

From:

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Transatlantic Caribbean

Dialogues of People, Practices, Ideas

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»Transatlantic Caribbean« widens the scope of research on the Caribbean by focusing on its transatlantic interrelations with North America, Latin America, Europe and Africa and by investigating long-term exchanges of people, practices and ideas. Based on innovative approaches and rich empirical research from anthropology, history and literary studies the contributions discuss border crossings, south-south relations and diasporas in the areas of popular culture, religion, historical memory as well as national and transnational social and political movements. These perspectives enrich the theoretical debates on transatlantic dialogues and the Black Atlantic and emphasize the Caribbean's central place in the world.

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Introduction

INGRID KUMMELS, CLAUDIA RAUHUT,

BIRTE TIMM, AND STEFAN RINKE

The oceanic dimension of the Caribbean has inspired substantial research in the fields of anthropology, history, and literary studies for decades. The massive enslavement of people from Africa and the slave trade of the Middle Passage to the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas have been identified as constitutive of the world's first industrialization and interpreted as a turning point for what we have come to understand as "globalization" and "modernity" (Mintz/Price 1976). In these processes, which this volume conceives and analyzes in their transatlantic dimensions, the Caribbean has continued to play a crucial role. We coined the term "Transatlantic Caribbean" to emphasize the interconnections *to* and *from* the Caribbean – to signify a region that transcends the one that is broadly defined as the islands that are within and adjacent to the Caribbean Sea as well as the coastal areas of South and Central America (Barker 2011). Many Caribbean societies have fostered intraregional relationships and shared certain similarities in their cultural and economic histories since the rise of plantation economies and the transatlantic slave trade in the 16th century. Yet, as research on the dissemination of Caribbean migrant communities all over the globe has shown, their strong connectivity extends well beyond this region (Gowricharn 2006; Cervantes-Rodríguez et al. 2009). Indeed, its web of connections and flows of people, practices, and ideas to and from the Caribbean has incited increased interest in the mobility and immobility of social actors, their network building, modes of communication, transfers of knowledge, political ideas, and their group consciousness (cf. for example Putnam 2013). Research in these fields has been inspired by groundbreaking theoretical approaches to understanding the range and hierarchies

of interaction between actors along the coasts of the Americas, Europe, and Africa, such as in Paul Gilroy's *Black Atlantic* or Bernard Bailyn's *Atlantic History*, and, moreover, has led to new concepts of modernity itself.

This volume, which is the result of the international conference "Crossroads of the World: Transatlantic Interrelations in the Caribbean" held on July 2012 at the Institute for Latin American Studies at Freie Universität Berlin, thus approaches the Caribbean as a contact zone of "global encounters." Such cultural transfers and exchanges sparked a history of innovations and the development of new thoughts, which, when disseminated across the Atlantic, closely connected the region with the Americas, Africa, Europe, and Asia. Based on current empirical research centering the Caribbean in its transatlantic entanglements, it builds upon and intends to refine concepts of the Atlantic seascape. Combining approaches of history, anthropology, literary and cultural studies, the contributions here connect empirically based micro-studies with research questions from transnational and global studies. The turn to transatlantic studies can be traced back to the social reality of transregional entanglements, but also to analytical concepts such as *transculturación* (Ortiz 1940), *creolization* (Mintz/Price 1976) or *diaspora* (Hall 1990), developed in particular by scholars who did research in the Caribbean to capture this reality. Even though important concepts were elaborated concerning the Caribbean and the diversity of its case studies, the Caribbean itself was predominantly perceived for many years as an exceptional region. Hence, the particular theoretical insights it yielded were later used for constructing theories with regard to other regions and in the study of transnational processes (Trouillot 2002; Gowricharn 2006; Glick Schiller 2009). While this is useful, it is at the same time necessary to specify concrete routes of interconnectedness and to avoid using sweeping theoretical concepts such as *creolization* – or for that matter *transculturación* and *diaspora* – as both "master symbol[s] of the Caribbean and as a paradigm[s] for the global" (Khan 2001: 272).

In order to gain a more integral understanding of the current world situation with regard to the (im)mobility of social actors and transfers of knowledge as well as cultural and political ideas, this volume emphasizes the prominent role of the Caribbean in world history and how the region's particular experience influenced leading paradigms such as modernity. When we think about modernity, it is important to remember that it originated in slavery and the exploitation of millions of Africans forced to work in highly efficient plantation economies. These constituted the basis of the world's first industrialization and became the major source of Europe's wealth and hegemony. The critical analysis of the Caribbean's exploitation

in a global context, articulated by prominent Caribbean scholars like C.L.R. James (1938), Aimé Césaire (1950), and Frantz Fanon (1961), has decisively influenced the work of the present generation of scholars, who approach the Caribbean as the point of departure for the analysis of an ambivalent and double-edged modernity. Caribbean societies are still greatly impacted by the legacies of slavery and racial, ethnic (and religious) hierarchies within the modern/colonial system, which are reproduced and transformed in the context of Caribbean migrations to different parts of the world (Grosfoguel et al. 2009). For this reason, when we research these societies in their interrelations, it is necessary to put a spotlight on the “darker sides of modernity,” on the ongoing manifestations of coloniality (Mignolo 2000; 2011), and on aspects of a “violent Atlantic modernity” (Palmié 2002: 127). As processes of creolization and transregional entanglements between the Caribbean and Western Europe have developed simultaneously, it is possible to trace relational inequality structures back to the historical entanglements between the two regions since colonial times (Boatecă in press). It is in view to such perspectives that take the persistent inequalities and power asymmetries into account that the contributions in this volume approach the Caribbean in terms of concrete routes of transatlantic flows, (im)mobility and the dialogues of people which may not only have a linguistic character, but economic, political, literary, religious, and musical dimensions as well.

