

# 'Rededicating Ourselves to the Cause of Bleeding Africa'

*Sociotropic Portrayals of Economic Cooperation in US Black Newspapers, 1946–1989*

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IPES 2023

# Domestic Audiences and Economic Cooperation Abroad

Post-WWII economic cooperation across countries took many forms

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→ What **other types of benefits** (ideology, identity) can economic cooperation bring, and to which **groups** (mass publics or minority)?

→ Importance of looking at preferences of marginalized and overlooked groups

# Internationalism and Economic Development

in the US Black community post-WWII

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- Intellectual leaders in US Black political thought long emphasized internationalism, pan-Africanism, and African socialism
- WEB Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Bunche, and Malcolm X, among others, all involved in multilateral and regional IOs
- Idea that economic development and cooperation in newly independent African and Caribbean colonies would elevate the status of Black communities worldwide

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International organizations in newly decolonized Africa and Caribbean widely covered in Black papers

→ Emphasis on economic and political cooperation in Africa vis-a-vis the status of Blacks in US

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- Differences in placement, salience, sentiment, context across White and Black newspapers
- Communication theory emphasizes **co-ethnic coverage tendency** across media outlets

# Hypotheses

$H_1$  Black newspapers are more likely to portray African economic cooperation and development more favorably than white newspapers.

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H<sub>2</sub> Black newspapers are more likely to portray African economic cooperation and development with greater sociotropic/plurastic language than white newspapers.

- Economic and political development in Africa, and trade among African and Caribbean nations, framed as enhancing the status of US Black community

# Data and Methods

## Historical newspaper data

Pairs of [Historical Black and White newspapers](#) in the same city, 1946–89 ( $N$  of news segments = 14,474) based on extensively preprocessed ProQuest [historical newspapers](#) data on TDM studio

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- [Hard test](#) of theory: Black newspapers tended to have coverage centered on local communities

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**ConText** analysis (Spirling et al. 2023) to compare differences in tone and phrasing

- Through **word embeddings**, allows testing of how words related to trade and cooperation/development are used differently across groups of texts (here, Black vs White newspapers)

economy		economy
policy		policy
freedom	<i>cooperat*</i>	america
nation	<i>develop*</i>	nation
country	<i>integrat*</i>	country
black		usa
africa		soviet



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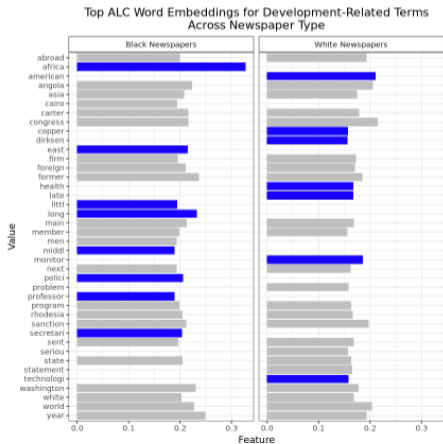
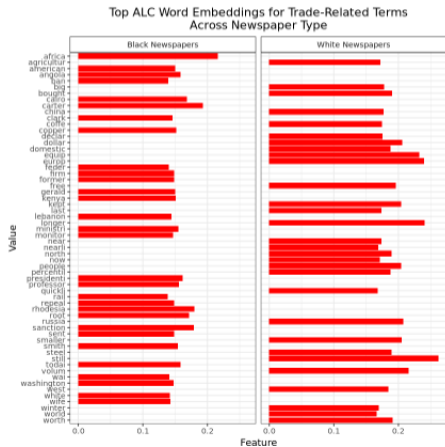
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- Trained a *local* word-embedding model
- Estimate nearest word embeddings: Different “contexts” for the same words across black vs white press
- More appropriate method to examine the hypotheses than STM or LDA

