



The Red and the Black
The Russian Revolution and the Black
Atlantic

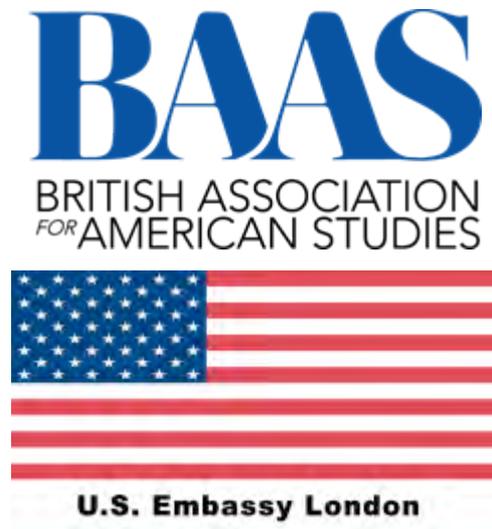
Institute for Black Atlantic Research
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(UCLan), Preston, UK

13-15 October 2017



**INSTITUTE FOR BLACK
ATLANTIC RESEARCH**

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Keynotes



Winston James is Professor of History at the University of California, Irvine. His publications include *Inside Babylon: The Caribbean Diaspora in Britain* (1993), edited with Clive Harris, *Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia: Caribbean Radicalism in Early Twentieth-Century America* (1998), which won the Gordon K. Lewis Memorial Award for Caribbean Scholarship from the Caribbean Studies Association, *A Fierce Hatred of Injustice: Claude McKay's Jamaica and His Poetry of Rebellion* (2000), and *The Struggles of John Brown Russwurm: The Life and Writings of a Pan-Africanist Pioneer, 1799-1851* (2010). His current projects include the completion of a two-volume study of Claude McKay, the distinguished Jamaican-born poet, novelist and political activist.



Cathy Bergin lectures in the Humanities Programme at the University of Brighton. She has published on the relationship between African Americans and Communism in the US between the wars, *Bitter with the Past, But Sweet with the Dream: Communism in the African American Imaginary* (Brill, 2015). In collaboration with Anita Rupprecht, she has edited a special issue of *Race and Class* on the theme of Reparative History published in January 2016. Her current research focuses on African American anti-colonial thought and traces the complex formations of internationalism which proliferate in the black radical press in the 1920s and 1930s. Her recent book *African American Anti-Colonial Thought: 1917-1937* (EUP, 2016) re-publishes key texts produced by African American anti-colonial activists.



Hakim Adi is Professor of the History of Africa and the African Diaspora at the University of Chichester.

Hakim is the author of *West Africans in Britain 1900-60: Nationalism, Pan-Africanism and Communism* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1998); (with M. Sherwood) *The 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress Revisited* (New Beacon, 1995) and *Pan-African History: Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787* (Routledge, 2003). He is also (with C. Bressey) the editor of *Belonging in Europe – The African Diaspora and Work* (London: Routledge, 2010). His most recent book is *Pan-Africanism and Communism: The Communist International, Africa and the Diaspora, 1919-1939* (Africa World Press, 2013).

He will launch the world's first online Masters by Research programme on the History of Africa and the African Diaspora in January 2018 and is the convenor of the New Perspectives on Black British History Conference at Goldsmiths University, London, UK, this October.

Hakim has appeared in many documentary films, on TV and on radio and has written widely on the history of Africa and the African Diaspora, including three history books for children. He has just completed a history of Pan-Africanism to be followed by a book on the history of African and Caribbean people in Britain that will be published by Penguin.
www.hakimadi.org

Artists



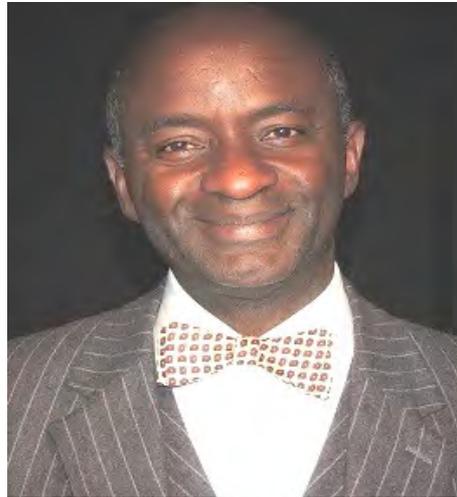
Linton Kwesi Johnson was born in 1952 in Chapelton, Clarendon, Jamaica. He came to London in 1963, went to Tulse Hill secondary school and later studied Sociology at Goldsmiths' College, University of London. He was a member of the Black Panthers, and developed his work with Rasta Love, a group of poets and drummers. In 1977 he was awarded a C Day Lewis Fellowship, becoming the writer-in-residence for Lambeth. He then worked at the Keskiee Centre, the first home of Black theatre and art.

In 1974 Race Today published Johnson's first collection of poetry, *Voices of the Living and the Dead*. He has had four more books published and in 2002 became only the second living poet and the first black poet to have his work included in Penguin's Modern Classics series, under the title *Mi Revalueshanary Fren: Selected Poems*. Johnson's first album, *Dread Beat An Blood* was released in 1978, and since then he has released 14 more albums, including *LKJ Live in Paris in 2004*, a CD and DVD celebrating his 25th anniversary as a reggae recording artist.

Linton Kwesi Johnson has been running his own record label, LKJ Records, since 1981. He has worked in journalism and still regularly tours around the world with the Dennis Bovell Dub Band. He is also a Trustee of the George Padmore Institute. In 2003 Johnson was bestowed with an honorary fellowship from his alma mater, Goldsmiths College.



David Rovics was born in New York City, and as a guitar-slinging singer/songwriter now based in Portland, Oregon, has toured in over two dozen countries, including at mass protests throughout North America and Europe. In addition to his musical involvement with the anticapitalist movement, labor, environmental and antiwar movements internationally, he has shared the stage on a number of occasions with Tom Morello, founder of Rage Against the Machine, who also recorded a lead guitar track on David's 2012 album, *Meanwhile In Afghanistan*. He has also shared the stage with Billy Bragg, Chumbawamba, Joan Baez, and Pete Seeger, and has toured extensively with Attila the Stockbroker, Robb Johnson, Anne Feeney, Tracey Curtis and Alistair Hulet www.davidrovics.com/



Nigerian-born **Tayo Aluko** is an actor, writer and baritone based in Liverpool, UK. With his one-man play *CALL MR. ROBESON*, among other awards he won the coveted Fringe Review Outstanding Theatre Award at the Brighton Festival Fringe in 2016. The play has also been performed on a number of occasions to great acclaim, including at New York's Carnegie Hall in 2012. Tayo researched, wrote and narrated to camera a film on the history of West Africa before the TransAtlantic Slave Trade, which forms part of the permanent exhibit at Liverpool's International Slavery Museum. As writer-on-attachment with the Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse theatres, he developed a new play titled *JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER* which premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August 2016. <http://www.tayoalukoandfriends.com/>

Programme

Venue: **Media Innovation Studio** (4th floor at University of Central Lancashire's Media Factory), Kirkham St, Preston, Lancashire PR1 2XY

Conference hashtag: #TheRedandtheBlack #theredandtheblack

Friday 13 October	
4pm	Registration
5pm	Welcome event <i>Chair: Alan Rice (UCLan)</i>
	Poem: from Olga Tabachnikova (UCLan) Film Clip: <i>Black Russians – The Red Experience</i> (forthcoming documentary) introduced by Prof Harold Weaver (Harvard) Book Launches: <i>Red International and Black Caribbean: Communists in New York City, Mexico and the West Indies, 1919-1939</i> (Pluto Press, 2017), with Prof Margaret Stevens (Essex County College) <i>World Revolution, 1917-1936: The Rise and Fall of the Communist International</i> by C.L.R. James (Duke University Press, 2017) with editor Christian Høgsbjerg (Leeds)
8pm	Special performance by David Rovics

Saturday 14 October		
9.30-10am	Registration	
10am	Welcome / Housekeeping	
10.05	<p>Keynote Address - Prof Winston James (University of California, Irvine), ‘The Russian Revolution and the Black Radical Imagination’</p> <p><i>Chair: Alan Rice (UCLan)</i></p>	
11.15	<p>Panel 1 – Russia 1917</p> <p><i>Chair: Olga Tabachnikova (UCLan)</i></p> <p>Room: Media Innovation Studio</p>	<p>Panel 2 – Claude McKay</p> <p><i>Chair: Fionnghuala Sweeney (Newcastle)</i></p> <p>Room: ME 320</p>
	<p>‘From Muslim Central Asia to Black America and back: on Lenin and Langston Hughes’</p> <p><i>Matthieu Renault</i> (Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis)</p> <p>‘“Race” and the Russian Revolution: Revisiting the “Jewish Question”, a Century on’</p> <p><i>Brendan McGeever</i> (Birkbeck)</p>	<p>‘Industrial Unionism, Intersectionality and the Russian Revolution: Claude McKay and Sylvia Pankhurst’</p> <p><i>Fabian Tompsett</i></p> <p>‘The Communist Politics and Primitivist Sensibilities of Claude McKay, 1919-1929’</p> <p><i>Owen Walsh</i> (Leeds)</p>
	<p>Panel 3 – Africa Rising I</p> <p><i>Chair: Raphael Hoermann (IBAR)</i></p> <p>Room: ME 414</p>	
	<p>‘Clements Kadalie, Interwar Southern Africa and Black Trade Unionists’ Rejection of “Communism with Its Violent Methods”’</p> <p><i>Henry Mitchell</i> (Edinburgh)</p> <p>‘Kenyatta, the Communist Left and the Growth of the Resistance Movement in Kenya’</p> <p><i>Ken Olende</i> (WEA)</p>	

12.30pm	Lunch	
1.30pm	<p>Panel 4 – Africa Rising II <i>Chair: Christian Høgsbjerg (Leeds)</i> Room: ME 320</p>	<p>Panel 5 – The Red Atlantic <i>Chair: Leslie James (Queen Mary)</i> Room: Media Innovation Studio</p>
	<p>‘The beginning of the Cold War in the Gold Coast?’ <i>Marika Sherwood</i></p> <p>‘Decolonization and the Cold War: African Student Elites as Transnational Actors in the USSR during the Khrushchev Era’ <i>Harold D. Weaver (Harvard)</i></p> <p>“‘People’s Friendship” in the Cold War: African Students at Moscow’s Patrice Lumumba People’s Friendship University’ <i>Rachel Rubin (University of Massachusetts Boston)</i></p>	<p>‘Calling the Toilers in the African Atlantic’ <i>Holger Weiss (Åbo Akademi University)</i></p> <p>‘Left Book Club and Its Associates: International Circulation of Socialist Ideas in an Atlantic Network (1935-1947)’ <i>Matheus da Silva (University of Sao Paulo)</i></p> <p>‘One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Popular Front Retreat and the 1937 “Parsley Massacre”’ <i>Margaret Stevens (Essex County College)</i></p>
3pm	Coffee Break	
3.30pm	<p>Panel 6 – Black Europe <i>Chair: Raphael Hoermann (IBAR)</i> Room: ME 320</p>	<p>Panel 7 – Black Activism in the Americas <i>Chair: Lisa Merrill (Hofstra)</i> Room: Media Innovation Studio</p>
	<p>“‘No More Slaves!” Lamine Senghor (1889-1927) and the Fusion of Pan-Africanism and Marxism in Interwar France’ <i>David Murphy (Stirling)</i></p> <p>“‘Colonial and subject peoples of the world, Unite”: the limits of the Communist International and the making of the 5th Pan-African Congress’ <i>Toussaint Losier (Massachusetts)</i></p> <p>‘European Marxist or Black Intellectual?: C.L.R. James and the</p>	<p>‘Sandalio Junco and “The Negro Question” in Latin America’ <i>Anne Garland Mahler (University of Virginia)</i></p> <p>‘Wilfred Domingo under Investigation’ <i>Peter Hulme (Essex)</i></p> <p>‘Cyril Briggs, the African Blood Brotherhood and Revolution in the <i>Crusader</i>’ <i>Jak Peake (Essex)</i></p> <p>‘Grace P. Campbell’s “An analysis of the</p>

