

REPORT on the Conference  
**RUSSIAN-AMERICAN LINKS: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND RUSSIA**  
20-21 September, 2007, St. Petersburg, Russia

The main purpose of the Conference was to bring to light a less known area of Russian-American interaction and explore various contacts of African Americans with Russia as well as the changes in appreciation of African-American history and culture in Russia in pre-Communist, Communist, and post-Communist time.

Multidisciplinary perspective encouraged interdisciplinary discussion and led to a more profound understanding of the issues considered. The program featured a variety of papers by Russian academics and educators representing research institutes, museums, and universities from around Russia: St. Petersburg, Moscow, Volgograd, Kazan, Chelabinsk, etc... Scholars from the United States, Great Britain, Hungary, Germany, Latvia, and Belarus also took part in the Conference. The greater part of them were CAAR members. The Conference brought together specialists in African-American studies from various geographical locations and gave them opportunity to meet and acquire better knowledge of colleagues' activities and ideas.

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THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE: Yuri P.Tretyakov, [yuri@eu.spb.ru](mailto:yuri@eu.spb.ru) , Elena M.Apenko, [eap@EA1380.spb.edu](mailto:eap@EA1380.spb.edu) , Natalia A.Alexandrova, [alegor@rol.ru](mailto:alegor@rol.ru)

KEYNOTE LECTURES were given by Dr. Maxim Matusевич, [matusema@shu.edu](mailto:matusema@shu.edu) , Seton Hall University USA, who spoke on “*Race Travelers’ and Black America’s Romance with Soviet Russia*”, by Lily Golden, [lilygold123@aol.com](mailto:lilygold123@aol.com) , Distinguished Scholar in Residence, Chicago State University, USA, who spoke on “*Afro-American Enclave in the USSR*” and by Dr. Fon Louise Gordon, [fgordon@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:fgordon@mail.ucf.edu) , Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Central Florida, USA who’s text “*Three Generations of American-Russian Women in the Twentieth Century*” was presented by Yury Tretyakov.

EVENING EVENT: on Thursday, September 20, the Conference was welcomed by US Consulate General in St. Petersburg because the Conference was on the list of events celebrating the 200th anniversary of U.S. - Russian diplomatic relations.

The idea of the conference was to create a panoramic view of African-Americans’ and Russian people contacts and mutual perception. That is why it was decided not to split presentations into parallel workshops. Instead, the program was formed in

chronological order starting from the XVIII century up to modern days under the general title: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND RUSSIA THROUGH CENTURIES:

Dr. Irina Mikhailovna Udler, [udler@ccn.org.ru](mailto:udler@ccn.org.ru), Associate Professor, Chelyabinsk State University; Professor, South-Ural State University. *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African. Written by Himself and Its Russian Lot*

Dr. Irina Vasilyevna Morozova, [morozovaira@hotmail.com](mailto:morozovaira@hotmail.com), Professor, University of Udmurtia, Russia.  
*Perception of Russia in A Narrative of the life and travels of Mrs. Nancy Prince*

Dr. Ivan Ivanovich Kurilla, [ivan.kurilla@volsu.ru](mailto:ivan.kurilla@volsu.ru), Professor, Volgograd State University, Russia. *American slavery and the Russian critics of serfdom in the 1850s*

Dr. Alexander Borisovich Okun', [alexan@sama.ru](mailto:alexan@sama.ru), Associate Professor, Samara State University, Russia. *Experience of Afro-American in Russia (R.T.Greeney – First American Consul in Vladivostok, 1898-1905)*

Dr. Olga Olegovna Nesselova, [olga.nesselova@ksu.ru](mailto:olga.nesselova@ksu.ru), Professor, Kazan State University, Russia. *Perception of Afro-American Writers by the Soviet Literary Criticism of the 1920-30s.*

Dr. Joy G. Carew, [igcare01@louisville.edu](mailto:igcare01@louisville.edu), Associate Professor of Pan-African Studies; Associate Director of the International Center, University of Louisville, USA. *In Search of the Soviet Promise: African Americans and other Blacks who went to the USSR in the 1920s and 1930s*

Dr. Larry A. Greene, [greenela@shu.edu](mailto:greenela@shu.edu), Professor of History, History Department, Seton Hall University, USA. *Langston Hughes, Russia, and the African American Press*

Dr. Ágnes Surányi, [suri@btk.pte.hu](mailto:suri@btk.pte.hu), Professor, University of Pecs, Hungary. *Three Travelogues: First-Hand Experience of the Soviet Experiment*

