it must. It was a strong country in the Soviet time. Russia has a place of its own, but we think it will become [stronger]. Now, looking at Russia, we cannot understand why such a big country is not as strong as it must be. Everybody knows that the USA is a superpower. But it still can resist America in the military sphere. They regret the eagerness, as they perceive it, of Russia to move towards a closer political and cultural relationship with the West which, as they argue, resulted in its relinquishing its own identity - a recognizable face in the African arena, a face that was epitomized by the Soviet Union as the protector of Africans from colonialists and neo-colonialists. Recent signs of change reflected in Russian attitudes towards US policies, approaches and actions on the international scene, are invariably met with applause by a majority of Africans. It goes without saying that the respondents see the outbursts of racism, of which Africans are well aware of, as well as instances of xenophobia and ethnic extremism, as a very serious flaw in the social fabric of the new Russia as compared to the situation in the former Soviet Union. Consequently, the attitude is also changing. This is so because they are used to news from other developed countries where these issues are not a At the same time, some respondents pointed out that as the successor-state to the USSR and a country that has achieved a high! Even today, many respondents see Russian policies as less infused with self-interest than those of other powers. As the Internet query shows, Africans are eager to get more support from Russia, including economic aid: Other evidence, collected by the research team, confirms this; and, after all, as one of our interlocutors, a specialist in international relations from Nigeria, noted: If we trade with each other, we know about you. Clearly, future diplomats were impressed by Russian political support for their country since the time of the Soviet Union, while young managers paid more attention to the weakness in current Russian-Tanzanian economic ties and to the fact that, in the not-too-distant past, a totally foreign-to-their-thinking, non-market economy was imposed on their country with Soviet assistance. Both these sentiments were encapsulated Africa Review 2. In the opinion of some of the respondents, many Africans do not see a difference between the USSR and the post-Soviet Russian Federation in the same way as a clear distinction is drawn between these two entities in the West. The dissatisfaction expressed by some with contemporary global unipolarity, and the generally positive attitude of many towards the USSR, is indicative of their belief that Russia will begin to play a more positive and active role in Africa and within the broader international community, and assist the continent taking its rightful place in a globalizing world. The ruler of the traditional Kingdom of Allada in Benin had the following to say: If we want [to admit] it or not, Russia is a great power and it is important that it finds its place in Africa and strengthens its relations with African countries in the economic, social and cultural spheres. Russia can help Africa. One of the respondents put it quite bluntly: Africa was making use of that for a long time, sometimes even forgetting that it must develop itself. If Russia had no strength and might, Benin could be colonized again. Africa Review 2, I 20 I 0: If Russia manages to appear and create new relations with Africa, it will probably have better relations with it than Africa now has with the United States and the United Kingdom. Another respondent gave expression to

this thought rather well: They like Russia for political reasons! The popularity of Russia is now a matter of politics. The following quotation from one of the interviewees from Benin vividly illustrates the role that image plays in economic relations between Africa and other countries, including Russia: If a country helps, people [will] express more interest in it. People take the ability to help into account. That is why I hope that this is our psychology. Re-Establishing Cultural Ties and a Media Presence in Africa. According to the majority of respondents with whom the research team cannot but agree, the key problem in creating a more positive image of Russia in Africa is a weakness, actually, almost a complete absence of Russian information and cultural penetration on the continent. In this respect, the statement of a young but well-educated woman from Lagos is characteristic: The comparisons respondents draw between Russian media activities in Africa and those of other countries are typical: Many respondents said that Soviet cultural centres were their main source of information on the USSR prior to their closure, and pointed to the cultural centres of other countries as good examples for Russia to try and emulate. If this does not happen, nothing good will ever come. The problem of strengthening cultural ties is related to the one elaborated upon above: All the respondents were unanimous in arguing that like under the Soviet Union, Russia should support Russian language departments in African universities, restore quotas for African students in Russian universities and take care of African graduates, send teachers to African schools and universities and, following present trends, establish scholarships for African academics or researchers and civil servants, and develop student exchange programmes. It must be pointed out that in many African countries the quality education received in the USSR was a crucial factor in maintaining a positive image of the country. Canada [and] many other countries support their alumni too. As an African respondent said: The mass media in Africa also rely mostly on Western sources for their rare and, usually, very brief reports on Russia. Because of this, almost day by day, the image of contemporary Russia is being diminished if compared to that of the USSR, which could rely on a Soviet propaganda machine that was able to compete with the West. Contrary to the USSR, Russia is presented to Africans as a country with high levels of social instability, unpredictable economic and political upheavals, violent extremism and Africa Review 2. The Image of Post-Soviet Russia in Africa I II human rights violations, in which all forms of xenophobia are prevalent, which is waging an open, and sometimes clandestine, war in the Caucasus, as a nation in which alcoholism is rife, and as a country where everyday life is controlled by a ruthless mafia. Alas, the words of a Beninese public figure who spent 13 years in Russia, from the late 1980s until the early 1990s, remain true: Caucasus [separatist] issues, or when another African is shot. It becomes abundantly clear just how true the views above are when positive news reports about Russian projects appear in the African mass media. But, alas, the small number of such reports is defined by very few relevant examples.

