



Politicized Economics or Economized Politics? Czechoslovak Economists and the Quest for “Third World” Development in the Era of Reform Communism¹

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ABSTRACT:

The paper analyses the scientific discourse that informed the Czechoslovak conceptions of development studies as well as the practice of development aid. On the example of scholarly outputs of two distinguished economists working at the Institute of International Politics and Economy — Blanka Šrucová and Jan Vraný — it explores the impact and process of adaptation of recent methodological influences from abroad onto the Czechoslovak development expertise. It situates the shifts in attitude towards the developmental assistance within the broader framework of Czechoslovak (economic) reform project as well as the global debates on the effectiveness of development strategies. The article claims that Czechoslovak economists used their transnational experience gained during missions abroad not only to “domesticate” recent trends in research and suggest more effective methods of Czechoslovak developmental assistance exported to the “Third World” but also to improve the conditions of national economy.

KEY WORDS:

Czechoslovak economists, development, expertise, Third World, socialism

CZECHOSLOVAK OPENING TO THE “THIRD WORLD”: NEW INCENTIVES FOR RESEARCH

The proceeding decolonization of the former colonial territories that gained momentum in the mid-1950s prompted the political leaders of socialist bloc to revisit the older geopolitical strategies towards these regions. Although during the Stalinist period they were considered an integral part of the western “sphere of influence,” with the Khrushchev’s turn of foreign policy, the African liberation movements often led by the leaders flirting with socialist viewpoints became to be seen as powerful allies in the “grand battle against imperialism.”² However, the new political and eco-

1 The research for this study was supported by the Slovak Research and Development Agency under the contract no. APVV-20-0333 within the project *Crossing Frontiers. The Phenomenon of Mobility in the History of Slovakia*.

2 The scholarship on East-South relations during the Cold War has expanded remarkably during the recent years. See for instance: E. BURTON — A. DIETRICH — I. R. HARISCH —



economic linkages between the “second” and “third” worlds were not established on bilateral levels only but were often negotiated (and fostered) on the international stage. The growing representation of the newly emergent states in the international bodies gave rise to new topics of global debates, mostly revolving around the questions of rapid development, economic take-off, mechanisms of foreign aid and other forms of redistribution of wealth from developed to developing countries.³ In attempt to lessen the traditional dependence of former colonies on western capital and to mobilize the “progressive” forms of economic development, the socialist governments invested many resources into the research on most effective tools of development aid. The question of “Third World” development became a priority item on foreign policy agenda, given that the successful implementation of socialist development models would provide a powerful platform to “show off” advances of socialism and portray socialist countries as a dynamic force able to influence the shape of the world.

The reality of Cold War thus provided the incentives, resources and goals around which the new forms of socio-economic knowledge were produced and cultivated. In the recent years there emerged a number of studies focusing on the Cold War social science, though many adopted the perspective from Western Europe.⁴ A notable exception is a volume *Social Sciences in the Other Europe since 1945* edited by Adela Hîncu and Victor Karady,⁵ studying the development of Eastern European social sciences against the background of the post-war sovietization, the rise of transnational en-

M. C. SCHENCK (eds.), *Navigating Socialist Encounters. Moorings and (Dis)Entanglements between Africa and East Germany during the Cold War*, Berlin and Boston 2021; J. MARK — A. M. KALINOVSKY — S. MARUNG (eds.), *Alternative Globalizations*, Bloomington 2020; D. RICHTEROVA — N. TELEPNEVA, *An Introduction: The Secret Struggle for the Global South — Espionage, Military Assistance and State Security in the Cold War*, in: *The International History Review*, Vol. 43, No. 1, 2021, pp. 1–11; L. STANEK, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War*, Princeton and Oxford 2020; J. KOURA, *A Prominent Spy: Mehdi Ben Barka, Czechoslovak intelligence, and Eastern Bloc Espionage in the Third World during the Cold War*, in: *Intelligence and National Security*, 2020, pp. 1–22.

- 3 S. LORENZINI, *Global Development: A Cold War History*, Princeton and Oxford 2019, pp. 50–67 and 89–106.
- 4 See for instance D. C. ENGERMAN, *Social Sciences in the Cold War*, in: *Isis*, Vol. 101, No. 2, pp. 393–400, or M. SOLOVEY — H. CRAVENS (eds.), *Cold War Social Science: Knowledge Production, Liberal Democracy, and Human Nature*, New York 2012. The topics of Eastern European economic expertise explored J. BOCKMAN, *The Long Road to 1989: Neoclassical Economics, Alternative Socialism, and the Advent of Neoliberalism*, *Radical History Review*, 2012, pp. 9–42; T. DÜPPE — I. BOLDYREV (eds.), *Economic Knowledge in Socialism, 1945–89*, in: *History of Political Economy*, Vol. 51, No. S1, 2019; T. RUPPRECHT, ‘Pinochet in Prague’. *Authoritarian Visions of Economic Reforms and the State in Eastern Europe, 1980–2000*, in: *Journal of Modern European History*, No. 3, 2020, pp. 312–323.
- 5 A. HÎNCU — V. KARADY (eds.), *Social Sciences in the Other Europe since 1945*, Budapest 2018. The emergence of prognostics as a distinguished discipline in state socialist science was a focus of J. ANDERSSON — E. RINDZEVIČIŪTĒ (eds.), *The Struggle for the Long-Term in Transnational Science and Politics*, New York 2015. For broader research on the sovietization of academia in Eastern Europe see J. CONNELLY, *Captive University: the Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945–1956*, Chapel Hill 2000.



counters in the 1970s and the emergence of reform narratives formed in the last decade of socialism and beyond. However, the authors analysed the changes in the sociology and economics predominantly from the perspective of their ability to reform the existing conditions *inside* the Eastern bloc, only partially touched the problem of export of expertise *outside* the bloc and the connections of socialist science with the development in the “Third World” were not researched at all. Another dimension to the history of social sciences adds the study of interconnections between scientific expertise and policy-making, which represents a long-term research interest of Czech historian Vítězslav Sommer.⁶ He is mainly concerned with the process of “scientization” of state-socialist governance and the rise of “technocracy” in socialist Czechoslovakia,⁷ indicating the numerous examples of transnational intellectual exchanges that went beyond the “Iron Curtain.” All the aforementioned authors demonstrated that expert knowledge held in the thinking of the Communist Party elites a prominent position and pointed out how sensitive the scientific expertise was towards the twists on political front whether domestic or international. However, the relations and contributions of state-socialist expertise to the global debates on the “Third World” development still remain a rather under-researched field.

