

Slavery vs. Colonialism? On the Role of Historic Memory in Shaping the Relations between African Americans and Contemporary African Migrants in the USA*

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African Americans, descendants of slaves forcibly brought from Africa to America hundreds of years ago, and contemporary voluntary African migrants to the USA do not form a single “Black community”. Remarkably, this fact contradicts the postulates of many breeds of “Black nationalism” from the mid-19th century on, which argue that all Black people are “brothers and sisters” because they share a common spirituality and pursue a common cause that demands their joint action all over the world. Among the reasons explaining such a non-unity, an important part is played by the different reflection of the past in their historic memory.

Based on field evidence collected in six states in 2013 and 2014, the article discusses the impact of key events in Black American and African history,

* The research is supported by the Russian Foundation for Humanities, grants # 13-01-18036 and # 14-01-00070. The author is sincerely grateful to Veronica Usacheva and Alexander Zhukov who participated in collecting and processing of the evidence, to Martha Aleo, Debra Ballard, Ken Baskin, Allison Blakely, Maria Boychuk, Igho Natufe, Bella and Kirk Sorbo, Harold Weaver whose assistance in organization and conduction of the research was inestimable, to Paul Stoller for the offprints of his publications, as well as to all the informants who were so kind as to spend their time for frank communication.

namely, the transatlantic slave trade, slavery and its abolition in the US, colonialism and anticolonial struggle in Africa, in the historic memory and their place in the collective consciousness of African Americans and contemporary African migrants. Contemporary African migrants and African Americans see and weigh the key events of the past differently. Many members of both groups do not feel they share a common “Black history”. To some extent, visions of the past promote Africans and African Americans’ rapprochement as victims of long-lasting White domination. However, a deeper analysis shows how the collective historic memory of both groups works more in the direction of separating them from each other by generating and supporting contradictory and even negative images of mutual perception. In general, the relations between African Americans and recent African migrants are characterized by simultaneous mutual attraction and repulsion. Among all ethnoracial communities in the country, the two groups (and also African Caribbeans) consider themselves as the closest; nevertheless, myriads of differences cause mutual repulsion. Inside the “magnetic field” of both attraction and repulsion for the Black communities, the differences in historic memory of African Americans and recent African immigrants in the USA play a significant role.

Introduction

In the 17th–19th centuries, in most countries of the New World, the European slave trade resulted in the formation of large communities of people whose ancestors had been forcibly removed from Africa. In the United States in particular, African Americans have become an integral part of the nation’s historical, ethnocultural, and socioeconomic landscape from its early days. Today, African Americans represent 12.6% of the country’s population (38.9 of 308.7 million people, according to the 2010 census).

The voluntary migration of African people to the Western Hemisphere, including the United States, began around the same time as the abolition of slavery, in the mid-nineteenth century. However, its scale became significant only in the 1980s and especially in the 1990s. By 2013, the number of African migrants reached 1.5 million, though they still form just 4% of the country’s residents who were born abroad.¹ Not just one “African diaspora” was formed, instead Senegalese, Ethiopian, and other national diasporas have formed; most African respondents think the same way (FA).² These diasporas are extremely heterogeneous and internally frag-

¹ Jie Zong and Jeanne Batalova, «Sub-Saharan African Immigrants in the United States», <http://migrationpolicy.org/article/sub-saharan-african-immigrants-united-states>, accessed on October 30, 2014.

² Here and throughout the text below “(FA)” stands for Field Archive in possession of the author.

mented – ethnically, religiously, socially, politically. At the same time, migrants from different states may share commonalities, including ethnicity, language and religion. There are business, friendship, and sometimes family relations between them; sometimes their members demonstrate pan-African feelings. Nonetheless, the country of origin is the identity’s “reference point” for most first generation African migrants.

This is very important for understanding mutual perception of, and relations between, Africans and African Americans. Notwithstanding regional differences, African Americans form a single ethnocultural, including linguistic, community that defines itself on the basis of race. Respectively, the generalized images of “Africa”, “Africans”, and “African culture” that ignore the continent’s diversity have formed in their minds as a reflection of their own ethnocultural integrity. African Americans see themselves not as a “diaspora” that seeks to find a niche in the time preceding their arrival in American society but as one of its most important initial components. Except for a small number of intellectuals that cultivate the “African identity” in themselves most actively, African Americans perceive themselves as true Americans. Also importantly, they often emphasize that they are the only Americans whose ancestors came to the country involuntarily (FA).

Africans clearly perceive themselves as migrants that are trying to adapt in a foreign country and integrate into a society in which African Americans form a fundamental component. They define the boundaries of their communities based primarily on nation of origin, as well as ethnicity, language, and religion, before race. That is why they do not include all Blacks or even all Africans in their communities. They perceive African Americans «as a distinct ethnic group with an identifiable set of cultural norms and values».³

Thus, African Americans and Africans (and Black Caribbeans) do not form a single “Black community”. This can seem quite natural, but what is remarkable is that this fact contradicts postulates of a significant number of powerful intellectual, cultural, and political teachings spread among Black people on both sides of the Atlantic since the mid-19th century. Garveism, Panafricanism, Negritude, Afrocentrism and other teachings of this sort proclaim the ideas of a single spiritual basis of all Black people, of a specific and unique mentality of Black people notwithstanding their place of birth, of worldwide “Black brotherhood” and “Black race’s common cause” that demands concerted actions of Black people on different continents in the world dominated by Whites.

³ Kevin M. Foster, «Gods or Vermin: Alternative Readings of the African American Experience among African and African American College Students», *Transforming Anthropology*, (13), 1, 2005, p. 35.

