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Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Atlantic Studies: Global Currents

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjas20>

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Ananya Jahanara Kabir

Published online: 30 Jan 2014.

To cite this article: Ananya Jahanara Kabir (2014) Oceans, cities, islands: sites and routes of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures, *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents*, 11:1, 106-124, DOI: [10.1080/14788810.2014.869010](https://doi.org/10.1080/14788810.2014.869010)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14788810.2014.869010>

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Oceans, cities, islands: sites and routes of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures

Ananya Jahanara Kabir*

Since at least New York's Jazz Age, people the world over have filled urban social spaces (dance halls, dance clubs, the dance floor) to enjoy themselves through partner dances that evolved from the fusion of African-derived percussive rhythms and body movements on the one hand, and European melodies, instruments, and courtly dance styles on the other. These dances originated through the colonization of Africa, the forced displacement of African peoples, their enslavement on plantations throughout the Americas and the Caribbean. Despite their traumatic origins, they have become synonymous with the kinetic, somatic, pleasurable dimensions of urban modernity. What can this paradox reveal about people who enjoy dancing to these rhythms, including those with no connection to "Africa"? What is the relationship between the transoceanic routes that first brought these rhythms from Africa to the Americas, and the transnational webs that have ensured their global popularity? Can we excavate a history that connects the ship, the jet engine, and the beats of the drum? Can rhythm help bridge the histories of the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans, especially given that similar rhythm cultures evolved in the Indian Ocean space through its own long histories of migrating and displaced peoples? By focusing on the sites and routes involved in the propagation of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures from the plantation to the dance floor, this essay will argue that the unpredictable alliances forged thereby between bodies, rhythms, and places update both the Black Atlantic paradigm dominant in thinking about music and dance, and return pleasure and the body to studies of globalization.

Keywords: Afro-diasporic populations; music; social dance; percussion; Black Atlantic; Indian Ocean; transcolonial connections; transoceanic connections; transnationalism; modernity

Mambo del amor— música moderna

Alegra las penas, ritmo retozón

The mambo of love: a modern music

It turns sorrows into joys, [this] playful rhythm

Celia Cruz y La Sonora Matancera,

"Mambo del amor," 1951

In 1951, a young Afro-Cuban woman from Havana sang of the exhilarations of the modern music, Mambo, and the transformative power of its "playful rhythm." Her band,

*Email: ananya.kabir@kcl.ac.uk

La Sonora Matancera, took its name from the town of Matanzas, birthplace of the Afro-Cuban music and dance style rumba. Like the rumba and the mambo, Cruz's early career, too, developed in a trans-American circuit. After the Cuban Revolution, she lived in the USA in exile – again, a fact reflected in the Afro-Cuban rhythms “exiled” in New York that during the 1970s developed into the music and dance style “salsa.” Decades later, “the playful rhythms” made famous by Cruz, Latin music's greatest diva, now resound worldwide: as salsa, danced to in nightclubs, studios, and dance festivals; as zumba, a gymnasium-based dance fitness regime; and as other emergent and revived dance forms, from Swing Era jazz dances like the lindy hop to today's Angolan kizomba.

These forms of moving socially, in time to music, are as diverse as are the people dancing them and the sites in which they are danced, but what they have in common are the rhythms and movement repertoires of the Black Atlantic. Through two world wars and one cold war, socialism's demise and capitalism's mutations, and through the transnational cultural flows of the globalizing world, these forms of *música moderna* and their “playful,” transformative rhythms have exerted a seductive power. They unite people claiming disparate histories, languages, religious, and class affiliations – often with no connection to Africa – in their desire to dance. What is the source of this power, and what can it reveal about the modernity it so boldly claims a stake in as well as about the people who use these rhythms for leisure and self-fashioning? What is the relationship between the transoceanic routes that first brought these rhythms from Africa to the Americas, particularly the islands of the Caribbean and the transnational webs that have ensured their global popularity as forms of collective pleasure to be found in cities worldwide? Can we excavate a history that connects the ship, the jet engine, and the beats of the drum?

Africans teaching South-East Asians salsa in Bangkok; cities in Eastern Europe fervently embracing salsa and kizomba; French-Algerian musicians in Marseille creating the most popular songs for zumba: these are just some of the alliances, unpredicted by Postcolonial Theory and seemingly unaffected by religious and ethnic identity politics, that are nevertheless thriving in the contemporary world. As with other forms of popular music and dance, the transnationalization of Afro-diasporic rhythms showcases the successes of cultural communication consequent upon ordinary people enjoying themselves in social spaces forged through shared kinetic pleasures, in the process often stepping beyond inherited prejudices and restrictions. But while urging a radical shift from the study of how people *don't* affiliate with each other (multiculturalism's “problems”), to ways in which they *do* (multiculturalism's everyday practice), the rhythm cultures that I term “Afro-diasporic” also lead us to complex histories underlying their formation and dispersal, as well as to the deep relationships they inscribe between modernity and the moving body.

Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures enable us to historicize the ways in which demotic, ephemeral yet powerful pleasures have bestowed a particular idiom of collective self-expression on the modern subject. By focusing on the sites and routes involved in the propagation of Afro-diasporic music, dance and percussive traditions, from the plantation to *la pista* (the dance floor), we can plot how rhythms from Africa to the New World traveled and transformed themselves, places, and peoples. As demonstrated by my opening example of Celia Cruz's career as it developed between Cuba and the USA – taking in along the way Havana, Matanzas, Mexico City, New York, and Miami – cities, islands, and oceans furnish sites as well as routes for the traffic between trauma and pleasure. In the process, the body's relationship to *alegría* (joy) is returned to studies of

globalization,¹ which, as I demonstrate later in this essay, have tended to ignore pleasure and the body altogether. At the same time, the unpredictable alliances forged thereby between bodies, rhythms, and places help us update both the Black Atlantic paradigm dominant in thinking about music and dance, not least by looking to forge conceptual and historical connections with the Indian Ocean world. These connections in turn help us consolidate the associations of modernity, embodied pleasures, and globalization set in motion, as I contend, by the transoceanic movement of movement which historically unfolded under the sign of African diasporic displacements.