	Advancement of Marxism Beyond its Leninist-Russian Expression' <i>Tennyson Joseph (UWI-Cave Hill)</i>	Negro Question in the U.S.A'' <i>Lydia Lindsey (North Carolina)</i>
5.30pm	Keynote Address – Dr Cathy Bergin (University of Brighton) ‘Bolshevism and African American Agency in the African American Radical Press’ <i>Chair: David Featherstone (Glasgow)</i>	
6.30pm	Buffet dinner	
8pm	Cultural evening with Linton Kwesi Johnson , including a Q&A session facilitated by <i>David Austin</i> (John Abbott College)	

Sunday 15 October		
10am	<p>Panel 8 – Black America <i>Chair: Jade Monserrat (UCLan)</i> Room: ME 320</p>	<p>Panel 9 – Soviet Russia <i>Chair: Cathy Bergin (Brighton)</i> Room: Media Innovation Studio</p>
	<p>“‘The Negro Question” – Marxism, Bolshevism and Black Internationalism’ <i>Jonathan Ellis</i></p> <p>‘The National Negro Congress’ <i>Clayton Vaughn-Roberson (Carnegie Mellon University)</i></p> <p>‘World Revolution and Slave Studies’ <i>Jeffrey Kerr-Ritchie (Howard University)</i></p>	<p>‘African American Literature in Soviet Russia / USSR, 1917-1930s: contacts, translations, literary criticism, editorial policy’ <i>Olga Panova (Lomonosov Moscow State University)</i></p> <p>‘African American Performers in Russia: Staging Red and Black’ <i>Lisa Merrill (Hofstra) and Theresa Saxon (UCLan)</i></p> <p>‘Blackness the Color of Red: Negotiating Race at the U.S. Legation in Riga, Latvia, 1924-1934’ <i>Maxim Matusevich (Seton Hall University)</i></p>
11.30	<p>Keynote Address – Prof Hakim Adi (University of Chichester), ‘Pan-Africanism and Communism: The October Revolution, Africa and the African Diaspora’ <i>Chair: Christian Høgsbjerg (Leeds)</i></p>	
12.30	Lunch	
1.30	<p>Live Performance - Tayo Aluko sings Paul Robeson</p>	
2pm	<p>Panel 10 – The Caribbean <i>Chair: David Featherstone (Glasgow)</i> Room: Media Innovation Studio</p>	<p>Panel 11 – Raya Dunayevskaya <i>Chair: Christian Høgsbjerg (Leeds)</i> Room: ME 320</p>
	<p>‘Firebrands, Trade Unionists, and Marxists: The Russian Revolution and the Emergence of the Left in Guyana, 1917-1956’ <i>Nigel Westmaas (Hamilton College)</i></p> <p>‘From the Russian Revolution to the Cuban Revolution’ <i>Steve Cushion</i></p>	<p>‘Biography of a Revolutionary Thinker and Activist’ <i>Ravi Bali</i></p> <p>‘Raya Dunayevskaya’s Philosophical Break with C.L.R. James (and Grace Lee Boggs)’ <i>Chris Gilligan</i></p> <p>‘Raya Dunayevskaya’s Concept of Black Masses as Vanguard of the American Revolution’ <i>Nigel Niles</i></p>

3.30pm	Coffee Break	
4pm	<p>Panel 12 - Marx / Lenin / Fanon <i>Chair: Andrea Sillis (IBAR)</i> Room:</p>	<p>Panel 13 - C.L.R. James / Linton Kwesi Johnson / Amiri Baraka <i>Chair: Leslie James (Queen Mary)</i> Room: Media Innovation Studio</p>
	<p>‘Marx’s <i>Eighteenth Brumaire</i> and its Appropriation by Caribbean Black Atlantic Intellectuals’ <i>Raphael Hoermann (UCLan)</i></p> <p>‘Distended Marxism: Frantz Fanon, the Comintern, and Dialectical Methodology in Marxist Pan-Africanism’ <i>Cosmo Pappas</i></p>	<p>“‘It was almost as if Lenin had had Trotsky shot for taking the side of the Proletariat against the Bourgeoisie’”: C.L.R. James’s <i>The Black Jacobins</i> and the Universality of Revolution’ <i>Philip Kaisary (Carleton University)</i></p> <p>‘The Unfinished Revolution: Linton Kwesi Johnson, C.L.R. James, and the new Socialism’ <i>David Austin (John Abbott College)</i></p> <p>“‘Hard Facts’”: Amiri Baraka and Marxism-Leninism in the 1970s’ <i>David Grundy (Cambridge)</i></p>
5.30pm	Final Plenary	
	<i>Chair: Alan Rice (UCLan)</i>	
	<p><i>Maxim Matusевич (Seton Hall)</i> <i>Fionnghuala Sweeney (Newcastle)</i> <i>Winston James (California – Irvine)</i></p>	
6.30pm close		

Abstracts

Panel 1 – Russia 1917

‘From Muslim Central Asia to Black America and back: on Lenin and Langston Hughes’

Matthieu Renault (Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis)

Lenin’s essays on national self-determination and anticolonial struggles are well known. Much less are his earlier remarks on the process of *internal colonization* of the Russian Empire’s “free” borderlands. “Oppressed nations” are conspicuously absent in those writings, which are complemented with a cross analysis of the shared destiny of Russian serfs and American slaves. This urges us to look afresh at the later identification between the experience of Asian and African people subjected to the yoke of European imperialism and that of African Americans considering themselves as colonized from within. Finally, Langston Hughes’s narrative of his travel to Soviet Central Asia in the early thirties offers a valuable perspective for re-examining the emancipation of the Empire’s “colored people” after 1917, and its limits.

Matthieu Renault is an associate professor in philosophy at the Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis, and a member of the Laboratoire d’études recherche sur les logiques contemporaines de la philosophie (LLCP). He authored *Frantz Fanon. De l’anticolonialisme à la critique postcoloniale* (Paris, Éditions Amsterdam, 2011), *L’Amérique de John Locke. L’expansion coloniale de la philosophie européenne* (Paris, Édition Amsterdam, 2014) and *C.L.R. James. La vie révolutionnaire d’un "Platon noir"* (Paris, Éditions La Découverte, 2016). He is currently writing a short book on Lenin and the Non-Western world (Paris, Éditions Syllepse, forthcoming : Fall 2017)

‘Race’ and the Russian Revolution: Revisiting the ‘Jewish Question’, a Century on

Brendan McGeever (Birkbeck)

One of the more underexplored aspects of Claude McKay’s 1919 statement on the anti-racist potential of the Russian Revolution is its multidirectionality. In the first instance, it was an address to the readers of *Negro World*: should the revolution spread, proclaimed McKay, it could break the grip of racism on the ‘white masses’ and make America safe for the ‘Negro’. What sometimes goes forgotten, however, is that McKay’s hopes derived from a reading of the Bolshevik response to their very own ‘race question’: the so-called ‘Jewish question’. A key link between the Black Atlantic and October 1917, for McKay, then, was the Jewish experience of the revolution.

This paper proposes to continue McKay’s multidirectionality by bringing the debate on ‘race’ and the Russian Revolution back through the so-called ‘Jewish question’. When the Bolsheviks came to power in 1917 they immediately came face-to-face with mass antisemitic violence. The pogroms of the Civil War posed fundamental questions of the Bolshevik project, in particular the Bolshevik theorisation of racism and the ‘national question’. What

especially shocked the Bolshevik leadership was the participation of workers and Red Army soldiers in this anti-Jewish violence. Based on archival research in Russia and Ukraine, this paper will examine antisemitism and the Russian Revolution through the prism of ‘race’, racialisation and anti-racist praxis. In doing so, it argues that debates on working class racism, self-organisation, the relationship between ‘race’ and class were also addressed within the revolution itself, through the Bolshevik confrontation with antisemitism.

Brendan McGeever is a Lecturer in the Sociology of Racialization and Antisemitism at Birkbeck, University of London. He is the author of *The Bolsheviks Confront Antisemitism, 1917-1919*, due to be published by Cambridge University Press in 2018. His work looks at the relationship between racism and antisemitism and class politics. With Satnam Virdee (University of Glasgow), he is also working on a collaborative project exploring the significance of antisemitism in the socialist movement of *fin de siècle* Europe. A collection of papers based on this work is currently being prepared for publication.

Panel 2 – Claude McKay

‘Industrial Unionism, Intersectionality and the Russian Revolution: Claude McKay and Sylvia Pankhurst’

Fabian Tompsett

These two key figures of revolutionary struggles which erupted after the First World War were both influenced by the Revolutionary Industrial Unionism of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW): Sylvia Pankhurst encountered the IWW during her two trips to the USA (1910-12). Her experiences during the Lawrence “Bread and Roses” strike in particular were to shape the way she approached organising working class women in London’s East End. Claude McKay was briefly involved with IWW in the USA before his stay of one and a half years in London (1919-1921). During this period he joined Sylvia Pankhurst in the Workers Socialist Federation, which had been involved in not merely supporting but attempting to emulate the Russian Revolution. Initially this was through Pankhurst willingness to back McKay in confronting E. D. Morel over his racist support for German hysteria over the deployment of African troops in the occupied Rhineland, an issue which involved both racist and sexist stereotyping. McKay was to become a regular staff member of the paper particularly over the summer of 1920, which saw the WSF transform itself into the “British Section of the Third International” and the subsequently reported on the Communist Unity Convention for the WSF. This paper will explore the intersection of sex, race and class through this encounter of this feminist activist and this African-Caribbean intellectual in the context of the class struggle as perceived by the IWW and the UK reception of the Russian Revolution.

Fabian Tompsett - During the 1970's I experienced the shortcomings of what a bourgeois university has to offer those of us with a working class point of view at Cambridge University and the London School of Economics. I turned to the workers movement to gain a more appropriate education and enjoyed the benefits of the comradeship of Joe Thomas (1912-1990) and the London Workers Group. Through working in radical bookshops and printshops I gained broad exposure to working class literature. With the arrival of the new millennium I became an active Wikimedian in 2003. In 2010 I re-engaged with existing Academic

apparatus, gaining a First Class degree in Social Enterprise in 2013. My dissertation looked at Wikipedia as a social enterprise in terms of the radical approaches to education from C. L. R. James to Ivan Illich. I followed this with MSc in ICT and Development focusing on the Encyclopedism of Otto Neurath and relating this to the Council Communism of the Figurative Constructivists with whom he worked. I gained a distinction for this. Since then I have published material on Alexander Bogdanov, particularly in relation to the Council Communists organised through the Allgemeine Arbeiter-Union – Einheitsorganisation (AAU-E). My current research involves looking at the connections between Proletkult in Russia, the Plebs League in the United Kingdom, the Industrial Workers of the World in the USA and Europe and the Left Communists of Germany. I am currently Wikimedian in Residence at MayDay Rooms, London.