This article aims to, at least partially, fill this gap and analyze the scientific discourse that shaped the understanding of the “Third World” development in Czechoslovakia. First, I look at the birth of new research disciplines that emerged in consequence of Czechoslovak opening towards the “Third World” in the early 1960s, particularly the economy of developing countries at the Institute of International Politics and Economy. Second, on the examples of the research conducted by the institute’s economists Blanka Šrucová and Jan Vraný I demonstrate how the Czechoslovak development expertise was shaped by the methodological innovations from abroad as well as by principles of escalating Czechoslovak reform movement.⁸ In the following section I explore how the post-1968 purges affected the careers of these specialists and the overall research on developing countries in Czechoslovakia. Towards conclusion, I try to assess the impact of Czechoslovak economists on the practice of development policy.

Paper’s ambition is thus to contribute to the current debates on the nature of relationship between science and politics during the communist dictatorship, and problematize this relation by studying the ways through which the non-state actors could pursue their international careers (and to a certain degree also independent research)

6 See for instance V. SOMMER, *Towards the Expert Governance: Social Scientific Expertise and the Socialist State in Czechoslovakia, 1950s-1980s*, in: *Serendipities*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2016, pp. 138–157. The work of Polish economists in the Third World explored M. MAZUREK, *Polish Economists in Nehru’s India*, *Slavic Review* 77 (3), 2018, pp. 588610.

7 V. SOMMER, *Řídit socialismus jako firmu: Proměny technokratického vládnutí v Československu, 1956–1989*, Prague 2019.

8 For an overview of Czechoslovak economic reform in the 1960s see M. MYANT, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1948–1988: The Battle for Economic Reform*, Cambridge 1989; B. KORDA — I. MORAVCIK, *Reflections on the 1965–1968 Czechoslovak Economic Reform*, in: *Canadian Slavonic Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1971, pp. 45–64; see also J. HOPPE — M. ŠKODOVÁ — J. SUK — F. CACCAMO, *O nový československý model socialismu. Čtyři interdisciplinární vědecké týmy při ČSAV a UK v 60. letech*, Prague 2015.

within the framework of controlled internationalism. Due to the limited scope I focus specifically on the example of the research activities held in the Institute of International Politics and Economy (ÚMPE) during the 1960s, which was established as a research centre of the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Foreign Affairs (and as such was supposed to serve the exclusive purposes, needs and interests of Czechoslovak foreign policy agenda). Concerning the geographical scope, I am concerned mostly with scholarly analyses focusing on the development of African countries. The study thus does not aim to provide an exhaustive analysis of all research projects on developing economies that were run in Czechoslovakia during the studied period, but rather to open a new field for exploration and offer vantage points for further research.

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The changed course of Czechoslovak foreign policy accompanied by the growing demand to offer a competent development model to the new political partners gave birth to a number of new research disciplines. The essential impulse came with the resolution of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (ÚV KSČ) from April 3, 1962 on the massive increase of scientific personnel focused exclusively on the problems of developing countries. As a practical effect of the resolution was subsequently established the Commission for the Complex Research of Developing Countries at the Presidium of Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (*Komise pro komplexní výzkum rozvojových zemí při Presidiu ČSAV*) which should command and coordinate the research on developing countries in the scientific institutes in Czechoslovakia and mediate the contacts with research centres abroad.⁹ The interdependence of politics and expertise was demonstrated already in the Commission's statutes in which the research on developing countries was rationalized as a means for more effective international strategy expected to secure the "growing reputation and influence of ČSSR in developing countries, not only in the field of politics but also in the economy, science and culture."¹⁰

During the first meetings of the Commission was the research on developing countries divided into three main areas — 1. the history and economy of developing countries after World War II, 2. the history, culture and society, and 3. the natural and technical sciences applied to the needs of developing countries. All of these fields were virtually absent in Czechoslovakia that time and needed to be built from scratch. Although research focused on the economy of developing countries was since 1957 partially done at the abovementioned Institute of International Politics and Economy, the Institute of Economy and Oriental Institute of Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (ČSAV), on the Commission's urge were the scientific workplaces specializing in developing countries extended to the Department of Developing Countries at the University of Economics in Prague, the Department of Tropical Diseases at the Faculty of

9 Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences (further only A AV ČR), fond (f.) Komise pro komplexní výzkum rozvojových zemí při presidiu ČSAV (further only KVRZ ČSAV), inv. no. 1, Box (b.) 1, 1961 — 1962, Zřízení komise pro komplexní výzkum rozvojových zemí ČSAV, Praha, 1961.

10 Ibid.





Hygiene of the Charles University, the Department of Tropical and Sub-tropical Agriculture at the University of Agriculture, the Department of Ethnography of Developing Countries at the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University and later also the Department of Tropicalization at the University of 17th November. These departments did not only offered “custom made” study programs for the foreign students but also prepared the new cohorts of Czechoslovak experts specialized in the aforementioned priority fields.¹¹ However, despite the energetic effort to expand domestic scientific capacities, Czechoslovak government initially struggled with the chronic shortage of qualified personnel. This situation resulted in rather uniform structure of the first generation of economists at ÚMPE regarding their educational background, political entanglement as well as circumstances of future career.

RESEARCH ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AT THE INSTITUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND ECONOMY – BETWEEN THE INDEPENDENT KNOWLEDGE AND IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS

Institute of International Politics and Economy was established by government decree in October 1, 1957 as a research department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to the founding statutes the institute should serve as a centre for scientific research of international relations and position of Czechoslovakia in international politics.¹² In the initial phase of the ÚMPE's existence was the research of developing countries identified as one of the priority areas and earned establishment of its own department. The first head of the Department of Developing Countries became Jiří Štěpanovský, a former social democrat who lectured at Higher School of the Political and Social Sciences the international law and contemporary history of the Far East and Africa.¹³

When analyzing the role of science in the era of state socialism, one must always come to terms with professed dependence of knowledge production on the socialist power structures. According to dominant narrative, represented for instance by Czech historian Petr Zídek, there was no such a thing as independent knowledge under state socialism and the ÚMPE's role was interpreted in terms of a mouthpiece of state propaganda rather than a genuine scientific undertaking. This argument is based not only on the mandatory Marxist-Leninist viewpoint that formed the compulsory methodological framework of all the Institute's outputs, but also on the fact that, as demonstrated by Zídek, virtually the whole founding generation of the ÚMPE's employees were alumni of the Department of International Relations at the Higher School of the Political and

11 A AV ČR, f. K KVRZ ČSAV, inv. no. 6-7, b.1, 1963-1975, Plány, zprávy za jednotlivá léta, Zpráva o činnosti Komise, Praha 1965.