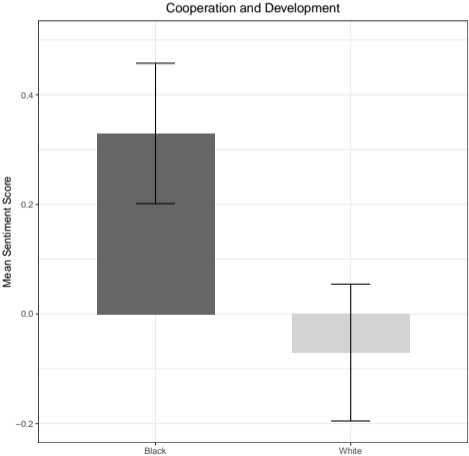
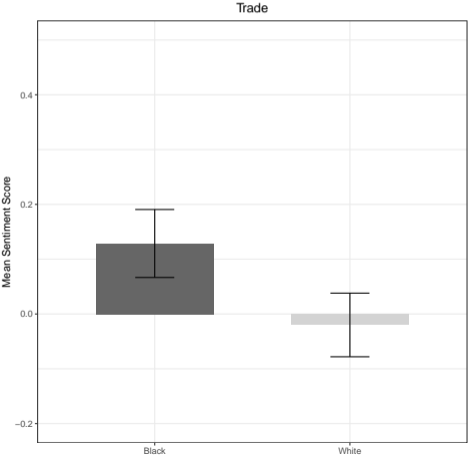
# Differences in Word Embeddings

Discriminant Word Embeddings in the Context of **Trade** and **Cooperation/Development** Related Terms in Black and White Newspapers



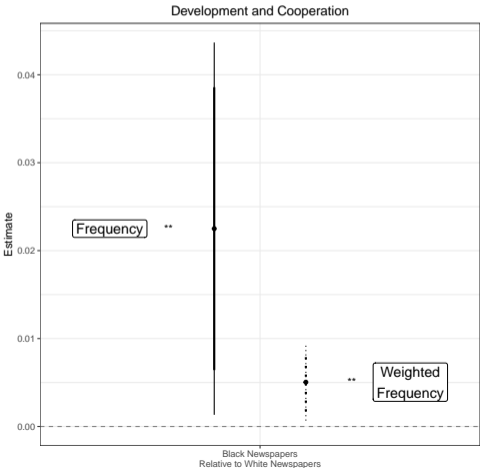
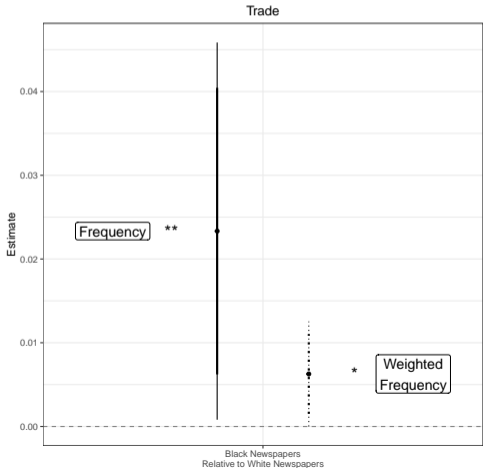
# H1: Favorable Coverage

Sentiment Analysis of News Coverage on International Trade and Cooperation/Development in African Countries



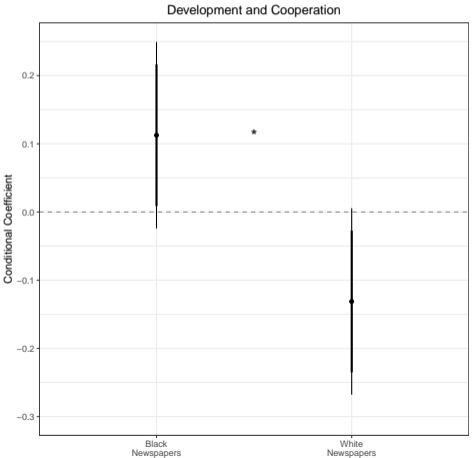
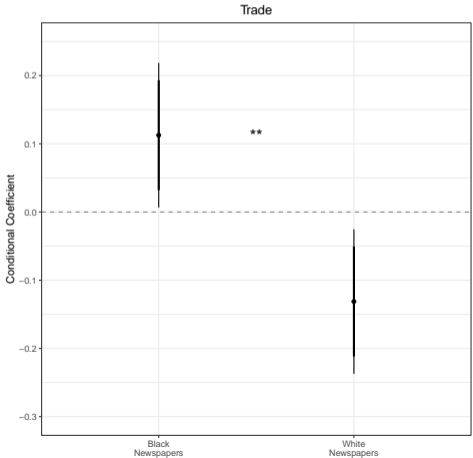
# H2: Geographic Sociotropic Coverage of Trade