Operationalizing the Transatlantic Caribbean: On Methodologies

What does it actually mean to investigate these interconnections that converge in the Caribbean? How can we trace people, practices and ideas across oceans, national borders, and continental coasts, and what are the limits to the fluidity of such exchanges? To what extent is research in the humanities and social sciences capable of operationalizing these approaches and thus effectively “grounding” the ocean? How can we substantiate the concept of the Caribbean as a global and highly interconnected region through empirical research? In our view, cultural and social anthropologists, historians, and literary scholars have abundant insight to share and much can be gained from the work that has been done in archives, libraries, and from field research at places like schools, political organizations, places of religious worship, nightclubs, street dances, ships, or immigration offices. Such “busy intersections” (Rosaldo 1989) are highlighted by the contributions in this volume. Building upon current approaches centering on translocality, transnationalism, social space, the intersectionality of

class, race and gender, glocalization, and global entanglements as well as on processes of cultural, religious, and ethnic identification and belonging, scholars continue to expand and operationalize notions such as modernity, memory, tradition, or the Black Atlantic. Cultural and social anthropologists have done this through translocal theory and multi-sited ethnographic field work. Historians have built upon these approaches by integrating multi-archival research and oral histories into their work, while not restricting themselves to the sources of the archives of the imperial metropolises.

The variety of disciplinary research united in this volume provides a cross section of diverse methodological approaches and follows recent trends in anthropology and history which privilege empirical research on individuals and their trajectories as more productive points of departure for theorizing than abstract theorems (Baca et al. 2009). The examples highlighted here not only demonstrate the multifaceted processes of transatlantic encounter and exchange in the areas of religion, education, popular culture, social and political movements, but also allow us to read history against the grain and to reveal the silences in historiographical accounts.

The volume approaches these interconnections by means of the central notion of dialogue, termed specifically as Afro-Atlantic live dialogue by James Lorand Matory (1999a). Matory traces the long-term interweaving of connections, multidirectional exchange and movement of people, ideas, and practices between Africa, Europe, and America and highlights in particular the conflictive dynamics of the cultural reproduction of African traditions in the Americas, both in the past and the present. With his notion of dialogue, Matory offers a concrete methodological and epistemological tool for the study of the long *durée* of transatlantic interrelations that many of the contributors undertake in this volume. They underscore dialogues that continue to shape the Caribbean by following actors on their routes across the Atlantic, by exploring their pathways, encounters, networks, modes of communication, and ideas for social and political mobilization, often in reference to day-to-day life. Instead of privileging research on the institutional level of colonial policy, international relations, and actors representing the social elites, many contributions in this volume follow students, musicians, political activists, writers, laborers, or religious practitioners and their quotidian practices.

By recasting our research as the Transatlantic Caribbean we integrate and bridge the manifold encounters of different peoples, cultures, and practices that shaped specific sites of the Caribbean region and its transatlantic dimensions. As an approach, it allows for unearthing the complex webs of interconnectivity and mutual exchange and helps to break with

Eurocentric perspectives, idealized historical master narratives, and canonized national legacies created by a historiography that is centered on the concept of nationhood that is still upheld in post-colonial nation-states, as well as in former colonizing countries. In contrast, the focus on actors reveals the negotiations that took place along different paths and points of encounter beyond the confines of the nation state. For example, non-privileged individuals may circumvent (though from a vulnerable position) the state's power of regulating the border, citizenship, and residency status.

Subsequently, the contributions in this volume not only explore various converging encounters, roots/routes, and movements, but also the limitations of creative exchanges stemming from the continued legacy of slavery and other persistent forms of social exclusion along the lines of race, class, gender, religious, and ethnic belonging. It is on the grounds of this empirical research, and by following the actors on their journeys across land and sea, that we approach the processes of border crossing, mobility, networks, and symbolic identification which have characterized the region ever since the colonial encounter (and indeed before). This has made it possible to detect areas and actors which require more research with regard to the interconnections between the islands of the Caribbean Sea, Latin, Central and North America, Africa, and Europe, and therefore take us beyond those merely between the US, the Anglophone Caribbean, and Europe, which Gilroy chose to highlight when he uncovered the role of Black American intellectuals and artists in what he calls countermodernity.

Several contributors have examined the Transatlantic Caribbean's less familiar south-south relations, such as those between Cuba and Mozambique in the field of socialist education (Dorsch), between Haiti and Jamaica in the field of work migration and political exile (Smith) and between Jamaica and Cuba in the field of Rastafarian music and culture (Hansing). South-south relations have also played an important role for particular manifestations of religion which the Caribbean diaspora has privileged in recent globalization processes. For this reason, special emphasis has been placed on the networks of Yoruba-Atlantic religions between Venezuela, the Caribbean islands, and Nigeria (Ayoh'Omidire), between Cuba and Nigeria (Rauhut), as well as those between post-socialist Germany and Cuba, which were initiated by former Cuban contract workers in the German Democratic Republic (Rossbach de Olmos). A number of chapters show that in view of socialism's political and social impact on the Atlantic, it is useful to think about these interconnections as part of a "Red Atlantic" (Dorsch; Palmié). In a similar way, other contributions reflect on a "Yoruba Atlantic," in which practitioners of Yoruba-based religions like Santería

exercise their religion in a very different social reality and environment at various sites of the Transatlantic Caribbean.¹ These authors reconstruct the particular paths and dynamics of border-crossing religious networks (Ayoh'Omidire, Rauhut, Palmié) and demonstrate how some practitioners construct a sense of belonging to a global community that has recently been called "Yoruba world religion" (Frigerio 2004; Olupona 2008). The "legitimate" representation of Yoruba religion is debated by actors with varying access to the sources and resources of transatlantic religious networks and therefore within power asymmetries (Rauhut).