“Bathed in a lather like post-horses”

In 1772, the British-Dutch soldier and author John Gabriel [Stedman](#) traveled to Suriname, encountering in the course of five years skirmishing colonial powers, rebelling maroons, captive slaves in classic plantation societies, Amerindian communities, and fabulous Amazonian landscapes. His observations were recorded in *The Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes* (1796). Early on in this account, [Stedman](#) describes a scene of slaves dancing to ad hoc percussive instruments (including their own hands) to celebrate an unexpected holiday:

Here now Mr De Graav, having bought some new slaves, gave a holiday to all the Negroes of his estate, and there I had the opportunity of seeing the diversions peculiar to that people, but of which I must reserve the particular account till another occasion, and only now say a word or two of the Loango-dancing, which was performed by the Loango Negroes, male and female, and not by any others, and consists from first to last in such a scene of wanton and lascivious gestures, as nothing but a heated imagination and a constant practice could enable them to perform. These dances, which are to the sound of a drum, and to which they strike time by clapping of hands, are more like a play, divided into so many acts, which lasts hours together, and during which pantomime the actors, in place of being fatigued, become more and more active and animated, till they are bathed in a lather like post-horses, and their passions wound up to such a degree that nature being overcome, they are ready to drop into convulsions.²

A few decades later, the Belgian globetrotter and artist Pierre Jacques [Benoit](#) provided the visual transcript to this scene in his *Voyage à Surinam: description des possessions néerlandaises dans la Guyane* (1839). Unlike [Stedman](#)’s *Narrative*, [Benoit](#)’s *Voyage* strives to produce a rather happy-go-lucky image of activities on this notoriously harsh colony, but on the matter of dancing slaves they seem to agree. One of the hundred black and white engravings that he included in his text is of the “Dou, or great slave dance on New Year’s Day.”³ Here, a group of slaves engages in seemingly carefree merrymaking under a tree. Men play a variety of small drums, including those held between the legs in very African fashion, while women (and a baby in the foreground) brandish shakers of the kind called *maracas* in Latin American contexts. Others clap their hands. Men and women, their torsos at best loosely wound about with fabrics, dance freely, their bodies both contorted and abandoned, captured by the artist to suggest the “wanton and lascivious gestures” that [Stedman](#) reported. At the center of the group dance a heterosexual couple, the man waving a spotted kerchief and the woman her skirts in a gesture startlingly reminiscent of Cuban rumba. In the background, we see another couple walking under a palm tree, the man holding aloft a similar kerchief.

These two scenes, one verbal and the other visual, are from Suriname, but they could well belong to any Plantation colony established on any Caribbean island.⁴ In both accounts, we note the association of captive revelry with dances; the dependence on percussion; and, very importantly, the necessary involvement of both sexes in a communal activity that is, at least in the image furnished by *Benoit*, on the verge of crystallizing into a partner dance (we will return to this point later). The writhing bodies and exhibited breasts of the women in *Benoit*'s engraving confirms the charge of being "wanton" and "lascivious" that *Stedman* imputes to the dance he witnesses, and these adjectives, indeed, are staples of English-language descriptions of African dances both on the mainland in Africa and under diasporic conditions. On a deeper level, the dance scenes oscillate between the enslaved, dehumanized body, "bathed in lather like post-horses," and its residual agency as asserted through the ability to enjoy oneself in and through dance. Detailed accounts of physical torture crowd *Stedman*'s text in particular, making description of the dancing body seem incongruous on one level, but contiguous to the tortured body on another. The breaking through of persistent pleasure from a backdrop of suffering drives home the point that it is indeed the resources of the same body which enable it to suffer and to seize enjoyment from the heart of pain.

This duality of corporeal pain and kinetic pleasure has hardly gone unobserved, and, indeed, it is very often used to extract a paradigm of resistance from the Plantation world. The typical moves involved are demonstrated, for instance, by Achille Mbembe's discussion of "necropolitics," which rehearses the Plantation as a site of complete arrogation of sovereignty from the slave by the master. It is through a "confrontation with death that [the modern subject] is cast into the incessant movement of history."⁵ Politics thus emerges "as the work of death," and "sovereignty as the right to kill."⁶ On the Plantation, "the slave is therefore kept alive but in a state of injury, in a phantom-like world of horrors and intense cruelty and profanity. The violent tenor of the slave's life is manifested through the overseer's disposition to behave in a cruel and intemperate manner and in the spectacle of pain inflicted on the slave's body."⁷ Nevertheless, as *Mbembe* continues, "[i]n spite of the terror and the symbolic sealing off of the slave he or she maintains alternative perspectives towards time, work and self."⁸ A similar argument has been made by Sudesh *Mishra* in the context of the suspended temporalities generated by the experience of the indentured laborers from India who supplanted slavery.⁹ As *Mishra* confirms through the examples of festive revelry sustained by the indentured laborers in Fijian plantations, it is the body itself, as a site and means of performance, that offers a route of resistance. To quote *Mbembe*, "[t]reated as if he or she no longer existed except as a mere tool and instrument of production, the slave nevertheless is able to draw almost on any object, instrument, language or gesture into a performance and then stylize it." And stylized performance is embodied, literally, through music and music's communal potential: "Breaking with uprootedness and the pure world of things of which he or she is but a fragment, the slave is able to demonstrate the protean capabilities of the human bond through music and the very body that was supposedly possessed by another."¹⁰

"Más cerca de los tambores"

Mbembe's use of the word "music" is arguably too generalized, however. On the Plantation, as the material from colonial Suriname reminds us, the only sonic accompaniment available was that produced by the body's percussive interaction with

surfaces of different kinds – hence the astonishing proliferation of idiophones as well as membranophones in these spaces of encounter. Forged through traumatizing and profoundly alienating processes foundational to global modernity, Caribbean percussive traditions and the instruments that are their manifestation proliferate, mutate, and bring into the world of pleasurable sound unexpected source materials. These materials include not just skin and wooden frame to create myriad variations on the drum (membranophones), but also crates and storage boxes, seeds, gourds, tree trunks, wooden sticks used in shipbuilding, and a range of metallic objects purloined from everyday use, from oil drums to ablution vessels to spoons (idiophones, both struck and scraped). These converted objects sound out resistance and pleasure to the punishing rhythms of plantation life through an equally bewildering profusion of modes: not just slapping with hand or stick, but scraping, shaking, and bringing together two metallic surfaces to resonate against each other. Their material and sonic histories continue to reverberate, literally, today: In the words of Mongo Santamaría, master Cuban drummer who, like Celia Cruz, came from his island to the USA just before the Revolution: “the drum was our tool and we used it for everything.”¹¹ Santamaría says this in the 1990s in his Miami apartment, removed in time and space from the Plantation; but the sound of the drum converts memory into continuity. The world of Afro-diasporic percussion confounds and dissolves the difference between past and future. Hence it is not music *per se* that I would wish to narrow down the body’s resistive potential to; it is the percussive heart of transplanted rhythms.