Africa-China partnerships and relations: African perspectives / edited by Kwesi Djapong Lwazi Sarkodee Prah & Vusi Gumede. DT C6 A37 The Chinese Eldorado and the prospects for African development / Kasahun Woldemariam.

The Soviet Union in Angola: It was seen by the Soviet Union as an opportunity to spread socialism to developing countries, build a sphere of influence and create a bloc in opposition to the West. While Americans feared a communist takeover of the continent, the relationships the USSR forged in Africa did not last long. Hasty and careless evaluation of potential socialist states, emphasis on the military leading violent insurrections, and inadequate aid all prevented the Soviet Union from developing anything more than, at best, friendly associations with countries that would eventually align themselves with the West. To understand how this happened, this paper will draw upon historical perspectives of Soviet and African thinkers of the time period as primary sources. We shall see that while Soviet historians largely blamed the fragmentation of African societies and the lasting effects of colonialism, African historians pointed to the lack of Soviet interest to help African countries when it did not benefit the Soviet Union. By studying how the situation was viewed from both sides, one can better understand exactly why and how the relationship failed. In addition to examining the general history of Soviet-African relations, this paper will focus on relations with Angola as a case study. Many African countries cut off economic and diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union during the period from to , seeing relations with Western Europe and the United States as more advantageous. Yet even this strongest and most enduring relationship between the USSR and an African state eventually failed, and Angola ended its socialist reforms. He plans to begin studying at the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce in the fall of This paper was written under the tutelage of Professor Peter Pozefsky.

The Rise and Fall of Soviet-African Relations Part of the reason why the Soviets experienced such difficulty transforming African countries into socialist states was that the Soviets largely lacked an understanding of the continent. Until the death of Joseph Stalin, the Soviet Union had almost no relations with the then-African colonies. Joseph Stalin maintained a strict, ideological focus in terms of the international socialist revolution and did not believe that the time was right for Africa to make the transition to socialism. Stalin was also wary of further agitating national self-determination movements, as this might embolden similar movements that he felt threatened the domestic stability of the USSR. Social fragmentation, weak economies, and violent political rivalries created political instability that prevented African governments from transitioning to socialism. Soviet diplomats largely blamed this political instability on Western interference. For example, failed Soviet attempts to incite revolution in Egypt, Ghana, Mali and Sudan, which had been allies with or at least friendly toward the USSR, naturally alienated the leaders of those countries and created credibility issues for the USSR in Africa. After seeing all the potential socialist states side with the capitalists by mid-decade, Soviet analysts were forced to acknowledge that their goals for Africa had been unrealistic. African students and African-American residents in the Soviet Union found that opportunities for economic and spatial mobility were extremely racialized and that racial slurs were often used outside official antiracism discourse. From to , the Soviet Union provided a number of African countries with economic aid, primarily in the form of technical assistance in developing infrastructure. In the mids, these countries either gained independence with the help of Soviet military assistance or were led by revolutionary leaders and were allies of the Soviet Union. After observing the stagnation of African economies in the s, it was decided under Brezhnev that a stage of capitalism was needed before socialism could successfully be implemented. The Soviets borrowed ideas from V. However, even this more liberal policy, developed with the benefit of several years of experience interacting with African countries, would also eventually fail. A case study of Angola reveals many of the reasons why this happened.