12 Quoted from P. ZÍDEK, *Od ÚMPE k ÚMV. Proměny komunistického „think tanku“*, in: P. DRULÁK et al., *50 let českého výzkumu mezinárodních vztahů*, Praha 2007, p. 120.

13 J. ŠTĚPANOVSÝ, *Výzkum rozvojových zemí v Ústavu pro mezinárodní politiku a ekonomii (1957-1969)*, in: P. DRULÁK et al., *50 let českého výzkumu mezinárodních vztahů*, Praha 2007, p. 240.



Social Sciences (1949–1953). This school was established short after the Communist coup in 1948 to prepare the new, politically-congenial professional elite that would take up the top positions in Czechoslovak economy, industry, state administration, journalism and international relations,¹⁴ and as such under the direct control of the Department of Culture and propaganda at the UV KSC.¹⁵ Moreover, all 22 employees hired in the years 1957/59 were the members of the Communist Party and many of them lectured at the Higher Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia.¹⁶ On that account, Zídek employed the phrase “communist think tank” to describe the ÚMPE’s real mission.¹⁷

Indeed, ÚMPE in many ways served as a reservoir of experts eligible for recruitment abroad. However, as will be shown, the seeming political reliability arguably allowed its employees to sidestep the lengthy selection process for service abroad that was usually applied on other candidates. Paradoxically, such circumstances often produced unexpected effects. I argue that transnational experience gained during their tenure in international organizations later had crucial impact on the quality of development expertise in Czechoslovakia, and precipitated the ÚMPE’s subsequent role as one of the major centres of Prague Spring’s reform movement. In the following section I will focus on the scholarly outputs and biographies of two ÚMPE’s employees — Blanka Šrucová and Jan Vraný — whose works helped not only to popularize the recent methodological trends in the field of development economy and trigger the domestic debates about the nature and more efficient methods of the development aid, but also allowed them to voice their criticism of current political practice. The following section thus could be viewed as an example of how deeply were expert cultures rooted in (and co-produced) the narratives of reform communism.

BLANKA ŠRUCOVÁ AND THE ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

First, let me provide some biographic details. Blanka Šrucová (*10. 2. 1941 – ?)¹⁸ started to work for ÚMPE right after finishing her studies at the Prague Higher School of Eco-

14 D. OLŠÁKOVÁ O, *Vysoká škola politických a hospodářských věd (1948–1953)*, in: S. SKLENÁŘOVÁ, *Možnosti a meze výzkumu dějin vysokého školství po roce 1945*, Hradec Králové 2010, pp. 49–59.

15 M. DEVÁTÁ, *Vysoká škola politických a hospodářských věd jako nástroj indoktrinace marxisticko-leninského světového názoru*, in: B. JIROUŠEK (ed.), *Proměny diskursu české marxistické historiografie*, České Budějovice 2008, p. 193.

16 ZÍDEK, *Od ÚMPE k ÚMV*, p. 120–121.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

18 Blanka Šrucová was born in 1941 in Hatín. According to the work reference attached to her personal file in AMZV, she came from the workers’ family. Her father was a member of KCS, she joined the party in 1960. But already during the high school she was described as one of the most active members of Czechoslovak Youth Union she joined in 1955. Between the years 1958–1963 she studies at Higher School of Economics. In August 1963 she started to work at ÚMPE. The period from September 1966 to June 1966 she spent in Hague as



nomics in 1963 so she belonged to the youngest members.¹⁹ In 1966 she won a scholarship at NUFFIC, the Dutch organization for internationalization of education. During her almost one-year long sojourn in Hague (from September 1966 to June 1967) she acquainted herself more thoroughly with the works of American economists known as Chicago School who suggested the human capital theory as a possible solution for current problems of economic development in the Global South. Research conducted during her stay in Hague then formed a basis for her two major studies on the role of the quality of the human resources in the Ghanaian development plans, which were published in English and presented at the Conference of Africanists from socialist countries held under the auspices of Hungarian Centre of Afro-Asian Research in March 3–7, 1969 in Budapest. Led by the prominent Hungarian development economist József Bognár, Centre was sort of *crème de la crème* of socialist-style development expertise which brought together the best experts in the field.²⁰

In the first study, “Demographic and Employment Problems and Policies of Ghana” published in 1968 Šrucová addressed the question of rapid population growth in Ghana and tried to explore the possibilities of its usage for the benefit of overall economic development. In the first part of the study she provided a detailed analysis of dire employment situation in Ghana and of factors which, in her eyes, engendered it. In the second part she delineated possible solutions for fixing it.

The key problem the most of the developing economies (Ghana included) were faced with in the mid-1960s was widespread underemployment or disguised unemployment in traditional agricultural sector combined with the growing surplus of labour unabsorbed by the emergent modern industries in urban areas. This led to the rise of phenomenon of educated unemployed, which Šrucová described in following words: “A peculiar feature of urban unemployment is incidence of unemployment among educated persons while at the same time there is a great scarcity of high level educated manpower. The majority of the ‘educated unemployed’ are reported to be seeking only employment involving non-manual work or so-called white-collar jobs.”²¹ She interpreted this situation as a consequence of education system inherited from the colonial period which was designed to meet the needs of colonial administration, and thus used to produce administrative clerks and primary school teachers.²² As a result, after independence many Africans considered any practical training beneath the dignity of educated men. School diplomas were often viewed as passports to the town and comfortable life. However, as she observed, “These attitudes,

a scholarship holder of NUFFIC. In 1970 was her contract with ÚMPE cancelled and there is no record about her further action.

19 Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (further only AMZV ČR), f. Osobní spis (OSO) 1945–92, Blanka Šrucová.

20 A career and legacy of József Bognár is a long-term research interest of Hungarian critical geographer Zoltán Ginelli. See his study Z. GINELLI, *Hungarian Experts in Nkrumah’s Ghana. Decolonization and Semiperipheral Postcoloniality in Socialist Hungary*, in: *Mezosfera: Refractions of Socialist Solidarity*, Vol. 5, May 2018, <http://mezosfera.org/hungarian-experts-in-nkrumahs-ghana/>.