‘The Communist Politics and Primitivist Sensibilities of Claude McKay, 1919-1929’

Owen Walsh (Leeds)

The Harlem Renaissance came closest to the ideas and ideals given new life by the Russian Revolution in the work of Claude McKay. While literary studies often identify McKay as a primitivist auteur, such a framing is rarely in conversation with his commitment to international communism. McKay’s politics were grounded in an agrarian and primitivist sensibility, as is evident both in his political journalism and in his literary work. The salient piece of political journalism in this respect is the 1921 article ‘How Black Sees Green and Red’, which examines the relationship between anti-racist, anti-imperialist, and anti-capitalist struggle. *Banjo*, a novel published eight years later, suggests a changed attitude to race, class, and nation – but one which nevertheless remains rooted in a primitivist sensibility. McKay’s deployment of “the hobo”, his primitivism, and the creeping racial essentialism in *Banjo* will be analysed to trace the author’s subtle but significant political evolution. In the late 1920s, McKay moved toward a politics focused on race, identity, and culture, to the explicit though uneven exclusion of working class struggle and anti-colonial nationalism. The changing shape of McKay’s political vision will be seen in the context of shifts in his relationship with international communism. The paper will offer new perspectives on how McKay negotiated the politics of class, race, and nation through the 1920s, at a time when the chronology and meaning of the black cultural front are being contested.

Owen Walsh - Leeds University PhD student studying 'Coloured cosmopolitanism on the Pacific Coast, c.1918-1941'. In 2015 I graduated from the University of Leeds with a BA in English and History. My undergraduate research project sought to consider black poet, novelist, and activist Claude McKay with a focus on his class position, and how that interacted with his racial identity. I followed this immediately with an MA in Race and Resistance, again at Leeds, from which I graduated with Distinction in 2016. My MA research looked at how and to what extent racial binaries were challenged in the work of Claude McKay and Popular Front author William Attaway. For this piece, I was a recipient of the 2016 Marion Sharples Prize for the best dissertation in the School of History. I began my PhD at Leeds in October 2016. My PhD project extends my interest in how African American activism and cultural outputs have challenged racial binaries into a west coast geography, where particular opportunities have existed for the troubling of racial ideology. I anticipate completing my PhD project in 2019 or 2020.

Panel 3 – Africa Rising I

‘Clements Kadalie, Interwar Southern Africa and Black Trade Unionists’ Rejection of “Communism with Its Violent Methods”

Henry Mitchell (Edinburgh)

In the 1920s all of the largest black trade unions across the Atlantic were decidedly sceptical about communism. They gravitated, instead, towards the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) - the ‘yellow’ Amsterdam International. Clements Kadalie led the Industrial and Commercial Workers’ Union (ICU), the first major black trade union that set out to become ‘One Big Union’ of workers ‘South of the Zambezi’, and affiliated with the IFTU in 1926. He also wrote numerous articles for the official organ of the US-based Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), *The Messenger*. Both Kadalie and A Philip Randolph, the head of the BSCP, were derided by communists as sell-out ‘bourgeois reformists’ who distracted from revolutionary organising. Governments, however, saw them as the most dangerous black men in each of their respective countries in the late 1920s.

Why, then, did the 1917 Russian Revolution, Comintern and the Red International of Labour Unions have a limited impact on interwar black trade unionism? A number of key officials in the ICU became communists, but were sidelined in leadership struggles that mirrored the yellow-red split in the international labour movement. Whilst Kadalie captured the imagination of black Southern Africa with arguments for black unity, a black Christianity, economic freedom and a Socialist Commonwealth - mobilising hundreds of thousands of workers - South African communists were expelled from the ICU and subsequently garnered only a few hundred followers. In part this reflected the place of the ICU, rooted within British Africa: Kadalie had “to speak of conditions in Britain, because if I refer to conditions in Germany, France or Russia I will be called a Bolshevik” and was compelled to follow Fenner Brockway and the ILP’s alternative arguments for transforming the empire into a ‘Federation of Socialist Commonwealths’. Additionally, black trade unionists felt they already ready knew the central tenets of ‘communalism’ - without Europeans having to tell them. But it also reflected the fact that violent revolution was seen by most black workers as impractical and highly dangerous. In the aftermath of numerous mass shootings by the South African government, non-violent mass organisation and general strikes - not vanguard revolutionary Communism - seemed the only practical way forward. As Kadalie wrote to a leading South African communist in 1928: “I found out the worth of your party in Europe...I believe in socialism and not in communism with its violent methods.”

Henry Mitchell is based at the University of Edinburgh working on an ESRC-funded PhD provisionally titled: 'Clements Kadalie: The Uncrowned King of the Black Masses, 1896-1951'. In 2015 he was a graduate attache at the British Institute in Eastern Africa. Previous research has focused on Malawians abroad in Southern Africa over the course of the 20th century and the history of Edinburgh's African alumni. Forthcoming articles are: 'Malawian Intellectuals, Christianity and the Millennium in 1920s Johannesburg' (South African Historical Journal), and "'Patience and Perseverance Overcome Mountains': The Prudent Struggles of Malawians Migrating Independently to Urban South Africa, 1913-1961' (Journal of Southern African Studies).

‘Kenyatta, the Communist Left and the Growth of the Resistance Movement in Kenya’
Ken Olende (WEA)

The paper will discuss to what extent the Kenyan independence movement was inspired by the Russian Revolution or influenced by Communist ideas and bodies such as the Red International of Labour Unions. Did changes in the policy of the USSR affect the development of independence and Pan-Africanist groups?

The spread of anti-colonial struggles like Harry Thuku’s East African Association launched in 1921 coincided with a worldwide mood that came out of the carnage of the First World War and the hope offered by the Russian Revolution.

But later experience shows how hard the communication of ideas could be. Jomo Kenyatta who would be imprisoned by the British during the independence struggle in the 1950s and later become independent Kenya’s first leader, worked with the Communist Party while he lived in Britain in the 1930s and wrote in its publications. Yet the ideas he implemented on his return to Kenya were nationalist rather than socialist.

However, several other leading figures in the resistance took a much more leftist stance. So, much of the leadership of the post war resistance movement emerged from a radical trade union background—including Mau Mau leaders Bildad Kaggia, Fred Kubai. They were influenced by and worked with the openly communist trade unionist Makhan Singh.

Yet when leading guerrilla leader Dedan Kimathi took the name “General Russia” it was more in general solidarity with powers that inspired resistance against the British than a wider engagement with Marxist ideas.

Ken Olende works as a tutor for Workers’ Educational Association and has written for *Unity*, the anti-racist and anti-fascist magazine, *Socialist Worker*, *Socialist Review* and *International Socialism Journal*.

Panel 4 – Africa Rising II

‘The beginning of the Cold War in the Gold Coast?’

Marika Sherwood

The 1945 Pan-African Congress’s Declaration ended with the words Colonial and Subject People of the world, Unite’. To attempt to achieve at least West African unity, Joe Appiah and Kwame Nkrumah, who had attended the Congress, went to Paris to interest activists there. A conference in London followed at which the West African National Secretariat was formed. Their aim was to ‘push forward the struggle for West African National Unity and Absolute Independence’. Kwame Nkrumah was appointed secretary. The first step would be to hold a conference not only of the ‘intelligentsia’, but of workers, trade unionists, farmers.

To achieve this, WANS published a monthly journal *The New African*, which included articles by the Francophone members. It also published Bankole Awoonor-Renner’s small booklet, *West African Soviet Union*, and most probably Nkrumah’s *Towards Colonial Freedom*. (I have not seen an original copy, so can only presume that it was published by WANS.)

Naturally contact was made with as many organisations and activists in West Africa as possible. Nnamdi Azikiwe from Nigeria was very supportive, as was I.T.A. Wallace-

Johnson, who had returned to Sierra Leone. Local newspapers published many supportive articles – whether any were published in the French colonies I do not know.

Nkrumah also travelled around the UK, not only to seek support for WANS but as a member of the Coloured Workers' Association, campaigning against the many forms of racial discrimination in the UK.

Why do I think this was the beginning of the Cold War in at least Ghana? The Cold War was attempts by the West to curtail support for the USSR and prevent its expansion. Awoonor-Renner, a Communist, was a WANS official and led WANS when Nkrumah returned to the Gold Coast towards the end of 1947. Bankole Akpata, another WANS 'official' joined the British Party. While studying in the USA, Nkrumah had been in touch with the Party there and receive some support from the CPGB for WANS, but was never a Party member.

Nkrumah was under surveillance by MI5 from his arrival in the UK. The 1948 'riots' in the Gold Coast were attributed by the government to communist activism. MI5, which was in collaboration with the CIA, set up offices there and in Nigeria. So the Cold War began.

Hungarian-born **Marika Sherwood** has lived in many parts of the world. In England she taught in schools before undertaking research on aspects of the history of Black peoples in Britain, more particularly the political activists of the past hundred years or so. In 1991 with colleagues she founded the Black and Asian Studies Association, edited the *BASA Newsletter* until 2007. The author of a number of books and articles, her most recent books are *After Abolition; Britain, The Slave Trade and Slavery from 1562 to the 1880s* (2007); *Origins of Pan-Africanism: Henry Sylvester Williams, Africa and the African Diaspora* (2010); *Malcolm X: Travels Abroad* (2011); *World War II: Colonies and Colonials*. (2013)

'Decolonization and the Cold War: African Student Elites as Transnational Actors in the USSR during the Khrushchev Era'

Harold D. Weaver (Harvard)

This presentation focuses on African students in Moscow during early African decolonization and the Cold War, the late 1950's and early 1960's. We will respond to three major questions:

1. What were Africans seeking in the USSR in human-resource development that they could not find at home?
2. What did they actually discover during their sojourns in the USSR?
3. How were the Soviet formal-education programs important in the Africans' struggle for full decolonization (cultural, psychological, economic, and political)?

We will draw upon our primary methodology of direct field experiences in Moscow during the Khrushchev era, as well as follow-up interviews in Tanzania, Paris, and elsewhere. Our research on African students in the USSR during the Khrushchev era is unique for several reasons: (1) our field-research methodologies (participant observation and interviews), (2) our point of view (Edward Said's "cultural empathy" as a significant aspect of our "antithetical knowledge" that we are seeking, (3) our focus on transnational actors (as opposed to international actors), and (4) our findings challenging previous scholarship related to (a) African students' personal, social experiences in the USSR and (b) their significant formal-education programs related to African needs and priorities as defined by prominent, anti-colonial African elites.

Harold D. Weaver, founding Chairperson of the Department of Africana Studies at Rutgers University, is currently an Alumni Fellow at Harvard University's Hutchins Center for African and African American Research and an Associate at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies. He has taught at various universities in North America, Asia, and Europe, including the Universite' de Paris VIII—Vincennes/St. Denis, Beijing Foreign Studies University, and Smith College. Weaver's 1985 dissertation, *SOVIET TRAINING AND RESEARCH PROGRAMS FOR AFRICA*--the first book-length monograph on African students in Russia--is being revised for publication as *DECOLONIZATION AND THE COLD WAR: AFRICAN STUDENTS IN THE USSR DURING THE KHRISHCHEV ERA*. His pioneering publications in the late 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's included articles in *THE AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST*, *THE TEACHERS' COLLEGE RECORD*, and *AFRICA REPORT*. Prof. Weaver's book and conference presentation draw upon his sojourns in the USSR as journalist accredited by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1963-64), as participant in the USA-USSR youth exchange program (1959), as participant in the World Youth Forum in Moscow (1961), as participant in the World Youth Festival in Helsinki and post-festival visitor to Moscow and Leningrad (1962), and as dissertation researcher (1963-64).