Soviet-Angolan Relations In the struggle for independence against imperialist Portugal lasting from to , three major revolutionary groups emerged in Angola: However, this government quickly disintegrated, as each of the three organizations sought absolute control of the state. As a result, a civil war broke out in Angola, one that would last over a quarter of a century. From that point until the end of the s, Soviet diplomats pursued economic and diplomatic relations in a manner that they hoped would promote a less

hasty, more comprehensive transition to socialism. After the failures of the Khrushchev era, Soviet leadership put more thought into which countries were most suited to socialism. In order to receive Soviet aid, the Angolan government had to have shown significant progress in industrializing its economy, nationalized its industries, instituted land ownership reforms, developed readiness among its people to support a cultural revolution, and established a vanguard party in alliance with countries of similar political ideology. This second approach proved more realistic than the first. However, the Soviet Union failed to establish a socialist government in Angola. The reasons for this are complex, and the next two sections of this study will examine these issues from both sides of the African-Soviet relationship in order to better understand them.

The Soviet Historical Perspective Among Soviet historians writing from the s onward, there were two schools of thought regarding the future of socialism in African countries. The first school held that Russians and Africans were united in their struggle against imperialist oppression, trying to overcome the damaging effects of capitalism, and that both societies were in the midst of a class struggle. Thus, these writers concluded, the Soviet mission was to help Africans realize that the only cure for their social, economic and political problems was the unification of a working class against the bourgeois, Western capitalists; the Soviet duty was to help the continent, whose economy relied almost entirely on agriculture, to develop its industrial sector. The second school, emerging later than the first around , had more knowledge of Soviet-African relations and was less ideological. Members of this school understood the difficulties of establishing a socialist government abroad and found obstacles within African societies that prevented the socialist revolution from taking place. In particular, their analysis pointed to the negative role of the military in developing countries. Aid to Africa was centered on strengthening the military rather than stimulating the economy. While the army was instrumental in gaining political independence from European colonial powers, these historians held that the military was not capable of leading its country after independence. One major theme in the Soviet historical perspective is the reference to a general policy for all African countries. Throughout their works, Soviet historians were concerned with the African continent as a whole, but did not mention specific policies for specific countries or regions. They believed that decades of exploitation during colonial rule had severely damaged the continent socially, economically and politically, and the rapid transition to independence had created an African society without differentiated national identities. At a time when the anti-imperialist revolution was gaining momentum, as Solodovnikov observed, the promotion of socialism in Africa brought the aims of African and Soviet scholars closer together. As was evident from the single crop agriculture developed during the colonial period, African economies were designed to benefit other countries rather than their own. However, once this class consciousness had been realized, socio-economic development and socialist revolution would follow. Seeing that African economies were being exploited by other countries, Kudryavtsev advocated that African countries following a non-capitalist path should rely on their own capital rather than on foreign capital. Georgy Mirsky, a specialist in developing world politics and part of the second school, illustrated how the army was a potential problem. He held that the military was the leader of the socialist revolution in its beginning stages, but if leadership of the revolution was not eventually taken over by the government, the military would develop interests of its own and no longer represent the people. For the time being, the army had taken the initiative of leading the revolutionary struggle because the working class, which should have fulfilled this role, was not present in African society. Mirsky held that ethnic conflict, the largest contributor to social turmoil in Africa, was a lingering effect of imperialism. However, he did not think its impact on society was as significant as class struggle. The political boundaries set during the colonial period placed members of different ethnic and communal groups in the same country. Akhmed Iskenderov, also part of the second school, believed that the military was an effective leader of the socialist revolutions in developing countries. Yet Iskenderov speculated that, if left in the hands of the military, the revolution might take another direction, diverging from the interests of the Soviet Union and the African people. The Soviet historical and ideological perspective explains the failures of their strategy by pointing to the military for not properly guiding the socialist revolution and African society for not having developed a strong bourgeoisie or proletariat class. What Solodovnikov and others did not foresee is that the Angolan people would have trouble relating to the socialist ideas of class struggle and industrialization. The focus on strengthening the military did bring about

