Sobering Europe

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Sobering Europe

How Caribbean authors outline an adaptation strategy of creolization

Chris von Gagern

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For Tina,

who once again had to come to terms

with a life partner who was mainly absorbed in contemplation,

but who would not have reached this conclusion

without her support - no matter how ambivalent she may have been.

Preface

The present publication represents the result of two years of research funded by the Volkswagen Foundation as part of its focus on "The Foreign and the Own – Problems and Possibilities of Intercultural Understanding" in the early 1990s. Given the internationalization of the European way of life, which tends towards global networking and homogenization but struggles to keep up with everyday normality, thus exacerbating cultural differences and intolerance towards the foreign, a deeper understanding of intercultural encounters was needed. The project of analyzing migration literature by Caribbean authors, which I had been following since my dissertation on European descriptions of cultural contacts in the Caribbean, seemed exemplary to me for this purpose, but initially did not receive the institutional support required for a project proposal. It was only with the scientific director of the renowned Ibero-American Institute in Berlin that a determined supporter was found, who supported the project without hesitation. To our surprise, however, its implementation was not threatened by the approval of the intended funding by the foundation, but by the resistance of the institute's administration, which expressed legal concerns about my employment as an external staff member for the duration of the project. Thanks to the intervention of the foundation's officer responsible for the research focus, the funding for the research project, once again without a home, was retained, although it was necessary to overcome the curious situation of a potentially funded project that was not supposed to be accommodated. The research activity finally found a welcome reception at the Latin America Institute of the Free University of Berlin, where Caribbean literature is not only part of the repertoire but also has Ulrich Fleischmann, an engaged representative of research, who offered to take responsibility as the project's leader. His knowledge and experience undoubtedly benefited the project, as did his role as chairman of the Society for Caribbean

Research, where the first results could be presented at the congress at the University of Vienna in 2001.

Originally, the literary comparison was intended to be even broader and include other European metropolises such as Amsterdam and Madrid, which also host Caribbean diasporas. However, although considerable communities of exiles from Cuba and the Dominican Republic have gathered in Madrid in recent times, only sporadic references to Madrid as a transit station can be found in texts set in Miami or Paris. – The Netherlands, on the other hand, were becoming a major destination for massive migration from the Dutch Antilles and especially from Suriname from the beginning of the 1970s, although later than London and Paris. The independence movement of Suriname was supported by the Netherlands not least because of the massive exodus to Europe, and its release into independence in 1975 was sealed in order to gradually regain control over the perceived problematic immigration. However, the prospect of impending restrictions on the right of settlement in the motherland initially intensified the influx. Corresponding to the controversy, there is a significant reflection of Surinamese migration in the literature, but also of the Antilles. Although it was possible to obtain and evaluate not as many texts as about London or Paris, but more than a dozen about Amsterdam and The Hague, I regret that I ultimately had to refrain from including them in the comparison because the approved period for the project had already been exceeded and the written processing of another chapter was no longer possible. Not that the experiences of Caribbean migrants in the Netherlands would have significantly modified the results (rather, they seem inclined to confirm and deepen the knowledge about ingrained but better concealed resistance to non-European immigration that already emerges in London and Paris), but a specific consideration in the form of a separate chapter would be due to Dutch-Caribbean authors, because a transnational perspective was intended and the Dutch Caribbean represents a facet that is often overlooked and overall receives little attention in the context of a potential Caribbean whole. At the moment, it must remain an intention to possibly make up for the missed opportunity in a future revision or to encourage someone else to engage with it.

I would like to express special thanks to Prof. Dietrich Briesemeister, who made the project possible through his support, although he thereby intensified an existing controversy with the administration of the Ibero-American Institute and ultimately felt compelled to resign from his position as scientific director. The project owes its success in overcoming the administrative hurdles of the Ibero-American Institute to the personal commitment of Dr. Hiltgund Jehle. I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks for the support of Prof. Ulrich Fleischmann, who took over the institutional leadership of the research project, although he initially mistrusted the approach.

Introduction

Motivated by the impression that the perspective of those stylized as strangers is neglected in the ongoing and increasingly intensified problematization of non-European immigration, the following analysis focuses on the view gained by Caribbean migrants of preferred destinations in Europe and how they adapt to the conditions experienced in the visited metropolises. This is explored through the analysis of literary works by Caribbean authors who have depicted their protagonists' stays in London and Paris. The analysis concentrates on publications since World War II, during which immigration from the Caribbean to both England and France reached substantial levels and was increasingly addressed in literature.

Literature, during the second half of the 20th century, serves as a medium in which the experiences of Caribbean protagonists with European conditions are not only continuously reflected but also adaptation strategies and concepts of adjustment are developed. The increase in texts is less proportional to migration from the Caribbean, which has stagnated since the 1980s or transitioned into circular movement, but rather to a European climate of growing xenophobia and seclusion in the face of a feared invasion from the formerly colonial periphery into the center of prosperity and progress. This development has led to an increased need for the affected individuals to express their views, not only through literary forms but also in other ways. The living conditions become more difficult even for naturalized citizens when their outward distinctiveness marks them as undesirable intruders. The resulting discourse presents a differentiated picture, allowing for the identification of recurring patterns of encounter and the documentation of characteristic problems of intercultural contact, which in this direction of mobility are notoriously burdened by prejudices and restrictions. Although the narrative perspectives of relevant experiences in predominantly fictional form cannot be easily regarded as a faithful reflection of social reality, the investigation of their

representation appears suitable for shedding light not only on blind spots in European self-perception but also on the ideology-forming process associated with it: how to deal with the intrinsic asymmetry of the relationship between locals and newcomers. The texts are examined in terms of the experiences conveyed and the consequences drawn by the protagonists, and are compared with each other as well as with the respective intentions of the authors. Diachronically, trends can be discerned from the identified variabilities, while synchronically, the comparison highlights the different conditions in London and Paris.

Caribbean migration and its reflection in literature are chosen as the subject of investigation because they appear exemplary in several respects for the global interconnection that also intensifies the influx into European metropolises. The Caribbean's special affinity with global centers is evident not only economically but also culturally, making the region a prototype of globalization. Colonized by various European powers, which fiercely competed for Caribbean territories, they were not only subjected to their interests for the longest period of all colonies but were also particularly adapted to the needs of the respective mother countries, including a complete population exchange. Despite being culturally Europeanized to the best of their abilities, according to the dictates of different colonial rulers, they have nevertheless become the epitome of particular racial and cultural diversity, characterized by the mixing of differences. From a European perspective, however, their residents are more likely to be labeled with "colorfulness" as a stigma.

Sustainable external dependence continues to pose a difficult legacy even after gaining independence. Emigration has therefore characterized the region since the mid-19th century, when the economic value of formerly exclusive sugar producers declined and a nomadic way of life became a survival strategy for the heterogeneous population. It is therefore not surprising that the traditional ties to former mother countries (as well as to the regional hegemonic power, the US) are exploited in the reverse direction of expansion. The fact that migration is directed towards various metropolises of highly industrialized countries allows for the comparison of the described experiences with respect to the respective destinations. Caribbean literature proves to be an especially interesting subject of

study because its authors develop a specific and innovative response to the notorious problems encountered by foreigners in Europe, which may be considered particularly relevant and of overarching importance in the context of advancing globalization. The decision to adopt a Caribbean perspective on Europe is also based on a previous analysis of literature from the opposite perspective, which focused on the European portrayal of cultural contacts in the Caribbean.[1] This reciprocally raised the question of the foreign perspective on European conditions. Therefore, an investigation of the Caribbean discourse on experiences in Europe also represents a complementary step towards achieving mutual exchange of experiences across cultural boundaries.

The Europeans and the Others

To give a rough idea of the context in which the analyzed discourse implicitly or explicitly takes a stand, I would like to outline the current debate on phenomena such as migration and European isolation, globalization and the formation of diasporas that question the concept of the nation, and finally sketch a controversial "new world order".