21 B. ŠRUCOVÁ, *Demographic and Employment Problems and Policies of Ghana*, Prague 1968, p. 28–29.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 29.



even if they can be understandable in a historical connection, constitute a serious problem for the developing economy.”²³ The modern industrial sector and commercial agriculture were, however, unable to produce new jobs quickly enough to absorb the manpower surpluses. Moreover, the increased demand for capital and technical equipment as well as for managerial and expert personnel tended to be covered by foreign imports rather than by expansion of domestic training programs. The key obstacle to economic development thus Šrucová saw in the ineffective exploitation of available human resources.

To absorb the unemployed, but educated masses, Šrucová proposed several labour-saving activities. Her suggestions were supported by the ILO study on Employment Objectives in Economic Development, which Šrucová largely drew on. The suggested programs included local capital constructions oriented to building water supply regulations, infrastructure, storage facilities or power stations; then activities oriented to development of rural industries including the promotion of social services on a self-help basis, such as rural housing, public sanitation, short-term classes during seasonal slack periods, use of educated unemployed to teach both — children and adults.²⁴ The main advantage of these activities rested in the fact that they required minimum governmental resources and mobilized rural communities. In this viewpoint Šrucová echoed the new mantra of the global development aid policy — not to waste stage budget on the costly imports from abroad but mobilize domestic resources.²⁵ However, as she sceptically remarked, the success of such strategy would to large extent depend on the governments’ willingness to implement capital-saving innovations through better adjusted forms of education and management of the workers.²⁶

This argument Šrucová further developed in the second study, “The Role of the Quality of Human Resources in Ghana,” published in 1971.²⁷ Immediately in the introduction she pointed out a “very deep disproportion” which existed in the government’s investments into human and physical capital. In the face of a series of failures of former development models exported to Africa she claimed that “we have got to welcome conceptions which put emphasis on the development of human resources,” and she expressed serious doubts about the success of models based on “steel industrialization” if they were not accompanied by the adequate changes in the quality of labour force.²⁸ As a major obstacle to development thus Šrucová saw the educational system. The recent education reform in Ghana was directed mostly to primary education, “which is rather general than professional and which does not produce the

23 Ibid., p. 30.

24 Ibid., p. 40.

25 See for instance SID seminar in Paris, *From the Crisis in Educational Systems to the Redeployment of Aid*, in: Prospects: quarterly review of education, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1974; H. M. PHILLIPS, *Planning educational assistance for the second development decade*, Paris 1973.

26 ŠRUCOVÁ, *Demographic and Employment Problems and Policies of Ghana*, p. 44.

27 B. ŠRUCOVÁ, *The Role of the Quality of Human Resources in Ghana*, in: J. BOGNÁR (ed.), *Proceedings of the Conference on the Implementation Problems of Economic Development Plans and Governmental Decisions in the Countries of Black Africa*, Vol. 3, Budapest 1971.

28 ŠRUCOVÁ, *The Role of the Quality of Human Resources in Ghana*, p. 26.



necessary supply of qualified manpower in a composition needed by the economy.”²⁹ All these factors led Šrucová to conclude that the current economic situation in developing countries is not as much the result of the lack of capital, but its “imperfect expenditure and exploitation.”³⁰ The promotion of vocational and short-term training programs oriented to concrete job positions were seen as a viable cure for current employment problems African leaders were facing.

Similar path as Šrucová took also her colleague from ÚMPE, Arnošt Tauber, a former ambassador in Switzerland, who lectured at the Czech University College of Agriculture as well as at Prague Higher School of Economics.³¹ As a member of interdisciplinary research team gathered around the project of the social and human factors in the scientific technical revolution³² ran at the Institute of Philosophy ČSAV and ÚMPE (*Mezioborový tým pro výzkum společenských a lidských souvislostí vědeckotechnické revoluce při FÚ ČSAV ve spolupráci s ÚMPE*) he focused on the application of the modern technique and technology in the conditions of the “Third World.”³³ The central question of his inquiry could be summarized as follows: to what extent are the modern technologies devised by European civilizations “transferable” to societies with different historical development, with different traditions and different forms of social and economic organization? From the broad range of technological exports to Africa he focused on the transfers of modern agricultural machineries and new crops, given that problem of nutrition formed his main area of interest.

Similarly to Šrucová he claimed that the key role in “adapting” modern technologies to the conditions in “third world” should be played by locally trained experts. The first phase of the process of applicability of modern technologies thus would rest on the preparation of qualified experts, engineers and particularly on the training of middle-level technicians who would possess the skill to operate new technologies. Without them, 1. the penetration of the scientific-technical revolution was impossible,” and in addition, 2. they could have significantly influenced the changes in social structure and accelerated the modernization of traditional societies.³⁴ This shift in optics should have been reflected also in the practice of development aid which should no longer be based on the “mere transfer of modern technologies from developed to developing countries” but rather on the assistance of developed states with

29 Ibid., p. 30.

30 Ibid., p. 33.

31 He also published a study on Social and Economic Aspects of World Food Production, in: *Impact of Science on Society*, Paris 1962.

32 For an overview of a theory of scientific technical revolution see V. SOMMER, *Scientists of the World Unite! Radovan Richta's Theory of Scientific and Technical Revolution*, in: E. ARONOVA — S. TURCHETTI (eds.), *Science Studies during the Cold War and Beyond: Paradigms Defected*, New York 2016, pp. 177–204.

33 A. TAUBER, *Uplatňování moderní techniky a technologie v podmínkách “třetího světa.”* Mezioborový tým pro výzkum společenských a lidských souvislostí vědeckotechnické revoluce při FÚ ČSAV ve spolupráci s ÚMPE (material určen pro vnitřní potřebu mezioborového týmu), Praha non-dated but most likely 1968. Interestingly, in the name of the study Tauber employed the phrase “Third World” and not “developing countries” preferred by Soviet scientists, which was rather unusual.