However, from when Liberia was founded by Black Americans in 1847 and slavery was terminated in the United States in 1865 until recent times, the relations between Black people of the two hemispheres were largely virtual: as it was pointed out above, until the 1980s and 1990s, the inflow of Africans to America was inconsiderable, while the reverse flow was even weaker. Furthermore, under the circumstances of racial inequality in America and colonialism and neocolonialism in Africa, the ideas of “Black brotherhood” resonated with many Africans and African Americans, from intellectuals to socially and politically active young representatives of the urban poor.

However, when a true “meeting” happened, it turned out that many deep differences of all kinds between the black natives of the two continents had formed over the centuries of separate existence. To some, these differences seem insurmountable to the point of not requiring attempts to overcome them (as to those Africans who consider African Americans as “just black Americans” or to the African Americans indifferent to their African roots), while others do whatever they can to bridge the gap, like activists of some African migrant and African American non-profit organizations, staunch supporters of Afrocentrism, and Black Americans wishing to cultivate the “African identity” (FA).

Many of our respondents believe that the integration of the groups among the black population in the US will never happen, although some of them admit this possibility, due to the Americanization of African migrants’ children (FA). At the same time, the aforesaid does not mean that the relations between the Black communities are bad. They cannot be characterized unambiguously at all, not least because they are not quite the same in different social and age groups, in megacities and in the outback, in the country’s North and South. Not by chance, our informants from both communities defined them in the widest possible range from “excellent” to “antagonistic”. Positive assessments included: “good”, “friendly”, “generally positive”, “normal, but not close”, “more or less decent”, whereas negative assessments included “not brilliant”, “superficial”, “cold”, “cautious”, “strained”, “suspicious”, and “watchful”. Finally, assessments based on mixed feelings included “misunderstandings”, “wrong perceptions”, “prejudice” and “mistrust” (FA). The African American – African relations resemble simultaneous attraction and repulsion of two magnets. They understand that among all ethno-racial communities in the country, they (and also African Caribbeans) are the closest to each other (to the degree that for non-Black Americans they often merge into one), recognizing common roots and partial similarity of problems in society for which racial division is so important. However, myriads of social, cultural and linguistic differences, which are immediately detected at an attempt of mutual attraction, cause mu-

tual repulsion. «It's still very hard for Africans to accept African Americans. Also for African Americans to accept Africans – a lot of African Americans see Africans as just any other foreigners» (FA).

Among the reasons that determine the nature of the relationship between Africans and African Americans is the peculiarity of their perception of each other. Many of the stereotypes are connected with the present day and experience in communication. Yet many *topoi* of the African – African American mutual perception are related to refraction in their collective memory of important events of the past. Slave trade, slavery and its abolition in the US, and colonialism and anticolonial struggle in Africa are the most crucial historic phenomena among those that affect the interaction between the two Black communities nowadays.

Methods and collected evidence

In 2013, a team of researchers directed by the author started a study of mutual perception and relationships between Black communities in the USA. To date, the research has been conducted in six states (Alabama, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, and Pennsylvania), in a number of towns, as well as in cities- Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, New York, and Philadelphia.

The task for the first field research season was to reveal the widest range of features of mutual perception and relations between African migrants and African Americans, developing in different social contexts. The methods of interview (structured, semistructured, and non-structured) and observation were used. Extensive structured interviews, usually done by preliminary appointment, were recorded on tape. Every day, the researchers spent time in predominantly Black neighborhoods of cities and towns of the Northeast and Midwest. They observed daily life, talked with common people in streets, stores, cafes, etc., and later recorded these conversations from memory. As a result, interviews and conversations were conducted with people representing almost the entire spectrum of social strata and groups of the urban Black population. They were African Americans and natives of 22 out of 49 sub-Saharan states. In addition, the researchers talked with Black Caribbeans from five countries and with non-Black Americans, connected in different ways with Africans and/or African Americans⁴.

⁴ The African states were Benin, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, and Uganda. The Caribbean countries were Barbados, Haiti, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. The origins of non-Black Americans were Arab, Chinese, European, Hispanic, Indian, and Jewish.

The main distinction of the fieldwork in 2014 was the shift in focus from the widest possible geographical, social, and national coverage of respondents, to a case study of two clearly defined and comparable small communities in the southern state of Alabama. Thus, this part of the study examined the situation not in the more historically progressive, cosmopolitan and tolerant cities of the Northeast and Midwest, but in towns in the outback in the south of the country, known for its conservatism and traditionalism. Focusing on towns was also explained by the desire to take into account a recent trend in African migration to the USA: settling not only in megacities but also in small cities and towns.

99% of the fieldwork was conducted between two small communities. The first was the African American community of the Livingston Chapel of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Black neighborhood called “The Hill” of the tiny town of Guntersville. The second was an Ethiopian Orthodox community whose members hail from different parts of the neighboring Marshall and Madison Counties for religious services and other events in the building of the Greek Orthodox Church in Huntsville.

The methods were adjusted accordingly, with the intention to establish trust with the members of the two communities. That is why we did not take structured and recorded extensive interviews, preferring conversations (although often long) in the form of semi-, and non-structured, interviews. The interviewers took notes sometimes during the conversation and sometimes afterwards. Compared to 2013, much more importance was given to participant observation whenever possible.

In total, over two field seasons, 172 interviews and conversations of different degrees of structuredness and length (from several minutes to two hours) were recorded, and records of 13 observed events were made. The compiled archive included various material evidence on the subject of research (flyers and business cards of African restaurants and hairdressing salons, Sunday prayer brochures of Black churches, museum booklets, etc.) and 519 original photos. The study is not completed yet, but we believe that the evidence collected to date already allows some preliminary conclusions to be drawn.