“People's Friendship” in the Cold War: African Students at Moscow's Patrice Lumumba People's Friendship University'

Rachel Rubin (University of Massachusetts Boston)

This paper explores the role of the Patrice Lumumba People's Friendship University in Moscow (PLPFU) in shaping both individuals and governments in post-colonial Africa. Founded in 1960, its stated objective was to provide higher education for the developing world. Its opening followed important global shifts—collapse of European empires, the assassination of Lumumba, geopolitical fallout from World War II—but coexisted with (and participated in) others—especially decolonization movements, Arab-Israel conflicts, and Cold War activities in the US and USSR.

PLPFU gathered future leaders from various newly-independent African countries. For many, it was one of the only avenues for post-secondary education available, along with the U.S.'s HBCUs (a fascinating parallel). Jeff Radebe, South Africa's Minister of Public Enterprises, recently commented, “Hundreds of young South Africans found here the education they were denied in their own homeland.”

Observers in the U.S quickly began to refer to PLPFU as a site of Communist indoctrination and a training-ground for terrorists; its symbolic connection with Lumumba was invoked (in racialized language) as evidence of this. Time magazine scoffed that “Four years after his death, a lot of people talk as though Patrice Lumumba were still the Congo” and moved on to list PLPFU as producing “terrorists” and “agitators” who are “invoking Lumumba's name” with its “rhythm of jungle drums.” Thus, I explore PLPFU's operation as a nexus of interaction among the various African countries whose students traveled there, the USSR as host and “instructor,” and the global vision of the U.S. and its allies.

Rachel Rubin is Professor of American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston, where she is Director of the Center for the Study of Humanities, Culture, and Society. She received her PhD from Yale University (in 1995) in both American Studies and Slavic

Languages and Literatures. She has published widely on international currents in cultural history.

Panel 5 – The Red Atlantic

‘Calling the Toilers in the African Atlantic’

Holger Weiss, Åbo Akademi University

The International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers or ITUCNW was an attempt by the Red International of Labor Unions (RILU, also known as Profintern) to sensitize Black toilers in the African Atlantic during the interwar period. Established in 1928 as the International Trade Union Committee of the RILU, it belonged to a group of new committees and organizations that saw their light during the so-called Third Period when the Third (Communist) International or the Comintern inaugurated its new policy of ‘class-against-class’. The foundation of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers was the attempt by the Comintern and RILU to build an alternative, radical body in the African Atlantic. In contrast to the Pan-Africanist organizations to direct its message to Black people in general, the ITUCNW presented itself in the African Atlantic as a class-organization for the Black toilers only.

A close reading of the rhetoric used by the leading figures of the International Trade Union of Negro Workers in their journal *The Negro Worker* reveals that it highlighted a ‘class-before-race’ perspective. This does not come as a surprise –Red International of Labor Unions had established the organization during the so-called Third Period. Starting in 1928 and officially ending in 1935, the Comintern and its various sub-units, committees and sympathizing mass-organizations followed the ‘class-against-class’ policy, fiercely attacking Reformist, Social Democratic and Socialist leaders and parties. The International Trade Union of Negro Workers was no exception to this: it was an organization only for the Black toilers and workers, not for the Black bourgeois leaders or activists. Its main target was Marcus Garvey and his United Negro Improvement Association, which was the leading Pan-African organization in the early 1930s.

However, it is questionable if the class-before-race rhetoric ever convinced but a few activists. By 1935, the attacks on the Black bourgeois leaders and organizations were to stop and as an outcome of the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern, the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers was to be transformed and was envisioned to emerge as a Black International. Nevertheless, this plan could never be realized. Back in Moscow, the Comintern quietly liquidated the organization in 1937.

Holger Weiss (PhD 1997, University of Helsinki) is Professor of general history at Åbo Akademi University, Finland, and Guest Professor of history at Dalarna University, Sweden. His research focuses on Global and Atlantic history, West African environmental history, and Islamic Studies (with a special focus on Islam in Ghana). His publications include *Babban Yunwa. Hunger und Gesellschaft in Nord-Nigeria und den Nachbarregionen in der frühen Kolonialzeit* (Suomen Historiallinen Seura 1997), (ed.) *Social Welfare in Muslim Societies in Africa* (Nordic Africa Institute 2002), *Obligatory Almsgiving: An Inquiry into Zakât in the Pre-colonial Bilād as-Sūdān* (Finnish Oriental Society 2003), *Begging and Almsgiving in Ghana: Muslim Positions towards Poverty and Distress* (Nordiska Afrikainstitutet 2007), *Between Accommodation and Revivalism: Muslims, the State and Society in Ghana from the*

Precolonial to the Postcolonial Era (Finnish Oriental Society 2008), (red.), *Atlantiska religiösa nätverk. Transoceana kontakter, trossamfund och den enskilda individen i skuggan av slavhandeln* (Nya Doxa 2010), *Framing a Radical African Atlantic. African American Agency, West African Intellectuals and the International Trade Union of Negro Workers* (Brill 2014), (ed.) *Ports of Globalisation, Places of Creolisation: Nordic Possessions in the Atlantic World during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Brill 2015), *Slavhandel och slaveri under svensk flagg: Koloniala drömmar och verklighet i Afrika och Karibien 1770–1847* (Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland, 2016), and (ed.), *International Communism and Transnational Solidarity: Radical Networks, Mass Movements and Global Politics, 1919–1939* (Brill 2017).

‘Left Book Club and Its Associates: International Circulation of Socialist Ideas in an Atlantic Network (1935-1947)’

Matheus da Silva (University of Sao Paulo)

Focusing on the histories of *The New Era Fellowship* (founded in South Africa in 1937), *The Current Affairs Group* (founded in Southern Rhodesia in 1938) and the *Left Club in Jamaica* (founded in Jamaica in 1938), we intend to map a triangular network of circulation of socialist ideas created between the Caribbean, Africa and Europe, from the transnational activities of the London’s Left Book Club, during its operation period between 1935 and 1947, when it founded more than 15 groups around the globe, which distributed the material produced by the Club. In addition to functioning as centers for diffusion of Marxist, anti-imperialist and anti-colonial ideas, largely forming local nationalisms, those circles acted as centers of congregation and education. *The Current Affairs Group*, for example, was founded under influence of Victor Gollancz to support the Republican cause on the Spanish Civil War. Along with the South African Communist newspaper *Guardian*, *The Current Affairs Group* was responsible for disseminating socialist ideas among the black apartheid-segregated population. We argue that transnational networks sewn by LBC, which connected those groups, favored the creation of a global circuit which helped non-European intellectuals to act as carriers of anti-colonial, anti-imperial, anti-racist and nationalist ideas. Themes that were already discussed within regional networks in southern Africa, as well as in the Caribbean region, independent of relations with Europe, through LBC could circulate its material, as well as collaborating in the amplification of local discussions to other national contexts, particularly in the Atlantic region under British influence.

Dr. **Matheus Cardoso da Silva**, Post-doctoral fellow, Department of History, University of São Paulo, Brazil. I am a PhD in Social History at the History Department of the University of São Paulo (2016), Master of Social History in the same department of USP (2010) and undergraduated in History (BA) at Fundação Santo André (2005). I was fellow of Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior, CAPES (2011-2015). In the first semester of 2015 I have concluded a doctoral stage at Royal Holloway, University of London, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Gregory Claeys, granted with CAPES PDSE scholarship. In 2008, I was a fellow of the Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq) and during 2009 and 2010 I was fellow of the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP). I have been working in the fields of Contemporary History and History of International Relations with emphasis in the area of Global Intellectual History. My research focus are compared and transnational studies, with emphasis on intellectuals, ideas, projects and political cultures. I'm also interested in discussions on issues related to authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, such as human rights

and cultural production in these contexts. I'm currently enrolled as a Postdoctoral fellow at Department of History, University of São Paulo.

‘One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Popular Front Retreat and the 1937 “Parsley Massacre”

Margaret Stevens (Essex County College)

A truth little known and even less understood is that some of the most significant victories and also setbacks in the past century made by Black people in the struggle against racial oppression developed within the context of the global Communist movement. Black working people in the Anglophone, Francophone and Hispanophone Caribbean islands as well as Communist hubs of operation in New York City and Mexico were central to this radical process—at once local, hemispheric and indeed global in its force and magnitude. We are indebted to scholars of twentieth-century Black radicalism and Communist history who have widely documented how Western metropolises such as Paris, London and New York City were international centers of operation for Communist praxis that addressed questions of anti-colonialism and the fight against racism. As a student of this history, however, I found that insufficient attention was being paid to the ways in which the Communist movement related to people based out of epicenters in Haiti, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, British Guiana and even Mexico. Therefore, I intend to present a paper that places the 1935 “Popular Front Against Fascism” in the specific context of US-Cuban-Haitian collaborative Communist-led activity and the subsequent 1937 genocide of Haitian workers in the Dominican Republic. In the wake of the 100th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, I aim to outline the strengths and weakness of one moment in Communist anti-fascist strategy in light of our own current historical period as leftists assess proto-fascist populism in the United States and anti-immigrant hegemony across Europe.

Margaret Stevens teaches history at Essex County College in Newark, NJ and is the author of “Red International Black Caribbean”, forthcoming October 2017 by Pluto Press. Dr. Stevens received her doctorate from Brown University in the Department of American Civilization, studying with leading scholars in the Africana Studies department. She has written and spoken numerous on the question of Communism and Black radicalism in U.S., Caribbean and global context. Currently she is completing an authorized biography on Kenneth Gibson, first black mayor of Newark, NJ, tentatively entitled “Mayor Kenneth A. Gibson and the Origins of Rainbow Coalition Capitalism.”

Panel 6 - Black Europe

“No More Slaves!” Lamine Senghor (1889-1927) and the Fusion of Pan-Africanism and Marxism in Interwar France’

David Murphy (Stirling)

To speak of a ‘Black France’ in the interwar period still typically involves accounts of jazz, Josephine Baker and the *vogue nègre* of the 1920s or the birth of Negritude in the 1930s.

Over the past three decades, however, groundbreaking research has uncovered the writings and activism of a hitherto largely forgotten group of black militants from the 1920s who sought to fuse Pan-Africanist and Marxist thought. This paper will examine one of the most important but still curiously neglected figures of this period, Lamine Senghor, a decorated Senegalese veteran of the First World War. Senghor emerged in the mid-1920s and, for a few short years (he died of TB in November 1927), he was perhaps the best-known and most influential black anti-colonial activist of his time. In his writings and activism, Senghor combined a communist-inspired critique of empire with an attempt to forge a shared sense of black identity across disparate groups both within France and more globally. My paper will chart the trajectory of Senghor's brief career as an activist, tracing the ways in which issues of race and class were consistently intertwined. It will focus in particular on his success at the inaugural meeting of the League against Imperialism (LAI) in Brussels in February 1927: Senghor's speech—in which he used slavery as a key trope linking black and working-class experience—was widely greeted as one of the highlights of the Congress, translated almost immediately into English and published in the United States.

David Murphy is Professor of French and Postcolonial Studies at the University of Stirling. He has published widely on various aspects of modern and contemporary Francophone West African culture, including the monographs, *Sembene: Imagining Alternatives in Film and Fiction* (2000) and (with Patrick Williams), *Postcolonial African Cinema* (2007). He has also published numerous edited volumes, including (with Charles Forsdick), *Postcolonial Thought in the French-Speaking World* (2009) and *The First World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar 1966* (2016). He is currently preparing a biography of the interwar Senegalese anti-colonial militant, Lamine Senghor.