immediate and radical change, but in the long run, it did not help the socialist cause. Soviet historians also failed to understand that, by categorizing African countries as either capitalists or socialists, the Soviet Union unintentionally followed a strategy that gave no flexibility to countries that wanted to pursue a neutral stance. The African Historical Perspective Compared to the Soviet historical perspective, African historians tended to focus more on the problems created by Soviet leadership pursuing its own interests while disregarding the needs of developing African states. African historians were critical of Soviet leaders, claiming that their lack of initiative in improving the military and economic situation in Angola hindered the revolutionary process. While the USSR supplied weapons and military advisers, it left military unrest to be settled through proxy warfare. The insufficient financial aid given to Angola forced that country to seek financial aid from the West. Oye Ogunbadejo, a scholar of Sub-Saharan Africa and its political and economic relations with the Soviet Union, makes the argument that neither Soviet nor Angolan leaders were deeply invested in developing a strong alliance with each other. Rather than focusing on political ideology, each side was concerned with the interests of its own country. He points out that the Soviets played an important role in the Angolan independence movement by arming and instructing the MPLA so then, after gaining independence, the Angolan government perhaps felt that it owed something back to the Soviet Union. Although Angola accepted only Soviet economic aid for much of the s, the Angolan economy, already devastated from years of war, continued to suffer. The Soviets allowed Angola to receive economic aid from the West, agreeing with Neto that this minor capitalist step was necessary on the path to socialism. While Angola appeased the Soviet Union by continuing to declare itself a socialist country, it was non-aligned in economic matters, open to receiving aid from both the USSR and the United States. The Soviet Union never issued any hard currency as part of economic aid to African countries, only offering weaponry and industrial equipment. He points out that, even though the Soviets had supposedly developed a friendly alliance with Angola, they did not take action when there was aggression by the South African military. When military action was necessary, they sent weapons and military advisers and supported Cuban regiments, rather than sending Soviet troops. Nolutshungu, in short, characterizes Soviet relations with Angola in the s as being passive but optimistic for improvement in the future. However, the fact that the Soviets only provided equipment, Soviet weapons, and Cuban contingencies prolonged the problem of political turmoil that had to be resolved after the Soviet Union withdrew its support for revolutionary regimes in underdeveloped Africa. These African historians claim that the Soviet Union was manipulating smaller, vulnerable states in Africa to create a front against the West. However, Soviet military support and economic aid were not sufficient to maintain political stability or to develop African economies in the long run. Conclusion As Soviet diplomats realized in the mids that their efforts to transform Angola into a socialist state had been futile, they began to withdraw from the continent. Soviet leadership conceded that socio-economic conditions had not been developed for the implementation of socialism. Gorbachev even admitted that he had underestimated the benefits of capitalism for Africa. The economic problems in the Soviet Union and the international conflicts in which it was involved were adding up; it had to prioritize its resources toward goals other than African socialism. Although the Soviet Union continued to support the Angolan government with military assistance, it was clear that by the end of the s, Soviet diplomats had given up on the strategy to transform Angola into a socialist state. Three main reasons for the failure of the Soviet strategy of implementing socialism in Angola are present in the Soviet and African historical perspectives: The overemphasis on the military to lead the socialist revolution in developing Angola, as described by African historians, led to militarization in states that were already experiencing civil war and political instability. Increased political instability made it extremely difficult for the Soviets to establish a socialist government in Angola. African historians also point out how the relatively small amount of Soviet aid in comparison to Western aid caused several African countries that were struggling economically to abandon socialism and align themselves with the West. Both sides eventually came to the conclusion that efforts to spread socialism to Angola were futile since the primary concern of socialism, class struggle, was not present in Africa in the s and s. The Soviet strategy attempted to force African countries to side with either capitalist or socialist thought, but a resounding majority of these countries eventually sided with the former. Works Cited Clement, Peter. Real and Fictitious Difficulties. Soviet-Angolan Relations Under Gorbachev. The

Local Context of Soviet Policy. Ideology and Pragmatism in Foreign Policy. Hoover Institute Press, Egypt gained independence in 1956. Angola, a focus of this paper, was a relative latecomer to independence, gaining sovereignty only in 1975.

Chapter 6 : Africa and the Soviet Union: Technology, Ideology, and Culture - NYU Jordan Center

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content. Soviet Political1 Henry Bienen Relations with Africa I Policy analyses of soviet behavior in Africa often focus on whether the USSR has a "grand design" or whether it operates opportunistically, reacting to openings as they arise.'