Discussion

First of all, it should be pointed out that one can find people with sufficient knowledge of African and Black American history almost exclusively among highly educated members of the two communities. It is especially true for the knowledge of the other community’s history: many non-highly educated respondents could not recall any events or names related to the other Black community’s history and had to confess their complete ignorance on the topic. This often leads to mutual surprise and even resent-

ment. For example, African Americans do not understand how Africans may be unaware of the history of slavery in the New World, while Africans are upset with Black Americans' ignorance of the history of anticolonial struggle in Africa. Both Africans and African Americans often read this situation as a manifestation of conscious reluctance to know the history of other Black people, as an eloquent testimony to the lack of Black unity. Nevertheless, some of them prefer to assume that history is just insufficiently taught in schools and see signs of improvement, in particular, the growing interest of African Americans in the history of Africa (FA).⁵

It can be argued that the majority of African Americans and Africans do not have a holistic view on history – their own and especially each others. Their historic consciousness, aside from that of highly educated humanitarians, is usually discrete: there is no room for history as a process, but there are several bright topoi – most significant phenomena or events that beam like stars on the dark sky of the past. All these “stars” are directly or indirectly related to the sociopolitical or spiritual resistance of Black people to oppression and exploitation by Whites in Africa and beyond. But they may be different or “shine” with different force for African Americans and Africans. It is so because «relevance of an event is determined not by “historic past” but by constantly changing present that holds in memory the most important facts of that event, its meaning. Thus, “history of memory” analyzes the meaning which the present attaches to the events of the past».⁶

Transatlantic slave trade, slavery and its abolition in the USA

The transatlantic slave trade, which began in the 16th (in North America – 17th) century, reached its peak in the mid-17th – 18th century, lasting until the second half of the 19th century and giving birth to the very phenomenon of “Black Americans”, as well as to the ques-

⁵ See also: Verona Mitchell-Agbemadi, «A Common Identity: Moving Towards Mutual Understanding and Acceptance Between Africans and African Americans», in Bruce C. Swaffield (ed.), *Proceedings of the Third Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture*, John Cabot University Press, Rome 2004, pp. 103-105; Foday Darboe, «Africans and African Americans: Conflicts, Stereotypes and Grudges. Portland State University», *McNair Scholars Online Journal*, (2), 1, 2006–2008, pp. 64-68, 76-77, <http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/mcnair/vol2/iss1/19>, accessed on September 18, 2014; Godfrey Mwakikagile, *Relations Between Africans, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans: Tensions, Indifference and Harmony*, New Africa Press, Dar es Salaam-Pretoria 2007, pp. 14-15; John A. Arthur, *African Diaspora Identities: Negotiating Culture in Transnational Migration*, Lexington Books, Lanham MD 2010, p. 249.

⁶ Yulia E. Arnautova, «Ot memoria k 'istorii pamjati' [From Memoria to 'History of Memory']», in Aron Y. Gurevich (ed.), *Odissej. Chelovek v istorii. 2003 [Odysseus. The Individual in History. 2003]*, Nauka, Moscow 2003, p. 189.

tions about the existence since then of “Black history” as the history of all Black people and of a single “African cultural tradition” in the Old and New Worlds. Among scholars, debates on these issues became permanent after the publication of Melville Herskovits’s works in the middle of the last century.⁷ Since the mid-1990s, there has been a rise in the US of public interest in the history of the slave trade and slavery, including among White Americans. It manifests itself in the opening of many new monuments, memorials, museums, exhibitions, and the creation of a number of radio and television programs, web sites, fiction and popular science books, etc.⁸ This is largely due to the enduring inflammation of the historic memory of the slave trade and slavery and its crucial place in the African Americans’ mass consciousness. The very birth of the African Americans was directly related to the incredible torments, and “birth trauma” of the slave trade and slavery – centuries of humiliation, suffering, and struggle – and still to a large extent determines their attitude and social behavior, no matter what social group or strata they belong to.⁹ To be sure, it must be clarified that the trauma of slavery influences precisely African Americans’ mentality but gives by no means rise to low self-esteem and negative self-concept.¹⁰ The painfulness for African Americans regarding the question of their past of slavery is also manifested in the fact that not all of them are willing to talk about it (FA), while the word *slaves* with respect to the ancestors of today’s African Americans is increasingly replaced by one considered more correct, namely, *enslaved* (FA).

The usage of *African Americans* as the most correct name for Black Americans contrary to still recent *Afro-Americans* is intended to relieve pain from the trauma of slavery, too. Today this term is preferred by most people of African ancestry in the US.¹¹ *African Americans* is to mean “Africans but living in America” and serving as the analog not of racial but

⁷ Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past*, Harper Brothers, New York 1941; Id., *The Human Factor in Changing Africa*, Knopf, New York 1962; see Walter C. Rucker, «Culture, Identity, and Community: From Slavery to the Present. Encyclopedia of African American History», in Leslie M. Alexander and Walter C. Rucker (eds.), ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara CA 2010, pp. 125-132.

⁸ Gert Oostindie (ed.), *Facing Up to the Past: Perspectives on the Commemoration of Slavery from Africa, the Americas and Europe*, Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston 2001; James O. Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill NC 2006.

⁹ Ron Eyerman, «Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity», in Jeffrey C. Alexander (ed.), *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, University of California Press, Berkeley CA 2012, pp. 60-111.

