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Destinies of Africa in the Modern World

15th International African Studies Conference

(Moscow, May 26-29, 2020)

Call for Papers

Dear Colleagues,

On May 26-29, 2020 in Moscow the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, in co-operation with the Research Council for the Problems of African Countries, holds the 15th African Studies Conference titled *Destinies of Africa in the Modern World*. The Conference main events will take place on the premises of the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The working languages are Russian and English.

During the Conference, each panel will work for one day and will have one or two time slots, with no more than six papers in each (that is, **no panel will exceed twelve papers**).

The Organizing Committee has considered all the panel proposals received by it and some have been accepted. The deadline for paper proposals (in the form of abstracts **within 300 words** in Russian or English) is **November 15, 2019**. The proposals should be sent **directly to the respective panel convener(s)** who is (are) to inform the applicant about his (her) application's fortune by **December 1, 2019** – the date by which the panel conveners are to submit their compiled panels to the Organizing Committee.

The information to be submitted alongside with the paper abstract includes full name, institutional affiliation, full mail and e-mail addresses, telephone number.

In the case the proposal is accepted and you need a Russian entry visa, the Organizing Committee will contact you with regards to your visa application support at a Russian Consulate or Embassy in **the beginning of the year 2020**.

The conference registration fee in Russian rubles, equivalent to \$150 (\$75 in rubles for students and for citizens of African states residing in Africa, except South Africa), is to be paid in cash onsite upon arrival. The Conference participants working for the Institute for African Studies

official partners are waved from registration fee. (For the list of the Institute for African Studies official partners please, visit the page “Cooperation” on the Institute’s website at the address <http://www.inafran.ru/en/node/144>). **No other participant can be waved from registration fee.**

The Organizing Committee can assist in booking accommodation, but independent reservation is encouraged. Please note that early hotel reservation is strongly recommended, as Moscow hotels and hostels may be full any season. Besides [booking.com](http://www.booking.com), [otel.com](http://www.otel.com) and other internationally recognized hotel and hostel search and booking websites, you may try specifically Moscow websites <http://www.moscow-hotels.net/> and <http://www.moscow-hotels.com/>.

Unfortunately, the Conference Organizing Committee has no means to support financially any Conference participant.

All the correspondence, other than related to paper abstracts submission and acceptance, should be sent by e-mail for the Conference Organizing Committee, to the attention of Mrs. Natalia Bondar, Head, Center of Information and International Relations, Institute for African Studies, to the address inter@inafr.ru. The Organizing Committee telephone number is + 7 495 690 2752.

The Organizing Committee would appreciate your familiarizing the members of your research/teaching unit, as well as all interested colleagues, with the present Announcement.

AMONG THE PANELS ACCEPTED FOR THE CONFERENCE

II-5. The Modern World in Africa

Convener: *Dr. Etienne Lock* ; e-mail: lock_etienne@yahoo.fr

Talking about “Destinies of Africa in the modern world” suggests a reflection based on issues related to destinies, having already situated Africa in a certain historical context. This supposes a sort of agreement on the concept “modern world”. This concept has been applied to the particular context of African experience, without questioning its relevance in such a context. Yet, the modern world defined as the circumstances and ideas of the present age is to be considered first as something particular, because circumstances always arouse from a particular context and ideas are also rooted in a particular context first. To that extent, the modern world could appear as imposed from outside the continent. Therefore, there could be a real difficulty and even an impossibility to discuss over the destinies of Africa in the modern world, without dealing with the concept “modern world” itself, as it is not free of controversy. If some African intellectuals, particularly in the 20th century, like Alioune Diop and Léopold Sedar Senghor defined their intellectual commitment expressed respectively through the concept of *Négritude* and the intellectual movement *Présence Africaine*, in the willingness to inscribe Africa in the modern world, they never gave the meaning of what they called “modern world”. Yet, one can assume that, having been trained in the western intellectual tradition during the colonial time characterized by cultural imperialism, the modern world they were referring to was actually the world defined and situated in a historical time, with features that were only related to the West. This comprehension of the modern world also called modernity did not remain the sole representation of the African intellectuals of the 20th century, since it has become something general and extended in the 21st century. In order to tackle properly the topic of the conference, it seems very important to clarify what the modern world means for Africa; and even if this kind of modern world is suitable for Africa and accepted in the continent. Is it therefore impossible to avoid questions that need to be addressed in connection with the modern world which today has

been summarized in the concept of globalization? The reality in Africa has demonstrated that on the side of that continent, globalization which characterizes the framework into which the destinies of Africa would be presented, discussed and even assessed already appeared in 1970s as it is the case today, as a westernization of the world in terms of ideologies and values. The contribution of Africa seems to be completely absent although it needs to be considered when talking about the modern world. This panel will raise some debates around the concept “modern world” from an African view. It intends to be multidisciplinary, associating multiple reflections around the following questions: Could the modern world, as known today, be a universal reality in a proper way? What does being in the modern world mean for Africa? Is the concept “modern world” relevant for Africa?