“My book is ‘un esfuerzo de la academia para estar más cerca de los tambores’ (an effort by the academy to be closer to the drumming).” Thus declares Arturo Escobar while exploring alternative development models for Colombia’s Afro-diasporic communities.¹² The drum is a privileged trope for all those – academics, cultural producers, activists – formulating or excavating modes of resistance in African heritage communities. Whether conducted through the lens of ethnomusicology,¹³ art history,¹⁴ dance,¹⁵ or cultural studies,¹⁶ scholarship demonstrates that, despite whatever else they may have lost in the Middle Passage, Africans and their descendants in the New World did not lose their percussive rhythms. Historians of slavery regularly invoke Afro-diasporic rhythmic retentions while discussing the legacies of the plantation,¹⁷ and historians of Afro-diasporic musicality equally regularly ground its birth and efflorescence in the conditions of slavery. As dance practitioners frequently celebrate, rhythms from Africa survived across generations through the policed yet irrepressible kinetic relationship between percussion and the body. What Peter Fryer calls “rhythms of resistance” are thus an intrinsic aspect of Afro-diasporic cultures in the Americas.¹⁸ Intellectuals have used the connection between rhythm, retention, and resistance as a philosophical index to Afro-diasporic cultures, positing the composite phenomenology of Afro-Caribbean rhythms as illustrative of the Caribbean’s historic and cultural particularity. For Antonio Benítez-Rojo, such rhythms are codes “that refer us to traditional knowledge, symbolic if you will, that the West can no longer detect.”¹⁹ For Édouard Glissant, they have shaped Caribbean self-understanding as a “culture that shatters the stone of time.”²⁰ The immense significance granted to African-derived music’s flamboyant syncopation and complex polyrhythmic structures is taken to its logical conclusion in Paul Gilroy’s seminal book on the Black Atlantic.²¹

These Africanist legacies are seen as capable of subverting not only European understandings of rhythm, but the linear temporality of capitalism itself.²² Likewise, laments for Afro-diasporic music’s succumbing to the forces of capitalism and the market

are frequently laid at the door of its putative incremental attenuation of these properties – its submission to “the straitjacket of four-square common time.”²³ Positing a utopian, counter-capitalistic potential for polyrhythm and syncopation has become the commonest mode of conscripting Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures into examinations of modernity, a move *de rigueur* since Gilroy boldly articulated modernity as constituted upon the ships carrying African bodies and cultures across the “Black Atlantic.” Yet this work, including Gilroy’s and its legacy,²⁴ has not unpacked the precise relationship between modernity as a phenomenon and the body’s response to musically-realized rhythm as communal expression. Neither has it engaged with the affective economies of kinaesthetic, embodied *enjoyment* that circulate in dialectical relationship to modernity’s traumatic fractures. For Gilroy, modernity is a catastrophe shared across postcolonial realms; although “the body must enter the discourse,” it does so as stricken and depleted, submitting, yet again, to capitalism’s machine.²⁵ The physical exhilaration produced by dance, which is the most immediate, visceral, and embodied manifestation of rhythm, is all too often overlooked in scholarship on the philosophical valence of Afro-diasporic rhythms within modernity. The problem is the body itself: academic study has leaned heavily towards textuality; bodily practices have been neglected and its practitioners often written out of analysis. Postcolonial Theory is a key culprit here, with one of its founding fathers, Homi Bhabha, even abstracting – without commentary – key concepts (note, for example, his concept of “time lag”) from the vocabulary of syncopation.²⁶

“Deep, where the sun don’t shine [...]”

The connection between thus evaporating the body from the plane of analysis and the Cartesian mind-body split has been unmasked systematically by Dance Studies,²⁷ but it is only in examinations of African American dance that this area engages overtly with questions of resistance and pleasure imbricated in race.²⁸ A fertile area for further study is the political inspiration that the African American female creative intellectuals Zora Neale Hurston and Katherine Dunham found in the music, dance, and religious cultures of Haiti.²⁹ In the symbiotic connections retained between an African-derived spirituality, rhythms that blur the distance between the secular and divine, and revolution, Haiti provoked pan-diasporic connections which dance studies should examine further,³⁰ but it would be equally interesting to see their transformation on social dance floors (both in Haiti and in secondary diasporic spaces, such as New York, Miami, and Paris) playing Haitian rhythms, whether *konpa* or *misik rasin*.³¹ But scholarly analysis of Afro-diasporic dance has looked to choreographed practice rather than social dance as a demotic and participatory practice, even though much-studied institutions such as the Alvin Ailey Repertoire pay constant homage to the dance floor. The Repertoire’s interpretation of Rennie Harris’s *Home*, for instance, revolves around the New York House anthem by DJ Dennis Ferrier:

Deep, deep where the sun don’t shine

Is a place where I call home

Here when the planetary alignments are right

When the DJ shuts out the light

Deep is where I’m home³²

The darkness of the club where the DJ rules, drawing out the best from the dancers, is a space scholars of rave and techno music have analyzed, but rarely those studying Afro-diasporic dance forms; even then, solo forms such as break dance, hiphop, and, more recently, kuduro, have been the focus rather than couple dance genres.³³ On the occasions that the kinaesthetic rather than sonic dimensions of these genres are examined, it is their history rather than their contemporary manifestations that command attention – an exception being Afro-Latin social dance forms.³⁴

Yet the participation in and challenges to modernity that scholars have attributed to Afro-diasporic rhythms had been made possible by the initial transformations of the drums of the Plantation to the big bands of New York's dance clubs and the dancing bodies that filled their floors from the 1920s onwards.³⁵ Cities have been crucial to the conversion of drum-based Plantation resistance into wider regimes of pleasure. These regimes evolved through the progressive accretion of European musical instruments around the percussive core of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures, as well as the conversion of group into partner dance on the basis of European courtly dances such as contredanse/contradanza (country dance), mazurka, polka, and waltz. Before the city, of course, it was the Plantation itself that first provided the basis for such contact. C. L. R. James's *Black Jacobins* provides an instructive opening emphasis on the Plantation's divergent rhythm cultures:

But one does not need education or encouragement to cherish a dream of freedom. At their midnight celebrations of Voodoo, their African cult, they danced and sang, usually this favourite song:

Eh! Eh! Bomba! Heu! Heu!