“Colonial and subject peoples of the world, Unite”: the limits of the Communist International and the making of the 5th Pan-African Congress’

Toussaint Losier (W. E. B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies
University of Massachusetts at Amherst)

On October 15th, 1945, co-chairs Amy Ashwood Garvey and W. E. B. Du Bois marked the beginning of the 5th Pan-African Congress. The first such congress in roughly fifteen years, this gathering explicitly built upon the tradition established by those held during the 1910s and 20s. Yet, as much as Garvey and Du Bois' positions of prominence acknowledged past leadership roles in the movement for African unity, it was Trinidadian journalist and former communist George Padmore who would be the gathering's most influential figure. In marked contrast to these previous efforts, Padmore's brought together more than ninety delegates from Europe's African colonies, with many of them representatives of mass organizations. Reflecting the breadth of his contacts amongst African peasant associations, co-operative societies, and workers organizations, this group of delegates articulated the increasingly militant anti-colonialism of the era, producing resolutions that put forward a vision of self-determination that various national liberation organizations would carry out over the next several decades.

While scholars have generally depicted the 5th Pan-African Congress as marking a shift away from the more reformist approaches of the four prior gatherings, this paper suggests that this Congress is perhaps better understood as a response to the limitations of left internationalist politics, specifically those of the Communist International. Although the 1917

Bolshevik revolution and the 1919 founding of the Comintern had promised a principled opposition to European imperialism, a cohort of Black radicals had by the 1930s begun to raise concerns about the limited attention paid to communist organizing within the African, Asia, and West Indian colonies. Perhaps more than any other figure, Padmore epitomized this shift, resigning from the international communist movement in 1933 largely because of the Comintern's perceived retreat from anticolonial struggles, ultimately concluding that the problem of colonialism could only be settled by the colonized. By establishing the contacts and building the organizations that would make the 5th Pan-African Congress possible, they helped to infuse the emerging national liberation struggles with a robust internationalism that would ultimately link the independence of one African nation to that of the entire continent, and beyond that, to the freedom of all colonized peoples.

Dr. **Toussaint Losier** is an Assistant Professor in the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at University of Massachusetts-Amherst. He sits on the advisory board of the university's W. E. B. Du Bois Center and is currently a visiting scholar at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University. Dr. Losier holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, with his research focusing on grassroots responses to the postwar emergence of mass incarceration in Chicago. At UMass Amherst, he teaches courses on African American History, Black Politics, Criminal Justice law and policy, and transnational social movements. His writing has been published or is pending in *Souls*, *Radical History Review*, *Journal of American History*, *Journal of Urban History*, *Wayne Law Review*, *Race & Class*, and *Social Justice*. He is co-author of *Rethinking the American Prison Movement* (Routledge, October 2017) with Dan Berger and preparing a book manuscript tentatively titled, *War for the Cities: Mass Incarceration, Black Liberation and the Remaking of the Carceral State*.

'European Marxist or Black Intellectual?: C.L.R. James and the Advancement of Marxism Beyond its Leninist-Russian Expression'

Tennyson Joseph (UWI-Cave Hill)

Caribbean intellectual C. L. R. James has made a distinct contribution to global Marxist thought through his insightful analysis of the organisational imperatives for revolutionary change beyond the Vanguard Party model offered by V.I. Lenin. Indeed, in the period following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the rise of spontaneous mass movements independent of centrally organised vanguardist leaders has concretely actualised James' reflections. Yet, despite the contemporary validity of his perspectives, James has been largely assessed as being more relevant to the radical politics of the advanced capitalist regions of Europe, than to the small Caribbean states in the black Atlantic. Whilst James is acknowledged as a foremost pan-Africanist, his "pan-Africanism" is often treated as being separate from his Marxism. With the exception of the reviews of his "Revolutionary Answer to the Negro problem in the USA", very few writers see his theoretical reflections on Marxist organisation as being linked to the possibilities of pan-African liberation. This paper seeks to highlight the analytical link between C. L. R. James' pan-Africanism and his Marxism. It seeks to resolve tensions between race and class, and Marxism and pan-Africanism, in an effort to dissolve the lingering questions about the applicability of Marxism to the black revolutionary politics in the Twenty-first century.

Tennyson S. D. Joseph holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge and is currently a Lecturer in Political Science, and Head of the Department of Government, Sociology and Social Work and Psychology at the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies. His work revolves around Caribbean Political Thought, Globalisation and Anti-colonialism, Sovereignty and Decolonization and the post-1945 Political History of Saint Lucia. His published books include *General Elections and Voting in the English-Speaking Caribbean 1992-2005* (co-authored with Cynthia Barrow-Giles) and *Decolonization in St. Lucia: Politics and Global Neo-Liberalism 1945-2010*, along with several articles. His MPhil thesis, submitted in 1994, was entitled, “*The Political Thought of C.L.R. James: Its Utility and relevance to the Contemporary Anglophone Caribbean – A Contribution to the Rethinking of Marxism*”. Since 2010 Joseph has been a weekly Columnist in *The Nation* a Barbados daily newspaper, in which his concerns over the challenges of Caribbean governance, the collapse of the familiar post-colonial development options, the failure of leadership, and the absence of a philosophical and intellectual response to the existential crisis facing the Caribbean have been given frequent expression.

Panel 7 – Black Activism in the Americas

‘Sandalio Junco and “The Negro Question” in Latin America’

Anne Garland Mahler (University of Virginia)

This study examines the work of an understudied Afro-Latin American intellectual who made a significant contribution to theorizing the role of black labor within international communist organizing. Many studies of the relationship between communism and black Americans in the 1920s-1930s focus on Claude McKay and Otto Huiswoud’s presentation of the “Thesis on the Negro Question,” the Scottsboro Boys case, and the Black Belt Thesis in the U.S. South. However, the role of this particular debate in shaping Latin American political thought has gone largely unrecognized.

At the First Latin American Communist Conference in Buenos Aires in June 1929, “the Negro Question” became a topic of heated disagreement and was especially employed in discussions of self-determination for indigenous communities. The well-known Peruvian *indigenista* philosopher, José Carlos Mariátegui, composed a position paper on “The Problem of Race in Latin America” to be read at the conference by his chosen representative, Dr. Hugo Pesce (the Peruvian physician who later introduced Che Guevara to Marxism). While Mariátegui’s contributions to “the Indigenous Question” in this speech are widely recognized, there was another participant at this conference, Afro-Cuban Sandalio Junco, who disagreed strongly with many of the participants’ dismissal of the presence of racial discrimination among the working classes and who clashed in general with the Comintern’s class-over-race position. The analysis of his comments at the conference, as well as his speech “The Problem of the Negro and the Proletarian Movement,” will be the focus of this paper, calling attention to Sandalio Junco, assassinated in 1942, as a central figure of black radical thought whose work continues to resonate in debates around race and class that shape social organizing today.

Anne Garland Mahler is an assistant professor of Spanish and an Andrew W. Mellon Fellow at the University of Virginia. Mahler is broadly interested in race and social

movements in the American hemisphere. Her book, *The Color of Resistance: Race and Solidarity from the Tricontinental to the Global South*, is forthcoming with Duke University Press. Mahler currently serves as President of the MLA's CLCS Global South Forum, and her articles have appeared in *Latin American Research Review*, *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, and *Small Axe*.

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'Wilfred Domingo under Investigation'

Peter Hulme (Essex)

In June 1919, agents of the Lusk Committee raided the Rand School of Social Science in New York and seized material suspected of encouraging sedition. The committee published its report under the title *Revolutionary Radicalism: Its history, purpose and tactics. With an exposition and discussion of the steps being taken and required to curb it*. One of the principal figures fingered was the Jamaican, Wilfred Domingo.

Domingo is an interesting figure with respect to the themes of this conference. Born in 1889, he worked as an apprentice tailor, meeting Marcus Garvey in the National Club in Kingston. Preceding Garvey to New York, in 1910, Domingo helped get him established and worked as an editor on Garvey's newspaper, *Negro World*, although Domingo's socialism eventually ensured a split. In the following years, Domingo consistently wrote for and participated in various groups and journals without getting entirely tied to a single position. He was more successful than many, if not all, his contemporaries in balancing the red with the black. After the difficult years of the Depression, and with the hardening of political positions within the socialist block, Domingo committed himself to the nationalist cause, becoming one of the founders of the Jamaica Progressive League in New York in 1936 and one of the shapers of the People's National Party back in Jamaica in 1938. This paper attempts to situate Domingo with respect to the movements and issues with which he was engaged in New York in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution.

Peter Hulme is Emeritus Professor of Literature at the University of Essex, where he taught for forty years before his recent retirement. His published work includes *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797* (1986), *Remnants of Conquest: The Island Caribs and their Visitors, 1877-1998* (2000), and *Cuba's Wild East: A Literary Geography of Oriente* (2011). He recently edited *These Many Years: The Autobiography of W. Adolphe Roberts* (2015). He is currently writing a book about the Nicaraguan poet, Salomón de la Selva.

'Cyril Briggs, the African Blood Brotherhood and Revolution in the *Crusader*'

Jak Peake (Essex)

In the wake of the Russian Revolution, Cyril Briggs founded the journal *Crusader* in 1918 and, a year later, the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), an organization closely linked with

the Communist Party of America (CPUSA)—often seen as a black ‘wing’ of the party. Galvanized by the Russian Revolution, as Briggs’s editorials demonstrated, Briggs devoted himself to both international communism and international black liberation.

Briggs attempted to sustain a balance between his ‘black’ and ‘red’ activism. While he sought to influence Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association and hoped to federate all black organizations, he and fellow ABB member Otto Huiswoud pushed the CPUSA to consider the plight of the African diaspora. His views concerning black liberation became increasingly militant, peaking around the 1921 Tulsa race riot, earning him the especial attention of the Bureau of Investigation which classified the ABB “entirely radical”. In 1939 the CPUSA expelled Briggs for his support of black nationalism, though he would rejoin the party some nine years later.

This paper focuses on Briggs’s writing and activism in the years following the Russian Revolution and examines how the Revolution’s aims—the establishment of a socialist state within Russia, but also abroad—could be seen as a guiding force in Briggs’s writing and the *Crusader*’s output. It also aims to demonstrate how the Russian Revolution inflected the magazine’s ‘revolutionary’ writing on topics ranging from the Mexican Revolution to fictional ‘world’ or Caribbean revolutions.

Jak Peake is a literature lecturer in the Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies, University of Essex. His current research project examines Caribbean-New York networks in the early twentieth century. His forthcoming monograph, entitled, *Between the Bocas: Reading Western Trinidad*, is due out with Liverpool University Press in 2017 and investigates the literary geography of Trinidad from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first century.

‘Grace P. Campbell’s “An Analysis of the Negro Question in the U.S.A”

Lydia Lindsey (North Carolina)

In 1928, Grace P. Campbell as a member of the America Negro Labor Congress (ANLC), wrote “An analysis of the Negro Question in the U.S.A.” for the Negro Committee of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) in response to Communist Sixth World Congress” the Black Belt Thesis. Campbell was a “race woman” who stood with one foot in the Progressive Era and the other in the bosom of the black militant Left. She is a vital link between the reformist movement of the nineteenth-century and the emergence of the radical black Left within the “new Negro movement” in the twentieth-century. Campbell was active in racial uplift charity work and the only female founder of the African Black Brotherhood (ABB) and in 1922, she became a member of the Workers’ Party. Campbell’s presence can be traced throughout the Left New Negro Movement of the twentieth-century, but her voice on the Left is often muted because she did not leave a plethora of writings; so, this particular précis allows us to hear her voice. It is a rare find. The significance of Campbell’s “An analysis of the Negro Question in the U.S.A” is fivefold: (1) it provides an assessment of the social, political, and economic struggle of African Americans for equality and dignity based on the most recent contemporaneous literature that mirrors aspects of her life and her family’s trajectory within the Negro Question, (2) it places a great significance on the intent and shortcomings of the Emancipation Proclamation and Reconstruction that were embedded in the Negro Question; (3) it offers a response to the Communist International (CI) proclamation of the Black Belt Theory; (4) it was written a few months before she left the

Communist Party in the midst of a factional struggle spearheaded by black male comrades; and, (5) it is an early account of a black female's position on the Negro Question, most early accounts were written by men. In her analysis, she concluded that "On the whole, the negro of America is among the most oppressed groups in the world."

