



*Kansai university and Faculty of Economics*



## **International Symposium**

# **Africa and Asia Entanglements in Past and Present : Bridging History and Development Studies**

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**Dreaming Afrasia: An Essay on Afro-Asian Relations in Historical Perspectives**

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### **Abstract**

According to the UN Population Division, the breakdown of the world population in 2100 is projected to be 4.7 billion Asians, 4.2 billion Africans and 2.0 billion people in the rest of the world. Promoting a visionary dialogue between the two major regions, Asia and Africa, is thus expected to be essential in deciding the future of the globe. The rise of Asian Tigers and mainland China has occasioned a significant shift in understanding of today's international relations, and some scholars even bring forward a non-Western IR theory. However, such a counter-hegemonic conception is not completely new in history, but just the latest addition to the discourse of Asian and African intellectuals in the 20th century, such as Rabindranath Tagore, Okakura Tenshin, Sun Yat-sen, Aimé Césaire and Julius Nyerere to name but a few. Reviewing the texts of those thinkers, this paper tries to trace a common thread embedded in their pan-nationalist narratives, which were to unite diverse peoples in their spatial frameworks, to denounce the militaristic nationalism and the social order based on self-interest, and thereby to attain a universal state of humanity. This paper also argues that considerable part of Asia and Africa have been characterised by frontier traditions with amorphous national boundaries and active migration, which seem to have counteracted the centripetal tendency of nationalism and possible reproduction of centre-periphery relations in the South.