¹⁰ Faye Z. Belgrave and Kevin W. Allison, *African American Psychology: From Africa to America*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA 2014, pp. 69-71.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 105.

ethnic names, like *Italian Americans*, *Irish Americans*, etc.¹² The proponents of this name argue that the name *Afro-Americans* illegitimately subordinates the African part of their identity to American, making the former secondary to the latter (FA).¹³ Significantly, those African American intellectuals and cultural figures who propagate “African identity” and argue that «Our children are Africans that are born and raised here» (in America) differentiate cultures of immigrants from Europe but not from Africa: «Everyone has their own culture, whether it be Italian, Irish or African».¹⁴ Moreover, «although most black Americans prefer to call themselves African Americans, they do not all think that recent African immigrants are entitled to use the term. Some American-born blacks believe that only people born in the United States who share the heritage of slavery and oppression should be called African Americans».¹⁵

For Africans, slave trade, both European and Arab, is a symbol of former subjugation of Black people, considered as an event of African history, more than a personal feeling. For them the acuteness of this issue in their historic memory and mass consciousness is weaker due not only to the fact that they personally are not descendants of slaves, but also because they now live in sovereign African states. Even more so, sometimes they look down on African Americans just because they

¹² Some supporters of the name *African Americans* suggest to give up the name *Blacks* (Lewis R. Gordon, «Thinking through Identities: Black Peoples, Race Labels, and Ethnic Consciousness», in Yoku Shaw-Taylor and Steven A. Tuch (eds.), *The Other Americans: Contemporary African and Caribbean Immigrants in the United States*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, New York 2007, p. 71). In this way, they once again demonstrate their desire to get rid of racially based names, equating the racial identification of their community to ethnicity. «All other ethnic groups of the United States carry names that are based on either their geographical origins or cultural ancestry. [...] The increasing usage of the term African American over the past 20 years rather than Black or Black American counters this point because this term is based on geographical and cultural ancestry» (Belgrave and Allison, *African American Psychology*, p. 105).

¹³ The name *African Americans* is regarded as unacceptable labeling by those who see in it the so familiar denial of the right to be considered full-fledged Americans for Black citizens (<http://neoafricanamericans.wordpress.com/>, accessed on December 7, 2014).

¹⁴ Phil Davis, «Dance and Drum Ensemble Teaches Delsea Students about African History through Performance Art», *South Jersey Times*, February 9, 2013, http://www.nj.com/gloucester-county/index.ssf/2013/02/dance_and_drum_ensemble_teaches.html, accessed on December 6, 2014.

¹⁵ Richard Worth, *Immigration to the United States: Africans in America*. Facts On File, New York 2005, p. 86. Recent Black immigrants in the United States do not have a common opinion on the possibility of being called “African Americans”. A few accept this name, but most of them insist on its rejection (Shiera S. el-Malik, «Neo African-Americans: Discourse on Blackness», *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, (4), 1, 2011, pp. 105-112).

are descendants of slaves (FA),¹⁶ or wonder: «Why should I care about them [African Americans] and the Transatlantic Slave Trade...What does this have to do with me? I realise that their ancestors originated from my neck of the woods but so what?»¹⁷

In the meantime, most African Americans are still inclined to see themselves as second class citizens in their home country, a nation wherein their ancestors always plaid an important role. An African American from Philadelphia spoke vividly about it: «During the 400 years of enslavement we helped to build this country. And we were not even allowed to use a bath. So that's trauma» (FA). Another Black citizen of the City of Brotherly Love answering the question: «What historical figures are most prominent for America?» said: «To me, Black people who were brought here as slaves – we built America. However, everything is based on Caucasians. You see all those statues [in the city]: some of them are for Blacks, but mostly they are for Caucasians» (FA). It is important to pay attention to the respondents' self-identification with the Black slaves of the time when the American nation was forming: the historic memory of that period is so much alive in the respondents' consciousness that there is no gap between the past and the present. History and modernity constitute an indissoluble symbiosis, and descendants consider themselves not just as heirs of heroic, although deprived of glory, ancestors, but as their comrades-in-arms.

It is natural that historic memory of the slave trade era – Black history's «bifurcation point», the way events and phenomena of those centuries refracted in it, has a tremendous impact on mutual perception of, and hence, relationships between African Americans, descendants of slaves, and recent African migrants who do not bear the stigma of ancestors' slavery. Among non-socioeconomic elements, namely, historical and cultural factors of interaction between African Americans and Africans, the memory of the slave trade is a key element. In the history of Africa, «nothing is more important than «slavery». The reason is because it is the one thing that ties all Black people together the world over» (FA). In the words of Abdullah, «While the historical past of American slavery joins Africans and Blacks at the hip, their separate imaginings of this event and its horrors result in a new type of divergence between them».¹⁸

¹⁶ See also: Msia K. Clark, «African American Identity and the Impact of the «New Diaspora»», *Pambazuka News*, 237, 2006, <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/comment/31250>, accessed on July 4, 2013; Nemata Blyden, «Relationships among Blacks in the Diaspora: African and Caribbean Immigrants and American-Born Blacks», in John A. Arthur, Joseph Takougang, and Thomas Owusu (eds.), *Africans in Global Migration: Searching for Promised Lands*, Lexington Books, Lanham, MD, p. 168.

¹⁷ <https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20140102135916AA8JnK7>, accessed on December 7, 2014.

¹⁸ Zain Abdullah, *Black Mecca: The African Muslims in Harlem*, Oxford University Press, New York 2010, p. 67.