34 TAUBER, *Uplatňování moderní techniky a technologie v podmínkách “třetího světa,”* 7.

building local scientific institutions, research centres, technical colleges and other forms of local educational capacities.³⁵ For Tauber, the expanded preparation of middle-class technicians also represented a solution for the widespread phenomenon of brain drain of university-level manpower from Africa to (mostly western) developed countries. Tauber argued that this work group widened the applicability of modern technologies and hence precipitated the further expansion of modern sector that would consequently absorb the surpluses of educated manpower.³⁶



JAN VRANÝ AND NON-ECONOMIC FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT

Another interesting direction of research on developing countries was delineated by economist Jan Vraný (*10. 8. 1928 – 2004).³⁷ Vraný was also an alumnus of the Higher School of Political and Economic Sciences where he graduated at the Department of Economics with specialization on the economics of agriculture. After graduation he continued to lecture on the school's successor, the Prague Higher School of Economics and in the years 1956–1962 took a research position at the Institute of Economics ČSAV.³⁸ Here he befriended Jan Auerhan, another Czech economist who later developed quite a successful international career as UNESCO expert on manpower planning. In 1962 was Vraný offered a job at the Department of Statistics at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, where he stayed until 1967. After termination of his contract for ECA, in September 1967 he took a research position at ÚMPE.

In his methodological approach Vraný got inspired by the latest findings of the economic anthropology, which studied the social dynamism and economic behaviour from the perspective of micro-groups. In African context this included the focus on tribalism, division of labour within family structure, patterns of land ownership in traditional societies, relations to economic phenomena such as money, etc., and their effect on economic development. This approach markedly differed from the

35 *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.

36 A. TAUBER, *Třetí svět: co s technikou a techniky?*, in: *Mezinárodní politika*, Vol. 13, No. 11, 1969, p. 54.

37 Jan Vraný was born in 1928 in Prague. His father was originally a member of Czech National Social Party, in 1947 he joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and worked as a member of presidium of agricultural cooperative (JRD) in Slivenec. Between the years 1949–1953 Vraný studied at Higher School of Political and Social Sciences, in 1953 began to work there as pedagogical assistant at the Department of Statistics. In 1956 he joined KSČ and moved to the Institute of Economics of Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In 1962 he was sent as an expert to Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa where he worked until 1967. Since September 1967 he worked at the Department of Developing Countries of ÚMPE, later at ÚMV. Interestingly, brother of his wife lived in Netherlands. After 1989 Vraný for a short time worked as an economic advisor at Czechoslovak ZU in Addis Ababa (since December 1990), however, in 1991 he was recalled officially due to “safety reasons”. The suspicions dated back to his work at ECA during the 1960s when he was accused by Czechoslovak Intelligence of spying for the West. After withdrawal he continued to work at ÚMV.

38 AMZV ČR, f. OSO 1945–92, Jan Vraný, Praha, Kádrový obor MZV — dotazník, 13. 4. 1971.



one adopted by “classic” proponents of Marxist African studies, who focused on the macro-groups as the primary analytic category (emphasizing the role of relations between social classes or nation-building processes in economic progress). As argued by Vraný, “in the most of the cases we are dealing with political and economic structures that are found in the phase undeveloped capitalism, with many remnants from pre-capitalist stage. The study of transformations of traditional societies in Africa thus necessarily requires a combination and division of labour between economic and sociologist approaches and analyses.”³⁹ Moreover, more thorough understanding of social dynamics on the micro-group level would have facilitated, in Vraný’s eyes, the decision-making process on the macro-group level and subsequently in the foreign policy as well as in economy.⁴⁰

Considering the experience with implementation of development programs Vraný maintained that absorption of modern technologies in Africa had a certain limit, usually determined by the quality of organizational work and social relations of production. “The successful solution of economic problems, especially in the phase of economic take-off, is thus to large extent dependent on the degree of adaptability of traditional social structures.”⁴¹ As the “pro-capitalist” and “pro-socialist” elements in relations of production in developing countries were not “matured” yet, Vraný suggested adopting “a more sober approach” to Czechoslovak plans of economic and political cooperation with these countries.⁴²

Same as Šrucová, Vraný participated in the abovementioned conference of Africanists and contributed to József Bognár’s volume with the study on the main reasons behind the failure of development planning in Africa.⁴³ The impulse to organize a conference was driven by the series of failures that marked the implementation of socialist development plans in Africa. All the participants seemed to come to conclusion that socialist-style models of rapid industrial development could hardly be applied on the specific conditions in the “Third World” in its orthodox form. As Bognár put it in the introduction to the volume, “The specific problems of planning and plan implementation in this part of the world cannot be investigated by socialist scientists merely within the limits of theories derived from experiences gained in their countries.”⁴⁴

Vraný contributed to the discussion with a critique of socialist planning models that were until then exported to Africa. As he rather boldly remarked in the opening lines of his study, “Short term but valuable experiences from the development

39 J. VRANÝ, *Úloha institucionálních faktorů a společenské motivace v hospodářském rozvoji (na příkladu východoafrické oblasti)*, Svazek 47 (pouze pro vnitřní potřebu), Praha 1970, p. 5.

40 Ibid., p. 57.

41 VRANÝ, *Úloha institucionálních faktorů a společenské motivace v hospodářském rozvoji*, p. 5.

42 Ibid., p. 9.

43 J. VRANÝ, *Some Problems and Basic Reasons of the Failure of Development Planning in Africa*, in: J. BOGNÁR (ed.), *Proceedings of the conference on the implementation problems of economic development plans and government decisions in the countries of black Africa*, Budapest 1971.

44 J. BOGNÁR (ed.) *Proceedings of the conference on the implementation problems of economic development plans and government decisions in the countries of black Africa*, Vol. 1, Domestic economic problems of development, Budapest 1971, p. 10.



of some political regimes in Africa suggest that the development will not take place so much on the basis of general breaking off and replacing traditional structures by completely new ones, but rather in their gradual reshaping to use all their positive features and elements which correspond to the specific conditions of developing countries and have no analogy in the structures of developed countries."⁴⁵ The plans were often badly elaborated, they held just a marginal position in state's administration system or tended to pursue too ambitious goals which did not correspond with the economic capacities of the country. "In such instances, the development plans become only means for obtaining foreign loans and gifts, and for the unfair policy of extended hands in both directions."⁴⁶

Although in Vraný's eyes the main blame for this development was put on the head of private monopolies and local politicians who expressed lack of support for planning, he was equally critical towards the socialist planners who underestimated local conditions. To illustrate the shortcomings of the planning in Africa he used an example of the First Five Year Plan of the Somali Republic, which was by 60% sponsored by USSR and other socialist countries. Despite the sufficient material aid, the plan produced just very disappointing results. The main reasons of the failure apparently were the critical underestimation of the educational field (which would prepare the qualified personnel) and lack of statistical data that would have assessed the viability of investment projects and, particularly, the marketability of their products. For instance, the fish processing factory in Las Khorah built with the Soviet credit was struggling to meet the goals stipulated by plan because of the lack of fish in the local waters, and inability to sell fish cans outside the small Somali market.⁴⁷ Vraný was also sceptical about the cornerstone of socialist development plans — implementation of state farms in Somalia, where cattle breeding remained the predominant form of cultivation of the land. Instead of mindless transfers of socialist-states' experience with post-war industrialization Vraný advocated mechanisms in which market and private initiatives would function in conditions determined by state. Only a mutual "division of labour" between the two sectors would lead to effective utilization of limited resources.⁴⁸