Lydia Lindsey is an associate professor of History at North Carolina Central University (NCCU), Durham, NC. She received her B.A. and M.A. in European History from Howard University; and her Ph.D. in British Empire and Commonwealth History and Modern European History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. During her graduate studies, she was in residence at the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, The University of Warwick, Coventry, England and Institute for Historical Research, University of London, Senate House, London, England. Her dissertation was titled: "Role of Immigration Policy, Race, Gender and Class in Shaping the Status and Quality of Life of Jamaican Female Immigrants in Birmingham, England, 1948-1962." She has participated in The National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar for College Teachers on Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire at Duke University, Durham, NC and a recipient of Schomburg Center Scholars-in-Residence Fellowship. She has published several articles on twentieth-century British history with a special focus on the black presence in the British Isles. Her latest article "Eric Williams, His Associates and the Imagination of an Anti-Colonial Society," appeared in *The Legacy of Eric Williams*, editors, Colin Palmer and Barbara L. Solow which was the recipient of the Chancellor's Personal Award, University of West Indian Press (UWI), 2016. Her research and teaching interests include the African Presence in Europe, Blacks in Britain, Modern Europe, black radical women within the African Diaspora. She is a recipient of an NCCU Teaching Award.

Panel 8 – Black America

“The Negro Question” – Marxism, Bolshevism and Black Internationalism’

Jonathan Ellis

“The Negro Question” has been and is still central to those who consider themselves revolutionary socialists. Various socialists have dealt with the question in a variety of ways. The Bolshevik Party, and its lead intellectual and political leader Vladimir Lenin, sought to unite the working class across national and racial lines in a unified movement against capitalism. Many early socialists in America either ignored the specific oppression of Black people under capitalism or allowed explicit white supremacy to exist within their circles. Early Black socialists who were alienated from white socialist circles in America were attracted to the Bolsheviks because of their insistence on racism being a central fight to the goal of international socialism. Black American and Caribbean socialists Claude McKay, Cyril Briggs, and Harry Haywood influenced American and Russian socialists ideas on the “Negro Question.”

Despite a rough start, the Communist Party USA was able to attract working class African Americans to its organization because of its radical stance on the “Negro” question. Their theory allowed them to seriously try and organize Black workers not only against their bosses but against racist terror in the Jim Crow south as well. This paper will explore how the “Negro question” allowed the Communist Party to become serious fighters for Black Liberation in the American south throughout the 1930s.

Jonathan Ellis has a Bachelor in History: Concentration in African American History. I am a young African-American with an interest in liberation and justice for all people. People over profit is an important principle of my political ideas. Raised in Atlanta all of my life and am currently seeing the beginning of gentrification on my side of town.

‘The National Negro Congress’

Clayton Vaughn-Roberson (Carnegie Mellon University)

This paper examines the local and transnational dimensions of the National Negro Congress (NNC) in Philadelphia during the period of the Popular Front. Under the leadership of Benjamin DeWayne Amis, a member of the Communist Party, the NNC’s Philadelphia branch drew strong connections between the socioeconomic conditions of black Americans under Jim Crow and the experiences of Africans and European Jews under colonialism and fascism. Racial activists articulated these connections through newspapers, conferences, speeches, and grassroots activism. This paper focuses on two questions: how did the NNC pioneer a global identity for American blacks and create solidarities with European Jews and colonized people worldwide, and how did these solidarities in turn influence its local activism in Philadelphia. Amis’ life and writing reveals the role of African Americans in the Popular Front as well as the overlapping diasporic anti-fascist struggles among Africans, black Americans, and European Jews. By examining the personal papers of Amis as well as the NNC records, this paper will shed light on the dynamic geo-political and socio-economic conditions that shaped the interwar civil rights movement. Positioned at the juncture between the local and transnational, African American anti-fascism raises challenging questions about how American historians conceptualize significant intersectionalities such as race and class, and Pan-Africanism and communism.

Clayton Vaughn-Roberson is a Ph.D. candidate in history from Carnegie Mellon University. His teaching and research interests are African American Transnational and Urban History; Race, Class, and Politics in 20th Century America; Cold War; History of the Soviet Union. Under the mentorship of Nico Slate, Mr. Vaughn-Roberson is writing a dissertation of the National Negro Congress’ transnational and local activism during the 1930s and 1940s.

‘World Revolution and Slave Studies’

Jeffrey Kerr-Ritchie (Howard University)

This talk addresses the following question: what impact did the 1917 Russian Revolution have on existing historical scholarship concerning slavery and emancipation and what were its consequences? Until then, most scholars argued that New World slaves were largely docile and content, emancipation was primarily a pious act initiated by benevolent white leaders, and people of African descent made no contribution toward world history. Between the mid-1930s and mid-1940s, these established arguments were robustly refuted by a remarkable scholarship including W. E. B. Du Bois’s *Black Reconstruction* (1935), C. L. R. James’ *The Black Jacobins* (1938), John C. Carroll’s *Slave Insurrections in the United States*,

1800-1860 (1939), Melville J. Herskovits' *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941), R. A. & A. H. Baur's "Day to Day Resistance to Slavery," *Journal of Negro History* (1942), Herbert Aptheker's *American Negro Slave Revolts* (1943), and Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944). Rather than being docile and quiescent, slaves fought, resisted, and sometimes overcame slave systems. Abolition was less a gift from above and more the outcome of economic contradictions as well as slave resistance in the Caribbean as well as the United States. Rather than people without history, slaves and freed-people played a vital role in the making of the modern world. I argue that this critical scholarship drew from communist ideas of world revolution propagated after 1917 that found fruitful soil in two decades of economic depression, state fascism, anti-colonial political mobilization, and World War. Moreover, this activist and revolutionary historical scholarship impacted existing struggles for a better world in Africa, the Caribbean, and beyond. This intellectual and political scaffolding proved remarkably resilient through the late twentieth century eventually succumbing to post-modernist historiography, the transatlantic turn, and nationalisms.

Jeffrey R. Kerr-Ritchie did his undergraduate degree at Kingston Polytechnic, England, and his doctorate in history at the University of Pennsylvania. He has worked at Howard University since 2006. He is the author of *Freedom's Seekers: Essays on Comparative Emancipation* (LSUP 2014), and two monographs *Rites of August First: Emancipation Day in the Black Atlantic World* (LSUP 2007), and *Freed people in the Tobacco South: Virginia 1860-1900* (UNCP 1999). His teaching fields include slavery, emancipation, and the African Diaspora. His current book monograph is titled "The *Creole* Slave Revolt & Clash of Empires." He agrees with those who think the study of history should liberate minds and that our major political task is to change the world not to reproduce it.

Panel 9 – Soviet Russia

'African American Literature in Soviet Russia / USSR, 1917-1930s: Contacts, Translations, Literary Criticism, Editorial Policy'

Olga Panova (Lomonosov Moscow State University)

The aim of the paper is to give an idea of the policy and guidelines for translation and publishing of Black American literature in Soviet Russia in 1917-1930s, as well as of the basis for establishing / maintaining contacts with African American writers. Ideology always being at the core of the Soviet literary policy, there exists, however, a drastic difference between the revolutionary 1917-1919, the 1920s (New Economic Policy) and Stalin's 1930s. The key issues that allow to see the logic of the change are: the choice of the authors and their works for translation and publishing, the bias of literary criticism, the dynamics of Black writers' literary reputation in the USSR, the activity of Soviet translators, publishers, periodicals "specializing" in African American literature, Soviet and international literary institutions (IURW, writers' associations and organizations of the 1920s, the Soviet Writers' Union). Special attention is paid to Black visitors (including major figures like Claude MacKay and Langston Hughes) and Black residents of the USSR, their essays, articles and travel-books about Soviet Russia, and the reception of these works in the Soviet Union, as well as to the correspondence between Black writers and Soviet institutions. The study is based mainly on the materials of the Soviet press (including newspapers, literary magazines

and journals) of the period in question, as well as archived documents from the funds of the Russian State Archive of Literature and Arts (RGALI), Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI), State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF).

Olga Panova is Professor at the Dept. of Foreign Literature, Faculty of Philology, Lomonosov Moscow State University, and Associate researcher at the Sector of Modern European and American Literature, A.M. Gorky Institute of World Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Olga Panova graduated from Lomonosov Moscow State University in 1987, she defended her PhD thesis *Ralph Ellison and the Black American Literature of the 1950-80s* (Moscow State University) in 1991 and her habilitation thesis *Black American Letters of the XVII-early XXth Century: Problems of Literary History and Its Interpretation* (Moscow State University) in 2014. She published a book *The Worlds of Color: the Quest for the National Identity in American Literature* (Moscow State University Press, 2014). She is an editor-in-chief of the scholarly periodical *Literature of the Americas: a Journal of American Literary History* (free access online at www.litda.ru), a member of EAAS (European Association for American Studies), RSACS (Russian Society for American Culture Studies), SSASAA (Salzburg Seminar American Studies Alumni Association). She is a co-editor of the scholarly series *Literature. XX Century. A Collection of Critical Essays*. Her current research includes African-American studies, American Modernism, Russian / Soviet literary and cultural contacts.

‘African American Performers in Russia: Staging Red and Black’

Lisa Merrill, Hofstra and Theresa Saxon, UCLan

For our contribution to this event, we explore the careers of black American actors Ira Aldridge and Paul Robeson, both of whom, while subject to oppression and racism in the US, were received positively as performers in Russia. Aldridge’s first visit to Imperial Russia coincided with official discussions around emancipation of serfs, and the connection between the systems of slavery and serfdom were noted in press reports of his performances – he was denied permission to perform in St. Petersburg whose authorities were fearful of the unrest that the actor, a seeming champion of the repressed, might inspire.

More than 75 years later, Paul and Eslanda Robeson’s embrace of Russia, as a place of liberation was so extensive that they chose to send their son to school there, rather than in the United States where even in the 1950s blacks were subject to continued overt discrimination. Though Robeson was more overtly political than Aldridge, and though the contexts of their visits were very different, they were harnessed by the Russian press as catalysts for political positions that they were seen to represent personally and with their artistry.

It is this shared and specific heritage of political activism associated with Aldridge and Robeson as black American performers in Russian theatre that forms the basis of this paper. Moreover, Ira Aldridge and Paul Robeson are pivotal figures for discussions of attitudes globally that continue to inform contemporary critical approaches to race and representation. This paper will explore the history of their engagement in and appropriation for the work of political activism in both Imperial and post-revolutionary Russia.

Lisa Merrill, Professor, Department of Rhetoric, Public Advocacy and Performance Studies, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY (Ph.D., New York University). Prof. Merrill’s ongoing

research and publications are in the fields of performance studies, American studies, critical race and cultural studies, and women's and gay and lesbian history. She has recently been awarded the Oscar G. Brockett Essay Prize from the American Society for Theatre Research and the Oscar G. Brockett Center for Theatre History and Criticism at the University of Texas-Austin for "Most Fitting Companions: Making Mixed-Race Bodies Visible in Antebellum Public Spaces," published in *Theatre Survey*, May 2015. Professor Merrill was awarded the Eccles Centre Visiting Professorship in North American Studies at the British Library for 2010-2011: "Performing Race and Reading Antebellum American Bodies." Professor Merrill has received the National Endowment for the Humanities senior faculty research fellowship, (2002-2003). Dr. Merrill's talks and appearances in Britain on nineteenth century performances of race in the abolition movement and onstage were sponsored, in part by Centre for the Study of International Slavery, Liverpool, England.