Africans and Black Americans are unanimous in glorifying victims and paying tribute to fighters against slave trade and slavery: «The Great men and women who have led the movement for emancipation are many and they provide great interest» (FA). Among the most outstanding figures in American history, members of both communities often named those who contributed to this struggle, which ended January 31, 1865 with the adoption by the US Congress of the 13th amendment to the Constitution, putting a ban to slavery and forced labor: Lincoln, Allen, Douglass, Tubman and others (FA). Although as a common symbol of oppression, slave trade unites Blacks in the face of Whites, this is not enough for them to feel historical and cultural unity: a union based not on commonalities but on dissimilarities to some third party is deliberately fragile and flawed; and more importantly, the slave trade resonates differently in the historic memory of Africans and African Americans, occupying a different place in their respective consciousness.

The attitude of African Americans toward Africans is determined to a large extent by the important part played in their collective memory by the true historic fact that Africans themselves supplied white traders with slaves. Black Americans not infrequently look at Africans as at the descendants of those who sold their ancestors into slavery (FA).¹⁹ These sentiments are so strong among them that Godfrey Uzoigwe, a US-based Nigerian historian, sees no prospect of rapprochement between the two Black communities if the African Union will not offer African Americans an official apology on behalf of Africa for complicity in the slave trade.²⁰ Once again, the time that separates the slave trade era

¹⁹ Padmore E. Agbemabiese, «The Changing “Face” of African Immigrants and Refugees: The Case of Ghanaian Immigrants in Columbus, Ohio», http://www.academia.edu/1530113/The_Changing_Face_of_African_Immigrants_and_Refugees_The_Case_of_Ghanaian_immigrants_in_Columbus_Ohio, accessed on October 20, 2012, p. 8; Paul Stoller, *Money Has No Smell: The Africanization of New York City*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2002, p. 153; Joseph Takougang, «Contemporary African Immigrants to the United States», *Irinkerindo: A Journal of African Migration*, 2, 2002, http://www.africamigration.com/archive_02/j_takougang.htm, accessed on July 19, 2013, p. 8; Kalu Ogbaa, *The Nigerian Americans*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT 2003, pp. 111-113; Matthieu Wibault, *L'Immigration africaine aux Etats-Unis depuis 1965*, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris 2005, pp. 154-158; , «African American Identity and the Impact of the “New Diaspora”»; Darboe, «Africans and African Americans», pp. 50, 70-72; Mwakikagile, *Relations Between Africans, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans*, pp. 41-42, 120; Abdullah, *Black Mecca*, pp. 67-70; Arthur, *African Diaspora Identities*, pp. 247-248; Shiera S. el-Malik, «Neo African-Americans»; Femi Ojo-Ade, «Living in Paradise?: Africans in America», *Irinkèrindò: A Journal of African Migration*, 4, 2011, pp. 17-18, <http://www.africamigration.com/Articles2011/OJO%20ADE%20LIVING%20IN%20PARADISE.htm>, accessed on July 19, 2013.

²⁰ Godfrey N. Uzoigwe, «A Matter of Identity: Africa and Its Diaspora in America Since 1900, Continuity and Change», *African and Asian Studies*, (7), 2-3, 2008, p. 286.

and today shrinks in Black Americans' consciousness, and contemporary Africans are considered responsible for an atrocity that took place centuries ago. The participation of Africans in the slave trade is seen as crime having no statute of limitation, passing from generation to generation, both collective and individual, i.e., extending to the "reference group", Africans, as a whole and to each member individually.

Of course, such charges usually offend Africans. However, some of them try to treat this situation with understanding: Africans sometimes attribute to the trauma of slavery the negative personal traits and behavior they see in African Americans belonging to the lower social strata, such as aggressiveness, rancor, suspiciousness, etc. (FA). According to an African interlocutor, «Africans in America are doing well because they have a different culture than that of African Americans: their ancestors were not slaves, and they are not fixated on the problem of racism, what does not allow African Americans to rise socially and culturally» (FA). Certain African Americans also find the origin and justification of sociopsychological problems experienced by some representatives of their people in the past of slavery (FA). Furthermore, the wish of some of them to nurture in themselves a "free" African identity is caused by a conscious desire to get rid of the trauma of slavery, manifested in the feeling of inferiority of their own sociocultural identity in American society (FA).

For a part of African Americans, mainly (but not exclusively) poorly educated and with a low cultural level, African immigrants are those who have come to their country to enjoy the benefits they do not deserve. Many African Americans (especially in poor Black ghettos of megacities) believe that African immigrants come to exploit the opportunities the United States offers, particularly, by taking away their jobs (FA).²¹ At the same time, as mentioned above, there are people that try to cope with the trauma of slavery by cultivating "a spirit of Africa", positioning themselves as first of all Africans. Some of them wear "African" clothes, adopt "African" religion, i.e. Islam, and generally tend to feel, think and behave "the African way", as they understand it. Usually they are from the lower middle and middle class. To the "real" Africans they usually appear comical and even unintelligent (Interview 4).

²¹ Wibault, *L'Immigration africaine aux Etats-Unis*, pp. 157-160; Darboe, «Africans and African Americans», pp. 50, 73-74; David Crary, «Africans in U.S. Caught between Worlds», *USA Today*, June 16, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-06-16-africanimmigrants_N.htm, accessed on December 7, 2014; Mwakikagile, *Relations Between Africans, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans*, p. 8; Msia K. Clark, «Questions of Identity among African Immigrants in America», in Isidore Okpewho and Nkiru Nzegwu (eds.), *The New African Diaspora*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington IN 2009, p. 261; Abdullah, *Black Mecca*, p. 56; Blyden, «Relationships among Blacks in the Diaspora», p. 170.

