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Published on H-Caribbean (July, 2023)

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Kaysha Corinealdi’s *Panama in Black* is an important contribution to the study of community formation in the African diaspora. Corinealdi examines the multigenerational activism of Afro-Caribbean Panamanians, who simultaneously engaged nationalist, imperial, and hemispheric discourses of anti-Blackness from the late 1920s up until 1970. She argues that the diasporic world making of Afro-Caribbean Panamanians “challenged the history of outsider vs. insider that had long shaped the experiences of African descendants, Indigenous peoples, and migrants of color in Panama and other parts of the Americas” (p. 3).

One of Corinealdi’s major interventions is her focus on Black people as knowledge producers who helped define Panama. As she establishes, Afro-Caribbean Panamanians considered the isthmus a place of socioeconomic possibility for persons of African descent. Yet white and mestizo Panamanians promoted an Iberian American nation in which Afro-Caribbean migrants and their children resided as outsiders. Further, US officials and businessmen viewed the Canal Zone as a territory in which to expand US imperial interests while discriminating against the majority Black labor force. These competing narratives shaped the context in which Afro-Caribbean Panamanians staked citizenship claims while affirming their connections to the broader African diaspora.

Afro-Caribbean men and women engaged in practices of vernacular citizenship that reflected what Corinealdi describes as “local internationalism.” Chapter 1 analyzes local internationalism as practiced through the *Panama Tribune*, an Afro-Caribbean Panamanian newspaper that catered to the interests of English-speaking Black residents. The late 1920s witnessed a wave of xenophobia in the isthmus, which led to constitutional amendments that denied the citizenship of children with foreign-born parents. The internationally circulated *Tribune* responded by promoting unity within the Afro-Caribbean community; its contributors affirmed the citizenship of Afro-Caribbean Panamanians. Corinealdi asserts that the *Tribune* provided a voice for diasporic populations by documenting day-to-day life and connecting local
forms of anti-Blackness to racism in Europe and throughout the Americas.

In chapter 2, Corinealdi demonstrates how Afro-Caribbean Panamanians worked within national and Canal Zone political structures to advocate for their citizenship rights. During the 1940s, President Arnulfo Arias announced his intention to denationalize the children of foreign-born parents. While some Afro-Caribbean Panamanians petitioned for the recognition of their citizenship, others called for a review of the discriminatory constitution. Corinealdi traces how the Panama Tribute editor, Sidney Young, as well as Afro-Caribbean Panamanian educators, repackaged anti-Black immigrant ideologies by promoting solidarity and assimilation. These activists formed labor unions and built coalitions through civic organizations that also demanded improved working conditions and educational opportunities. Corinealdi highlights that Afro-Caribbean Panamanians asserted their demands as members of a global democratic movement, with some using anticommunist discourses to call for racial equality.

Importantly, Corinealdi contends that Afro-Caribbean Panamanian activism resisted characterizations of either embracing or challenging assimilation. Chapter 3 compares the activist trajectories of two prominent leaders who garnered international reputations by the early 1950s. On one hand, journalist George Westerman shifted his focus from addressing life in the Canal Zone to speaking more broadly in support of all Panamanian citizens. On the other hand, educator Edward Gaskin focused on international unionism while supporting a notion of citizenship that validated English speakers who retained their Afro-Caribbean culture. For both men, their anticommunist stances enabled them to contribute to treaty discussions that unfolded between Panama and the United States during the early 1950s.

Afro-Caribbean Panamanians remained vulnerable to anti-Black polices that unfolded within and outside of the Canal Zone. As Corinealdi explains in chapter 4, in 1954, white Canal Zone officials worked with white and mestizo Panamanians to introduce school conversion and depopulation. Panamanian elites used both policies to assert a national identity in which Afro-Caribbean descendants remained “questionable citizens.” Ultimately, during the 1940s and 1950s, thousands of Afro-Caribbean Panamanians protested nationalist expectations by leaving the isthmus.

Corinealdi concludes that those who moved elsewhere maintained their claims to the nation while seeking citizenship elsewhere. Chapter 5 uses New York City as an example of this dynamic by focusing on women of a Brooklyn-based organization, Las Servidoras. Las Servidoras founders formed part of a wave of Afro-Caribbean Panamanian migrants who built community with African Americans, as well as other Caribbean and Latin American residents. Corinealdi includes oral histories as she examines how their social events—which raised funds to provide scholarships for Black children—challenged racial stereotypes and centered Afro-Caribbean Panamanians in New York politics.

Black in Panama uncovers the complexities of Afro-Caribbean Panamanian identity across class, gender, and generational lines. Corinealdi’s account of Afro-diasporic world making reveals an ongoing practice in which Afro-Caribbean migrants shaped ideas of citizenship on the isthmus and throughout the Americas. As a result, this book is essential reading for those interested in the history of Caribbean migrations, the African diaspora, the Canal Zone, Panamanian nation formation, and citizenship in Latin America.
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