Since the end of World War II, the metropolises of the highly developed industrial countries have been at the center of a gradually increasing migration movement from so-called underdeveloped countries of the former colonial periphery, which has been causing growing alarm among the established European population in recent times. The lack of integration of the newcomers and problems with increasing xenophobia among the natives are cited as critical points. As the fear of an "invasion of the poor from the Third World" fueled by repeated economic recessions since the 1970s spreads, xenophobic groups and parties opposed to non-European immigration have emerged in almost all European countries around the

[1] Chris von Gagern, *Reisen in die Karibik: Wie sich Kontakt mit anderer Kultur in Reisebeschreibungen darstellt* (1994)

turn of the millennium. On the other hand, the long-term problems of declining birth rates and increasing aging of a shrinking European population make the acceptance of immigrants appear necessary.

The centers of Western prosperity and progress are not without reason at the center of migratory interest. Experts also see the unequal distribution of wealth and resources as a primary cause of the worldwide migration, which is now seen even by experts without any polemical intention like Myron Weiner, as a serious threat to the achieved level of civilization in the destination countries.[2] This migration from the former colonial periphery to the center is directly related to the preceding worldwide colonial expansion of European powers. During colonial rule, most of the major nations today managed to accumulate disproportionate wealth at the expense of those they colonized, thus initiating the rapid progress that the "developing countries" have been striving to catch up with desperately yet in vain ever since. By systematically aligning their development with the needs of the colonial powers, their acquired advantage was able to be sustainably expanded. When it could no longer be denied at the beginning of the 20th century that the benefits of many of the exhausted colonial possessions fell short of the diverse costs of their domination and that the colonial project was thus undeniably declining, a process of gradual decolonization was initiated, which released one possession after another into independence and was essentially completed after World War II. However, even self-government left the former colonies with limited freedom; the close interconnections continued under new hegemonic powers. In the era of the East-West conflict with its strict polarization into an imperialist and a communist camp, they were no longer directly subjected to a colonial power, but they formed satellites of the two superpowers, the USA or the USSR, which jealously controlled the proteges understood as backward in their development and monitored their progress on the respective path of economic and social convergence. Even after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, the developed countries continue to perpetuate a world order under the

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[2] for facts and assessments of global migration, see Myron Weiner, *The Global Migration Crisis: Challenge to States and to Human Rights* (1995)

motto of liberalization, which keeps others dependent and denies them the satisfaction of minimal own needs.

Stimulated by post-war reconstruction and the recruitment of labor in the remaining colonies, there was a substantial reverse flow after World War II, mainly to England and France. However, as helpful as foreign assistance was for the economic upswing of the 1950s and 1960s, it has been considered increasingly unnecessary or problematic since the recession of the 1970s. Immigration has since been subjected to a series of restrictions to reduce the influx. The established foreigners began to feel a change in sentiment against them: they were told to leave because they were no longer needed. However, incentives for their return were as ineffective as increasing social pressure on them, which has increasingly manifested itself in individual attacks and assaults and has led to widespread reservations against all those who are believed to question the cultural identity of the respective nation. Rather, the immigrants began to organize themselves locally against xenophobic hostilities from informal and political groups and to defend their acquired rights.

In the process of European integration, internal European borders gradually fell, but the common external border is fortified even more hermetically against non-alliance intruders. Because Europe stubbornly refuses to be seen as an immigration destination, it obliges its member states to dissolve ancestral alliance obligations, such as those maintained by Great Britain with the Commonwealth, and to take measures against immigration. In 1992, an agreement was reached on a common, more restrictive refugee policy.

On the other hand, Europe cannot and does not want to escape the opposing trend of advancing globalization in the economic and, by necessity, cultural sphere. The internationalization of metropolises in the course of their development into globally significant trade and service centers irreversibly diversifies the indigenous culture and inevitably requires a certain willingness to compromise. Not only do the coveted foreign or multinational capital owners settle there, but they also require a workforce of low qualifications. Global communication media disseminate information about living conditions, economic growth,

disproportionately high labor demand, and thus stimulate worldwide migration in the developing world. Locally, the attractiveness of mythically exaggerated expectations of centers of prosperity is additionally fueled by corrupt governments, human rights violations under dictatorships, civil wars, and natural disasters, which inevitably lead to a departure in search of sustainable living conditions. Despite all measures taken against it, global transportation networks enable global mobility. Under restrictive conditions, the number of illegal immigrants increases, especially in the dark. With them, a new layer of the underprivileged enters the metropolises, prompting critics to warn of a new form of slavery, as quasi-colonial conditions threaten to reproduce in the heart of global cities.

Parallel to a development that inexorably brings the world closer together, global norms are also being developed. For example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 provides for both the right to leave and the right to return to the respective country of origin. The European standard also includes a commitment to the international agreement on non-discrimination based on race, religion, gender, and language. Theorists also demand, in the course of liberalizing trade and capital flows, a further implementation of international freedom of movement, which should also free the economic factor of labor from all-encompassing restrictions in terms of self-regulation of the market and the realization of equal opportunities. However, opponents of this demanded right to freely choose the desired society oppose it with the right to protect a community and its developed way of life, and in Europe, they can still be confident of a significantly higher acceptance of their argument. This is because baseless fears and concerns (such as ethnic conflicts, loss of ancestral privileges and European dominance in the state, unemployment and social decline, overpopulation, incalculable environmental burdens, and an "ungovernable chaos") motivate voters and rulers in Europe to adopt a defensive stance and a correspondingly restrictive regulation of migration, reserving the right to strict selection of admitted immigrants.

Cultural pluralism has become an undeniable fact, especially in European metropolises. However, the culturally homogeneous nations of Europe still struggle with this concept and respond with increased emphasis on integration

and cultural assimilation of migrants. Cultural exchange between the native population, defined by ancestry, and foreigners is asymmetric and guided by strict adherence to a predetermined "dominant culture". While it cannot be assumed that immigrants refuse integration or adaptation, they tend to adapt to the local circumstances rather than fully integrate and give up or set aside their own cultural heritage. Social pressure, coupled with latent stigmatization of foreigners, who are often met with suspicion and occasionally targeted with hostility and aggression, proves to be counterproductive and reinforces their recourse to their original culture. As a result, an increasing refusal of exclusive loyalty to a nation and its culture can be observed among them. Instead, they affirm racial and cultural differences, advocate for equality, and assert their right to free cultural development.

Enhanced by globalization, which refers primarily to the economic liberalization since the 1980s but is increasingly associated with its far-reaching cultural, social, and political consequences that have led to the emergence of a "transnational global society", diasporas are increasingly forming communities of people scattered around the world for various reasons, who share a common origin. The emergence of transnational communities often connects geographically distant places of origin and destination. Circular migration, in the form of movement back and forth between different locations, is increasingly replacing unilateral emigration. Consequently, transnational identities are emerging, with their representatives advocating for ambiguous affiliations to more than one community. Particularly, the second generation of immigrants, growing up under the overlapping influence of different cultures, tends to select elements from both cultures and create dynamic and hybrid cultural variants.[3] While adaptation to local conditions is generally ensured, the emphasis on cultural difference also entails a certain degree of separation. Advocates of cultural assimilation, considering it an indispensable prerequisite, argue that integration has failed and the nation-state, whose cohesion is based on cultural commonalities, is threatened by gradual cultural pluralization.

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[3] referring to the formation of diasporas see Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas. An Introduction* (1997)

Robin Cohen interprets the signs of the times more calmly: We are undeniably on our way to a global civilization, and advancing globalization makes states more interdependent, thereby curtailing their sovereignty to some extent. Diasporas add a cultural interconnection of societies to their mutual economic, technological, and ecological interdependence. They form a lobby in both the country of origin and the destination country. In the latter, they advocate for equal opportunities, legal certainty, family reunification, freedom of movement, and autonomous self-organization. In the former, they assert their influence to improve living conditions, often advocating for a change of government, and frequently lend weight to their innovative ideas through financial support from family clans and substantial investments. In light of the development of global cities and the proliferation of diasporas, a nationally homogeneous identity appears obsolete. With nearly 200 sovereign states in the UN but more than 2,000 ethnicities claiming a national identity, the concept of granting each ethnic community a national territory must be considered a failure. States are rather challenged to manage a diversity of overlapping social identities. Current concepts do not adequately address the new realities, but the concept of the multicultural state encounters neo-conservative resistance in Europe due to fears of dissolution of the nation-states, which forces its abandonment as politically unachievable before it could be seriously tested.