However, among the much more affluent and educated African Americans, belonging to the “upper middle class”, as well as among the rich Black celebrities, in their desire to associate themselves with the Africans, Africa has acquired a novel consideration. In the development of such an attitude, an important role was played by the Alex Haley’s novel *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*, first published in 1976, and made into a TV mini-series the following year.²² Inspired by the ideas of restoration of both their personal roots and the whole Black world’s unity, a sort of Black cultural continuity in time and space, these people afford expensive DNA analyses to find out from which modern African states their ancestors were taken to the New World and to what peoples they belonged.²³ Those Black Americans (and not only) who cannot pay for a DNA test but still want to enquire their ancestry refer to the website ancestry.com (FA) which on the one hand is free but on the other may not provide scientifically sound results. It is noteworthy that even obtaining information about the origin from a particular ethnic group does not prevent Black Americans from seeing themselves primarily as Africans “in general”: the typically African American, that is racial, logic still dominates their way of thinking.

The increasing popularity of such a tendency among wealthy African Americans gives reason to the so-called “roots tourism”. There are non-profit organizations and even special travel agencies that organize such tours. Black tourists from the USA and other countries of the New World go to the sites connected with slave trade. There – in the restored architectural monuments, recently created museums, reconstructed ceremonies, listening to the stories the tourist guides tell – history is already waiting for them, presented according to visitors’ own perceptions of it, keeping its overall terrifying reality and emotional power, in spite of

²² About the impact of the movie on the minds of a part of African Americans and on the perception of their own history by people in Africa (particularly in the Gambia), see: Alice Bellagamba, «Back to the Land of Roots. African American Tourism and the Cultural Heritage of the River Gambia», *Cahiers d'études africaines*, (49), 1-2, 2009, pp. 453-476; Ojo-Ade, «Living in Paradise?: Africans in America», pp. 14-17; Donald R. Wright, «The Effect of Alex Haley’s “Roots” on How Gambians Remember the Atlantic Slave Trade», *History in Africa*, 38, 2011, pp. 295-318.

²³ See: Alondra Nelson, «Bio Science: Genetic Genealogy Testing and the Pursuit of African Ancestry», *Social Studies of Science*, (38), 5, 2008, pp. 759-783; Elonda Clay, «Mediated Science, Genetics and Identity in the U.S. African Diaspora», in Stewart Hoover and Monica Emerich (eds.), *Media, Spiritualities and Social Change*, Continuum Press, London-New York 2011, pp. 25-36. For example, one of our respondents turned out to be a descendant of the Cameroonian Bamileke (FA).

possible distortions.²⁴ An additional impetus to such tourism was given by the Obama couple who, in 2009, solemnly visited Cape Coast castle in Ghana, one of the main sightseings left by the slave trade era.

However, many (but of course, not all) residents of the African countries perceive coming to the places of their ancestors' suffering and often experiencing a genuine catharsis by the Black Americans something strange. In Ghana "non-African Africans" are called *oburunni*, that once meant "European", "white person" and now means any "foreigner" in the Tiv language.²⁵ In East Africa, the same semantic transformation happened with *mzungu*, the Swahili word for "European", "white person", which is also used there in relation to Black Americans (FA). An elderly employee of a museum of African American history in Boston regretfully told us that, considering her-

²⁴ Edward M. Bruner, «Tourism in Ghana: The Representation of Slavery and the Return of Black Diaspora», *American Anthropologist*, (98), 2, 1996, pp. 290-304; Paula A. Ebron, «Tourists as Pilgrims: Commercial Fashioning of Transatlantic Politics», *American Ethnologist*, (26), 4, 1999, pp. 910-932; Katharina Schramm, «Das Cape Coast Castle (Ghana) als Heterotopie: Geschichte und Gegenwart eines umstrittenen Ortes», in: Hansjörg Dilger, Undine Frömming, Kerstin Volker-Saad, and Angelika Wolf (eds.), *Moderne und Postkoloniale Transformation: Eine Schrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Ute Luig*, Reimer, Berlin 2004, pp. 227-241; Gaetano Ciarcia, «Restaurer le futur. Sur La Route de l'Esclave à Ouidah (Bénin)», *Cahiers d'études africaines*, (48), 4, 2008, pp. 687-705; Bayo Halsey, *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2008, pp. 151-232; Belagamba, «Back to the Land of Roots»; Adia Benton and Kwami Z. Shabazz, «"Find Their Level". African American Roots Tourism in Sierra Leone and Ghana», *Cahiers d'études africaines*, (49), 1-2, 2009, pp. 477-511; Jemima Pierre, «Beyond Heritage Tourism: Race and the Politics of African-Diasporic Interactions», *Social Texts*, (27), 1, 2009, pp. 59-81; Liza A. Gijanto, «Competing Narratives: Tensions between Diaspora Tourism and the Atlantic Past in the Gambia», *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, (6), 3, 2011, pp. 227-243; Timothy R. Landry, «Touring the Slave Route: Inaccurate Authenticities in Bénin, West Africa», in Helaine Silverman (ed.), *Contested Cultural Heritage: Religion, Nationalism, Erasure, and Exclusion in a Global World*, Springer, New York 2011, pp. 205-231; Toni Pressley-Sanon, «Acting Out: Performing Memory of Enslavement in Ouidah, Benin Republic», *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, (4), 5, 2011, pp. 57-80; Kofi Boone, Carol Kline, Laura Johnson, Lee-Anne Milburn, and Kathleen Rieder, «Development of Visitor Identity through Study Abroad in Ghana», *Tourism Geographies*, (15), 3, 2012, pp. 470-493; Kim Warren and Elizabeth MacGonagle, «"How Much for Kunta Kinte?": Sites of Memory & Diasporan Encounters in West Africa», in Walter van Beek and Annette Schmidt (eds.), *African Hosts and Their Guests: Cultural Dynamics of Tourism*, James Currey, Woodbridge-Rochester, NY 2012, pp. 75-102; Ann Reed, *Pilgrimage Tourism of Diaspora Africans to Ghana*, Routledge, London 2014; Wendy W. Fall, «A Negro Handbook for West Africans and Other Strangers. A Meditation on Caste, Class and Other Matters by a Native Anthropologist», https://www.academia.edu/4461174/A_Negro_Handbook_for_West_Africans_and_Other_Strangers_Introduction, accessed on June 29, 2014.