The contributors who examine the better-known north-south relations have undertaken new approaches to the (im)mobility and acting capacity of individuals in the Transatlantic Caribbean. They have taken serious account of the experiences and self-identifications of the actors by considering them as students, intellectuals, political activists, artists, musicians *and* migrants at the same time, as in the case of Martinicans and Guadeloupeans migrating to France (Childers) or the Jamaican radicals in Harlem (Timm). As research on the nexus between the actors' mobility, political vision, and engagement shows, nation building in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica was a transnational endeavor (Horn, Timm). The Dominicans' modernity followed a particular postcolonial path, for the Trujillato system strategically drew upon the "enlightened" side of Western modernity and ideals by adopting a highly racialized discourse of direct opposition to Haiti's "savagery" and "backwardness" (Horn).

Finally, the authors in this volume elaborate on the emergence of transnational, diasporic, and global forms of consciousness which have built upon these transatlantic interconnections from the 15th century. The global significance contemporaries' attributed to Columbus' "discovery" of the New World in Guanahani, the autochthonous name of the island he first landed on, is explored by taking into account the impact of other explorers' voyages and this period's print revolution (Rinke). The reciprocal processes of exchange of francophone and hispanophone literature and political practices of the respective empires are deciphered, whereby it is demon-

1 The Yoruba emerged in West Africa due to their missionary and colonial construction as an ethnic group from the middle of 19th century (Peel 1989). Millions of Africans were enslaved and brought to the Americas, especially to the Caribbean and Brazil in the 18th and 19th century and were retroactively categorized as Yoruba. They have established Yoruba-based religions such as Santería in Cuba, Vodou in Haiti, or Candomblé in Brazil, which consist in the worship of African gods (Orishas) by way of their association to Catholic saints.

strated that periphery and center should not be viewed as separate worlds, but rather as mutually constitutive (Müller). By spanning webs of Caribbean music and dance between such metropolises as Paris, Havana, and New York in the 1920s and 1930s actors effectively bestowed Caribbeanness with a global dimension. On this basis, actors as diverse as musicians, dancers, patrons, and writers already identified as a diaspora during this period (Kummels).

Expanding the Black Atlantic and Approaching it through the Metaphor of Dialogue

Two contributions look into the processes of exchange and critical notions of modernity, tradition, and memory from the perspective of the theoretization of the key concepts of Gilroy's Black Atlantic (Palmié) and of Afro-Atlantic live dialogue (Matory). Palmié encourages scholars to not only engage theoretically and epistemologically with the Black Atlantic, but also to expand it to other regions, languages, sites with empirically grounded work. Indeed, the contributors to this volume have embraced the call for more empirical study, permitting readers to see several overlapping "Atlantics" from places like Maputo, Berlin, Paris, Havana, Kingston, or Caracas.

Gilroy's influence has been considerable: His scholarship has increased our awareness of previously neglected aspects of transatlantic interrelations, emphasized the central role of enslaved African people and their descendants, and foregrounded their agency in conforming to a "counter-culture of modernity." Still, long before Gilroy, anthropologists of "Afro-American Studies" from the early 20th century studied the cultural contact and transfers between Africa, the Americas, and Europe in a way that we would today call multi-sited field research. They underlined the crucial role of the Caribbean in these transatlantic connections to Africa through various cultural, religious, and social ties. They elaborated analytical tropes such as survival (Herskovits 1941), flow and re-flow (Verger 1968), memory (Bastide 1955) and creolization (Mintz/Price 1976), which have since been challenged and reworked, especially in anthropology and history, in line with recent Atlantic approaches (Yelvington 2001; Palmié 2008a; Thornton 1998; Drotbohm/Kummels 2011).

By introducing the notion of an Afro-Atlantic live dialogue, James Lorand Matory provided researchers with an innovative metaphor that has contributed to a more complex understanding of the long-term interweaving of connections between people traveling back and forth across the Atlantic, who, during and after slavery and up to the present, have carried with them

their transformative cultures, practices, and visions. Using the example of religious practitioners from the Brazilian Candomblé – intellectuals and merchants who have frequently traveled between Brazil and Nigeria since the second half of 19th century – Matory showed how they collaborated with Lagosian intellectuals to bring about a “transnational genesis of Yoruba” (Matory 1999b). Thus, what is often evoked by scholars and practitioners today as a Yoruba traditional religion is not in fact a “pure” and continuous memory of a timeless and spaceless Africa, but rather a selective, and even conflictive, process of strategic incorporation of religious sources, images, and practices in different localities and periods in the Atlantic world (Matory 1999a).

The still relevant notion of the survival of African cultures in the Americas could accordingly be better understood by emphasizing the often uneven aspects of dialogue between actors and practices. Survival needs to be situated between affirmation and transformation and should rather be seen as a process of rediscovering and (re-)inventing (Matory 2006). The contributions of Palmié, Ayoh’Omidire, and Rauhut empirically support this insight that different strategies of identification and belonging cannot be traced back to Africa and that African practices cannot be conceived solely as the origin and lone past of Afro-American cultures. These practices instead constitute continuous and important sources of identification in the present. With his analytical metaphor of dialogue, Matory thus encourages us to focus on the people themselves – on their experiences and their strategic agency in the cultural reproduction and the making of a history which is shaped by patterns of interconnectivity across the Atlantic world.