The question of how to adapt socialist planning methods to social conditions in developing countries was apparently on the table for long time. Already in the mid-1960s the series of setbacks of socialist planning in Africa made Czechoslovak state authorities to identify a study of planning methods as a priority in the State plan of scientific research. In consequence was launched a large-scale project on the planning experiences in developing countries in which participated the Department of the world economics at the Research Institute of National Economic Planning together with ÚMPE. The research team included Drago Fišer and Alois Holub — both from the Institute of National Planning, and Otakar Klokočník, expert on African

45 VRANÝ, *Some Problems and Basic Reasons of the Failure of Development Planning in Africa*, p. 81.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 82.

47 VRANÝ, *Some Problems and Basic Reasons of the Failure of Development Planning in Africa*, p. 89–90.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 81.



economy from ÚMPE. However, the research participants seemed rather sceptical about the prospects of reforming socialist planning methods. As they noted, "...in the question of adaptation of socialist planning to the needs of economically less developed countries there exists considerable helplessness."⁴⁹ Moreover, already in the year of publication of the study — in 1965, they did not think that socialist development in Africa was likely in the short term: "Embarking on the socialist path, which would be able to introduce revolutionary changes and relatively quickly overcome the low level of production, is not under the current conditions in the less developed African countries possible [...]"⁵⁰ This assessment was only compounded by the fact that the economic potential of socialist countries "will not be in the short run so strong that they would be able to deal with own needs of rapid economic development and simultaneously play a significant role on the wider front of economic aid to African countries."⁵¹ In such situation, the improvement of the quality at the expense of quantity of provided development aid they identified as crucial for the future cultivation of mutual relations.

TRANSNATIONAL ENCOUNTERS

These new approaches to the development studies did not evolve in isolation but to large extent responded to the new trends in international development politics that emerged and were widely discussed in the various UN bodies over the course of 1960s. For instance, under the imperative of then unequivocal modernization theory, a call for closer integration of manpower planning into broader economic plans in developing countries was voiced by experts in International Labour Organization since the early 1960s. Similarly, reflecting on unconvincing results of the educational reforms in the "Third World", the UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning in May 1966 convened a conference to discuss the following burning issues: 1. employment opportunities for the educated. "This rapidly growing problem is rather the reverse of the problem of manpower shortages which commanded primer attention only a few years ago."⁵² 2. The role of education in rural and agricultural development. "Economic development experts and policy-makers have lately come to regard agricultural and rural development as perhaps the number one problem for many developing countries, deserving of a higher priority than it has been getting." 3. The implementation of educational and manpower plans. These three segments represented the main points of reference in the global debate on employment situation in developing countries. Šrucová's frequent references to a number of ILO publications, including *Employment Objectives in Economic Development* (Geneva: ILO, 1961) or *Employment problems and Policies* (Geneva: ILO, 1960) thus demonstrate her effort to keep the pace with the latest trends abroad. Moreover, she was equally

49 D. FÍŠER — A. HOLUB — O. KLOKOČNÍK, *Rozbor pokusů o plánování v hospodářsky málo vyspělých zemích*. Díl třetí: oblast ECA, Praha 1965, p. 11.

50 Ibid., p. 60.

51 Ibid., p. 113.

52 Foreword by P. H. COOMBS, in: *Manpower Aspect of Educational Planning*, Paris 1968, p. 6.

influenced by the works of the pioneers of human capital theory including Theodore W. Schultz (*The Economic Value of Education*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1963) and American economist Mary Jean Bowman (“The Human Investment Revolution in Economic Thought”, *Sociology of Education*, 39, no. 2, 1966), both distinguished members of Chicago School.

Conversely, Vraný in his accounts on non-economic factors of development drew on the works of French sociologist and agronomist René Dumont, British economist Colin Clark, American economist and director of the Economic Development Institute at the WB Andrew Kamarck, British sociologist Michael Banton and one of the pioneers of economic sociology, American Neil Joseph Smelser. The works of Šrucová, Vraný as well as Tauber thus demonstrate the Czechoslovak experts’ ambition to reflect on the contemporary debates and attempt to use new methodologies for improvement of the state’s current aid strategies. Moreover, it could be argued that with their focus on secondary-level education and promotion of short-term vocational training programs preferably in agricultural field they anticipated a major change in the field of global educational development policies that emerged in the 1970s — the reorientation of education systems in the “third world” from “universal academic” to vocational purposes, which went hand in hand with promotion of manual training in areas necessary for technical efficiency.⁵³

TOWARDS THE PRAGUE SPRING – CRITICISM

Experts’ attempts to come up with more effective ways of cooperation with developing countries took place concurrently with more general debates about inventing economically efficient model of socialism. Šrucová’s advocacy of cooperation based on development of human resources grew out of this critique. She observed that “[Previously] We favoured ... the priority growth of the means of production over consumer goods — we treated it as a canon and the only possible way to achieve economic growth [...] It was not until our economy found itself in a current condition that theorists as well as practitioners started to realize that the growth of production funds, quick increases of GDP are not always driving forces of economic growth, but first and foremost it is the growth of effectiveness. In this respect we were to a great degree outpaced by western theories.”⁵⁴ She also did not hesitate to make parallels between problems of Czechoslovak economy and failures of socialist planning Africa maintaining that “The similarity with the shortcomings and the mistakes of the centrally planned socialist economy is here not merely coincidental.”⁵⁵

Along the similar lines was written Richard Wagner’s study on the prospects of Czechoslovak economic relations with developing countries published already in

53 S. P. HEYNEMAN, *The History and Problems in the making of Education Policy at the World Bank 1960–2000*, in: *International Journal of Educational Development*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 2003, p. 318.

54 B. ŠRUCOVÁ, *Otázka kvality lidských zdrojů v ekonomické literatuře*, in: *Mezinárodní vztahy*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1969, p. 60.

55 ŠRUCOVÁ, *The Role of the Quality of Human Resources in Ghana*, p. 29.