Theresa Saxon, School of Language and Global Studies / Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Central Lancashire. Theresa Saxon is a founder member of the Institute for Black Atlantic Research at the University of Central Lancashire, and her research focuses on eighteenth and nineteenth-century transatlantic theatre history. Her current research focusses on race and popular theatre, most recently, "*In Dahomey in England: a (negative) transatlantic performance heritage*," published by *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents* in January 2016. She has also written on Native American Performance history, burlesque and pantomime. Dr Saxon's book, *American Theatre: History, Context, Form*, was published in 2011 by Edinburgh University Press. Dr Saxon has organised a series of events and conferences, most notably the Theatre and Performance conference at IBAR, UCLan in 2015. Dr Saxon's research has been funded by the U.S Embassy in London, the British Academy Overseas Conference awards and the Eccles Centre for North American Studies at the British Library, where she was awarded a Visiting Fellowship in 2012.

Panel 9 – Soviet Russia

'Blackness the Color of Red: Negotiating Race at the U.S. Legation in Riga, Latvia, 1924-1934'

Maxim Matusevich (Seton Hall University)

This paper draws on the archival records of the United States Consulate in Riga, Latvia, during the interwar period to reconstruct the rites of passage by African American citizens of the United States traveling to and from the Soviet Union. In the absence of established diplomatic relations between the US and the USSR (until 1933), the US diplomatic legation in Riga served as a popular entry point for American tourists and contract workers attracted by the mystique and job opportunities of the first socialist state. During the interwar period, the USSR was visited by hundreds if not thousands of American travelers - an assortment of leftists, adventurers, businessmen, intellectuals, and job seekers. Among this motley crew of sojourners we find a number of African Americans, whose motives for travel to Soviet Russia frequently differed from those driving their white compatriots. Ever since the bard of the Harlem Renaissance Claude McKay arrived in Petrograd as an honorary guest of a Comintern Congress in 1922, many black Americans, especially the educated urban elite, developed a fascination with the multiethnic and ostensibly colorblind Soviet experiment of fashioning a new social order. Among those who decided to gain a first-hand experience of a society which eschewed racism as a matter of policy and state ideology were not just such luminaries as McKay, Langston Hughes, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Paul Robeson, or such ideologues as

Harry Haywood and William Patterson but also dozens of lesser known (or completely unknown) personalities – factory workers and middle class professionals, journalists and writers, actors and athletes. In fact, most of them remained rather oblivious to the Communist ideology per se, but all appeared to have been intrigued by its promise of a colorblind utopia. The consular records of the American legation in Riga contain a wealth of data related to some of these travels. In the course of formal interviews with consular officials, American citizens, including the minority of black visitors, revealed remarkable details of their Soviet odysseys. For obvious reasons, African Americans proved to be particularly attuned to the “race question” in the Soviet Union. Importantly, they tended to interpret race relations in the “land of the Bolsheviks” by referencing the conditions obtained back home. And the comparison was usually not in the United States’ favor. The tone of many of these consular interviews is indicative of a degree of mutual suspicion and, in some cases, even outright hostility palpably present between the black interviewees and the white legation officers. The archival records bring to life a unique story of “race tourism” by African Americans to the first socialist state and thus provide a rare insight into the early Soviet society and its accepted attitudes toward racial difference; and such accounts are usually juxtaposed with an eviscerating critique of North American and Western racism during the interwar period.

Maxim Matusevich is a Professor of History at Seton Hall University, where he also directs its Russian and East European Studies Program. Prof. Matusevich has published extensively on the history of African-Soviet/Russian ties and the functions of race in the Cold War. He is the author of *No Easy Row for a Russian Hoe: Ideology and Pragmatism in Nigerian-Soviet Relations, 1960-1991* (Africa World Press, 2003) and editor of *Africa in Russia, Russia in Africa: Three Centuries of Encounters* (Africa World Press, 2007). He is presently working on a new book project that looks at the experiences of African American sojourners in the Soviet Union.

Panel 10 – The Caribbean

‘Firebrands, Trade Unionists, and Marxists: The Russian Revolution and the Emergence of the Left in Guyana, 1917-1956’

Nigel Westmaas (Hamilton College)

British Guiana (Guyana), like elsewhere in the Black Atlantic, felt the impact of the Russian Revolution of 1917. The rise of the Left in Guyana in the period was initially marked by the work of trade unionists like Hubert Critchlow and others. On his return to Guyana from a visit to Soviet Russia in 1931 Critchlow is reported to be the first individual to introduce the term “comrade” to the colony and uphold the Red symbols in May Day marches. Individual firebrands, some of whom hailed from the local chapter of the African Blood Brotherhood, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association, and other organisations were active as an emergent black nationalism. By the late 1940s, the nascent nationalist, Marxist influenced movement had developed in Guyana.

The story of the left’s role in the movements for change in the colony is conveniently identified in three periods: before the Russian Revolution; between 1917 and the Second World War, and from the immediate post-war period to 1956. The negative fall-out of the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 appeared to close a chapter in the already fragmented

leftist movement, after the left of centre government had collapsed under the weight of British colonial repression.

This paper explores the largely unrecorded contribution of the early radical movements, their varied ideological outlooks, and potential collective influence on the development, by the 1950s, of a popular national party, the Peoples Progressive Party (PPP) with its Marxist and anti-colonial orientation.

Nigel Westmaas is an Associate Professor of Africana Studies at Hamilton College (New York). He earned his master's and Ph.D. from SUNY Binghamton and BA (Hons) from the University of Guyana. He has published articles in journals and magazines, including *Against the Current*, *Small Axe*, *Emancipation Magazine*, *Caribbean Studies*, *Guyana Art Forum* and *An Introductory Reader for Women's Studies in Guyana*. He is the co-editor of a UNESCO assisted booklet *Guyanese Periodicals: 1796-1996*. Westmaas also contributes guest articles to the *Stabroek News*, one of the national newspapers of Guyana. His research work for and contributing introduction to the Marcus Garvey Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Caribbean series project (University of California) was published in 2011. He published a chapter titled "An Organic Activist: Eusi Kwayana, Guyana and global Pan-Africanism" in the text *Black Power in the Caribbean* (University Press of Florida, 2014). He also published mini-biographies of eight prominent historical and contemporary Guyanese figures in the *Dictionary of Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Biography*, edited by Franklin Knight and Henry Louis Gates Jnr and published by Oxford University Press in 2016. Westmaas is a longtime political activist of Guyana's Working People's Alliance (WPA), the organisation in which the late Walter Rodney was a leading member.

'From the Russian Revolution to the Cuban Revolution'

Steve Cushion

The Cuban Communist Party was the most significant response to the Russian Revolution in the Caribbean. It also provided an organisational home for many Afro-Cuban working class militants. So, when the communist party set up the Cuban trade union federation in 1939, three of its principal leaders were of African heritage: Lázaro Peña, Jesús Menéndez and Aracelio Iglesias. Later, in 1956, Juan Taquechel, the black communist leader of the Santiago stevedores, organised a dock strike in support of a rebel uprising in the city. But the role of Afro-Cuban workers goes well beyond such exceptional leaders and we find their contribution to revolutionary politics at all levels of the movement. The sugar workers' "soviets" of 1933 are just one example of the legacy of 1917 in Cuba.

Many West Indian immigrants in Cuba also joined the communist party and this militant organisational experience would be a factor in the Labour Rebellions of 1930s. Hugh Buchanan, "the first Jamaican Marxist," had close contacts with the party when he worked in Cuba in the 1920s.

Recent research shows that the working class played a much more decisive role in the outcome of the Cuban Revolution than was previously understood. But if the working class role has been hidden from history, the revolutionary activity of Afro-Cuban workers has been doubly obscured. This paper will trace the history of the Afro-Cuban relationship with communism from the party's foundation through to the rebel triumph - from the Russian Revolution to the Cuban Revolution.

Steve Cushion is a retired university lecturer living in East London with a PhD in Caribbean Labour History who is Branch Secretary of the University and College Union (UCU) London

Retired Members' Branch and is on the committees of the Socialist History Society and the Society for Caribbean Studies. He is also Secretary of Caribbean Labour Solidarity (CLS). He is author of *"The Hidden History of the Cuban Revolution: How the Working Class Shaped the Guerrillas' Victory"* published by Monthly Review Press, *"Killing Communists in Havana: The Start of the Cold War in Latin America"* from the Socialist History Society and *"Up Down Turn Around: The Political Economy of Slavery and the Socialist case for Reparations"* from CLS.

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Panel 11 – Raya Dunayevskaya

‘Biography of a Revolutionary Thinker and Activist’

Ravi Bali

Raya Dunayevskaya was born in 1910 in the Ukraine, which was then part of the Tsarist Russian Empire. She was Jewish at a time when Jews experienced widespread discrimination and persecution. Her family fled the Ukraine in 1918, displaced by the turmoil of the Civil War that followed the Russian Revolution. They ended up settling in Chicago in 1922, only three years after the urban uprising by African-Americans in 1919. From her early teens through to her final years she was involved in both the Marxist and Black liberation movements. This paper provides a biographical account of her involvement in both of those movements – from the 1920s through to the 1980s. The paper will cover her involvement in revolutionary Marxist politics – from her work with Trotsky in the 1930s and her involvement (with C.L.R James) in the Johnson-Forest Tendency, through her eventual break with Trotskyism and her founding of Marxist-Humanism in the 1950s. It will also cover her parallel involvement in the politics of Black liberation – from her early involvement in the American Negro Labor Congress in the 1920s, through the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, her dialogue with African revolutionaries in the 1960s and her work with Black feminists, in the 1980s. The paper will provide the wider context for the two other papers on the panel.

Ravi Bali has been active in revolutionary left struggles for more than three decades. He is currently a member of the Radical Housing Network (London).

‘Raya Dunayevskaya’s Philosophical Break with C. L. R. James (and Grace Lee Boggs)’

Chris Gilligan

C.L.R. James (J.R. Johnson) and Raya Dunayevskaya (Freddie Forest) formed the Johnson-Forest Tendency (JFT) in the American Trotskyist movement in the 1940s. The JFT (which also included Grace Lee Boggs) split from Trotskyism in 1950 and went on to form Committees of Correspondence in 1951. Dunayevskaya subsequently split from James and Lee and formed News and Letters Committees (NLC) in 1955. This paper examines the philosophical basis for the split between Dunayevskaya and her co-collaborators in the JFT. It does so through a detailed examination of letters exchanged between Dunayevskaya, James and Boggs between February 1949 and May 1953. The letters were written against the

backdrop of the Stalinist domination of worldwide communism, the emergence of anti-colonial freedom movements in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the JFT battles within the American Trotskyist movement, the JFT's activity around the US miners' General Strike against automation (1949-1950), and the early years of McCarthyism. The letters centred on Lenin's *Notebooks on Hegel's Science of Logic* and Dunayevskaya's reading of Hegelian dialectics. It was through these discussions that Dunayevskaya came to her understanding of Marxist dialectics as involving a two-way movement from theory to practice and from practice to theory, in which the movement from practice is understood as itself a form of theory. The paper will examine the differences between Dunayevskaya's understanding of Hegel and that of James and Boggs, and, in particular, its implications for revolutionary organisation.