In this volume, Matory further elaborates on the notion of dialogue as not being of a purely or mainly linguistic character (a notion developed by Bakhtin), but instead as also having economic, political, literary, religious, and musical dimensions. He contends that coeval interlocutors shape dialogue, creating multiple sets of relationships through time, a process that is essential for the formation of a diasporic consciousness. Dialogues can have several layers and the authors participating in this volume often analyze dialogues in a broad sense at a micro level in order to assess the relation of power between the interlocutors, the duration of dialogues, and their wider societal implications. They address dialogues in the context of highly uneven power relations, for instance in situations relating to the “first contact” between indigenous people in the Caribbean and European colonizers (Rinke) or the legacies of colonial/racialized hegemonic values of the US and Europe in the Dominican Republic (Horn) or regarding

attempts to confront “violent Atlantic modernity” in colonial Cuba by interconnecting world views taken from ancient Abyssinia, Egypt, and Rome (Palmié).

Other contributors highlight those dialogues initiated in urban spaces as points of transit and migration (Smith, Childers), sites of political networks (Timm), and places of attraction for artists and intellectuals (Kummels, Müller). The concept of a dialogue is further applied in order to emphasize the transcultural dimensions of interactions within the Atlantic world in the fields of education (Dorsch), music (Hansing, Kummels), literature (Müller), and religion (Ayoh’Omidire, Rauhut, Rossbach de Olmos). This empirical research from a micro-perspective on actors and their practices of transatlantic and particularly Afro-Atlantic live dialogue can be systematically linked to macro-level conceptions of the modern/colonial world system. In a world of persistent social inequalities and power asymmetries, particular with regard to access to resources, information and knowledge, dialogue is usually not on equal footing and often reflects the intractable legacies of violent enslavement, exploitation, and colonial-based racial hierarchies that continue to shape global power relations today. By taking this dimension into account, we are able to gain a more integral understanding of how people act in the face of asymmetries and conflicts of dialogues that constitute the Transatlantic Caribbean.

Memory: In Dialogue with the Past

Centuries of colonialism, slavery, racism, sharp class divisions, and underdevelopment still cast their shadow on the Caribbean. To be sure, the relatively young nation-states are still in the process of negotiating their interpretations of the past and determining the way forward, politically, economically, and socially. For hundreds of years, colonizers rigorously imposed what should be remembered as a part of history. According to their version children in the Caribbean were taught to see colonialism as a step towards “civilization” and to view colonizers as heroes. Though people in the Caribbean hence felt as though they formed part of an empire, they were still denied even the most basic rights. Nation-states tend to develop national myths and legacies centered on well-known dates and widely accepted watershed events for the purpose of creating a common past that legitimizes the unified nation and its current borders (Hobsbawm/Ranger 1983). However, in the post-independence societies of the Caribbean, new spaces have opened up for reinterpreting history and creating new memories. History is thus increasingly being written from the perspective of the

region in a way that puts the spotlight on actors whose voices were silenced in colonial and early post-colonial narratives.

Many contributions in this volume emphasize the importance of reflecting on processes of memory and memorialization. They shift our attention to the silences in historiography and remind us that hegemony and power relations determine which histories are told. Michel-Rolph Trouillot has prominently argued that not all silences are equal (Trouillot 1995). The tremendous influence of European colonization and Western science has not only led to Eurocentric interpretations of world history, but privileged, assumingly “European-Western” ideas and ideals, while Africa and African practices, or the prevailing structures of racism and colonial dominance, as well as the resistance against them, are, as Horn argues, often absent in the dominant narratives of the past. In contrast, the practitioners of Yoruba-Atlantic religions highlighted by Matory, Palmié, Ayoh’Omidire, and Rauhut reevaluate African traditions as legitimate sources for their religious practices. Hansing, furthermore, shows how not only Jamaican Rastafarian music and culture, but also the alternative interpretation of history is appealing to young black Cubans today. Rastafarian beliefs offer a different worldview and perspective on colonialism and racism in the Caribbean, from which many black people still suffer in socialist Cuba. Music and dance themselves are important media for transmitting embodied knowledge and creating memory, as revealed by the performances which Caribbean artists produced in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s. Kummels’ contribution demonstrates how diasporic Caribbeanness is formulated as an alternative narrative on the stages and dance floors of cabarets, night clubs, music halls, and *boîtes*, as well as on venues of academic debate.

Neither individual nor collective memory is static. The meaning and interpretation of historical events change over time and are influenced by our perspective today. Stefan Rinke, for instance, reassesses the way we have been taught to think about the very first encounter between Columbus and the indigenous societies in the Caribbean on the basis of novel insights about the latter’s perspective. Childers’ contribution reveals the voices of the migrants from the French overseas territories that contradict the negative, one-dimensional appraisal of French immigration policies by political activists and scholars alike. In a similar manner, Dorsch’s focus on the experience of students that participated in the regulated student exchange programs between Cuba and African nation states shows that personal experience and memory can differ dramatically from institutionalized perceptions of the same processes. Memory, we are again reminded, is always dependent on who does the remembering and at what specific point

in time. This is also manifest in Timm's contribution. She shows that national narratives in postcolonial Jamaica often emphasize the role of the two main political parties in the run-up to independence. Such narratives, however, overshadow the transnational roots of nationalist thinking in the Jamaican community in New York and the important influence of the emigrants on the island's political developments. By drawing our attention to the less prominent inner-Caribbean dynamics and exchanges, Smith, too, reminds us of the importance of looking at histories beyond the dominant narratives of watershed events like the Haitian Revolution, the labor rebellions in Jamaica in 1938, or the Cuban Revolution. His contribution examines migration processes between Jamaica and Haiti in the 19th century, which so far have been given little consideration due to a focus on 20th century migration, political turmoil, and environmental catastrophes.