Canga, bafio té!

Canga, mouné de lé!

Canga, do ki la!

Canga, li!

“We swear to destroy the whites and all that they possess; let us die rather than fail to keep this vow.”

The colonists knew this song and tried to stamp it out, and the Voodoo cult with which it was linked. In vain. For over two hundred years the slaves sang it at their meetings, as the Jews in Babylon sang of Zion, and the Bantu today sing in secret the national anthem of Africa.³⁶

The revolutionary potential of Haiti's African rhythms is nevertheless diluted by evidence of the capitulation of “the small privileged caste” of house slaves who “repaid their kind treatment and comparatively easy life with a strong attachment to their masters” in the form of adopting their dance styles. “Dressed in cast-off silks and brocades, they gave balls in which, like trained monkeys, they danced minuets and quadrilles, and bowed and curtsied in the fashion of Versailles.”³⁷ Indeed, for James, these are the very practices that have “enabled Tory historians, Regius professors, and sentimentalists to represent plantation slavery as a patriarchal relation between master and slave,” although he does later concede that such instances of “mimicry” could have offered an alternative pathway to revolutionary consciousness.³⁸

Yet it is these dances, variously termed as products of “transculturation” and “creolization,”³⁹ which made African rhythms proliferate in diasporic space; these were the *ur*-forms of Latin social dances now enjoyed the world over,⁴⁰ with North American dances such as the cakewalk forming an important intermediary step.⁴¹ The dance halls and jazz clubs of Harlem and Paris in the early twentieth century were exemplary of the expressive space offered by the democratic anonymity of cities. Exiting from the club to the streets, the dancers continued to exude a positive affective complex around exhilaration, “swagger,” and kinetic vivacity (“feeling alive”), exteriorized off and on the dance floor through gait, dress, and gesture. The multiple emancipatory possibilities of dance are celebrated ceaselessly in both song lyrics and body movements. Through a mixture of kinesis, mimesis and narrative, dancers generate an embodied, collective recollection of the traumatic histories of deracination that underlie the positive affective complex of the urban dance floor. If “deep, where the sun don’t shine” is “home,” it is because the dancing bodies, “bathed in lather like post-horses” recall and undo the dehumanization of the Plantation through an identical physiological product – sweat. In the sharing of sweat and heat a new “Afropolitan” is forged – the person who is engaged in self-fashioning through Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures and their attendant style statements, irrespective of their own racial identity.⁴² The desirability of the Afro-diasporic dancing body cannot be separated from discourses of racism and fetishizing of difference; yet, the urban dance floor encourages a nuanced approach to these contradictions. As Richard Wright asked in 1941: “Why is our music so contagious? Why is it that those who deny us are willing to sing our song? Perhaps it is because so many of those who live in cities feel deep down just as we feel.”⁴³

“Comunique com teu corpo o meu [...]”

The global flows of people to urban centers under the signs of labor and leisure, including diasporas created through slavery, indentured labor, and transnational economic migration, have created and nurtured the Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures as vectors of mixing – from the mixing of “the melody of Europe and the rhythm of the Africa” (to cite the famous words of choreographer Rex Nettleford),⁴⁴ to the mixing of peoples on diverse dance floors, from long-established clubs which grow out of the migrant or local populations of particular cities, to dance festivals taking place in cities to which they do not necessarily have an organic connection.⁴⁵ But it is a particular kind of Afro-diasporic dance, precisely those partner dances which C. L. R. James found objectionable, that exemplify the protean kinetic solidarities which the dance floor promotes. These dances, involving hetero-normative “dyads” on the very specific social space of the dance floor,⁴⁶ have granted Afro-diasporic rhythms a foundational role in shaping and complicating gender roles in modernity, as the performative energies of the dance floor bring to the forefront role-play, transgression, solidarity, and desire. Unlike hip-hop and other solo shows of kinetic masculinity, and unlike the audience-performer separation in choreographed dance, Afro-diasporic partner dances have, since the 1920s, brought men and women together in demotic spaces to generate the sense of *feeling alive*. These dances predicate new units of analysis beyond the plantation and the nation-state on the one hand, and transnational webs formulated on doxological exclusion, such as Islam, on the other. Instead, through North-South circuits of kinetic “contagion,” we can emplace the cities which social dancers inhabit and which nourish venues for social dancing, within two *overlapping* networks – the transoceanic, defined by the ship and the drum,

and the transnational, defined by the jet-engine and the record. The dancing couple in Black Atlantic space, whose immanent historical emergence is already evident in an engraving such as Benoit's, traverses and redefines these networks and their philosophical relationship.

I have elaborated elsewhere how the interlocked construction of masculinity and femininity enacted in Afro-diasporic partner dances interacts with the historical relationship of these dances to *communitas* in order to promote a dynamic, joyous, equitable and, ultimately, counter-hegemonic, partnership.⁴⁷ As Astrid Kusser observes, "under the influence of dances like the cakewalk, heterosexual European couple dance was irreversibly radicalized within a few decades."⁴⁸ To extract the full benefit of this analytical approach, we must be prepared to examine the life of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures under both capitalism and socialism – a task which has, to date, not been undertaken. Indeed, the valorization of polyrhythm and syncopation as resistant to capitalist time have bypassed commentary altogether on their development within socialist systems, most obviously in Cuba. While it is beyond the scope of this essay to dwell in detail on contemporary Cuban dance, let me at least comment on the palpable irony with which contemporary Cuban cultural producers relate to their island's tenacious association with Afro-Cuban percussion, music and dance – a response that must be attributed to the gap between material conditions of Cuban life and an image of Cuba as a sensuous, dance-filled paradise that lies outside of capitalism's grasp. Nevertheless, this irony is not so embittered that it comes unleavened with affection for that heritage as, for instance, apparent in the productions of the Danza Contemporanea de Cuba. Here, tortured duos who are never quite able to consolidate the couple dance, and robotic groups who dance like automatons transmit the affective dimension of life under extreme socialism in Cuba,⁴⁹ and yet the climactic moments conclude with men and women able to dance together joyfully. The movement repertoires themselves draw on the full spectrum of Cuban dance styles from the nineteenth century onwards, *són cubano*, *danzón*, *mambo*, *pachanga*, as well as *rumba* and the development of *suelta* (free) styles to accompany the more brash music style known as *timba*.