1966.⁵⁶ Wagner rejected the optimistic schemes of inevitable socialist development of newly liberated states arguing that “Identification of national-liberation movement with the socialist revolution together with the misleading opinion that disintegration of colonial system of capitalism automatically means the end of the capitalist system itself produced schematic conceptions of the next path of developing countries.”⁵⁷ This interpretation then helped to embed a widespread belief that socialist revolution was the only way of overcoming social and economic backwardness. However, this approach was fuelled by the lack of knowledge of non-economic factors and availability of domestic resources in developing countries, and therefore needed serious revisiting. For Wagner, future relations with developing countries were to be determined by growing entanglement of the world, in which all of its “three parts” were increasingly interdependent.⁵⁸ The key to more beneficial cooperation with developing countries thus in Wagner’s eyes lay in closer integration of Czechoslovak economy into international market.⁵⁹

But perhaps the most direct criticism of former strategies of development cooperation was voiced by ÚMPE specialist on Latin America Ladislav Dvořák in his contribution presented at the meeting of the Committee for the history and culture of Latin American nations organized by ÚMPE in April 9, 1968. He openly said that in current practice “the objective discrepancies between socialist and developing countries were downplayed and set aside to a sphere of temporary mistakes and accidental errors.”⁶⁰ The assistance of socialist states to developing countries was motivated not by bilateral interests, but by the “feelings of suprapersonal, even mystic internationalism, and by theatrically idealized approach based on generous altruistic aid.”⁶¹ Dvořák pointed out that Czechoslovak scientists were often forced to reduce their research to parroting empty political slogans and any attempt for serious analysis of socio-economic structures in developing countries was censored.⁶² Dvořák predicted the radical revision in the Czechoslovak studies on developing countries, where the management of the research would be in the hands of *real* scientists.⁶³ His words echoed not only the rise of prominence of scientific expertise which was part and parcel of Czechoslovak reform project but also the popular impression that Czechoslovak government wasted too much of its precious resources on development aid to Africa, and for this very reason the Czechoslovak economy found itself in a crisis.⁶⁴

56 R. WAGNER, *Hospodářské vztahy Československa s rozvojovými zeměmi*, in: *Mezinárodní vztahy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1966.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 35.

58 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 39.

60 L. DVOŘÁK, *Aktuální problémy výzkumu rozvojových zemí*, in: *Mezinárodní vztahy*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1968, p. 77.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 77.

62 *Ibid.*, p. 78.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 79.

64 In contemporary Czechoslovak press appeared several articles monitoring the conflicts between the local and African students, which were provoked by the higher scholarship of the latter. One of such protests occurred in the boarding house *Mláda Garda* in Bratislava in 1964. See Open Society Archives, f. Radio Free Europe, Czechoslovak Unit — Old

Both these stances fuelled the endeavour to reformulate the content of development aid in a way that would be more beneficial for Czechoslovak economy.



SHIFT OF OFFICIAL PARADIGM – POST-1968 PURGES AND THEIR IMPACT ON RESEARCH OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Considering the abovementioned critical accounts, it seems as no surprise that during the 1960s ÚMPE became one of the major centres of reform movement. The main concern of the employees during this period was to expand the applicability of the Institute's project outputs into the political practice. However, these efforts were interrupted by the Soviet invasion in August 1968. The following personal purges and throughout restructuring of ÚMPE had far-reaching consequences on the quality and future orientation of the research on developing countries in Czechoslovakia. According to the findings of Petr Zídek, during the Party interrogations were all 68 employees of ÚMPE fired and only 29 of them (out of which just 10 scientific) were then offered a position in ÚMPE's successor — the Institute of International Relations (ÚMV) that inaugurated its activities in 1970.⁶⁵ The new institution should become a truly "political", which meant that it was expected "in greater extent than ever assist to the practice of foreign policy and the Communist Party propaganda."⁶⁶ This goal should be reached through "correction of the flawed theories of international relations" which went hand in hand with the requirement for greater integration of the classic works of Marxism-Leninism into the research.

Virtually all former employees were subjected to screenings and compelled to attend the inter-Party interviews. To illustrate the consequences of this process on the individual careers of former ÚMPE employees I will use the case of Jan Vraný, who was one of those few who were offered a continuation of a contract in the new Institute of International Relations. The first and most direct impact on his career had a cancellation of membership in KSČ in 1970 which effectively prevented him from taking any further research trips abroad. Besides writing a repenting letter to re-establish his reputation, other "corrective measures" imposed on him included the demand for increased political activity — he became an active member of the Local National Committee in Slivenec, participation in various forms of brigade work and courses in "inter-party education for non-party scientific workers,"⁶⁷ and he was instructed to supervise the diploma theses of foreign students.⁶⁸ Moreover,

Code Subject Files II (1962–1966), Bratislava students protest, July 1964. Similarly, Czechoslovak daily *Rude právo* in 1962 tried to assure its readers that Czechoslovak economic cooperation with Africa was not based on the premise that "we are sending them loads of gifts" but rather on mutually beneficial trade. See F. VYCHODIL, *O vývozu a spolupráci*, in: *Rudé právo*, Praha 31. 8. 1963, p. 2.

⁶⁵ ZÍDEK, *Od ÚMPE k ÚMV*, p. 125.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁶⁷ AMZV ČR, f. OSO 1945–92, Jan Vraný, Praha, Záznam o komplexním hodnocení z roku 1976.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Dodatek k životopisu, 10. 3. 1976.



he participated in a number of official popularizing and propaganda activities for the foreign audiences which took mostly the form of writing articles for the magazine *Solidarity: A monthly magazine for Czechoslovak African relation*, which was the main channel of the Czechoslovak press propaganda to Africa. He was also commissioned to write a publication on Czechoslovak economic relations to Africa for Czechoslovak Committee of Afro-Asian Solidarity. In the sphere of research, he was instructed to shift his focus from the non-economic factors of development to the problems of implementation of New International Economic Order, energetic crisis in Arab world and the UN third decade of development which reflected the new major concerns of Czechoslovak foreign policy towards Afro-Arab region.⁶⁹ Concerning the post-1968 fate of Blanka Šrucová, last record in the archives states that in 1970 she was not offered a contract at a newly-established ÚMV and at the time of submission of this paper author was unable to find any track about her further career (except for the information that she got married and changed her name to Janoutová).

