

EAAS Travel Grant Report

From 19 June to 3 August 2013 I visited the United States for one of the last research trips of my doctoral project. From 20 to 22 June I attended the annual SHAFR meeting. The two panels I put together were 'Panel 15: U.S. Diplomacy, the Congo Crisis, and the Relation between the Cold War and Decolonization, 1960-1980' and 'Panel 68: America and Africa: The Unconventional Diplomacy of the U.S. in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1949-1963'. The first session resulted in an interesting discussion about the amount of 'real' power the Soviet Union possessed during the Congo crisis. Alessandro Iandolo pointed out that Khrushchev knew that the USSR never had the technical ability to transport troops and supplies to the heart of Africa. The different papers that had been presented were tied together by Ryan Irwin. He concluded that Africa provides the historian with a topic to reflect on the analytical limits of the bipolar framework. In the second session, the discussion focused on my argument that Eisenhower had an Africa strategy which was based on education and public diplomacy. Jason Parker, who chaired the panel, and the lively discussion that followed provided me with helpful pointers and more specific research questions for my research.

From 23 to 27 June I went to the Bentley Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan to look at the papers of the two assistant secretaries of state, Joseph Charles Satterthwaite and G. Mennen Williams. Particular the latter papers were insightful because they shed more light on Kennedy, a President who preferred working with informal advisors.

At the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in College Park, Maryland I worked with the material I had declassified. These papers finally make it possible to write a history of American public diplomacy in Africa. The documents I found, strengthen claims I have made, confirm hunches I had and are invaluable in the construction of a convincing narrative. For instance, I found proof of early cooperative practices between USIS and the Ghana government as well as an early and proactive strategy to deal with the Bandung Conference, two arguments which are rejected by historians..

I also visited Howard University, where the Nkrumah papers and the Dabu Gizenga papers are stored. It gave me the opportunity to look at documents which I did not find in Ghana. These documents will significantly improve the Ghanaian side of my international history.

In the special collections reading room at Georgetown University, I consulted the Fitzhugh Green Papers, the John Brown Papers and the Barbara Ward Papers. While the former two were public diplomats in Africa, the latter worked as an anthropologist in Ghana

and was a close advisor to Kennedy. Ward became an intermediate between Kennedy and Nkrumah, making her views on Africa invaluable for a multifaceted history on US-Africa relations.

From 28 July to 3 August I visited Boston. In the MIT archives I spend one day going through the papers of Ithiel de Sola Pool, Milikan and Daniel Lerner who all had an important role in thinking about what public diplomacy could achieve in the modernization process. Lastly, I went to the John F. Kennedy Library where I was focused on the administration's response to the anti-American statements in the Ghanaian press, its definitions of neutralism and non-alignment and propaganda during the Congo crisis.

Because study in the archives was combined with a thorough rewriting and restructuring of the thesis, this last research trip has been incredibly productive. In the course of writing my thesis, certain actors and events have become prominent than I initially imagined. The EAAS travel grant provided me with the opportunity to flesh out important analytical details, strengthen essential arguments and give my narrative a better footing.

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