The contributions to this volume developed out of a conference that took place in July 2012 at the Institute for Latin American Studies at Freie Universität Berlin called "Crossroads of the World: Transatlantic Interrelations in the Caribbean." Scholars from different disciplines and the three circum-Atlantic continents engaged in a fruitful dialogue about migration and processes of exchange, memory, and memorialization in the context of cutting-edge Caribbean research. Interestingly, the initial puzzlement of Caribbeanists coming together in Berlin was expressed several times during the congress. The question "What on earth does Berlin have to do with the Caribbean?" soon became a sort of running gag that was repeatedly referenced by participants, as at one of our evening get-togethers in a Jamaican restaurant in Berlin-Kreuzberg. Nonetheless, the connection was already more than obvious by that point and it was not nearly as farfetched as some had initially thought. The participants were literally in the process of experiencing Berlin as a meeting ground for Caribbeanists, where transatlantic connections from diverse parts of the world were being investigated from different institutional settings and once nationally rooted research traditions. Anthropologists and historians, as well as practitioners of Cuban Santería living in Berlin and others, came into dialogue in this city, though not for the first time.²

2 Research on the Caribbean in a transatlantic dimension has some tradition in Germany as is exemplified by the regular work and publications of the German Anthropological Society's (DGV) regional group "Afroamerika" with its focus on African diasporas, including those of a Transatlantic Caribbean. One meeting of this group resulted in a more intensive exchange with Stephan Palmié, the results of which were published in the volume *Afroatlantische Allianzen* edited by Heike Drotbohm and Ingrid Kummels in 2011. As an outcome of these academ-

Not only were we able to enter into a productive dialogue about the Transatlantic Caribbean as scholars with distinct points of departure, but it also became clear that many of us examined our research questions by tracing multi-directional flows of histories, people, ideas, and practices. This precise approach can be understood by applying the trope of dialogue, for as the following contributions united in this volume demonstrate, it entails an effort to understand reciprocal processes of exchange that characterize the Caribbean region in its transatlantic dimension.

Outline of the book's contributions

James Lorand Matory opens the discussion with a reflection on the multidirectional exchange processes between Africa, Europe, and the Americas and critically engages with prominent metaphors of African diaspora cultural history. Starting with his own biographic approach to Africa as an African-American, Matory reconstructs the work of 20th century scholars that were academically and politically involved in searching for the African roots of American culture. He first distances himself from Herskovits' metaphor of (African) survivals (1941), with its notion of Africa as the (unchangeable) past of the American present. Moreover, he criticizes the metaphor of creolization (Mintz/Price 1976) which he contends failed to recognize the particular actors, sites, and moments that were actively engaged in the creative transformation of cultures on both sides of the Atlantic. Matory finally contrasts the notion of memory as it is used by Bastide (1955) and his successors and encourages us to instead focus more on the processual character of commemoration – the way people in the Americas selectively remember aspects of African cultural practices in an endless struggle over the meaning and usage of gestures, words, and memories. Based on an impressive range of empirical research on the Yoruba religions in West Africa, US, Brazil, and the Caribbean, Matory introduces the metaphor of an “Afro-Atlantic Live Dialogue” in order to trace the longstanding interweaving of connections between people, ideas, practices, publications, and commerce around the Yoruba religions that circulated in

ic dialogues, James Lorand Matory decided to stay with an Alexander von Humboldt Research Award at Freie Universität Berlin's Institute for Latin American Studies during the entire year of 2014. The Caribbeans' transatlantic circuits in literary production, arts and knowledge transfer have also been studied by Germany-based Caribbeanists such as Fleischmann (1984; 2007); Ineke Phaf-Rheinberger (2011); Bandau/Zapata Galindo (2011).

the Atlantic world. Genealogies of cultural reproduction are strategically constructed in a context beyond that goes beyond nation and region. Matory sharpens our understanding of the conflictive dynamics in the negotiation of African tradition in the Americas, which are not to be viewed as one-dimensional legacies of the past, but rather as actively and continuously renewed practices in different periods and locations in the Atlantic world.

The question of how to broaden scholarship on Atlantic exchange processes is also a key theme in **Stephan Palmié's** contribution. In taking up the theoretical engagement with Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic and the notion of countermodernity, Palmié reconsiders his own approach to Afro-Cuban traditions. Building on central impulses from C.L.R. James, Eric Williams, Aimee Césaire, Fernando Ortiz, and Sidney Mintz, Palmié foregrounds the dark and violent side of "Atlantic modernity", which, as Gilroy has already stated, is inextricably intertwined with "part of the ethical and intellectual history of the West as a whole" (Gilroy 1993: 49). He focuses on José Antonio Aponte, a leader of an Afro-Cuban *cabildo*,³ who organized an insurrection against the Spanish colonial administration in 1812. Palmié recognizes him as a subaltern personality who was "railing against a violent Atlantic modernity [...] by fusing into a counterhegemonic vision of [...] Western learning available to him." He indicates the lessons that can be derived from such figures, histories, and struggles for understanding the Black Atlantic, while demonstrating that "modernity" is by no means opposed to "tradition" and Africa is much more than an objectified Western projection of a "celebration of origin." In this sense, Palmié criticizes any essentialist use of the Black Atlantic as a synonym for black or African people or the African diaspora in genealogical and racial terms, privileging instead an epistemology that traces routes of intercontinental movement and exchange. He finally calls for more scholarship that expands the Black Atlantic to include other regions, languages, and sites in empirical research and consequently critically engages with it in its theoretical and epistemological implications.