Mr. Steven Lee, [steven.lee@stanford.edu](mailto:steven.lee@stanford.edu), Ph.D. Candidate, Program in Modern Thought and Literature, Stanford University, USA. *Revisiting Langston Hughes' 'Moscow Movie'*

Dr. Tatiana A. Tagirova, [ttagirova@hotmail.com](mailto:ttagirova@hotmail.com), Assistant Professor, English Department University of Puerto Rico, Bayamón, USA. *Alexander Pushkin and Claude McKay: Cross-cultural Affirmation of National Sentiments*

Dr. Louisa Petrovna Bashmakova, [louisa\\_p@kubsu.ru](mailto:louisa_p@kubsu.ru), Chair of Russian and Comparative Studies in Languages, Literatures and cultures; Center for Studies in

History of Culture, Kuban State University, Krasnodar, Russia. *Richard Wright's Legacy From and For Russia: in the Choice of M. Gorky or F.M. Dostoevsky*

Dr. Oleg Vyacheslavovich Riabov, [riabov1@inbox.ru](mailto:riabov1@inbox.ru), Professor, Ivanovo State University, Russia. *B&W Graphics: Black and White Americans in the Soviet Caricatures during the Cold War*

Dr. Irina Novikova, [iranovi@lanet.lv](mailto:iranovi@lanet.lv), Professor, Department of Culture and Literature, University of Latvia, Rīga, Latvia. *Images of America, Slavery, and Freedom in the Film Maximka*

Dr. Nickolay Georgievich Scherbakov, [tarusan@list.ru](mailto:tarusan@list.ru), Professor, Mr. Alexander Leonidovich Litinsky, [ajax36@yandex.ru](mailto:ajax36@yandex.ru), PhD Candidate, Center for African Studies, Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia. *Afro-America through the key-hole (or loophole?) of "America" magazine*

Dr. Mary Condé, [m.e.conde@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:m.e.conde@qmul.ac.uk), Senior Lecturer, Queen Mary University of London, UK. *An African American in Russia: Andrea Lee's Russian Journal*

Dr. Yuri Stulov, [yustulov@mail.ru](mailto:yustulov@mail.ru), Chair, Dept. of World Literature, Minsk State Linguistics University, Belarus. *J. O.Killens Revisiting the Life of A. S. Pushkin: Drama of Identity*

Dr. Simone A. James Alexander, [alexansi@shu.edu](mailto:alexansi@shu.edu), Chair, Department of Africana & Diaspora Studies, Seton Hall University, USA. *En/gendering home, en/gendering difference: Performing and representing blackness in (Communist) Russia*

Dr. Svetlana Boltovskaja, [boltovsk@gmx.net](mailto:boltovsk@gmx.net), Institut für Völkerkunde, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany. *Africans as development workers in Moscow: Soup kitchen and parish center at the American Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy*

Mr. Aliou Tounkara, [atunkara@mail.ru](mailto:atunkara@mail.ru), President of African Union Diaspora Organization, St. Petersburg, Mr. Ali Nassor, independent journalist. *Africans in Modern Russia*

Dr. Kassie Freeman, [kassie\\_freeman@sus.edu](mailto:kassie_freeman@sus.edu), Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs, Southern University System, USA. *African Americans in Russia: Their Educational Perspectives, Challenges, and Opportunities*

Dr. Svetlana Yuryevna Sigida, [ssigida@mail.ru](mailto:ssigida@mail.ru), Professor, Moscow Conservatoire. *African-American Musicals in the USA and Russia*

PANEL DISCUSSION “*The Role of Higher Education in Promoting Racial and Ethnic Diversity in a Society: Lessons Learned from U.S. and Russian Educators*”

was moderated by Ms. Maria Ozhekh (moderator) [mozhekh@aed.org](mailto:mozhekh@aed.org), , Program Officer, Center for International Exchanges, Academy for Educational Development, Washington, DC, USA, and was launched by presentations of Dr. Nadezhda Konstantinovna Radina, [rasv3@uic.mnov.ru](mailto:rasv3@uic.mnov.ru), Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Nizhniy Novgorod, Russia: *Russian racism: Tactics of self-accusation and self-justification of people who witnesses attacks on black students*; Dr. Olga Yuryevna Antsyferova, [sfera@ipn.ru](mailto:sfera@ipn.ru), Chair, Dept. of World Literature, Ivanovo State University, Russia: *Russian Students on Afro-American Culture*, and Dr. Phillip Hesser, [phesser@smtp.aed.org](mailto:phesser@smtp.aed.org), Senior Program Officer, Academy for Educational Development, Washington, DC, USA: “*Effective Participation*” and the “*Teaching of Life*”: *Cross-currents of Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Experience in U.S. Higher Education*