The Orisha’s second religious diaspora between Cuba and Brazil: 
nation, ethnicity and religion in the Black Atlantic

Stefania Capone
(CNRS/EHESS, Paris)

Abstract
By expanding Gilroy’s analyses on the Black Atlantic to include the South Atlantic and in particular Brazil and Nigeria, I will focus on the diffusion of these religious practices in a tricontinental space of circulation. Recent studies have shown how the transnational “Yoruba” community is constituted on both sides of the Atlantic, thanks to the continuous exchanges between these two territories. If the Yoruba identity in Nigeria needs its American “mirror” to exist, the so-called “globalization of the Orisha religion” is the product of this incessant negotiation between different versions of the Yoruba tradition in Africa as well as in the diaspora. The circulation of religious practices between Cuba and Brazil highlights new routes in the Black Atlantic that jeopardize the hierarchical structure of local traditions and put into question some key issues in transnational processes. This also includes the persisting role of nation and the issue of religious syncretism.