²⁵ Obiagele Lake, «Toward a Pan-African Identity: Diaspora African Repatriates in Ghana», *Anthropological Quarterly*, (68), 1, 1995, p. 30; Mwakikagile, *Relations Between Africans, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans*, pp. 31-32.

self an African, she went to Africa, realizing that, for its residents, Black Americans are not “brothers and sisters” (as they are for her), but just wealthy tourists from a prosperous country (FA). We were told a similar emotional story by another elderly African American woman who calls Africa “sweet home”: «I have convinced them [Africans] I am not wealthy; you know, they think everybody, every African American that comes is wealthy, they think you live in a big house, you have a lot of cars and TVs, you have the like. Actually, I had to save money for years to make this trip. I stayed myself and no one sponsored me. I had to eat tuna fish for months! They mustn’t say that [I am wealthy]! They don’t have a concept of that! They think this is America, that money just flows [in America]! They didn’t know how much I sacrificed! So I think understanding is not that easy, and I had to convince them not to treat me like a tourist, for, you know, they think you are a sack of money!» (FA).²⁶

African states also see Black Americans as a potential source of income. That is why they attract them as investors and tourists, providing opportunities for “homecoming” as permanent residents. Ghana has been particularly active in this respect since the time of its first President and a major ideologist of Pan-Africanism Kwame Nkrumah (who, however, was ideological rather than “mercantile” supporter of Black Americans’ “repatriation”). Our interviews and conversations reveal that the vast majority of African Americans and Africans (as well as of Black Caribbeans) finds mass “return” of Black natives of the New World to Africa unnecessary or at least unrealistic (FA). Nevertheless, small communities of “homecomers” do exist, in particular, in Ghana. The depth and strength of the feelings experienced by these people at “coming back home” to Africa, to the land of their ancestors, is incredible.²⁷ Yet the position of the homecomers in the local society turns out to be very contradictory, because they often have different cultural habits

²⁶ See also *ibidem*, p. 39.

²⁷ Seestah Imahkus, *Returning Home Ain’t Easy but It Sure Is a Blessing*, One Africa Tours & Speciality Services Ltd., Cape Coast 1999.

and ways of thinking than the local population and authorities (FA).²⁸

Nonetheless, those African Americans who see themselves first as Africans usually do not rule out, at least in principle, the possibility of resettling in Africa at the time of their retirement (FA). The Uhuru Movement,²⁹ an organization which combines in its ideology Marxism with the idea of Marcus Garvey about the necessity of Black people's repatriation to Africa, is currently acquiring land in Ghana for potential resettlers (FA). Yet it should be noted that many African Americans from all strata of society already feel American to such a degree that reaching back to the days of the slave trade (personally and collectively as a whole ethnoracial community) does not interest them. They do not feel any special relationship, either good or bad, with Africans and treat them as any other immigrants. Outside major urban agglomerations, this indifference is amplified by the fact that few Africans live there, thus reducing the possibilities of personal contact with them (FA).

While in Africa people often see in African Americans' roots tourism an opportunity to capitalize on eccentricities of rich Westerners, different are the views on the search of Black identity by African Americans of those Africans who reside in the US. Some sneer those African Americans «who try to be more Africans than Africans» (FA), to find “real Africa” without leaving the home country, and think that they achieve this goal by, among other things, wearing pseudoafrican clothes and buying souvenirs from Africa that have very little to do with local folk art. “Fashion” for DNA analysis is estimated differently: on the one hand, some Africans believe that it will help African Americans realize that Africa is not culturally homogeneous, while, on the

²⁸ As a young African wrote on an Internet forum, «Nobody wants African Americans to return to Africa because they will be foreigners. They are better off where they are and our ancestors stayed behind because they were probably weaker but where we are is where we are supposed to be», i.e. in their home, in Africa (<http://neoafricanamericans.wordpress.com/>, accessed on December 7, 2014). See also: Lake, «Toward a Pan-African Identity», Mwakikagile, *Relations Between Africans, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans*, pp. 45-51, 104-107; Alusine Jalloh and Toyin Falola (eds.), *The United States and West Africa: Interactions and Relations*. University of Rochester Press, Rochester NY 2008, pp. 147-188, 200-213, Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh, «African Americans, African Immigrants and Homeland-Diaspora Development in Africa», *African Diaspora*, (10), 3, 2010, pp. 207-234; Jung R. Forte, «Diaspora Homecoming, Vodun Ancestry, and the Ambiguities of Transnational Belongings in the Republic of Benin», in Jean M. Rahier, Percy C. Hintzen, and Felipe Smith (eds.), *Global Circuits of Blackness: Interrogating the African Diaspora*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana IL 2010, pp. 174-200; Katharina Schramm, *African Homecoming: Pan-African Ideology and Contested Heritage*. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, CA 2010; Gaia Delpino, «Building Up Belonging: Diasporic ‘Homecomers’, the Ghanaian Government and Traditional Rulers: A Case of Return», *African Diaspora*, (4), 2, 2011, pp. 163-184.