Proponents of the current philosophy of postmodernity predominantly perceive the social, political, and cultural consequences of globalization as liberation from the exclusive claim to progress according to the Western model that characterized the era of modernity. However, critics fear that the dissolution mainly occurs in the sense of expanding capitalist dominance. The fact that pronounced hegemonic aspirations manifest behind the much-vaunted "invisible hand of the global market" is widely ignored or denied on the one hand, but it also provokes fierce opponents of globalization on the other. These opponents are not only militant critics of globalization, who worldwide advocate for curbing the rule of the strongest and for a more symmetrical development, but also a resurgence of nationalism, racism, and sexism can be observed in Europe and beyond. Religious fundamentalism, not only in the Islamic world, indicates a growing tendency to

deviate from the dominant model of uniform progress towards a uniformly conceived modernity.

Since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the communist Eastern Bloc, which stabilized international relations for over 40 years through a balance of terror, there has been talk of a "new world order". However, the apparent global interconnection of societies and the historical experience of interferences play a minor role in this narrative. Rather, the predominantly American rhetoric is based on preconceived dichotomous patterns of thought and once again initiates a division of the world, this time into developed and underdeveloped, which is also referred to as the North-South conflict.

“Limes-ideology” versus “Clash of Civilisations”

In the context of the concept of a 'new world order,' I would like to address two controversial theories that seem to be paradigmatic in their interpretation of current developments and are therefore relevant to this investigation, as they significantly influence the thinking about immigration into highly developed industrial countries. – In his work 'L'empire et les nouveaux barbares,' physician and humanitarian Jean-Christophe Rufin warns of a trivial polarization and criticizes the emerging division and fortification of the industrialized countries in the North against a feared invasion of the 'barbarians from the South,' which he argues could lead to a system of global apartheid. – In 'The Clash of Civilizations,' political scientist Samuel Huntington advocates for a clear division into several culturally determined blocs as the basis for a stabilized politics in the 21st century, and considers a comprehensive cultural mixing as a dangerous subversion of social cohesion. The division of the world addressed in both theories contradicts the current trend of globalization only superficially, but emphasizes its inherent asymmetry, which is seen as a destabilizing factor.

Rufin compares the crisis in international relations after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc with the situation of the Roman Empire after its victory over Carthage.[4] The withdrawal of the central opponent necessitates a reorientation, which at that time, as today, is sought in a unifying opposition to others who have no knowledge of their community. The historical parallel lies in the confrontation of a centralized party with a diffuse plurality, which, due to the absence of a unifying opponent, is stylized as a threat. Just as the peoples stereotypically declared 'barbarians' beyond the imperial domain were the imagined opponents of the Roman Empire's mission to bring civilization with a claim to universalism, today the opponent is mainly located in the South, and the 'Third World' is stylized as new barbarians, against whose threat the 'Empire of the Civilized' unifies as a defender of liberal democracy. The confrontation of the wealthy countries of the North with the poor in the South is not only a construct in which identity is sought, but also an expression of a fundamental ideological shift: from an ideological solidarity pact of equalizing development, there is a gradual shift towards an image of the enemy, and after the end of the Cold War, an ideology of inequality and asymmetry is revived, in which the myth of development for all collapses. Because it becomes not only clear that the progress of the developed countries is no longer attainable, but also that the widening gap is stylized as a contrary development that signals a fundamental incompatibility. The new concept includes a rupture with the South and the establishment of a protective wall around the civilization of the developed world, comparable to the ancient Limes, which served as protection against a feared invasion of the barbarians. By fueling panic about an invasion of the poor and taking measures against migration, the North is preparing to hermetically seal its borders in the long term, only allowing permeability outward, thus virtually summoning a violent confrontation. – Conversely, on the side of the Others, a culture of poverty as a permanently established phenomenon is preparing growing population segments for an invasion of the strongholds of prosperity. The polarization is reciprocally taken up, confirming the ideology of rupture. With migration, tensions are brought to European metropolises in the form of conflicts with ethnic undertones.

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[4] Jean-Christophe Rufin, *L'empire et les nouveaux barbares* (1991)

The estimated contrast between civilization and barbarism must undoubtedly be considered ideologically elevated: it is less about showing how things are, but rather about which direction should be taken. In the sense of an ideology of rupture between worlds, imaginary contrasts are intensified and a confrontation between antagonists is initiated. In order to secure the continued existence of their superior way of life, the highly developed industrialized countries of the North gradually conformed to spatial limitations. After the failure of the colonial assimilation of the world, the focus shifted to a retreat to a secure defense line that is intended to exclude poverty and instability, while accepting and solidifying asymmetric development. The still under construction "Limes" separates a closed world from a diffuse outside that is necessarily handed over to the others. However, the policy of demarcation only works if it is possible to stabilize the neighboring states in the contact zone along the "Limes" and functionalize them as buffer states. Therefore, the primary diplomatic interest is directed towards the integration of these contact countries, to which certain privileges would be offered in exchange for security obligations. Development aid in general is increasingly linked to the stabilization of conditions and is primarily aimed at averting the social threat to the North. As competing as the interests of the industrialized nations may be, they seemingly converge in terms of averting the threat to their prosperity. The process of European unification since the 1960s illustrates this: while before there was fierce competition among different nations and a fusion was rather sought with the corresponding colonies in the South, they have since adopted a defensive ideology, for which they also gave up the last privileges for their former colonies, in order to jointly enforce a sharper external border step by step. To legitimize increasingly hermetic isolation from non-European migrants, their previously relatively insignificant infiltration is portrayed as a breach, thus fueling a defensive attitude in the population. Public opinion is already infected with the ideology of protecting prosperity through containment. In the name of security, the "Limes" ideology aims for a sharp separation and strongly suggests that the "Limes" must be made impermeable. Any means is suitable for defense, as opponents are not subject to one's own laws and ideals – what would be strictly punished within the "Limes" is allowed outside. Thus, democracy, development,

and the rule of law are limited to insiders. The safeguarding of achievements, developmental advantages, and privileges is thus bought at the price of justice. In his critical interpretation of a new world order aspired by the "Empire of the Civilized," Rufin concludes by noting that defense strategies of this kind historically have sooner or later ended in a breach. However, the example of the Roman Empire, which was able to delay its decline by centuries through such means, is unlikely to discourage the main advocates, even though no one can seriously expect such a span in our fast-paced times.

In contrast to Rufin's provocative intention in exposing systematic segregation between North and South as a "new world order," Huntington prepares for a "clash of civilizations" as the future defining confrontation. He passionately advocates for a model of a world divided into different civilizations, where the leading industrial nations must reaffirm their Western identity if they do not want to perish.[5] After the end of the Cold War and the resulting division into two unifying ideological camps, he sees a concerning resurgence of different cultural identities that shatters any hope of a global civilization based on the Western model.

Undoubtedly, the United States, as the current hegemonic power, and its European allies have already lost (and thus the model of Western culture as such) their disciplining influence. Since the end of Europe's colonial expansion at the beginning of the 20th century, a revolt of the oppressed against Western dominance has emerged and gradually undermined it over time. With the gradual decline of European colonial powers and eventually the United States from their world-dominating positions, the exemplary function and binding force of a unified civilizational concept diminishes. The international order, which has long been dominated by the West, is destabilizing. Different cultures are drifting apart rather than coming closer together. In the meantime, the proclaimed universality of Western culture has proven to be a construct, making room for a plurality of influences from different cultural spheres, each with its own concept of progress.