When we look at the publication outputs of ÚMV in the subsequent two decades, they resembled more to economic journalism than proper scientific analyses providing solutions to global problems (perhaps except for those focused on the Marxist critique of western neo-colonialism in the “Third World”). The studies on developing countries published in the last decade of state socialism almost unanimously focused on the prospects of mutual trade and the new forms of economic and technical cooperation⁷⁰ circumscribed by the discussions about the theory of non-capitalist path to development, which at that time already seemed to lose scientific relevance and political allure.⁷¹ Moreover, over the course of the 1980s the research on developing countries was slowly thrust out from the priority areas of ÚMV. As Zídek aptly remarked, ÚMV gradually became a “depository of merited diplomats and high-rank employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who reached a retirement age.”⁷²

CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the transnational dynamics behind the evolution of development research in Czechoslovakia. On the cases of career spans and scholarly publications of two notable economists focusing on African development at ÚMPE — Blanka Šrucová and Jan Vraný — it demonstrated that despite ideological constraints

69 Ibid., Stanovisko výboru 12. ZO KSČ FMZV ku komplexnímu hodnocení s. Jana Vraného, 16. 6. 1976.

70 See for instance J. VRANÝ, *Hospodářská spolupráce ČSSR s tzv. jádrem rozvojových zemí socialistické orientace při upevňování jejich ekonomické samostatnosti*, Prague 1985; or I. DANKO-VIČOVÁ, *Problémy a perspektivy rozvíjené mezinárodní dělby práce mezi socialistickými a rozvojovými zeměmi*, in: *Mezinárodní vztahy*, Vol. 21, No. 7, 1986.

71 For a controversy which surrounds non-capitalist path see C. Y. THOMAS, ‘*The Non-Capitalist path’ as a Theory and Practice of Decolonization and Socialist Transformation*, in: *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1978, pp. 10–28; or C. Y. THOMAS, *Class Struggle, Social Development and the Theory of Non-Capitalist Path*, in: M. PALMBERG (ed.), *Problems of Socialist Orientation in Africa*, Uppsala 1978.

72 ZÍDEK, *Od ÚMPE k ÚMV*, p. 126.

they actively reflected on global contemporary debates on the prospects of development in Africa and tried to interconnect their observations with the current practices of development policies of Czechoslovak government. Their critical analyses of development practice as well as suggested solutions correlated with the rationales of Czechoslovak reform communism which emphasized the economic efficiency and “scientization” of political practice. Although this study was mostly concerned with theoretical observations and their impact on the practice of development aid must be comprehensively justified by the further research, even now is possible to draw certain conclusions.

It seems that scientific recommendations to shift focus of development aid from exports of physical capital (which rarely paid off as African governments had chronic problems with paying back the loans) to training of future experts on African soil were, at least rhetorically endorsed by Czechoslovak state authorities. First doubts were raised already in 1965 when the members of the 10th Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a rather detailed report on the current experiences with the implementation of the Czechoslovak political strategy towards the countries of sub-Saharan Africa (*Dosavadní zkušenosti z plnění koncepce čs. zahraniční politiky vůči zemím tropické Afriky a výsledky při rozvíjení našich vztahů s těmito zeměmi*).⁷³ In the document authors speculated over the rather disappointing results of scholarship programs for students from developing countries, coming to conclusion that “the transfer of education to the African ground would better serve the purpose.”⁷⁴ Moreover, in the mid-1960s also sparked debate about extending classic university scholarships of the combined study programs which would include also practical training in Czechoslovak enterprises.⁷⁵ Czechoslovak foreign trade corporation Polytechna was already offering a number of short term training programs — in finances, banking, welding, management of industrial enterprises etc., for applicants from developing countries, which were provided on purely commercial level.⁷⁶ However, number of trainees from developing countries had a rather declining tendency — declining from 176 in 1966 to 97 in 1969⁷⁷ and, as such, training programs could never have competed with the university programs generously sponsored by Czechoslovak

73 AMZV ČR, f. TO-T 10 1965 — 1969, b. 1, case 2, *Dosavadní zkušenosti z plnění koncepce čs. zahraniční politiky vůči zemím tropické Afriky a výsledky při rozvíjení našich vztahů s těmito zeměmi*, Pro schůzi kolegia MZV, Prague, 25.9. 1965.

74 In the report was openly stated that “Students are losing the contact with the developments in Africa, they get used to the careless life, lose motivation to study as well as the interest to come back to their homeland.” In AMZV ČR, f. TO-T 10 1965 — 1969, b. 1, case 2, *Dosavadní zkušenosti z plnění koncepce čs. zahraniční politiky vůči zemím tropické Afriky a výsledky při rozvíjení našich vztahů s těmito zeměmi*, Pro schůzi kolegia MZV, Praha, 25.9. 1965.

75 National Archives of the Czech Republic (further only NA ČR), f. Ministerstvo školství a kultury, b. 117, inv. no. 35 — Ghana, 1961–1966, case: čeští a slovenští profesory na VŠ v Ghane — Zásady k dohodě o spolupráci při výchově odborníků a vědeckých pracovníků mezi Ghanou a ČSSR, Praha 1965.

76 AMZV ČR, f. Porady kolegia 1953–1989, book no. 142 — Vědecko-technická spolupráce ČSSR s rozvojovými zeměmi, Praha, March 1971.

77 Ibid.





government. Nevertheless, these examples signalize a certain paradigmatic shift in Czechoslovak approach to development aid that could be summarized as a call for higher efficiency at the lower costs. This tendency could be traced in the experts' claims for "more sober approach" to plans of scientific-technical cooperation with developing countries, proposing a re-reorientation to local, short-term trainings of middle level technicians as a useful solution for both — Czechoslovakia's own struggles to play a role of generous donor as well as employment situation in Africa. Although these pragmatic rationales were after August 1968 denounced as "rightist revisionism", some residues of it endured to the later decades. To give just one example, the training of operational personnel for the jointly sponsored enterprises became a stable part of bilateral economic agreements and new trend in socialist-style means of assistance to developing countries.⁷⁸ This form perhaps did not overshadow the provision of government scholarships but still mirrored a certain shift in attitude towards Czechoslovak internationalist commitments which roots could be traced back in the intellectual ferment of the 1960s.

⁷⁸ NA ČR, f. KSČ-ÚV 1945–1989, Praha — Předsednictvo 1976–1981 (02/1), sv. 12, ar.j. 12/ k informaci 1, Správa o realizácii technickej pomoci v roku 1975, Prague, 6.8. 1976.