In this essay, I shall base my work on accounts from sub-Saharan Africa. Conflict is the incompatibility or interference, as of one idea, desire, event, or activity with another. A conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur. It is a badge worn by every African society, and could be a defining apparatus in regards to personal or group behavior. Meanwhile religion is a set of beliefs that shape behaviors and conduct. But religious beliefs are not confined to a certain ethnic group; in cases where it does e. African Traditional Religion, it has to do with few modifications. According to Kadayifci Orellana, ethno-religious conflicts are those involving groups where religion is an integral part of social and cultural life, and religious institutions are representatives, possessing moral legitimacy and mobilizing potentials. Map of Sub Saharan Africa Issues Generally, crisis across the sub-Saharan Africa is either influenced by religion, ethnicity, or in most cases both. Statistics reveal that 4 out of 5 African countries were sunk in a civil war within a decade of obtaining independence from colonial masters Civil wars; The picture in Africa; The Economist. Most of these crisis had ethno-religious undertones. Local land grab disputes which often result in massive arms clashes leading to destruction of lives and properties are mostly fought on ethnic bases. While socio-political crisis such as pre or post-election brawls have both religious and ethnic undertones. The influence of trade and other forms of relations with the Middle East through the Sahara desert triggered this 16th century invasion. One of the most outstanding invasions that comes to mind started in Gobir a kingdom in the North of present day Nigeria in Over the years, ethnicity and religion has been used as bases of grabbing political power, influence and control of economic resources in Africa. Islam and Christianity are the most populous religions in Africa; in recent times, more crisis has been brewed on ethno-religious grounds. Reasons being that when conflicting groups identify themselves along ethno-religious lines, religious identity can create sharp distinctions between parties, and increase group mobilization. Most religious groups waging wars in the continent began with an ethnic agenda before going wild into religion. Causes of ethno-religious crisis include, marginalization and desanctification. Ethno-religious apparatus can, and has been used to chart socio-political causes. Map of armed conflicts in Africa This led to the killing of many Igbo tribes-men residing in northern Nigeria and subsequently the Nigerian civil war. The crisis led by this group has claimed lives in thousands, properties worth billions of Dollars have been destroyed, and left more than three million people internally displaced. The Sudanese civil war of and was notorious for having long standing ethno-religious backgrounds. After the terrorist attacks in the USA, the world have changed significantly on several aspects. The phenomenon has also inspired the rise of many terrorist organizations around the world, as well as an increased flow of illegal arms through the black market to various rebel groups. Africa has benefitted a fair share of terrorism in this guise, no thanks to her porous borders and weak security systems. Adding to the odds is the rise in militant rebel groups in Africa, fueled by ethnic and religious sentiments, and financed by rich interest groups. The availability of arms and ammunition at the disposal of one rebel group invariably inspires the rise of another. The imminent rise in illegal trade of arms across international borders is a major setback to fighting the spread of violent extremist groups. It should be noted that disarming rebel groups at the end of any uprising sponsored by an external force has always been a huge problem to stopping the circulation of crisis to other circles. Obviously, after the Balkan wars, the circulation of AK rifles and other types or arms in the black market has fueled patches of major conflicts and terrorist attacks in Europe; the Arab Spring has also led to the rise of rebel armed groups terrorizing Africa. The aftermath of the Arab spring left patches of rebel groups formerly supported by western forces with so much arms and ammunitions which they trade on the black market and in support of any uprising group toeing their part. These arms somehow find their way into rebel groups down the Sahara. Mass illiteracy is one of the main reasons why Africans are more vulnerable to ethno-religious crisis. This factor alone accounts for a large scale downward spiral syndrome in African crisis

studies. Due to illiteracy, many Africans are ready tools for religious or ethnic related revolts. A collection of I literate youth groups found across sub-Saharan Africa act as standing battle forces. Adding to illiteracy is poverty and inequality. Most African societies caught in the crisis circle suffer more from poverty; both of the mind and materially. When people are jobless, and hungry, they are easily motivated by religious beliefs or ethnic sentiments to wage wars, especially if victory in such wars promise economic prosperity, and emancipation. The only possible way to manage ethno-religious intent for mayhem in Africa is to enlighten and empower the people in the best possible means.

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Chapter 9 : The Soviet Union in Angola: Soviet and African Perspectives on the Failed Socialist Transform

Perspectives on African Politics (distributed on 3/15/92), and further particularizes his analysis by concentrating on Soviet-Angolan relations. A detailed account of those relations.