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[5] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996)

New regional powers in Asia, the Islamic world, Eastern Europe, etc., not only demonstrate growing influence but also challenge the West and the world order maintained by the West.

Among various scenarios of decline and resulting reordering (Huntington mentions, in this context, other visions besides the unlikely claim of Western hegemony in the course of globalization, such as polarization under the sign of poor countries in the South versus the wealthy in the North or a multilateral confrontation between individual states without a disciplining hegemonic power, or even the dissolution of national-state order, which he associates with a collapse of state authority, anarchy, and ethnic conflicts under the leadership of criminal warlords, resulting in uncontrollable refugee flows), Huntington tends towards the model of global integration of 7-8 cultural spheres or civilizations, in which nation-states survive but form competing blocs around leading core countries based on cultural affinity. In a balance through changing tactical alliances between the blocs, which are fundamentally hostile to each other, hence why cross-block partnerships would be considered unstable, he still sees the best guarantee for relative political stability given the circumstances. Because he considers cultural homogeneity as the crucial prerequisite for social cohesion. However, in such a constellation, the West must fight for its survival, whether it wants to or not. Its survival depends on reaffirming the shared Western identity in order to achieve the unification that alone offers a chance to face the challenge.

In countries with different ethnic populations, he anticipates exhausting internal conflicts and social segregation in the process of integration into core countries of different cultural spheres, which predispose them to being losers. Because he sees clear identification with and unwavering loyalty to a group as an archaic principle that justifies itself through the fact that a tight organization with common values and goals proves to be more powerful, effective, and therefore more viable in the confrontation with others. He considers "culturally schizophrenic" nations with populations belonging to different civilizations as unstable and threatened with decay in the long run. ("We are different people and belong in different places".) Currently, the West is trying to maintain its leadership position by defining its interests as global and hoping to integrate everyone into a globalized world

economy. However, he considers the formation of overarching global associations to be utopian in the face of disintegrative tendencies. The existing contradictions cannot be concealed for long. Due to the interdependencies, the Western industrialized countries are more at risk of being undermined as preferred destination countries by a self-reinforcing global migration crisis. Because there is a serious danger that Europe, like the United States, will become fragmented societies. The attitude towards increasing migration flows in the Western industrialized nations has so far been ambivalent and has oscillated between support due to labor demand, which was predominant until the 1970s, and restrictive control and selection measures due to unemployment, which have been on the rise since the 1980s. But the already imported problems are becoming all too clear; because the half-hearted attempts at integration must be considered failed in the face of a cultural pluralism established in the metropolises, which promotes instability. There is growing fear of invasion among the population, and recently there have been outbreaks of violence against migrants, especially in Europe.

If the West, whose zenith has also been surpassed, unmistakably announced by economic depressions, followed inevitably by invasions of the barbarians, the decline could still be averted or at least delayed if a unification of the West could be achieved through a renewed commitment to Western values, such as the heritage of antiquity, Christianity, linguistic diversity, separation of state and church, the rule of law, social pluralism, representative democracy, and individualism. Foreign enclaves of cultural pluralism must be cleansed, immigrants from other cultural circles must be more strictly selected and integrated. Supporters of multicultural societies within their own ranks are considered by Huntington to be disguised separatists and are identified as renegades as the foremost target of his criticism.

Both visions of a "new world order," whether critical or supportive, signal a hostile climate towards non-European migration, which is expected to intensify in the future rather than normalize in the context of a globalized system that involves complex interactions. There is not only little room for the formation of more complex social organizational patterns, such as multiple cultural affiliations and

hybrid identities, but also an implicit attribution of dominance to reductionist tendencies towards "archaic principles" in order to combat change and mixing. Although the reactionary orientation mentioned may not attempt to do justice to the complex circumstances as much as it seeks to problematize and exacerbate them through ideological elevation, its rhetorical effectiveness should not be underestimated. The electoral successes of neo-conservative and right-wing populist parties in most EU member states indicate a growing acceptance of defensive and security-oriented concepts among the European population. Moreover, the heightened ideological polarization of world politics following the attack on the World Trade Center, with some aligning themselves with "anarchic terrorism" and others with "civilization," points to a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Approach

The examination of Caribbean migration can serve as an exemplary example that polarizing concepts, however common they may be, do not adequately address current realities, but rather in a global context, complex and irreversible interrelationships, not least of a cultural nature, exist that make insistence on incompatible opposition appear absurd, despite undeniable differences and peculiarities of all variants.[6]

Firstly, it is necessary to introduce particularities that characterize not only the Caribbean but also the migration emanating from it, such as racial and cultural

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[6] Edward W. Said has aptly formulated the dilemma of global socialization by pointing out the causal European involvement: "No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are no more than starting-points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental....No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about. Survival in fact is about the connections between things." *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), p. 336.

mixing, or the existence of a tradition of mobility and emigration. Then, the sources underlying the examination, the methodological approach, and the theses represented will need to be explained.

The Caribbean as a Diaspora and the Tradition of Persistent Migration

The Caribbean can be considered the most intensely and enduringly colonized region. With the discovery of the New World, Spanish conquerors took possession of the first colonial territories here, some of which are still under European rule (such as the French overseas departments and the Dutch Antilles, as well as some remaining British West Indies) or seamlessly "associated" with the regional hegemon, the USA, such as Puerto Rico and the formerly Danish Virgin Islands. In the absence of trade goods, such as the originally hoped-for spices, or natural resources, such as the coveted gold, the Caribbean became the cradle of plantation economy, which was to bring unparalleled profit to Europe. By the end of the 18th century, they represented the richest and most coveted colonies, fiercely contested by all European colonial powers. Plantation economy and African slaves shaped the region so enduringly that these criteria are now considered constitutive for a predominantly cultural definition of the region, which includes the island world of the Caribbean Sea as well as those coastal areas that are also predominantly shaped by plantation economy and Afro-American cultures, such as the three Guyanas or Belize.

Due to the fact that a veritable population exchange took place on the archipelago, which was divided among Spain, Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands, in which the virtually exterminated indigenous inhabitants were initially replaced by enslaved Africans in the majority within a few decades, and after their eventual emancipation in the mid-19th century, supplemented by Asian (specifically Indian, Javanese, and Chinese) contract workers, an extraordinary ethnic and cultural diversity emerged in a confined space – against the will of the colonial rulers, who

made every effort to assimilate the heterogeneous population into the respective European culture. Apart from a characteristic racial mixing that has produced all possible nuances of skin color, the culture today also presents itself as a hybrid product. On the one hand, the islands have been enduringly Europeanized after centuries of assimilation efforts, and on the other hand, they exhibit syncretistic cultural features that draw on African, Asian, and occasionally indigenous origins. From the forced mixture of peoples on the plantations and the everyday intersection of different cultures, a gradual process of "creolization" has resulted in not only independent Creole languages but also a multitude of hybrid, transcultural, creole identities, whose common characteristic lies in the synthesis of elements of different cultural origins.