It is the co-existence and dialogue between these two branches of Afro-diasporic social dance forms – partner and solo – that help reveal the full story of rhythm's relationship to modernity, co-optation and resistance. It is also important to note that this dialectical relationship is by no means confined to circulations of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures between the Northern and Southern parts of the New World, as the Black Atlantic paradigm would encourage us to imagine, or even within an Anglophone, North Atlantic circuit as that outlined by Paul Gilroy. In particular, the Portuguese African colonies offer rich comparative material for an extended understanding of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures in a circum-Atlantic perspective, particularly as Angolan partner dance forms *kizomba* and *semba* are currently enjoying a transnational popularity that seems about to overtake that of salsa. Just as the salsa dance floor is periodically interrupted by solo dance forms such as reggaeton from Puerto Rico and Cuban *timba*, so is the *kizomba* dance floor strategically open to the Angolan counterpart of hip-hop, *kuduro*, as well as solo forms from Anglophone and Francophone Africa that go under the rubric of "afrobeat" and "coupé décalé." Yet as the lyrics of a *semba* song "Desliza comigo" ("move with me") by Angolan singer Paulo Matomina declare, "comunique com teu corpo o meu" ("my body communicates with yours").⁵⁰ Naming the genres of "merengue" (from the Dominican Republic, but very popular historically in Angola), "our *kizomba* (nossa *kizomba*)" and, most importantly, "semba, in fashion now" as the

soundtrack to this intersubjective communication, the lyrics evoke kinetic communication as making sense only within the collective space of the *salaõ* and *pista* (dance hall; dance floor). This auto-referentiality recalls that of countless salsa and son songs,⁵¹ even while the lyrics describe dance steps that are distinctly Angolan rather than Latin American.

Transoceanic, transnational, trans(post)colonial

Bringing in the Lusophone world also demands an integrative approach to Afro-diasporic rhythms. In the webs of the former Portuguese empire, the circuits of cultural, economic, and political transfer were not only transatlantic, but included mid-oceanic stopovers such as the Cape Verde archipelago, and even rounded the African coast to include Indian Ocean sites such as Mozambique and Goa, and further afield to Timor and Macau.⁵² Music and dance were inevitably implicated. The consequent layering of colonial and postcolonial Lusophone rhythmic history reveals the otherwise efficient “Black Atlantic” paradigm as susceptible to trapping Afro-diasporic cultures within a Northern, Euro-American framework. This northern, Anglophone bias is being corrected by an emergent scholarship on contemporary Brazil-Angolan musical connections, particularly in the realms of “global ghettech” and their accompanying dance genres such as funk carioca and kuduro.⁵³ These postcolonial transactions draw out the older, often erased debt of Brazilian percussive-kinetic repertoires to the slave population from Angolan regions concentrated particularly around Salvador de Bahia. That flow of influence was not unidirectional; rather, through African communities in Lisbon and the movement of peoples around the Lusophone Atlantic world, kinetic developments involved the North and South Atlantic as well as both eastern and western coastlines. These older histories are being revived today by kinetic exchanges between Brazil and Angola in the form of dance festivals bringing Angolan social dance forms such as kizomba and semba to Brazilian dance communities accustomed to home-grown partner dances such as samba de gafieira, samba rock, various forms of Brazilian zouk, and forró. Afro-Brazilian dancers are increasingly using kizomba and semba, with their marked Africanist body movements, to revive in their own social dance repertoires buried or attenuated somatic traces of “Africa.”

While these exchanges can be theorized as postcolonial revivals of specific hemispheric or transatlantic circuits for Afro-diasporic music and dance, we need to explicate their participation within cultural transactions on a transoceanic, even planetary scale. What Miguel [Vale de Almeida](#) calls “the semiperipheral and subaltern natures of Portuguese colonialism” have left their traces in the postcolonial period.⁵⁴ Kizomba, semba, and kuduro music and dance now form part of a Lusophone cultural assertiveness radiating out from cities situated on an erstwhile Lusophone imperial axis – Maputo, Luanda, Lisbon. Driving from Nampula to the Ilha do Moçambique in September 2013, I was treated to an array of semba music played on the car stereo by my driver who lived on the Ilha. We also listened to musicians from Cape Verde such as Lura singing modern versions of funaná and coladeira. In Maputo, clubs such as Coconuts now host concerts by kizomba singers from Luanda – on September 27, 2013, for instance, the kizomba artist Matias Damasio was performing there – while other clubs such as Face to Face and Macaneta play marrabenta (local music and dance) on some nights and host kizomba lessons and parties on others. In September 2013, I heard radio channels in Maputo constantly playing “Musica Angolana.”⁵⁵ And already in 2011, a Mozambican couple won the Europe-wide AfricAdançar social dance competition held annually in Lisbon.⁵⁶

Transatlantic paradigms are insufficient to explain these developments, which involve pan-African transactions between two countries facing the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean respectively, and whose musical and dance cultures have been deeply influenced by those specific orientations. We thus need a more complex transoceanic model of cultural-kinetic exchanges to break through the academic compartmentalization dictated by geopolitical logic which traps the study of culture within nation-states, Cold-War derived “areas,” or post-imperial phantoms. The study of cultural innovation must break through North-South axes that connect former imperial centers and decolonized metropolises, and place Black Atlantic routes in broader transoceanic perspectives.

Indeed, the Lusophone evidence complicates matters even further. Kizomba is neither a “pure” Angolan dance, nor even one that arose through intra-Lusophone cultural contact (between Portuguese colonizers and the African colonized). Kizomba, rather, was formed in the 1980s, in kinetic response to the music of zouk, especially the French Antillean band Kassav’. Furthermore, zouk music was also taken up by Brazilians in the late 1990s, who wanted an appropriate music to which they could continue dancing the ephemeral social dance lambada.⁵⁷ That the underlying rhythms of zouk music were mobilized by Angolans and Brazilians alike in developing indigenous kinetic responses exemplifies how Black Atlantic rhythm interfaces cross linguistic boundaries: zouk, a music produced in the French Caribbean and sung in the Creole of Martinique and Guadeloupe, generated parallel dance styles evolving in two Lusophone countries. Zouk’s kinetic influences thus involve music and dance legacies from two different empires, French and Portuguese, while zouk itself has been formed through conscious playing with the musical heritages of the Anglophone, Hispanophone, and Francophone Caribbean.⁵⁸ And there is more: irrespective of the language of the streets, in cities along the transoceanic routes I have traced, from Paramaribo to Maputo, it is zouk music, danced to in the French Caribbean manner, which is the preferred couple dance, despite the new inroads being made by kizomba and semba.⁵⁹ Zouk’s formidable kinetic influence across Africa and South America – as evinced by their tri-continental “Mawonaj Tour” through 2013 to celebrate 40 years of music-making – illuminatingly illustrates the continuing traffic between islands, cities, and oceans in the postcolonial present, and points the way to further research on the routes and sites for the transoceanic proliferation and transnational permutation of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures.

