

Postcolonial Pop Cultures in Belgium, Germany and France. Representation of sub-Saharan Africa in the media ensemble of the long 1960s in the context of the Decolonisation

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Decolonization can be described as a transcultural process of global importance that forced the former European colonial powers to re-define themselves on a political, economical but also cultural level after the independence of their former colonies. The project aims at analyzing the functions and dynamics of the representation of "Africa" in the mass-media-ensemble during the long 1960s. This period is characterized by the integration of decolonization and the so-called "third world" into the mass-media-ensemble as well as by the challenge of traditional images and the re-negotiation of new ways of representation. The 1960s can therefore be considered as a crucial moment for the representation of Sub-Saharan Africa in the media. The project looks for traces of decolonization in the popular media cultures of Belgium, France, and Germany. It questions the persistence of colonial images and discourses, and analyzes the emergence of new forms of representation of the Other as well as spaces for participation for the now independent countries. It addresses the interconnections between the political process of decolonization and its medial forms of representation and appropriation and examines the relationship between intellectual culture, counter cultures and the mainstream media in three European countries that deal in very different ways with their colonial history. Through its transnational approach, the project aims to relate specific discursive and audio-visual forms of representation of Sub-Saharan Africa and its population with transnational imaginations of "Europe" and "the Europeans"; but it also addresses processes of negotiation of "Blackness" in a transatlantic perspective, e.g. in popular music. The focus on transnational dynamics and forms of appropriation in intermedial and intercultural transfers highlights finally the role of cultural mediators or interfaces as correspondents, entertainers or sportspersons as well as forms of personal intercultural contacts.