Migration has a long tradition in the Caribbean. On the one hand, today's population, whether of European, African, or Asian descent, represents a collectively immigrated – or rather, in the majority, forcibly transported – population during the colonial period. On the other hand, a large part of them, in connection with the decline in significance of the formerly exclusive sugar producers, which fell into crisis in the 19th century and were compelled to abandon slavery in favor of wage labor, were once again forced to migrate. Since the half-hearted concession of emancipation was not sufficient to win the cooperation of the formerly enslaved, many European planters withdrew to their respective home countries in the second half of the century. The less privileged were left with no choice but to compensate for the lack of earning opportunities through seasonal labor migration on the increasingly neglected islands of the colonial powers: first to other islands where sugar was still being grown and there was temporarily increased demand for labor, and around the turn of the century, increasingly to the Central and South American mainland to seek employment, for example, in the construction of the Panama Canal. Despite racial discrimination and exploitative working conditions elsewhere, migration became an indispensable factor, a reluctantly accepted aspect of the social perspective,

increasingly integrated into the life plan of each individual, and has remained relevant beyond the decolonization of most islands until the mid-20th century.[7]

Achieving independence through their own efforts, like the colonies on the American mainland, proved to be hopeless for the scattered islands divided among various rulers (with the exception of Haiti, which, inspired by the revolution in France, freed itself from French colonial rule and slavery in a bloody war of liberation and defended its achieved independence against Spanish and British restoration attempts of European colonial power). Although the USA repeatedly presented themselves as liberators – such as in the cases of Cuba and Puerto Rico – their interventions also expanded their influence as a regional hegemonic power. Autonomy in the Caribbean therefore continues to be seen as something granted by higher powers and revocable. External dependence and foreign control persist and even under self-administration, only limited independent development perspectives emerge for the geographically and politically fragmented islands, which represent more competitors than cooperation partners on the world market. The aspect of one-sided development as a tropical extension and specialized complement to the metropolises in the form of plantation colonies proves to be a sustainable handicap that hinders diversified development according to their own needs. Colonial heritage also includes a steeply stratified society that hampers social advancement and – despite all mixing – depends on nuanced criteria of descent and skin color. Those who strive for social mobility usually seek it elsewhere, in accordance with the logic of the circumstances.

Since World War II, Caribbean migration has been directed towards broader goals, preferably to North American and European metropolises, and for the first time with a permanent perspective. One reason for overseas ventures was the participation of French and British contingents from colonies in the Caribbean in

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[7] To understand Caribbean migration, including its causes, goals, specific characteristics, and impacts, refer to *The Caribbean Exodus*, edited by Barry Levine (1987), especially the contributions by Dawn Marshall, "A History of West Indian Migration: Opportunities and 'Safety-Valve' Policies"; Charles Carnegie, "A Social Psychology of Caribbean Migrations: Strategic Flexibility in the W.I."; Aaron Segal, "The Caribbean Exodus in a Global Context: Comparative Migration Experiences".

the war. The commitment to the Allies not only revived the connection to the motherland, but also fostered the awareness of having acquired a right to settle there. On the other hand, European countries actively sought labor from the remaining colonies in the post-war period to eliminate war damages. Additionally, Europe increasingly became the focus of Caribbean migration because the traditionally preferred emigration to the neighboring USA was restricted in 1952 by nationality-based quotas that disadvantaged non-European immigrants.

Necessity has always played a significant role in mobility for societies in the Caribbean; migration is constitutive for them. A flexible and nomadic way of life has become a cultural characteristic in them and promotes not only the willingness of a majority of their residents to seize opportunities wherever they arise and build multiple options, but also adaptability. In the face of growing restrictions on migration, this makes them experts, for example, in existing loopholes. Because many have embarked on wanderings, almost every one of those who stayed behind has relationships abroad. The mobility of those who have built a life in the metropolis, in turn, fuels expectations among those who have stayed at home. The knowledge of opportunities elsewhere, even if often embellished and unreliable, strengthens the desire for migration. – The widespread belief that social advancement can be achieved in the metropolises, which stubbornly fails in the Caribbean, is due in no small part to the principle of Europeans justifying colonial appropriation with a program of gradual cultural assimilation that promised the colonized people to have equal access to the much-advertised blessings of civilization. Ultimately, they are doing nothing more than using existing ties to the center in reverse expansion, which is what the culture so forcefully conveyed to them has prepared them for.

While the Caribbean does not stand out in terms of the absolute magnitude of its population exports, it has the highest emigration rate worldwide in relation to a total population of about 35 million. A broad cross-section of the population is motivated to migrate, including skilled professionals and intellectuals as well as low-skilled individuals, men and women alike (although in the post-war period, more men initially emigrated, since the late 1960s, women have slightly outnumbered men). Caribbean governments generally do not dislike emigration,

as it reduces the problems resulting from the islands' traditional overpopulation. Some of the smaller islands, in particular, have become economically dependent on financial remittances from migrants. However, as mainly young people emigrate, new problems arise for the elderly who are left behind.

Since the Caribbean is not currently considered an acute crisis zone, migration is seen as voluntary and predominantly economically motivated, although many flee a hopeless situation and seek refuge in the strongholds of civilization. Only in the case of Cuba and Haiti is the term "refugees" used, as they are granted compelling reasons to go into exile. In the case of Cubans, political oppression by the communist regime is generally more readily acknowledged and exile is granted accordingly, compared to Haitians whose plight is caused by dictatorial rulers who mostly remain in power with the support of the United States.

As the region was divided among various colonial powers and later came predominantly under the influence of the United States, there are ties to a variety of metropolises that are considered as destinations (from New York to London, Paris, Miami, Madrid, Montreal, Toronto, The Hague, Amsterdam, and at times Moscow). However, the migration movement does not only follow the pre-determined path from a colony to the corresponding metropolis, but there is also a lively fluctuation of migrants between the destinations. In practically all the mentioned places, a Caribbean diaspora has established itself, which is in loose contact with the diaspora in other cities. The permanent character and irreversible influence of Caribbean migration is also evident in Caribbean-influenced neighborhoods such as Brixton in London or Barbès in Paris. Because the newcomers cultivate a strong bond with their origins, not least due to latent hostilities from the European side, and in the European metropolises, they reconstruct their own specific way of life. The Caribbean itself could already be considered as a diaspora, where there is a struggle to establish a connection to the long-discriminated African origins. If a hybrid cultural identity is already crucial in the Caribbean, it is expanded rather than unified during its continuation of migration (preferably to the centers of industrialized countries and to a lesser extent back to Africa or Asia).

As Caribbean migration is diverse and spread across a variety of destinations in Europe, North America, but also in Latin America, Africa, and more recently even in the Arab world, its impact on the respective host countries remains relatively small. They form minorities that pose little threat to the dominant society but continuously struggle with marginalization. The fact that they consist literally of all races and their diverse mixtures often makes them difficult to categorize in terms of origin, but in a European environment, where until after World War II – unlike the United States, for example – there was no significant network of non-European populations, they have a distinct external distinctiveness that supports a general classification as foreigners, even though they, like Antilleans in France or the Netherlands (or Puerto Ricans in the United States), should be considered as equal citizens. Those who cannot claim such a privilege are hindered by increasingly restrictive immigration regulations. These regulations also affect the British West Indies, such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, etc., and Guyana and the former Dutch Suriname on the South American continent, which traditionally cultivated a strong affinity for their former colonial metropolis. But with the not entirely coincidental granting of independence, their inhabitants also lost the right to settle in Europe, not least because they were held responsible for a diaspora perceived as problematic in Great Britain or the Netherlands. – There are indications that the Caribbean, whose connection to the center was so sustainably pursued and unquestioned for so long, is on the verge of being declared a problematic region "beyond the limes," against which Europe wants to protect itself.

Sources and Methodology

The migration movement from the formerly colonial periphery to the centers of industrialized countries in general, as well as migration from the Caribbean in particular, has so far been analyzed mainly from social and political perspectives, rarely from cultural ones. In the field of migration research, efforts have been made to shed light on aspects such as scale, causes, routes, trajectory, conflict potential, and integration opportunities. Most studies focus on the United States, as it has

long been a contested destination for emigration, and there has been an interest in recognizing and controlling migratory tendencies. As early as the 1920s, there was already a discussion of intercultural and interracial relationships, which initially focused on the problem that certain ethnicities do not assimilate into the American melting pot. Inspired by the African American civil rights movement, the 1960s saw an increased engagement with ethnic minorities, with an emphasis on the demand for cultural pluralism. This engagement has since been systematically deepened and differentiated. In this context, the neighboring Caribbean, which has become a closely watched sphere of influence for the United States since the withdrawal of the colonial powers, has been extensively examined, with detailed treatment of immigration from individual islands. This includes issues of integration or marginalization, social mobility, and cultural identity of exile communities. Special attention has been given to migration from Puerto Rico as an associated territory of the United States, as well as refugee waves from communist Cuba.