Africa-Oriented News Coverage of International Trade and Cooperation/Development in Black Newspapers: **Geographic** Sociotropic Coverage



# H2: Pluralistic Sociotropic Coverage

Africa-Oriented News Coverage of International Trade and Cooperation/Development in Black Newspapers: **Pluralistic** Sociotropic Coverage



# Conclusion

## First Year Of African Unity Organization Marked By Success

By MICHAEL KEATS  
(United Press International)

In the early hours of the morning one year ago—members of the world press were summoned to the ornate Africa hall in Addis Ababa where the heads of state of 30 African states had been meeting for four days.

When the press arrived, leader after leader came to exact the birth of the Organization of African Unity as a dynamic step toward realizing the dream of "Africa for the Africans."

At the same time, there was a warning from the speakers that these black African countries in the OAU intended to "liberate" the rest of the continent still under white minority rule. The ultimate target was, said it, South Africa.

What has happened since then?

The fledgling OAU has faced several tests that could have wrecked it. But it has proved its usefulness and can claim 12 months of solid existence.

African heads of state are scheduled to meet again in Cairo in July, this time as the "OAU Assembly."

Before the 22 leaders arrived in the Ethiopian capital last May, their foreign ministers had met for a week and con-

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After long, involved conferences, the charter of the OAU was drafted and signed. African leaders left, but less than two months later faced their first crisis together over the border fighting between Algeria and Morocco which threatened the very existence of the OAU.

Sekou again took the lead and the dispute was introduced to the conference table. Then the Senegalese's son Ethelouis was involved in border clashes with Germany, but that, too, under OAU direction has been steered into negotiations.

While these incidents showed that the organization was gradually building itself into a force, many African leaders appeared to be aware that it would fail by losing momentum.

The organization was not equipped to act quickly in the army mutiny in East Africa last January, and Colonial British troops were called in.

These incidents symbolized



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- Economic and political developments abroad salient to Black political and economic postwar thought



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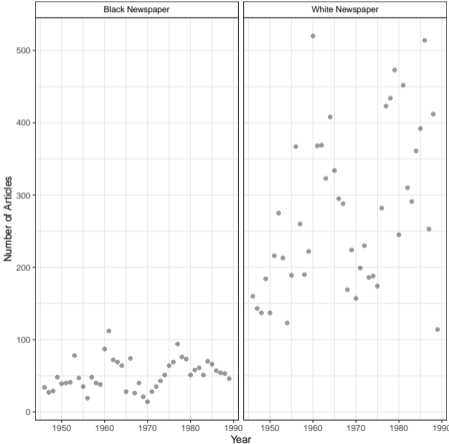


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# Newspaper Sample

The Number of News Segments on IPE and IO Topics by Newspaper Type Across Years



# Number of Relevant News Articles and Segments

<i>Black Newspapers</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>N of Articles</i>	<i>N of Segments</i>
Afro-American (1893-)	Baltimore, MD	226	542
Atlanta Daily World (1932-)	Atlanta, GA	73	188
Chicago Defender (1921-2008)	Chicago, IL	163	219
Cleveland Call and Post (1934-)	Cleveland, OH	74	166
Kansas City The Call (1933-1984)	Kansas City, MO	19	20
Los Angeles Sentinel (1934-)	Los Angeles, CA	51	69
Michigan Chronicle (1939-2010)	Detroit, MI	37	49
New Journal and Guide (1916-)	Norfolk, VA	169	333
New York Star-Amsterdam News (1938-)	New York City, NY	106	183
Philadelphia Tribune (1912-)	Philadelphia, PA	176	410
The Pittsburgh Courier (1911-)	Pittsburgh, PA	31	91
<i>White Newspapers</i>			
Chicago Tribune (1923-1996)	Chicago, IL	1,193	3,858
Los Angeles Times (1923-1995)	Los Angeles, CA	2,025	6,560
New York Herald Tribune (1926-1962)	New York City, NY	530	691
The Atlanta Constitution (1881-1984)	Atlanta, GA	277	395
The Sun (1837-)	Baltimore, MD	452	700

*Note.* The names of each newspaper occasionally changed throughout the years. We have merged them into a single outlet under one representative name.