Hauke Dorsch focuses on the transatlantic trajectories and biographies of Mozambican students who studied in Cuba with the internationalist educational exchange program offered by the island's socialist government in the 1970s and 1980s to allied African countries. The specific experiences of students allow for insights into unexpected outcomes in these south-

3 *Cabildos de nación* were fraternal associations in the Spanish colonies. During the 18th and 19th century enslaved and free Africans in Cuba relied on them as their main institution of social bonding.

south alliances. Cuba developed policies for a global expansion by imagining itself to be the spearhead of an Internationalist “Red Atlantic”, a term coined by Markus Rediker and further elaborated on by Dorsch to denote a particular transatlantic connection within the framework of the Black Atlantic. This collaboration was designed as a measure to free “third-world countries” from neocolonial dependence on the north, mainly the US and Europe. Yet, as the example of Miguel shows, not all of the students in this program willingly followed the institutionalized paths foreseen by the Cuban and Mozambican state officials, specifically by duly returning to their respective homes as expatriates and integrating into the workforce of their countries of origin after having completed their studies. Dorsch uncovers multiple examples of Mozambican students successfully developing their own strategies of internationalization, such as during their maritime voyage to Cuba, or when attending the schools built for them on Isla de la Juventud in Southern Cuba, or when unexpectedly migrating to third countries due to marriage. These experiences resulted in divergent perceptions and individual actions which likewise compose the “Red Atlantic.” Dorsch’s approach allows him to skillfully read against the grain of the official narrative of the internationalist and anti-imperialist south-south collaboration by highlighting alternative circumventions of what was a “regulated” institutionalized exchange

Stefan Rinke approaches the “Transatlantic Caribbean” by reassessing the encounter between Columbus and the indigenous population in the Americas during his search for a passage to India. While the year 1492 is usually perceived as a turning point in world history, or seen as the beginning of the modern era, Rinke draws our attention to the often neglected perspective of the inhabitants of the islands in the Caribbean, for whom the event was also a major turning point. On the basis of new insights from archaeological as well as ethno-historical research, Rinke interprets the indigenous people as active persons whose actions were informed by their worldview, culture, and ritual practices. Thus, rather than being passive victims, as which they were often portrayed, they were in fact in dialogue with the European colonizers and contributed to shaping the course of events. Rinke further reminds us that Columbus’ arrival in the Caribbean came in the wake of other fundamental changes, including altered perceptions of geography and spatiality resulting from voyages like Vasco da Gama’s and the revolution in print media, which allowed Columbus to promote his expeditions as the “discovery” of the New World. These developments go a long way toward explaining why it is Columbus’ sojourn that is remembered as the “discovery” of the Americas, and not the

earlier journeys of the Vikings. In light of the dramatic upheavals in Caribbean societies after centuries of colonialism, the cruelty of slavery, and the massive demographic changes resulting from the involuntary settlement of millions of enslaved Africans, the “Day of Guanahani” deserves to be seen as a turning point that not only forever changed and shaped the Caribbean region, but also laid the foundation for the transatlantic interrelations that initiated a truly global experience affecting other regions as well.

Maja Horn’s examination of Dominican modernity likewise shows how much hegemonic Western discourses have influenced our perception of events and their consequences. She offers critical reflections on the country’s postcolonial path and the specific theoretical contribution for Latin American critical thought and Atlantic modernity deriving from this experience. Horn argues that while scholars usually choose to study the prominent case of Haiti in relation to Western modernity and its heroic historiography of resistance and anti-colonial struggle (in 1804, Haiti became the first independent republic in the Americas after an insurrection of enslaved people), the particular postcolonial history of its neighbor-state Dominican Republic has largely been overlooked or only perceived in opposition to Haiti. Yet, the Dominican experience demonstrates a very particular insertion into modernity, which has been strongly influenced by European and US imperialism and Western political thought. Horn reconstructs how national racial discourses of Anti-Haitianism during the dictatorships of Trujillo (1930-61) and under its successor Balaguer (1966-78; 1986-96) were shaped by the geostrategic racial project and the political vocabulary of US imperialism in the first half of the 20th century. She emphasizes how Trujillo strategically connected the project of Dominican modernity to “enlightened” Western modernity by employing anti-Haitian sentiments that pointed to Haiti’s alleged “savagery” and “backwardness.” At the same time, he mobilized racial thoughts of white supremacy – thoughts which continue to be difficult to break away from. To understand Caribbean political culture and theory, Horn urges that we have to consider how it is interrelated with the two sides of Western modernity (one “dark,” one “enlightened”), US imperialism, legacies of European colonial powers, racism, and divergent narratives of revolution and modernity.

By centering on the personal experiences of migrants arriving in France from French overseas departments and territories, **Kristen S. Childers** is able to elaborate on this migration within the context of colonialism and postcolonial racial discrimination. She offers a novel interpretation of France’s policy of institutionalized migration in the 1960s, whereby it attempted to orchestrate migration processes through the newly established

Office of Migration from the Overseas Departments (BUMIDOM) from Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Réunion in response to the country's need for cheap labor. Scholars as well as activists lobbying for the independence and separation of the Antilles have mainly portrayed this national migration institution as an example of the exploitation of the formerly colonized and an expression of the persistence of racism in France that, moreover, helped fuel growing independence movements among Antilleans on both sides of the Atlantic. Aimé Césaire, for instance, criticized these policies as “genocide by substitution.” The high expectations created by BUMIDOM's advertising of their programs, which promised great employment opportunities, were indeed in conflict with the harsh domestic reality of racist discrimination and the placement of migrants in low-paid jobs. However, based on her own collected oral accounts, Childers argues that many immigrants emphasize in retrospect the advantages of the new economic and personal opportunities which their journey over the Atlantic nevertheless provided. This holds especially true for women, who often faced bleak prospects in the Caribbean and for whom a new life in France offered a chance for economic and social independence. In another interesting twist, Childers contrasts the experience of Antillean migrants in France with the often deplorable situation of Haitian immigrants in the Antilles, who more often experienced xenophobia and discrimination from Antilleans rather than signs of solidarity.