In Europe, the academic study of the phenomenon of growing non-European populations in metropolitan areas, as well as its causes and consequences, only began to emerge in the late 1960s. Similar to the United States, sociological perspectives dominate here as well. Relevant studies on Caribbean migration primarily focus on destination countries such as Great Britain, to a lesser extent on France, and occasionally on the Netherlands. However, beyond the fragmented picture provided by surveys and interviews, the perspectives and opinions of the immigrants themselves on the issues they encounter or raise have so far received relatively little attention.

Perhaps less representative but much more comprehensive and nuanced, the fates, problems, and adaptation processes of migrants are reflected in cultural media such as literature. As testimonies of a foreign perspective that have arisen of their own accord, literary representations of the experiences of immigrants offer unfiltered insights and are therefore all the more effective in illuminating blind spots in self-perception. In addition, those "others" who enter European metropolises in this way also take a position on the existing conditions and influence their further development through their own discourses. While literature

as a product of creative imagination is not necessarily limited to faithfully reflecting an objective reality, it also has an ideological impact, as the conveyed reflections have the ability to change attitudes and intervene in readers' understanding of reality through rhetoric. However, the role of ideology formation through cultural means appears to have received little attention in this context so far. In the belief that it requires special attention and criticism, I take up the suggestion of literary scholar Edward Said to focus on the transcultural interaction between literature and its current social context across language and national boundaries and to "counterpoint" the described experiences with the social conditions that inspired and are critically referred to in the texts on Caribbean migration to Europe.[8]

Literature as a Chaotic System

Since a literary analysis in this sense deviates in various ways from currently prevailing systematic theoretical approaches and consciously exceeds the usual national or linguistic comparative framework, the underlying understanding of literature requires explanation. – The approach is essentially inspired by the literary theory developed by Alexander Argyros in criticism of Derrida's radical

[8] „Contamination is the wrong word to use here, but some notion of literature and indeed all culture as hybrid.... and overlapping with what used to be regarded as extraneous elements – this strikes me as the essential idea for the revolutionary realities today, in which the contests of the secular world so provocatively inform the texts we both read and write....Once we accept the actual configuration of literary experiences overlapping with one another and interde pendent, despite national boundaries and coercively legislated national autonomies, history and geography are transfiguered in new maps, in new and far less stable entities, in new types of connections. Exile, far from being the fate of nearly forgotten unfortunates who are dispossessed and expatriated, becomes something closer to a norm, an experience of crossing boundaries and charting new territories in defiance of the classic canonic enclosures.... Texts are protean things; they are tied to circumstances and politics large and small, and these require attention and criticism.... Instead of the partial analysis offered by the various national or systematically theoretical schools, I have been proposing the contrapuntal lines of a global analysis, in which texts and worldly institutions are seen working together... and in which the literature of one commonwealth is involved in the literature of others.“ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), S. 317-318.

deconstructivism and in adaptation of insights from chaos research, which encourages a systemic view of the relationships between cultural products and the natural environment. It conceives of narrativity as a chaotic system and relates it to the generation of cultural change.[9]

A keyword sketch of chaos as an object of knowledge is to be provided in advance, which is essentially based on Argyros' presentation: In the natural sciences, until recently, the focus was mainly on linear systems whose evolution is predictable or deterministic. In these systems, cause and effect are proportional, and the whole can be considered as the sum of its parts. The multifaceted chaos theory owes its current significance to the realization that we apparently have to deal with nonlinear systems to a much greater extent, whose processes change abruptly and unpredictably, and where the smallest fluctuations in their variables produce disproportionate effects or trigger turbulence. When studying this instability and its random behavior, the supposedly disordered chaos often revealed itself in strange and unexpected ways as regular and structured. The ability of nonlinear systems to find new order in chaos became evident. A polarization of randomness and order seemed not to accurately describe the behavior of most systems. Rather, chaos bridges this dichotomy and suggests a third possibility, which appears as a chosen strategy of evolution to flexibly reconcile conservation and innovation. What appears as random arbitrariness turns out to be randomness channeled in a productive way. Matter and energy exhibit self-organizing tendencies. Chaos gives systems creative energies. A characteristic of the systematic nature of chaotic systems is a coordinated interplay between erratic and deterministic states. Typical of the seemingly random behavior of chaotic systems is that they strive for a strange attractor, which is neither stable nor random. (An attractor is the

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[9] Inevitably, the elaborated theory is reduced here to a sketch of some relevant aspects. By foregoing an adequate presentation of the fundamentals of chaos theory, only an imperfect, albeit, I hope, not entirely distorting impression can be conveyed. For further exploration, reference is made to Alexander J. Argyros, *A Blessed Rage for Order: Deconstruction, Evolution, and Chaos* (1991), Part 3 - Chaos.
As general introductions to chaos theory, the following could also be helpful: James Gleick, *Chaos: Making a New Science* (1987) and
Ilya Prigogine/Isabelle Stengers, *Order out of Chaos: Man's New Dialogue with Nature* (1984).

equilibrium state to which a dynamic system seems to be heading and which reveals a visible form in a "phase space" – a graphical model that depicts the processual development, thus including the history of a dynamic system. While linear systems move towards stable attractors such as a fixed point or a circle, and one cannot expect random processes to have an attractor, the development of nonlinear systems converges on recognizable similar and lasting patterns, but the repetitions are non-periodic and never completely identical.) The fluctuation between randomness and order is based on the sensitivity of chaotic systems, which react to fluctuations in external conditions. The smallest differences in the original inputs are amplified through feedback until they influence the macroscopic behavior of the system. Contrary to the common perception of chaos as the epitome of disorder and uncontrollability, chaos research understands non-equilibrium of dynamic, especially living, systems as a source of order and evolution. When nonlinear systems are pushed into states far from equilibrium, they tend to undergo discontinuous, global organizational steps. Their self-organization begins spontaneously, they become innovative and negentropic, meaning they are capable of reversing the tendency of increasing entropy in the sense of a gradual decay of order, which is considered inevitable for all linear processes according to the second law of thermodynamics. Accordingly, evolution no longer appears irreversibly bound to degeneration, but chaotic processes also give it the meaning of generating increasingly complex levels of matter and energy from simple components, which exhibit a global structure of self-similarity and fractal scaling. Chaotic systems generate hierarchical scales that exhibit enough similarity to establish universality, but not so much that they exclude continuous innovation. By repeating archetypal patterns at different levels of evolution, the universe creates itself, so to speak. Fractal self-similarity suggests that nature finds solutions to similar problems by generating structures that preserve recognizable similarity across scales. In addition, flexible systems that exhibit chaotic sensitivity and self-regulating adaptability are more viable than rigid systems, which were considered the epitome of order and thus permanence. Due to adaptability and innovative power, nonlinear chaotic processes apparently not only survive better than linear static ones, but "everything seems to go better when it approaches the

behavior of a chaotic attractor, which is individually unpredictable". Consequently, the unpredictability of nonlinear innovative capacity should be seen not so much as an obstacle or threat to order, but as a legitimate and necessary tool of evolution in the sense of inventing a future of more complex order. Chaos offers evolution the stability as well as the sensitivity it needs to periodically reinvent itself.

Argyros focuses primarily on the philosophical implications of chaos theory and argues that it supports a perspective that bridges the gap between the physical world, as the subject of scientific knowledge, and the mental constructs from the realm of human culture, which the humanities deal with. Considering that the universe contains both the world of nature independent of humans and the social environment created by humans, the understanding of the complexity of natural phenomena derived from chaos research also applies to cultural products. Not only natural phenomena and physical objects are predominantly the result of dynamic, hierarchical, feedback-dependent, nonlinear processes, but cultural phenomena and mental products as well. Chaos underlies all flexible and creative processes, whether natural or cultural in origin. The cultural world of mental constructs and the physical world of the natural sciences are thus connected by an isomorphism. Complexity reveals a universal behavior that suggests the global nature of systems beyond delimited disciplines and specialized sciences.

