

Globalization of an Educational Idea

Workers' Faculties in Cuba, Mozambique and Vietnam

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The Workers' Faculty idea can be traced back to the *Rabfak* that were founded in 1919 and were widespread in the Soviet Union. These were aimed at achieving two goals:

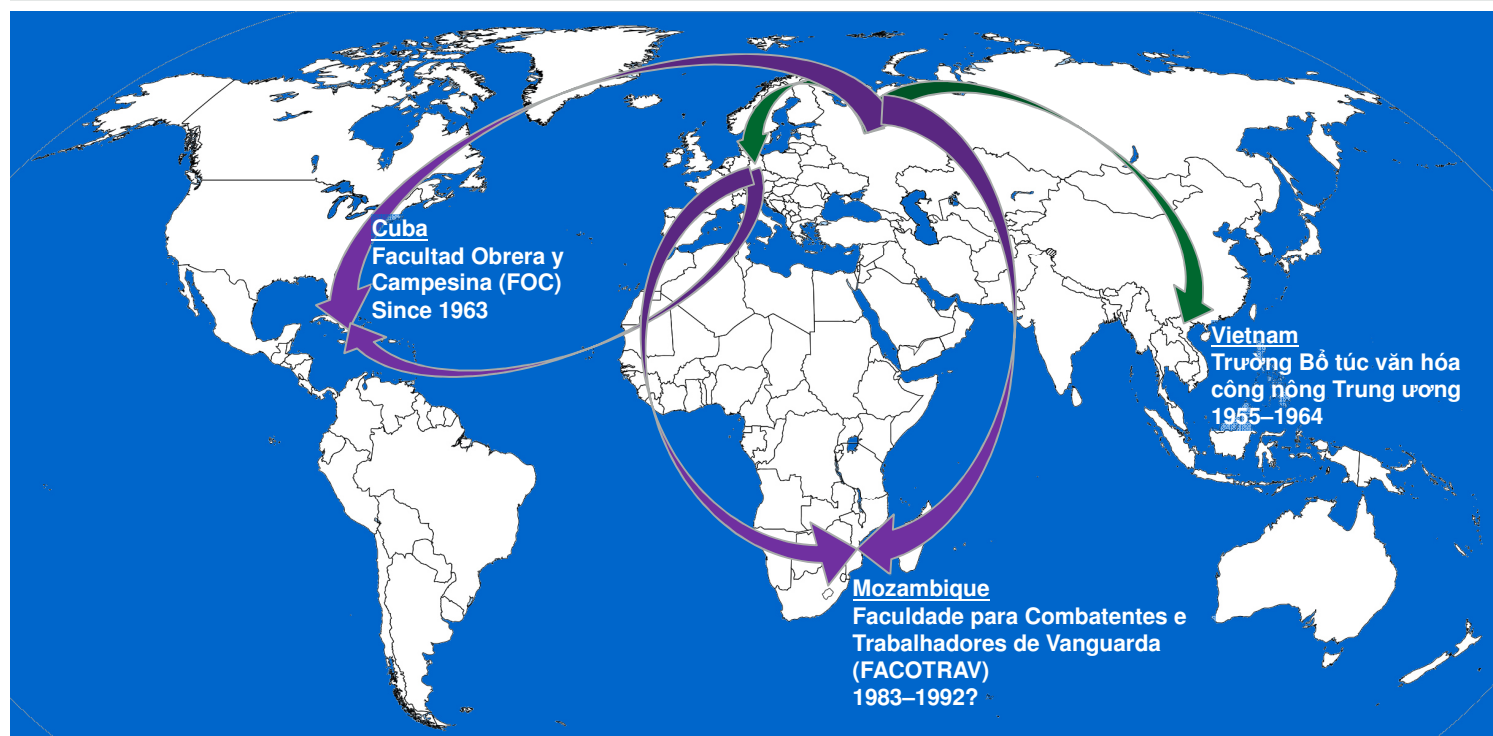
- To enable workers and peasants to study at universities;
- To create a new social elite.

After World War II this idea was transferred to different countries around the globe where it was implemented in local contexts. This globalization of the Workers' Faculty took place in two waves:

First wave, after 1945: The Workers' Faculty idea was directly transferred to Central and Eastern European countries (the German Democratic Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the People's Republic of Poland), and to Asian countries following a socialist development path (the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea).

Second wave, from the late 1950s on: The Workers' Faculty idea spread in African and Latin American countries through indirect institutional transfer, largely via the German Democratic Republic.

The project focuses on Workers' Faculties in Cuba, Mozambique and Vietnam.



Research Question:

How did the globalization of the educational idea "Workers' Faculties" evolve in the interaction of external influences and national or pre-national traditions?

The research goal is the comparative study of the Workers' Faculties of Cuba, Mozambique and Vietnam as an example of a global institutional transfer.

Archival research in the countries concerned and contemporary witness interviews form the empirical base of the project. The research draws on various approaches to the understanding of institutional transfers: neo-institutionalism, in which the concepts of isomorphism and de-coupling are used to analyze institutional change and world polity influences; and approaches that focus on transnational borrowing and lending processes of education policies.