



Call for Papers



Black Power: Cultural and Political Movements in the Black Americas

2nd International Conference of the Black Americas Network

October 18-19, 2018 at the Center for InterAmerican Studies (Bielefeld University)

(Coordinators Afua Cooper, Wilfried Raussert, Matti Steinitz)

This year marks the 50th anniversary of “1968” – a generation-defining year for millions of radical activists around the world who took part in a series of simultaneous, and often interrelated, protest movements for social justice, peace, gender equality, and liberation from the intertwined legacies of colonialism and racism. For the African American freedom struggle - perceived as vanguard of the global 1960s youth rebellion by many contemporaries -, 1968 was a watershed year: the assassination of Civil Rights icon Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968 accelerated the rise of the Black Power Movement – one of the broadest assaults on white supremacy in the long history of emancipation struggles that have defined the Afro-diasporic presence in the Americas. Deeply rooted in the tradition of Black transnationalism, Black Power heralded a new era of African American defiance, militancy, and cultural awareness, which transcended the U.S. and left its footprints throughout the Hemisphere, providing marginalized communities beyond national and cultural boundaries with meaningful symbols of resistance and self-affirmation in the face of racial oppression. Black Power’s hemispheric impact encouraged the emergence of musical genres, antiracist movements, and border-crossing networks of solidarity among Afro-descendants in the Caribbean, Latin and North America, which continue to shape the political and cultural expressions of the Black Americas in the 21st century.

50 years after the emblematic Black Power salute of African American athletes John Carlos and Tommie Smith at the Summer Olympics in Mexico City and the release of James Brown’s seminal “Say It Loud - I’m Black and I’m Proud”, the *Black Americas Network* pays tribute to the long-lasting legacy and continued relevance of the movement with the upcoming international conference “Black Power: Cultural and Political Movements in the Black Americas” to be held at the Center for InterAmerican Studies (Bielefeld University), October 18 and 19, 2018. Committed to the conceptualization of a hemispheric perspective on Afro-diasporic movements and cultures, the conference is intended to deepen the transdisciplinary dialogues between scholars, activists, and artists, that were initiated at the first network conference on “Entangled Black Americas” in January 2017. While keenly interested in contributions which focus on the historical Black Power era (1965-1975) and its interrelations with global decolonization, we want to approach the topic from a comprehensive point of view, which means that we welcome all papers which deal with the manifold political and cultural manifestations of black empowerment and resistance against white supremacy in its diverse hemispheric expressions since the days of slavery. This encompasses forerunners and sources of inspiration of the Black Power movement which represent the “black radical tradition” (Cedric J. Robinson) in the Americas, as well as the transnational, transcultural, and transgenerational impact of Black Power on movements and popular culture from the 1960s until now. Practices of comparison within and between movements provide an additional focus and a dialogue with the SFB project “Practices of Comparison” at Bielefeld University.

As it is our aim to bridge demarcations between different lines of academic investigation, cultural and political activity, we accept proposals for papers, performances, and statements which deal with topics that may include but are not limited to one of the following topics:

- legacies of slave resistance as represented by the Haitian revolution, *quilombos*, *palenques*, maroon societies, Nat Turner, Zumbi dos Palmares, Benkos Biohó
- the Abolitionist movement
- pre-1960s cultural movements: e.g. Harlem Renaissance, Négritude, Negrismo, Rastafarianism
- Black Marxism
- the African-American freedom struggle and decolonization
- Black transnationalism: diverse currents of black (inter-)nationalism and Pan-Africanism as represented by W.E.B DuBois, Marcus Garvey, Frantz Fanon, C.L.R. James, George Padmore, Malcolm X, Abdias do Nascimento et. al.
- Black feminism and women in the struggle: Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Queen Mother Moore, Fannie Lou Hamer, Nancy Morejón, Denise Oliver, Angela Davis, Lélia Gonzalez et. al.
- Cuba and the Black Liberation Movement
- Civil Rights-Black Power era (1955-1975): political and cultural manifestations in the U.S. and transnational impact
- “Rainbow radicalism” and “Third World solidarity”: interethnic alliances between African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Native Americans, Asian Americans, students
- Narratives of resistance: Afro-diasporic literature and liberation
- sociopolitical implications and hemispheric diffusion of Afro-diasporic genres as Blues, Jazz, Calypso, Soul, Funk, Reggae, Dub, Salsa, Cumbia, Samba, Hip-Hop, Reggaetón, Baile Funk
- Afro-diasporic identity formation and social movements in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Practices of comparison within and between movements
- Black Power in the 21st century: e.g. #Black Lives Matter, Afro-Latin@ movements

Participants should submit a 250-word abstract proposal for a paper, performance, or political statement by **May 1, 2018**.

Please understand that the organizers are unable to offer financial support and participants are responsible for their own expenses.

Email your abstracts and inquiries to: Afua Cooper (raetown27@gmail.com), Wilfried Rausert (wilfried.rausert@uni-bielefeld.de) and Matti Steinitz (matti.steinitz@uni-bielefeld.de)

Network Webpage: <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/ias/blackamericas/>

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