According to Argyros, chaos research unfolds significance for art and the humanities insofar as it provides a general model for presenting creative solutions. He argues that culture has taken over the role of primary producer of variation on the level of social environments through random genetic mutation. He considers humans as a species that, in relation to the primarily self-created social environment, wrestles alternative options from the current circumstances. The human mind, as a predisposition of a complex biological organism, develops by inventing alternative futures and forming explanatory theories about its natural and social environment. However, humans generate information exponentially by reflecting on themselves. In the process of reflection, the present is fed back into the attractor (the enduring pattern that the process of its emergence in phase space seems to strive for) with regard to future alternatives and thus modified. Cultural production represents a way to stage other forms of being that are then considered,

judged, rejected, selected, or changed. Cultural impulses are capable of pushing traditional attractors, which symbolize the current social situation, toward new configurations. Art, therefore, has the task of taking a critical stance and showing ways to modify the past so that it can ultimately be replaced by an alternative of more complex order. Social rules that resist cultural innovation by their nature appear in this image as baggage against unmediated social change and ensure that an existing configuration can only be changed gradually and step by step.

According to Argyros, language is the most powerful medium in terms of shaping and modifying our shared social environment. In particular, he attributes to narrative a function as a fundamental agent of cultural change. It is to be regarded as an essential component of the dialectic between humans and nature, which creates a map of the world and reflects the process of evolution. By formulating hypotheses about the nature of a segment of reality or the consequences of certain variations of the existing model, narrative contributes on a collective, cultural level what the brain does on the level of the individual, namely, generating models of reality and comparing them with sensory impressions and other models. By being able to sufficiently reflect the environment in the form of dynamic causal relationships, narrative serves not only to create semantic richness but ultimately to create the world of humans as a whole. In narrative reflection, he sees a complex strategy embodied to store, process, manage, and manipulate information. The mental creation of narrating the world offers an elegant and robust solution for human information management. However, narrative does not only reflect reality but also experiments with it. It represents a nonlinear, turbulent flow and amplifies local fluctuations that may grow into global transformations in the system. The production of literature is therefore to be seen as a method to stimulate cultural variation in the form of fictional scenarios and to spread possibilities that enable cultural progress. "When the cultural player recognizes the rules, he is in a position to improve the game or invent a new one." However, since this striving for innovation initially involves the creation of ideological ideas, skepticism, as pursued by Derrida's deconstructivism, is certainly justified. Whether they contribute to the rhetoric of developing more complex order or rather to unfair simplification must undoubtedly be critically evaluated. Cultural competence is

continuously modified through appropriate feedback. But unlike a radically deconstructivist understanding of literature that does not envision anything beyond textuality, the theory that culture is a chaotic system encourages the hope that small disruptions by individuals or small collectives will spread globally in the networked system of social environments.

Postcolonial Literatures

Before exploring the innovative impulses that arise from the discourse of Caribbean authors on migration to Europe, I would like to discuss a study that examines the discursive relationship between postcolonial literature and the dominant trends in literary production and criticism in general, and lays the groundwork for an approach of cross-cultural criticism, as suggested by Said.[10] Although "The Empire Writes Back" refers to the literary response of formerly British colonized individuals, the insights gained from it are also considered fundamental and relevant for postcolonial literatures beyond the English-speaking world.

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin observe that in literatures from territories decolonized after World War II, regardless of the continent, there is a tendency to counter the prevailing cultural discourse of the metropolis, to which postcolonial authors remain connected to a large extent, as they are mostly influenced by it and refer to it even across national borders. They provide a perspective of the formerly colonized, which strongly relativizes the implicit claim of Euro-American culture to universality. Despite postcolonial societies' unanimous attempts to establish their distinctiveness from the metropolis, its influence persists, particularly in the cultural sphere. However, the relationship of cultural exchange usually remains asymmetrical. The fact that the hegemonic claim of the center is not overcome with independence is evident in how postcolonial literature is often considered

[10] Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tifflin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (1989)

marginal, not only within the English-speaking world. While colonial authors from the imperial era and occasionally non-European proteges are rather generously included in the canon of British literature, postcolonial authors face stricter selection criteria, often accompanied by a linguistic demarcation. This counters the tendency of decentralization and pluralization, reinforcing the notion of a unified standard, in order to maintain the central position of the metropolis and the established hierarchical structures. Ashcroft goes even further and asserts that European literary theory, despite contrary postmodern and poststructuralist efforts, has regarded its standards as too universal to adequately address postcolonial literatures. Consequently, a distinct postcolonial literary theory has emerged, which shares certain aspects with postmodern or poststructuralist approaches, but is not synonymous with them.

Despite all cross-cultural networking, postcolonial authors are characterized by their search for a new relationship with both the corresponding region and the metropolis, in order to overcome the social and cultural alienation caused by colonialism. Drawing on precolonial cultures, they often deliberately emphasize the differences from the metropolis and construct cultural alterity. In order to find an independent viewpoint of the colonized and affirm a distinctive cultural identity, authors frequently take creative liberties, such as appropriating the colonial language, breaking away from predetermined stylistic norms, and proclaiming cultural variations that arise from creolization.

While the overlap between postcolonial literature and features of European postmodernity and poststructuralism is evident, particularly in terms of criticism and subversion of Eurocentric positions, it cannot be incorporated into a universalistic paradigm. Despite the postmodernist effort to deconstruct central authority, unquestionable truths, claims of universal validity, and the search for encounters with non-European individuals in non-dominant forms, the critical movements, however revolutionary they may appear in a European context, are often viewed as Eurocentric from a postcolonial perspective. Due to the not entirely baseless suspicion that the center now likes to present itself as an opponent of imperialist thinking, while subliminally pursuing tendencies of appropriating the Other, positions that offer themselves as allies against European cultural

imperialism are accepted only conditionally and eclectically. (For example, an understanding of discourse as competing statements that take a stand against each other is considered relevant, as is Marxist ideology critique, although Marxism has largely lost its traditional appeal to the colonized as a critique of Western imperialism and has been exposed as Eurocentric.) Instead of engaging in European concepts of transmitting meaning and thus exposing themselves to the suspicion of imitation, postcolonial perspectives tend to rely on syncretistic practices, draw on oral traditions, cultivate cultural intertextuality, and create a transcultural communication situation.

Corpus and Theses

Caribbean literatures present a multifaceted and rich discourse on migration, both to the metropolises of North America and Europe, and to a lesser extent, Africa. Considering the growing diasporas around the world and the fact that Caribbean writers themselves were often at the forefront of those who migrated to the metropolises or were inspired to write by the experience of being foreign, it is not surprising that migration has become a frequently discussed topic in Caribbean literatures. What is more remarkable is that the literature branch that emerged in the various diasporas and addresses this topic, which can no longer be clearly located nationally, has hardly been systematically studied so far, let alone in a transcultural comparative framework that includes different destinations.

With regard to the francophone Caribbean, Michael Dash points to the current proliferation of exile or migration literature. His observations seem to be applicable to the other Caribbean language areas in a meaningful way as well.[11] There, too, exile and return have long been a recurring theme, which stands in an indirect relationship to the most pressing literary theme of recent times, the search for Caribbean identity. In the past, the focus was usually on exile as an alienating

[11] see J. Michael Dash, „Exile and Recent Literature“ in *History of Litarature in the Caribbean*, Vol. I (1992).

experience and the complications arising from disorientation in the face of a hostile foreign environment, which, in accordance with the trauma of uprooting in Caribbean history, provided an opportunity to propagate the ideal of a distinctive identity and rootedness in one's own homeland culture. However, it is increasingly being expressed that a unified mother culture is a fiction. Rather, the Caribbean conglomerate of cultures in fragmented territories offers little refuge. Cultural belonging often remains a dream or at least a continuing problem. The postcolonial attempt to counter the cultural dominance of the West with an ideology of black uniqueness (as envisioned, for example, by representatives of movements like Negritude in the 1940s and 1950s or Black Power in the 1960s and 1970s) has only had temporary and limited influence. Since the 1980s, the allure of European and North American metropolises has increasingly outweighed the ideological retreat to an imaginary black authenticity. This is reflected literary in a gradual rejection of a poetic regionalism. Worldly experience is increasingly seen as inspiration, nomadism as a stimulus. The Caribbean is newly understood from a distance – as an identity that is just as unstable as it is diverse, in a constant process of becoming an unpredictable change. An ideology of cultural authenticity becomes to some extent irrelevant due to this new understanding. From the experience of a more or less sinister exile, the conclusion is no longer to withdraw into oneself, but to overcome obstacles and hostilities through increased mobility and cultural versatility. Caribbean protagonists now find themselves more in cultural polyvalence than in black authenticity.