While terms such as “transoceanic” and “transnational” help us to grasp the historical and contemporary dimensions of these kinetic networks, an even more useful concept, which highlights the actual sites where rhythmic and other kinds of cultural exchange took place, is the “transcolonial.” Recent research on “transcolonial collaborations” radiating out from post-revolutionary Haiti emphasizes “how cultural forms – textual, visual, musical, and movement-based – illuminate the engagements of people of African descent in physical and ideological collaborations across imperial frontiers as one path towards political ends that would convert fear to possibility.”⁶⁰ Retracing “communication networks between subjects of different European empires” foregrounds “intercolonial contact zones [...] traces of forgotten possibilities [...] [and] the worlds we have lost” through an over-emphasis on intellectual rather than performative cultures.⁶¹ The “transcolonial” further leads into what I want to call the “trans-postcolonial.” The foundational influence of Kassav’ in Africa is one example, while the nascent trend of Haitians in the USA gravitating to Angolan semba – surely because of its rhythmic parity to Haitian konpa music – is another. The “trans-postcolonial” opens up new approaches to transoceanic questions constellated around Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures, particularly

their propensity, in the guise of specific dances at specific moments, and through specific cultural players, to connect Anglophone, Lusophone, Francophone, and Hispanophone postcolonial linguistic zones across Africa, Europe, and the Americas. The example of Augustin Kayembe, one of Africa's top music impresarios, who owns a chain of nightclubs across the continent under the rubric of "Chez Ntembe" ("our corner") is instructive: he was born in Zambia of Congolese parents, lives in Johannesburg, and runs nightclubs in Lusaka, Windhoek, Kinshasa, Brazzaville, Johannesburg, Luanda, and Maputo (although in Maputo they had to close because "another club owner sent people to shoot me"). What music plays in these clubs? Mainly "house, [Angolan] kizomba and American beats."⁶²

"Vini vini vini vini la gamat a commencé"

Tracing rhythm cultures thus pushes us to theorize cultural connections that are often part of people's everyday lives but below the radar of academic disciplinary segmentations. For instance, those studying the Lusophone world are accustomed to Cape Verde's status as a crossroads for cultural transfer between not only different nodes in the Lusophone world but also across empires.⁶³ But no explanation yet exists of the astonishing similarity between Papiamentu/Papiamentu, the Creoles of the Dutch Caribbean islands, and Capeverdean Creole.⁶⁴ This linguistic similarity in fact suggests that we take seriously, too, the links between aspects of Capeverdean and Caribbean rhythm cultures – for instance, the physical and structural similarity of the Capeverdean scraped idiophone, the ferrinho, to the Indo-Caribbean struck idiophone, the dhantal (also transcribed as "dantal"). But do we even have a theoretical language to explicate these connections between not only linguistic zones which are the legacies of different empires, but between diasporic populations of African and Indian heritages transplanted successively to the same insular and littoral Plantation spaces through the systems of first slavery and then indentured labor? At the moment, there exists neither critical vocabulary nor mainstream political will to consider seriously the ensuing interactions.⁶⁵ Most starkly, there is very little cultural recognition of the Indian in the mix in the creolized populations particularly of islands whose human labor streams were controlled by the French. Either the Indian populations entered so thoroughly into the processes of creolization as cultural assimilation that they have lost the ability to retrace their contribution to a composite cultural matrix, or processes of what de-creolization have so thoroughly set in, prompted by nativist postcolonial reassertion in India, that creolization as an overall process involving all transplanted populations is now strenuously denied by Indian heritage populations.⁶⁶ A clearer picture of inter-diasporic interactions in post-Plantation space has consequently failed to emerge.

This scholarly reluctance to unpack these interactions is all the more glaring given that certain spaces of embodied cultural practices, such as music, dance, food, and language, have long been vital sites for a three-way creolizing process between African, Indian, and European forms. Thus Gordon [Rohlehr](#), in his account of calypso as a creolized cultural form, notes in passing:

Ras Shorty 1 (Garfield Blackman) was born in 1941 in Lengua, a village of cane and peasant farming whose population is so overwhelmingly Indo-Trinidadian that even the small percentage of Afro-Trinidadians who live in that community resemble their Indian neighbours in carriage, in gestures, and in understanding of Bhojpuri that is still spoken

there. Nurtured on both calypso and Indian folk and popular musics, Shorty learned to play the dholak and the dhantal and was experimenting with integrating these musics, it is said, since his first calypso composition, ‘Mango Long’ (1958). After that adventure, his songs became a mixture of comic narrative and here he demonstrated not only a familiarity with several of the popular Indian songs but considerable skill in rendering them in illustration of his initial assertion that Indian singers had been improving over the years [...] It would take Shorty a few more years of toil [...] before he would with ‘Indrani’ (1973), ‘Kalo gee bull’ (1974) and the massively popular ‘Endless Vibrations’ (1975) effect the perfect blend of calypso and East Indian rhythms while, paradoxically, calling for a change in ‘the accent of Carnival/to a groovy, groovy bacchanal’.⁶⁷

Rohlehr considers the adoption of Indian heritage sounds to call for a “groovy bacchanal” as being a paradox, but does not explicate why. Likewise, in discussions of the creolized music-dance forms sega and maloya from the Indian Ocean islands of Mauritius and La Réunion respectively, the cultural encounter between Indian and African rhythms, body movements and melodies are rarely the focus of study, at best being parenthetically noted.⁶⁸