# Frequent Words Across Time

<i>Year Intervals</i>	<i>Black Newspapers</i>	<i>White Newspapers</i>
1946 - 1950	foreign, colored, <b>africa</b> , world, united, people, <b>negro</b> , blood, states, liberia	united, foreign, trade, states, american, world, south, british, nations, government
1951 - 1955	<b>africa</b> , foreign, trade, south, united, british, new, world, said, west	foreign, united, aid, states, world, american, military, economic, nations, war
1956 - 1960	<b>africa</b> , foreign, trade, million, united, countries, south, world, american, economic	united, foreign, states, president, american, trade, nations, economic, countries, soviet
1961 - 1965	<b>africa</b> , foreign, united, nations, trade, president, south, states, american, <b>negro</b>	foreign, united, aid, states, world, trade, nations, american, president, million
1966 - 1970	<b>africa</b> , foreign, trade, people, countries, south, states, government, british, <b>slaves</b>	foreign, united, states, million, trade, world, south, government, president, american
1971 - 1975	<b>africa</b> , trade, foreign, <b>black</b> , countries, united, nations, university, west, world	foreign, trade, world, united, states, american, countries, oil, million, south
1976 - 1980	<b>africa</b> , <b>black</b> , south, foreign, united, economic, trade, world, government, policy	foreign, united, world, states, south, policy, carter, president, government, soviet
1981 - 1985	trade, <b>africa</b> , south, <b>black</b> , foreign, business, president, economic, international, government	foreign, united, steel, countries, world, south, trade, government, policy, reagan
1985 - 1989	south, <b>africa</b> , trade, <b>black</b> , foreign, policy, university, government, president, economic	south, foreign, trade, aid, world, sanctions, american, president, government, united

# Feature Loss by Different Minimum Frequency Thresholds

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<i>Minimum frequency threshold = 30</i>	Removing 43,791 of 46,518 terms (125,083 of 587,011 tokens) 14,468 documents, 2,727 terms, and 461,928 tokens
<i>Minimum frequency threshold = 20</i>	Removing 42,257 of 46,518 terms (91,963 of 587,011 tokens) 14,470 documents, 4,261 terms, and 495,048 tokens
<i>Minimum frequency threshold = 15</i>	Removing 42,257 of 46,518 terms (91,963 of 587,011 tokens) 14,470 documents, 4,261 terms, and 495,048 tokens
<i>Minimum frequency threshold = 10</i>	Removing 41,051 of 46,518 terms (76,606 of 587,011 tokens) 14,472 documents, 5,467 terms, and 510,405 tokens
<i>Minimum frequency threshold = 8</i>	Removing 40,314 of 46,518 terms (69,645 of 587,011 tokens) 14,472 documents, 6,204 terms, and 517,366 tokens
<i>Minimum frequency threshold = 5</i>	Removing 38,485 of 46,518 terms (57,144 of 587,011 tokens) 14,472 documents, 8,033 terms, and 529,867 tokens

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# Training Local Word Embedding Model

<i>Epoch</i>	<i>Loss</i>
1	0.2103
2	0.0823
3	0.0624
4	0.0534
5	0.0479
6	0.0442
7	0.0414
8	0.0392
9	0.0374
10	0.0360



# Context of Communism/Socialism

- “African socialism” a prominent development model in 1960s
  - Promoted by Nyere (Tanzania) in the EAC; Nkrumah (Ghana) in the OAU
- Split Black elites of US; fears of McCarthy-era targeting



# Regional and Temporal Variations