In Caribbean literature, migration to Europe has been observed for over a hundred years. Some texts that originated in the 19th century can be found. However, at that time, travel to European metropolises was mainly limited to a small circle of colonial rulers who generally had little reason to feel foreign there. Only from Haiti, which became independent in 1804, there are sporadic visitors of African descent in Paris who encounter the unknown. In the colonial territories, after the emancipation of slaves, wider circles of creole society began to enjoy greater mobility. Given the sporadic descriptions of stays in the metropolis, mostly obligatory educational trips by occasionally colored members of the upper class, it is only from the turn of the century that one can speak of a discourse. Between the

two World Wars, representations of Caribbean protagonists' stays in Europe increased significantly, including for the first time those who did not belong to the upper class. Since World War II and the subsequent decolonization of French and British territories, the previously sporadic discourse has rapidly gained density in terms of publication frequency, as well as the diversity of social perspectives and the explosiveness of cross-cultural criticism. The chosen period of investigation from the post-war period to the end of the 20th century focuses on current developments, especially since publications towards the present are steadily increasing. The discourse, whose contributions refer to each other as well as take a stance on the described conditions, is meaningful, particularly regarding European xenophobia, which represents a fundamental experience for all protagonists, although they react differently to it. Since there can hardly be talk of a cultural divide in view of the traditionally close ties of Caribbean territories, the external foreignness of the protagonists plays a significant role. The range of experiences described presents a differentiated picture that resists hasty generalizations. Not only racial differences among the protagonists, but also pronounced class differences, different cultural influences, and various political conditions play a role, which facilitate or hinder migration and also complicate life in the metropolis. The French nationalization of Caribbean territories grants Antillean migrants a freedom of movement that is increasingly denied to West Indians in Great Britain due to the devaluation of Commonwealth status, and that was never granted to exiles from communist Cuba or dictator-controlled Haiti. In addition, variables for the respective reception play a role, which affect different destinations, but also temporal developments, which are reflected in the comparison.

The study focuses on 44 texts by Antillean, West Indian, Haitian, and Cuban authors that describe experiences in London and Paris and are set in the post-World War II period. While predominantly men express their views in the post-war period, an increasing number of women feel compelled to make a statement and numerically dominate with 15 female authors out of a total of 28. They are mostly novels and stories, less frequently autobiographical accounts. The criterion for the literature search was initially only that the texts convey detailed experiences of Caribbean protagonists during their stays in one of the two European metropolises,

providing insights into the process of adaptation to the conditions. Accordingly, texts were excluded if the description provided too little information about the social environment, contact situations, and a certain temporal development, as is often the case with short stories or poetry, which deliberately focus on fragmentary aspects. Although the majority of the texts are novels and thus suggest fictional elements rather than documentation of personal experiences, all the considered texts are based on actual stays of their authors in the described destinations. Therefore, it can be assumed that the depictions are not necessarily in line with the authors' personal experiences, but are indirectly related to them. Historizing fictions as well as theoretical processing of impressions were not considered as primary literature but may have been considered as secondary literature. Despite all efforts not to overlook any relevant texts, the selection cannot claim to be exhaustive. The literature search was made difficult not only by the fact that the texts can be attributed to different language areas and national literatures but also by the fact that it cannot be assumed that Caribbean literature has been bibliographically recorded completely, especially regarding publications in exile. In addition, not all authors, especially those who were born or raised in the metropolis, reveal their origin or ancestry. Some texts, such as Lamming's "Water with Berries," were out of print and unfortunately not available in relevant libraries at the time. Of course, new texts have since been added that could no longer be considered, such as Zadie Smith's "White Teeth," because the chapter on London was already completed at the time of its publication. While not comprehensive, the corpus of texts considered can at least claim to represent a representative selection that makes the Caribbean discourse on migration in the period under consideration detailed and comprehensible.

The discourse offers a wealth of examples of how the relationship between locals and foreigners is shaped. Naturally, the texts not only depict reality faithfully, but also reconstruct experience with the intention of shaping it, giving it perspective, and composing it into the final text that is communicated. In addition to truthful behavioral examples, the texts also include fictionalizations, alienations, critical reflections, personal statements, polemical replies from the author and his various protagonists regarding the described reality. In doing so, they exemplify,

deconstruct, criticize, or create ideological ideas, propagate or reject certain attitudes towards the given circumstances. With the design of perspectives and ways of thinking, they more or less deliberately influence the understanding of reality for their readers. Those who stayed at home learn about the experiences of others in foreign lands, the opportunities they encountered, and the disappointments they faced. Potential travelers or emigrants are either encouraged or warned in their endeavors. Members of exile communities see their behavior reflected. Last but not least, European residents of metropolises are described and often critically reflected upon. The comparative analysis primarily focuses on the ideological process in the discourse under consideration: how do the protagonists adapt to the given circumstances, and what adaptation strategies do the authors develop as a consequence of the experiences described?

Given the abundance of material, the texts cannot be exhaustively treated individually, but are evaluated and related to each other under selective aspects, primarily in terms of content. Corresponding questions reveal the original disposition, collected experiences, and drawn conclusions of the protagonists, allowing for the abstraction of the adaptation strategies conveyed by the authors. From a multitude of texts that tell a thematically similar story in differentiated ways and at different times, significant similarities as well as variables crystallize in comparison. These variables highlight characteristic forms of encounters, prevailing reactions, and tendencies of changing developments against the socio-political background of the respective metropolis. On a higher level of comparison, the patterns of interaction between "locals" and "foreigners" in relation to London and Paris can be contrasted, in order to explore their different self-perceptions in relation to foreigners.

Based on the comparison of the texts, the thesis is put forward that Caribbean authors, in the face of a xenophobic attitude towards non-European immigrants felt more openly in London than in Paris, demonstrate tendencies to persistently adhere to constructed contrasts of race or culture, or to revive concepts that proved useful in the colonial era for the domination of foreigners. They converge on an

adaptation strategy that explicitly seeks to overcome such polarization, rather than nurturing defensive or reciprocally rejecting reflexes, as would be expected. Their descriptions imaginatively stimulate the transformation of a limited mindset, whether they are confronted with it from the European side or become aware of it among their fellow countrymen. Their plea for transnational and transcultural compatibility draws essential inspiration from the idea of creolization. In contrast to the exclusivist conception to which Europeans have always shown a strong affinity, the overlapping of different cultures is not only permissible but also constitutive. Creative mixing of differences is seen as an enrichment for both sides, which also produces new variations, instead of being perpetually regarded as contamination or bastardization. Insofar as the propagated model of cultural hybridization potentially allows for a significantly greater structural complexity of the elements involved and contributes less to the escalation of ethnic conflicts than the prevailing polarizing principle of clear-cut oppositions, it promises to better meet the increasingly pluralistic situation in European metropolises. The emerging tendency among Caribbean authors to perceive an adverse situation for migrants in London and Paris as a challenge and to creatively deal with it in terms of creolization of the circumstances eloquently exemplifies the insight from chaos theory that a state far from equilibrium encourages the emergence of more complex organizational forms. From this perspective, the Caribbean discourse on migration is highly relevant and particularly relevant with regard to a globalization that reveals a persistent asymmetry in its cultural effects.