Despite the fact that Indian Ocean kinetic interactions between African and Indian rhythm cultures have been as neglected as their Caribbean counterparts, it is my contention that looking to the Indian Ocean world in conjunction with the Atlantic can help us move forward this particular agenda for a new global Atlantic Studies. While the Caribbean has been the privileged space for developing the transcolonial “as a geopolitical and methodological concept,”⁶⁹ the excitement of studying comparatively these intra-diasporic rhythm cultures in transoceanic encounter is another pressing reason to shift the gaze to the wider Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds in rethinking the “transcolonial” and indeed the “trans-postcolonial.” When we hear a sega song such as “Gamat dans kartier,” which syntactically and lyrically brings together a traditional and very regional communal music practice (the *gamat*) from colonial India to a social space forged out of the indentured labor experience and expressed in a Kreyol Morisien word (“kartier”), and which urges the audience in Kreyol to come and participate in the song and dance revelry of the gamat (“vini vini vini vini la gamat a commencé”), we are already in a creolized cultural encounter, but when we see the dancing bodies accompanying this kind of song, with the hip movements reminiscent of yuka dance from Africa and the arm movements, of Indian dance, we definitely need a new way of thinking of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures that goes beyond racialized binaries of “African” and “European” in articulating the modes and products of cultural encounter. Rhythm cultures are useful here because they take us to multi-modal archives carried in the moving body across times and spaces – a dialogue which continues when sega music and dance borrow from different Caribbean forms such as reggae, zouk, and chutney-soca, or when the Capeverdean music group Cabo Verde Show play to a massive audience in St Denis, La Réunion.⁷⁰

The severally creolized cultures of the Indian Ocean world enhances revisionist moves towards a “Brown Atlantic” that foregrounds indentured labor diasporas, but which often remain fettered by an inability to cross internalized boundaries:⁷¹ in this case, those between the Indo- and the Afro-derived kinetic heritages of the Caribbean, maintained, but also breached, by local cultural politics.⁷² Starting with the Indian Ocean also helps us rethink the connection of modernity and the Atlantic via slavery, because the Indian Ocean was a pre-colonial space for the movement of peoples including slaves as well as their cultures. Layered spaces of cultural encounter resulted. Here, pre-colonial

circulation of trade and labor were overlaid first by population movements generated through the webs of Empire, and subsequently by further displacements in postcolonial period. For instance, the most successful musical impresario in Portugal, Zahir Assanali, the director of the music events promotion company Grupo Chiado, is a Mozambican of Indian heritage who lives in Lisbon.⁷³ Assanali was born in the early 1970s in the Ilha de Moçambique, a pre-colonial crossroads for the mingling of Arab, Swahili, and Gujarati traders; in colonial times, the Ilha was thoroughly influenced by Goa; and now Assanali, a product of that space, listens to Bollywood music at home and to Mozambican marrabenta music in Maputo, observes Ramadan and eschews pork, and organizes the biggest musical concerts not only in Portugal but also Angola, Mozambique, and Brazil. These activities and predilections may strike some of us as contradicting each other; but they inhabit in his person and are part of his habitus. Such personal biographies, in conjunction with macro-histories of the movement of movement, allow us to plot new engagements between “black” and “brown” Atlantic, and indeed “black” and “brown” Indian Ocean through the framework of rhythm cultures.

Kinotoscapes of the African diaspora

These sites and routes of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures formulate the “Afro-diasporic” as a common signifier of a range of kinetic practices, through which the causes and consequences of the persistence of African-heritage rhythm cultures within the contested and increasingly transnationalized cultural terrain of modernity may be investigated. The consequent vision of islands, cities, and oceans exceeds the trajectories determined by linguistic homogeneity, single regnant imperialisms, continental frameworks, and the competitive memorializations of trauma by different diasporas inhabiting the same space. An attention to rhythm enables us reintroduce into studies of transnationalism’s dialectical traffic with global modernity the pleasures of kinesis and modernity’s Afro-diasporic connections.⁷⁴ To the “ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes” that Appadurai marshaled into his influential exploration of global modernity,⁷⁵ I would thus add *kinotoscapes* to privilege the cultural encounters that took place, and still do so, through the historical movement of peoples and their kinetic traditions across the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. These kinotoscapes breach linguistic boundaries derived from reified European imperialisms, provoking a new understanding of *histoires croisées* (“crossed historiographies,”⁷⁶ new modes of provincializing Europe and North America.⁷⁷ While shaped by Afro-diasporic rhythms, their semiotic hide-and-seek with the “Afro” (signaled by the intermittent presence of the prefix “Afro” in formulations such as ‘(Afro-)Latin dance’) foregrounds complexities of race and its intersections with ethnicity as well as non-biological affiliations.

Across this web stretch the energies of the dance floor, the relationship between electronic music and live concerts, and that between solo and couple dancing, their interactions constantly generating possibilities for the modern subject’s self-fashioning through what Frederick Moehn calls “new dialogues” across “old routes” traversed by African-heritage rhythms. It is the protean and unpredictable alliances provoked by the dance floor, particularly the dance floor for Afro-diasporic partner dances, but also in the trans-postcolonial possibilities of Afro-diasporic dance floors, which allow us to draw out these complexities as they are performed and embodied. Yoking the sliding signifier “Afro” to “diasporic” creates a pan-hemispheric and transoceanic analytical category with which to investigate the variegated significations of African-ness that are diffused,

performed, and debated through Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures, as well as ask: what does modernity look like when the persistent popularity of Afro-diasporic rhythm cultures is privileged as the starting point of analysis? The recycling of dance steps, genre names, and verbal and musical phrases in structured improvisation, and their journeys across oceans, continents, empires and postcolonies, are the raw materials through which to explain how Afro-diasporic kinetic repertoires, especially in conjunction with couple dance, might challenge reigning capitalist hegemonies as well as nostalgia for socialism, and the commodification of pleasure that characterizes the rise of the modern, urging us to shift the hermeneutic paradigm to emphasize survival, resistance, and exchange of ways of being in the world through the exhilaration that dance and music generate.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank [Manuel](#) Barcía Paz and my other colleagues at *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents* for making possible the circumstances that led to this essay appearing in print.

Notes on contributor

Ananya Jahanara [Kabir](#) is Professor of English Literature at King's College London, and the director of *Modern Moves: Kinetic Transnationalism and Afro-Diasporic Rhythm Cultures*, a five year research project funded by a European Research Council Advanced Grant.