Chris Gilligan has been active in pro-immigrant activity for almost a decade. He has been a board member of Scottish Detainee Visitors (SDV) and the Glasgow Refugee and Migration Network (GRAMNet). Currently he volunteers with Open Borders Scotland (OBS) and Massive Outpouring of Love (MOOL). He is the author of *Northern Ireland and the crisis of anti-racism: rethinking racism and sectarianism* (Manchester University Press,

'Raya Dunayevskaya's Concept of Black Masses as Vanguard of the American Revolution'

Nigel Niles

This paper outlines and explains *American Civilisation on Trial* (ACOT), Raya Dunayevskaya's key text on the Black struggle in the USA. In ACOT (1963) she shows how, when Black movements and workers' movements joined forces, great leaps were made in the struggle for freedom: from the struggle against slavery in the early 1800s through to the freedom movement of the civil rights Era in the 1950s and 1960s.

The paper examines Dunayevskaya's approach to the Black freedom struggle through an explication of three key concepts that are central to ACOT: the Black masses as Force and Reason; multiple forces of revolution, and; the Black masses as vanguard. In talking about the Black masses as both Force and Reason Dunayevskaya challenges both the idea of Black slaves, sharecroppers and later, workers, as cowed and passive, and the idea that they were politically backward. Her concept of multiple forces of revolution broke with the Left idea that national liberation struggles had to subordinate themselves to 'workers' struggles, and specifically, that African-Americans had to wait until 'after the revolution' for their rights and liberty. For Dunayevskaya, both the class struggle and the struggle against racial oppression are different aspects of the struggle for humanity to become fully human, and they inform and encourage each other. Her concept of Black masses as vanguard makes the case for viewing the Black masses as a leading driver of revolutionary struggles in US history.

Nigel Niles has spent a lifetime working, mainly in the public sector, and is a retired science teacher. He has been an activist on and off for more than three decades in anti-war protests, anti-racist campaigning and in opposition to government cuts. Despite decades of set-backs for progressive causes he is still inspired by Marx's humanist vision of "from each according to his/her ability, to each according to his/her needs".

Panel 12 - Marx / Lenin / Fanon

‘Marx’s Eighteenth Brumaire and Its Appropriation by Caribbean Black Atlantic Intellectuals’

Raphael Hoermann (UCLan)

This paper wants to illustrate how Marx’s essay *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852) has become a key intertext for anti-colonial Marxist Black Atlantic intellectuals from the Caribbean, such as C.L.R. James, Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon. At first glance, it seems astonishing that a text that is deeply Eurocentric and in one passage even racially caricatures the contemporary Haitian Emperor Faustin I. should be appropriated by these staunchly anti-racist activists. However, it seems partly Marx’s trenchant analysis of the social deep-structures that underpin revolutionary and counter-revolutionary change that allowed an anti-colonial Marxist appropriation. With the addition of race to the equation, they were able to forge analytical approaches that have been able to capture more minutely the dialectics of race and class in a colonial context. Besides Trotsky’s *History of the Russian Revolution* (1930), Marx’s *Brumaire* forms a key intertext for James’ history of the Haitian Revolution *The Black Jacobins* (1938/63). He not only applies it to the analysis of the colonial class-race-nexus but also appropriates Marx’s ‘Poetics of Revolution’ to forge his own poetics of anti-colonial revolution. In his anti-colonial Marxist manifesto *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955) Césaire applies Marx’s analysis of proto-fascism to European colonialism. As he contends, colonialism equals fascism committed against non-Europeans. Fanon, in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) transforms Marx’s exhortation to develop a novel ‘poesy’ for the future proletarian revolution into a clarion call to revolt against the psychopathology of racism. To borrow Marx’s famous dictum from *The Brumaire*, this racist-pathological “tradition from all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living,” as Fanon forcefully demonstrates.

Dr. **Raphael Hörmann** earned a PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of Glasgow. He has held several postdoctoral fellowships and posts both in Germany and Britain. Currently, he is Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Black Atlantic Research at the University of Central Lancashire, where he was a Marie-Curie Intra-European Fellow before. He has also held fellowships at the German Historical Institute in London and the Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies at Linnaeus University in Växjö, Sweden. Currently, he is writing a book manuscript on Transatlantic Gothic Narratives of the Haitian Revolution. He is author of *Writing the Revolution: German and English Radical Literature, 1819-1848/49* (2011) and co-editor (together with Gesa Mackenthun) of an essay collection (2010) on the discourses of slavery and forced labour from antiquity to the present and of articles on the Haitian Gothic and on the trope of the zombie and the Haitian Revolution.

‘Distended Marxism: Frantz Fanon, the Comintern, and Dialectical Methodology in Marxist Pan-Africanism’

Cosmo Pappas

I will first analyze the dialectical methodology of Fanon. Arguing that Fanon forges a “general theory of decolonization” based on a unity of economic analysis and the

phenomenology of race, I will also point out the ways in which Fanon complicates this theory in an attempt to bridge the gap of universal and particular. More specifically, Fanon is able to show that race is the lived modality of class under imperialist capitalism through an analysis of the corporeal and psychological violence of colonialism, and he also works to incorporate gender into his analysis. Fanon is aware in his writing outside of *Wretched of the Earth* that gendered sexual violence is a constituent element of colonialism, yet he meets trouble in developing a “general theory of decolonization.” He describes colonialism, metaphorically, as a form of sexual exploitation of people living under colonialism, but this does not incorporate the specific attention he directs toward the use of sexual violence as a political weapon by the colonial authorities, particularly by the French colonial administration toward women militants of the FLN. Drawing on a black feminist as well as Marxist analysis, I argue that Fanon described an incomplete dialectic of (anti)colonial violence which, ultimately, left gender liberation as much left behind as a living possibility. I then investigate Fanon’s relationship with Comintern anticolonial policy, comparing Fanon’s analysis with the language of Soviet Marxist analysis of colonialism to understand the relationship between socialist revolution as understood in Comintern policy with gender and racial liberation.

Cosmo Pappas is an independent researcher and office worker living in Ypsilanti, Michigan. He studied Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan and now spends his time not at work practicing and learning foreign languages and researching dialectics and imperialism.

Panel 13 - C.L.R. James / Linton Kwesi Johnson / Amiri Baraka

“It was almost as if Lenin had had Trotsky shot for taking the side of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie”: C.L.R. James’s *The Black Jacobins and the Universality of Revolution*?

Philip Kaisary (Carleton University)

In *Black Marxism* (1983), Cedric Robinson argued that in his historical masterpiece, *The Black Jacobins*, C.L.R. James “framed the Haitian Revolution against the Bolshevik model”.^[1] This paper will undertake a close reading of James’s comparative analysis of the Russian and Haitian revolutions in *The Black Jacobins* to test this particular argument of Robinson’s. In addition, a critique of Robinson’s claim for the centrality of 1917 to James’s masterpiece will serve as a point of departure for a re-examination of the theory of world revolution that undergirds James’s text – an analytical endeavor that also impinges on recent scholarship on the ‘universalism’ of *The Black Jacobins*.^[2] James certainly connected the revolutionary events in Saint Domingue of 1791–1804 to the Russian Revolution (as well as, inevitably of course, the French Revolution) but also, in the appendix essay to the 1963 second edition, to the Cuban Revolution of 1958. There, James argued that, “What took place in French San Domingo in 1792–1804 reappeared in Cuba in 1958.”^[3] Insisting that in placing these two world historical revolutions side by side he was not using them merely as convenient bookends of an epoch of Caribbean history, James argued that these two events shared key structural commonalities. This paper will therefore offer a critical exploration of the multiple (and overlapping) historic, theoretic, and analytic frames in which James located the Haitian Revolution.

1 C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, 2nd ed. rev. (New York: Vintage, 1963).

2 See, for example: David Scott, “The Theory of Haiti: *The Black Jacobins* and the Poetics of Universal History” and Nick Nesbitt, “Fragments of a Universal History: Global Capital, Mass Revolution, and the Idea of Equality in *The Black Jacobins*,” both in *The Black Jacobins Reader* edited by Charles Forsdick and Christian Høgsbjerg, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017).

3 Ibid. 391.

Philip Kaisary is Assistant Professor of Critical Legal, Social, and Political Theory in the Department of Law & Legal Studies, and cross-appointed to the Department of English Language & Literature and the Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature, Art & Culture (ICSLAC) at Carleton University, Canada. He is author of *The Haitian Revolution in the Literary Imagination: Radical Horizons, Conservative Constraints* (University of Virginia Press, 2014) as well as articles and essays (published or forthcoming) on topics ranging from Haiti’s early independence constitutions, slavery on film, hemispheric American literary and cultural history, and human rights, in *Atlantic Studies*, *Law & Humanities*, *MELUS (Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States)*, *Slavery & Abolition*, and two forthcoming edited volumes. Prior to his appointment at Carleton, he was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Vanderbilt University and an Assistant Professor at the University of Warwick in the School of Law and the Yesu Persaud Centre for Caribbean Studies.

‘The Unfinished Revolution: Linton Kwesi Johnson, C.L.R. James, and the new Socialism’

David Austin (John Abbott College)

Linton Kwesi Johnson (LKJ) is widely known as a (dub) poet and one of the most important poetic voices of dissent of our time – the “political poet par excellence,” a title he once bestowed upon the celebrated Guyanese poet Martin Carter. But what is perhaps less widely acknowledged is the philosophical and political underpinnings of his poetry, the sense of dialectical movement and possibility that is tied to the work of the late Marxist theorist C.L.R. James. The poet describes James’s *Notes on Dialectics: Hegel, Marx, Lenin* as a central book for him in terms of understanding the nature of socialist and working class struggle. The dialogue between James and Johnson is evident in the poems “Di Good Life,” which is dedicated to James, and “Reggae fi Radni,” an elegy for the Guyanese historian and political activist, Walter Rodney. In these two poems we witness a synthesis of Johnson’s political-poetics and James’s poetic-politics, the combination of which produces a political aesthetic of human possibilities in the light of the collapse of the Socialist Bloc and the death of Rodney, carried out in a manner that is characteristic of Martin Heidegger’s idea that the poem reveals or brings into the open the unconcealed.

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“‘Hard Facts’”: Amiri Baraka and Marxism-Leninism in the 1970s’

David Grundy (Cambridge)

Previous critical discussions of Amiri Baraka have focused almost exclusively on the poetic and political work which predates his ‘conversion’ to Marxism-Leninism in 1974. Yet Baraka’s Marxist period, which lasted the majority of his career, was neither an aberration nor a footnote. Baraka did not simply fade away into obscurity once he became a Marxist; rather, he produced a large body of work that deserves re-assessment, looking to the examples of Bolshevism and Maoism in order to build a viable mass politics and mass art. In this paper, I will examine Baraka’s collections *Hard Facts* and *Poetry for the Advanced*, published in 1975 and 1979 respectively. While often dismissed as ‘dogmatic’ and ‘sloganeering’, I will argue that these collections combine the polemic-prosaic with a “lyric necessity” that never left Baraka. Baraka here shows himself to be a mature poet, drawing on the tradition of American socialist poetry – in particular, that of Langston Hughes – illuminating debates on the American left in a decade of increasing political fracture, and writing poems of absolute commitment to the struggle against capitalism and imperialism. In engaging with and reviving a neglected tradition of Soviet-influenced Afro-American Communism – one often forgotten in the wake of McCarthyism and the often explicitly anti-Socialist discourses of Black Nationalism – Baraka’s work illuminates the fraught legacy of the Soviet revolution in Black America at a time of divisive Cold War politics, in which the search for a workable mass politics and for a means of poetic expression adequate to this task was as vital as it now is today.

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