

**When the dead understand us: traces of Bantu languages in the Cuban Spanish
chants in Palo Monte or Regla Conga**

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This work will describe parts of the so called “bozal spanish” (SCHWEGLER,2003) spoken in specific Bantu rituals religion from a black-african origin (Palo Monte, or Regla Conga) guided into two central categories: identities and traces of languages in contact.

So, it will be a descriptive work by using collected data along two years of continuous fieldwork investigations in Cuba (Havana City, Cienfuegos and Pinar del Rio Provinces) and want to contribute to the best comprehension of the remains of ritual languages and the contact of the Spanish with them. It wants to contribute, yet, to the best understanding the identities vs “be african” through the ritual “African” language used at the funeral ceremonies in Palo Monte.

This is a multidisciplinary work, looking the language not only as system but as a complex whole. I will try to discuss here the limits of creole languages (MUYSKEN & ARENDS, 1995, MINTZ & PRICE, 1976, and others) and the “Cuban spanish” used in ritual chants and witchcrafts in Palo Monte, into the ritual religions and the specificity of Cuba in the caribbeans studies and African diaspora.

As PALMIE (2002) argues, the traditional caribbeans cultural practices are part of the same history that produces modernity and both represents, together, an hybrid formation. So, doing this parallel with the language, I will try to expose some faces of the Spanish and “Bantu languages” used in religion rituals.