Notes

1. I use “alegría” as a critical term following [Quintero Rivera](#), *Salsa*.
2. [Stedman](#), *Narrative*, 14.
3. [Benoit](#), *Voyage*, plate XIX.
4. Indeed, while Suriname is not an island, it, together with British Guyana and French Guyane, were made to replicate on its coastal strip the conditions of island plantation economies; even today, the Guyanas retain strong economic and cultural ties with the Caribbean region as much as to mainland South America.
5. [Mbembe](#), “Necropolitics,” 12.
6. *Ibid.*, 15.
7. *Ibid.*, 21. I use Plantation (with a capital “P”) after the example of [Benítez-Rojo](#), *Repeating Island*.
8. *Ibid.*, 22.
9. [Mishra](#), “Time and Girit.”
10. [Mbembe](#), “Necropolitics,” 22.
11. [Gerard](#), *Music from Cuba*, 26.
12. [Escobar](#), *Territories of Difference*, 25.
13. [Manuel](#), *Caribbean Currents*; [Fryer](#), *Rhythms of Resistance*; and [Monson](#), *The African Diaspora*.
14. Farris [Thompson](#), *Flash of the Spirit*.
15. [Dixon Gottschild](#), *Digging the Africanist Presence*.
16. [Moten](#), *In the Break*.
17. [Brown](#), *Reaper's Garden*.
18. [Fryer](#), *Rhythms of Resistance*.
19. [Benítez-Rojo](#), *Repeating Island*, 220.
20. [Glissant](#), *Poetics of Relation*, 137.
21. [Gilroy](#), *Black Atlantic*.
22. [Glissant](#), *Poetics of Relation*; [Gilroy](#), *Black Atlantic*; and [Crichlow](#), *Globalization and the Post-Creole Imagination*.
23. [Brennan](#), *Secular Devotion*, 238; see also [Gilroy](#), “Exer(or)cizing the Black Body.”

24. See, for instance, [Baucom](#), *Spectres*.
25. [Gilroy](#), *Black Atlantic*, 200; see also *ibid.*, 197.
26. [Bhabha](#), *Location of Culture*.
27. [Sklar](#), “Five Premises”; [Jowitz](#), “Beyond Description”; [Lepecki](#), *Presence of the Body*; and [Kraut](#), “Stealing Steps and Signatures Moves.”
28. [Martin](#), *Critical Moves*; [DeFrantz](#), *Black Beat*; and [DeFrantz](#), *Revelations*.
29. See [Fischer-Hornung](#), “Keeping Alive the Spirit of Africa.”
30. See in this context the essays in [Fischer-Hornung](#) and Goeller, ed., *Embodying Liberation*.
31. For a detailed study of how the music is imbricated with politics in Haiti, see [Averill](#), *A Day for the Hunter*, though once again, we find scant attention being paid here to the actual body movements of people on the dance floor or carnival spaces.
32. [Ferrier](#), *Underground is my Home*.
33. On kuduro, see [Alisch](#) and Siegert, “Angolanidade Revisited.”
34. See, for instance, [Aparicio](#), *Listening to Salsa*; [Fraser Delgado](#) and Esteban Muñoz, *Everynight Life*; and [Waxer](#), ed., *Situating Salsa*.
35. See [Engelbrecht](#), “Swinging at the Savoy”; and [Manning](#) and Millman, *Frankie Manning*.
36. [James](#), *Black Jacobins*, 14. The chant and its own discursive history, including its use (and, in fact, mistranslation) by [James](#), is usefully discussed in [Pettinger](#), “Eh! Eh! Bomba, hen! Hen.”
37. *Ibid.*, 19.
38. *Ibid.*, 19. Here the work of [Bhabha](#) on mimicry (see his *Location of Culture*) would be a useful supplement.
39. On transculturation, see [Ortiz](#), *Cuban Counterpoint*; for creolization, see [Cohen](#) and Toninato, ed., *Creolization Reader*; and [Stewart](#), ed., *Creolization*.
40. [Chasteen](#), *National Rhythms, African Roots*.
41. [Kusser](#), “The Riddle of the Booty.”
42. I use “Afropolitan” in a somewhat different way than does, for instance, Achille [Mbembe](#); see his essay, “Afropolitanism.”
43. [Wright](#), *Twelve Million Black Voices*, 127–128.
44. [Nettleford](#), *Mirror, Mirror*.
45. See [Kabir](#), “The European Salsa Congress.”
46. On couple dance as being constituted through heteronormative dyads, see [Chasteen](#), *National Rhythms, African Roots*.
47. [Kabir](#), “Dancing Couple.”
48. [Kusser](#), “Riddle of the Booty.”
49. For which see [Moore](#), *Music and Revolution*.
50. Matomino, “Desliza,” in *100% Angolano*. Transcription and translation of the lyrics are mine.
51. [Brennan](#), *Secular Devotion*, 73.
52. [Vale de Almeida](#), “Portuguese Colonisation.”
53. [Moehn](#), “New Dialogues, Old Routes.” See also Jayne [Brown](#), “Buzz and Rumble.”
54. [Vale de Almeida](#), “Portuguese Colonisation,” 108.
55. These observations are based on fieldwork in Mozambique (Ilha de Moçambique and Maputo) in September 2013.
56. See the [ÁfricAdança](#)r homepage.
57. [García](#), “Le phénomène Lambada.”
58. [Guilbault](#), *Zouk*.
59. Fieldwork conducted in Paramaribo, June 2013, and Maputo, September 2013.
60. [Johnson](#), *Fear of French Negros*, xii.
61. *Ibid.*, 3–4.
62. [Mthembu-Salter](#), “Augustin Kayembe.”
63. [Green](#), “Creole Identity”; [Cidra](#), “Cape Verdean Migration”; and [Vale de Almeida](#), “Portuguese Colonialism and Creole Identity.”
64. See [Green](#), “Creole Identity,” 158.
65. Although note that the word used derisively by Indian heritage communities in the Caribbean to mark the offspring of Indian- and African-heritage parents, “douglá,” is being valiantly mobilized by some to develop a poetics and politics of “douglarisation”; see [Puri](#), “Rape, Race and Representation.”
66. See the work of Aisha Khan here, for example, [Khan](#), “Sacred Subversions.”

67. Rohlehr, "Calypso," 178.
68. See, for instance, what Francoise Verges, speaking of the maloya, says: "I am trying to reconstruct the moment when maloya (the traditional music of Réunion, sung by slaves, transformed by indentured workers and sung to this day) was created – a melancholic music, a 'blues'." Verges, "Indian-Oceanic Creolizations," 145.
69. Johnson, *Fear of French Negroes*, 4.
70. This concert took place on the 14th of July 2010.
71. See my critique of Niranjana, *Mobilizing India*, in Kabir, "The Indian Woman's Moving Body."
72. I spell these out in Kabir, "Calypso and Krishna's Flute."
73. Interview with Zahir Assanali, Cascais, July 2013.
74. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*.
75. *Ibid.*, 33.
76. Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories."
77. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*.

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