Ingrid Kummels analyzes how internationally mobile artists from the Caribbean have been engaged in globalizing and popularizing music and dance genres from the Caribbean in the 1920s and 1930s, a period commonly known as the Jazz Age. Applying Matory's concept of dialogue in order to analyze the economic, political, literary, and musical dimensions of interactions within the Atlantic world, Kummels focuses in particular on Caribbean musicians, singers, writers, and artists who initiated such dialogues and thereby actively encouraged processes of appropriation of Caribbean cultures both in their country of origin and their diasporic setting. Highlighting Paris as a center for Afro-(Latin) American music, she reconstructs how Afro-Caribbean and US African-American artists and intellectuals encountered in Paris the stereotyped fascination of European intellectuals for *art nègre*, perceived in terms of Eurocentric primitivism. Josephine Baker's performance of the “Danse des Sauvages” as a so called “authentic African” expression was a field of debate which provoked interventions from Antillean intellectuals like the Martiniquan Jane Nardal. Kummels next analyzes dialogues in which Antillean actors were able to influence the dynamics of the then very modern fascination with exoticism

and primitivism for their own ends. She also draws her insights here from her own fieldwork on the Cuban female Son septet Anacaona, who performed in Paris in 1938. Kummels shows how these dialogues were the sites for diverse formulations of diasporic Caribbeanness, ranging from gendered versions such as Anacaona (a female Taino political leader during the time of Columbus) and reconceptualizations of the national character of music and dance to more encompassing horizons of identity such as black *latinité* – the simultaneous love for Latin America and Africa.

Katrin Hansing also examines music and culture as vehicles for border-crossing exchange and turns her attention to young black Cubans who currently embrace Jamaican Rastafarian culture. By studying the spread of Rastafari and Rastafari-influenced cultural expressions in Cuba, Hansing offers insight into a local reinterpretation of this globalized cultural and spiritual movement that originated in Jamaica in the 1930s. She shows how Rastafarian culture and messages were introduced and disseminated predominantly through music, images, and other cultural forms, and how they appeal in particular to the disadvantaged and disillusioned young people suffering from racism and a lack of economic opportunities in Cuba. Based on the expressions of this group collected during fieldwork done in Havana, Hansing demonstrates how they find meaningful and inspiring messages in the ideas of black empowerment advocated by Rastafarians in order to confront a social reality of persistent racism in Cuba – a reality that is often silenced in the official ideal of a socialist society based on racial equality. She further describes the ease with which the protagonists combine elements of Rastafarian spirituality with elements of Afro-Cuban religion Santería, one of the most prominent religions in Cuba based on West African Yoruba traditions and influences from spiritism and Catholicism. Hansing's contribution vividly brings to light the growing popularity of Rastafari in Cuba, which reminds us of the continuing need to reevaluate social constructions and representations of “blackness” and the different sources and origins of African heritage in Cuban society today.

Claudia Raubut analyzes the search for African traditions and their religious appropriation in Cuba as a relevant practice to counter the colonially based racist perception of African-based religions in the Americas. Based on extensive fieldwork in religious settings in Havana, she focuses on a religious project in Havana led by *babalao* (priest) Víctor Betancourt, who claims in particular to reform Cuban Santería by restoring “lost African rituals.” These practices are usually described in other Afro-Atlantic religions as “re-Africanization,” which connotes a broader complex of appropriation of “African-style” rituals and cosmologies in the Americas by

simultaneously eliminating Christian influences. In the Cuban example, however, Rauhut shows that Betancourt's "reform project" of Santería is by no means a unidirectional adoption of timeless and spaceless "West-African versions" of the Yoruba religion. It rather constitutes a mutual, transatlantic ritual exchange, which its leader therefore conceptualizes as a "restoration of religion" between practitioners from Cuba, the Caribbean, Latin America, the US and Nigeria on a level playing ground. Rauhut interprets the particular positioning of Betancourt as the self-assertion of a very Cuban conception of this religion that is shared by many practitioners. Betancourt claims exclusive expertise of Cuban rituals within the global emergence of what has recently been proclaimed as "Yoruba world religion." Rauhut furthermore interprets this current religious agency as a way for actors to "re-make" and "re-write" Afro-Cuban ethnography, which has suffered from misrepresentations for some time due to the legacy of colonial racist values. Rauhut finally concludes that such micro-perspective empirical studies of the different trans-local variants of the "re-Africanization" in Afro-Atlantic religions enlarge our understanding of what it means to be Yoruba from an actor's perspective in diverse sites of the Atlantic world.

Félix Ayoh'Omidire examines a further example of the global spread and recreation of Yoruba religions. Focusing on the little-researched case of Venezuela, he proposes that the country needs to be considered part of the religious historiography of the "Yoruba Atlantic Diaspora." This term was introduced by Falola and Childs in 2004 and usually pertains to countries with large populations of African descendants, like Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, or Trinidad and Tobago. In Venezuela, Ayoh'Omidire argues, factors such as its proximity to those countries as well as recent political and economic developments have led to the emergence of a Yorubanized identity construction. This practice was initiated with the arrival of Cuban Santería and mediated since the 1960s by the immigration of Cubans who once lived in the USA or Puerto Rico to Venezuela. Omidire describes how Santería was first transformed in the 1980s through a process of "Venezuelarization" and then focuses on more recent developments and actors who engage in the re-Yorubanization of Santería. He defines re-Yorubanization as a process of engagement with "direct sources" of the Yoruba religion and the Yoruba people from Africa. As a direct consequence, transatlantic religious networks of Yoruba religion which connect people from Nigeria, Cuba, Venezuela, the USA, Trinidad and Tobago, and Colombia have continued to grow and to expand. These networks, however, are sometimes accompanied by conflicts and rivalries between the followers of the Cuban-style tradition

and those of a more Yoruba-African tradition. Language barriers between Yoruba, English, and Spanish, as well as divergent interpretations between different generations of worshipers may contribute to this opposition. Ayoh'Omidire emphasizes that the growing Yoruba practice in Venezuela and its reciprocal influence on practitioners from Africa and Cuba is an example for what Matory calls "Afro-Atlantic Life Dialogue." He furthermore advocates including the concept of a "Yoruba Atlantic" as a complement to the existing one of a Black Atlantic in order to grasp these complex dynamics.

