

Call for Papers

Deadline February 10, 2012

Crossroads of the World Transatlantic Interrelations in the Caribbean

International Conference at the Institute for Latin American Studies, Free University of Berlin

Convenors: Ingrid Kummels, Stefan Rinke, Claudia Rauhut, Birte Timm

July 2 and 3, 2012

The **Institute for Latin American Studies** of the **Free University of Berlin** is pleased to invite proposals for presentation at this interdisciplinary conference. The primary goal is to assess current trends and encourage new approaches in the research on the Caribbean from anthropology, history, sociology, political science, literature and other disciplines. The conference intends to provide a platform for exchanges between junior and senior scholars who work on the Greater Caribbean, understood as a region whose diaspora dimensions extend beyond the Caribbean islands and adjacent continental coasts. The confirmed keynote speakers are J. Lorand Matory (Duke University) and Matthew J. Smith (University of the West Indies, Mona).

As a highly globalized region which is tremendously shaped by multiple paths of migration since European colonization in the 15th century and the transatlantic slave trade, the Caribbean is often described as a paradigm or master symbol of “modernity” and globalization. A myriad of different cultures, languages, religions, ideas and practices have not only influenced and formed the Caribbean, but the respective Caribbean dynamics, in return, have profoundly reshaped other parts of the world. However, not all of the multiple interrelations between the Caribbean, North and South America, Africa, Europe and Asia have received equal attention or have been viewed from a historical perspective. The transatlantic networks of a range of actors such as religious mediators, labor migrants, traveling entertainers and other specialized professionals as well as political ideologues such as transnationally active radical nationalists still remain to be explored. Their “Live Dialogue” (J. Lorand Matory) – their long-term weaving of connections through travel back and forth over the Atlantic – may have contributed in specific ways to shape daily culture and religious practices, social movements as well as national and transnational political images that refer to blackness, indigenoussness or Creole identities. The multiple interrelations between the Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia are therefore not just viewed as legacies of the past, but as actively and continuously renewed practices in colonial and post-colonial contexts.

Because of its particular historical experiences, its diverse and multi-ethnic societies, the Caribbean region offers a field of research ‘par excellence’ for studying transatlantic and transpacific interrelations concerning culture, religion, politics, ideologies and social movements. As part of its theoretical framework, the conference particularly focuses on “live dialogues” that shape the transatlantic interrelations between different actors, institutions, social practices and power relations in Caribbean configurations and their diaspora. Thus, we aim to assess the value of a transatlantic approach towards the Caribbean, to analyze its role in the study of the Americas and to explore future directions for research.

We are particularly interested in empirically based approaches on transatlantic movements, cultural practices and political images and arenas where long-term processes of identity-building take place, ranging for instance from identification with a regional Caribbean identity, insular or national, to transatlantic and diasporic movements.

Contributions are especially welcome but not restricted to the following panels:

Historical Formation of “the Caribbean”

- Power, Agency and Gender in Slavery, Colonialism, Post-Emancipation
- Actors and Practices of Decolonization and Nation-Building
- Transatlantic Interrelations in the 20th Century: Politics, Ideologies, Culture, Social Movements
- Discourses of Territorial Identification – Regional, Insular, National, Transnational, and Transatlantic

Weaving Identities and Belongings

- The Self and the Other in Blackness, Africanness, Indigenusness, Creole Identities
- Re-Thinking the Black Atlantic, African Diaspora and Diaspora Horizons
- The Intersectionality of Gender, Race, Class, Ethnicity, Sexuality, Inequality

Migration, Diaspora and Cultural Transfers

- Roots and Routes of Culture: The Crossing of European, African, Asian, North and Latin American Influences
- Global Tourism and Consumerism with regard to Food, Music, Dance, Sport, Art and Cinema
- Transatlantic Networks – Couplehood, Family, Friendship and Labor
- Caribbean Diasporas, Transatlantic Mobility and Dynamics of Returning Home

Religion and Transatlantic Linkages

- Transatlantic Religious Practices, Biographies, Networks, Gender Dynamics
- Interrelations of Religious Institutions, Social Policies and International Politics
- Mediators of Knowledge Production, Transfer and Circulation
- Syncretism/Anti-Syncretism, Authenticity and Purity

The deadline for submissions is February 10, 2012. Please send proposals (300 words) and other inquiries to Claudia Rauhut (rauhut@zedat.fu-berlin.de) and Birte Timm (Birte.Timm@fu-berlin.de)

In order to facilitate discussions between all participants, the conference language will be English.