If Venezuela seems to be a somewhat surprising location within what might be termed the Transatlantic Caribbean, the city of Berlin might initially appear to be even more unlikely as the site of **Lioba Rossbach de Olmos'** study on the Santería religion. Rossbach de Olmos examines the history and conditions of Santería practice in Germany, including the specific experience of the former German Socialist Democratic Republic and within the context of reunited Germany after 1989. She reconstructs the religious biographies of people from different national, regional, and religious backgrounds, highlighting the example of the German Santero Mark Bauch. Bauch considers himself to have always been a spiritual person and at first started practicing Buddhism. In 2009, he was initiated into Santería by a Berlin-based Cuban dancer and practitioner of Santería and by a Venezuelan Santera also living in Berlin, who combines practices of Cuban Santería and the Venezuelan Maria Lionza religion. Inspired by various religious influences over the years, Bauch finally combined and embraced distinct practices of Buddhism, Cuban Santería, and the Venezuelan Maria Lionza religion. Rossbach de Olmos thus shows that the biographies of priests give evidence of transatlantic movement between the US, Cuba, Germany, Venezuela, and Nigeria. Analogous to the Caribbean, which is often conceived as a laboratory of cultural transformation, she argues that Berlin has recently become an important site for the Caribbean diaspora. The German capital is a place where new religious and cultural experiments are being conducted. Using the theoretical frame of transculturality (referring to German philosopher Welsch, 1999), Rossbach de Olmos suggests that when we analyze cultural and religious mixtures, we should not regard them not as an exception, but rather as the norm.

Cultural transfers are also at the center of **Gesine Müller's** contribution. Her comparison of the literary production of the former French and Spanish colonies in the Caribbean reveals a complex web of exchange processes between what are often categorized as centers and peripheries. By showing how French literature influenced writers in the Spanish Em-

pire, Müller's examination illustrates how literary ideas transcended classic imperial boundaries. Such cultural flows are clearly visible in the outcomes of literary production, though it is often difficult to trace the specific interaction that inspired other types of cultural production. Müller's approach foregrounds authors and writers and their political, journalistic, ethnographic, and historiographic activities. These actors absorbed cultural and philosophical trends in their travels from different countries and in different languages, and they were also widely read. Above all, the metropolitan centers have played a special role in these processes of exchange. This perspective cautions us against a simplistic, one-dimensional view of the interaction between one group of thinkers in the former colonial "motherlands" and another group in the former colonies. It instead highlights the agency of the writers in the former colonies who took their inspiration from the cultural and literary production of several countries. Especially in regard to the movement for abolition, Müller shows how critical ideas were influenced to a large degree by exchange, not a unidirectional flow of thoughts. Her comparison further underscores how the capacity of France to absorb contributions from the colonies significantly strengthened the French Empire. The weaker cohesive power of Spain encouraged writers from former Spanish colonies to interact with other centers of literary production and critical thought in France, Great Britain, and the US.

In her empirically based analysis of the emergence of anticolonial nationalism in Jamaica, **Birte Timm** also demonstrates how important travel and migration experiences were in the development of new ideas and political activism in Jamaica. By tracing the routes and experiences of Jamaican emigrants and their encounters with African-Americans, Africans, and immigrants from other colonies in Harlem in the 1920s and 1930s, and by also investigating their exposure to radical black-nationalist thought, as well as socialist and anti-colonial positions, Timm uncovers forgotten transnational roots of the decolonization movement in Jamaica. The disappointment resulting from many activists' experiences with both the black-nationalist and socialist movements and their futile efforts to merge race and class approaches was fertile soil for the seeds of Jamaican nationalism planted by Jamaican emigrant W. Adolphe Roberts. He had been inspired by Latin American freedom struggles and Bolivarian concepts of Pan-Americanism and approached the Jamaicans in Harlem. The anti-colonial pressure group that evolved became the spearhead of anti-colonial thought and activism in Jamaica and significantly influenced the development of local politics. Timm shows that the migration experiences led to a more outspoken form of radical anti-colonialism that was not only

unprecedented on the island, but was also met with skepticism and reluctance. While current political parties have each tried to rewrite history in their own self-serving way, Timm's study on the Jamaica Progressive League follows the routes of the activists and their various intellectual influences and ultimately proves the influence of migration and metropolitan experiences in the development of anti-colonial nationalism in Jamaica.

Matthew Smith reminds us the importance of the often-neglected topic of migration within the Caribbean. Reflecting on why these histories have not been memorialized, he argues with Trouillot that collective memory is always selective and purposeful. It thus predetermines which narratives of the past are integrated into the historical canon, whereby they are usually ones that support and legitimize the self-image of the current nation state. Smith's empirical insight into the circuits of migration between Haiti and Jamaica in the 19th century reveals histories that have been overshadowed by national narratives and a strong research bias on 20th century migration. Migration in the 19th century was largely political, however, and created important networks spanning between Jamaica and Haiti that heavily influenced politics in Haiti and still hold sway in the present. Smith describes a lively transnational space that offered room for maneuvering, especially for political exiles, and the conspiring of rebellions and counter-rebellions. It is noteworthy that nearly all presidents have been exiled during their careers. Smith highlights the agency of these migrants and shows that the networks they created were instrumental in providing opportunities for migration and (legal and illegal) commercial exchange, familial connections and intermarriage, especially in the second generation. Framing these insights in terms of Foucault's concept of "counter-memories," Smith joins other authors in this volume in urging researchers to shift their focus on less prominent histories of mobility and processes of transfer in order to bring to light the hidden histories that are often overshadowed by powerful master narratives.

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