²⁹ *Uhuru* means “freedom” in Kiswahili.

other hand, other Africans think that for rich and far-famed African Americans taking a DNA test is first of all a matter of personal promotion. However, American Africans unanimously support roots tourism because it contributes to increase the genuine knowledge about Africa for Black Americans and the abandonment of negative stereotypes, thus promoting better relationships between African Americans and African migrants in the USA (FA).³⁰

As it has been stressed above, the historic memory of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery is crucial for the African Americans' consciousness. For Africans, the topos of slave trade is also important, but firstly, to a lessened degree, and secondly, it refracts in their minds from a different angle. In fact, they do not consider slavery a story of betrayal of some Black people by others, but rather of exploitation of Black people by the White. Paradoxically, the racial aspect is expressed stronger by the Africans than by the African Americans. Howbeit, in general, the historic memory of the slave trade separates the Black communities in the United States more than it unites them in the face of White America.

As for the topos of slavery, it is perceived as "own history" only by those Africans who depart from the idea of a single Black history. Yet Africans have something to remind those Black Americans who claim that their ancestors suffered and Africans not, namely, colonialism.

Colonialism and anticolonial struggle in Africa

The role the issue of colonialism plays in the relationship between Africans and African Americans is not as meaningful as that of the topic of slavery. This is probably because the number of recent African migrants is smaller compared to that of African Americans, and because slavery is more poignant than colonialism in their discourses. Yet, the historic memory and ideas of colonialism, anticolonial struggle, and the rise of independent states in Africa possess undoubted importance for the mutual perception of, and relationships between, Africans and African Americans, and, in many ways, in a comparative retrospect with slave trade, slavery, and emancipation of slaves.

An important question for both communities is whether it is possible to equate the oppression of Africans under colonialism to the suffering of African Americans under the yoke of slavery. Or was the torment of Black Americans so much more terrible that only they can be considered the most disadvantaged people in history and in the modern world, to the point of claiming "reparations" (FA)? And should

³⁰ See also: Mwakikagile, *Relations Between Africans, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans*, p. 119.

their relationship with Africans be built as the relationship between true companions in misfortune, or as the relationship between those who suffered immensely and those who suffered “moderately”?

Some African Americans view slavery and colonialism as comparable phenomena (FA). Conversely, many of them believe that colonialism was not as cruel to Black people as slavery and that they cannot be compared considering the different degree of inhumanity. Furthermore, some Black Americans tend to blame Africans for a lack of understanding of all the horror of their ancestors’ life (FA). On their part, Africans complain that Black Americans underestimate the inhumanity of colonial regimes and that their insistence on the Africans’ misunderstanding of the nightmare of slavery takes a toll on their relationship (FA). Sometimes Africans accuse Black Americans for their alleged lack of support in their struggle against colonialism and blame them for not seeking to influence US policy towards Africa in the postcolonial era. However, this is not true because Africans tend not to know the activities of African Americans in support of anticolonial movements in Africa. Moreover, Africans do not take into consideration how difficult it was for African Americans to provide them with effective support at the time of racial segregation, and even after its termination.³¹ As for those African Americans who cultivate in themselves an African identity, as well as for the members of the practicing “black internationalism” organizations like the aforementioned *Uhuru Movement*, they try to avoid comparisons between slavery and colonialism, preferring to speak about Black people’s troubles in general, the troubles caused by the White (FA).

Many African Americans from all strata of society speak about their de-facto unequal position in their own country, although they recognize evident improvements in recent decades (FA). However, this does not prevent some of them, mainly those from the underclass, from basing their attitude toward Africans (and probably people from the Third World in general) on the premise that they are citizens of a powerful and highly developed state, while the immigrants hail from the poor and underdeveloped nations (FA). At the same time, Africans feel proud of the fact that their home countries got rid of the colonial dependence, albeit

³¹ James H. Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill NC 2002; Ogbaa, *The Nigerian Americans*, p. 115; Zachery R. Williams, «African Americans, Pan African Policy Matters, and the Development of the Black Foreign Policy Constituency for Africa and the African Diaspora, 1930-1998», *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, (1), 10, 2007, pp. 135-151; James Okoro, Richard Ingwe, and Uno Ijim-Agbor, «African-American Influence on American Government’s Foreign Trade, Investment and Aid Policies toward Africa: Continuing Challenges», *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, (2), 8, 2012, pp. 1269-1285.

remaining economically underdeveloped and burdened with many social and political problems (FA). The names of the outstanding fighters for independence, who also were the first leaders of the sovereign African states – such as Azikiwe, Kenyatta, Lumumba, Nkrumah, Nyerere, Sékou Touré, Senghor and others, including even Mugabe, are pronounced with great respect (FA). Some Africans, and also some Black Americans who know Africa, even used to say with regret that, except Mandela, the later decades did not have African leaders with a similar charisma (FA). The presence in Africans of a pan-African layer of identity, though not as a primary character, is evidenced by the fact that sometimes they see the origin of the contentions between African peoples and the current conflicts in the continent as a direct result of colonialism and colonial politics based on the principle of “divide and rule” (FA).

In the differences between the historical situations of colonialism and slavery, and respectively of the struggle against them, some African respondents see the reason for the dissimilarities between their cultures and the culture of Black Americans: «[Question:] Does the culture of African Americans differ from African considerably? [Answer:] Yes, it’s another culture. It’s difficult to explain but I think the reason is that those were two different types of struggle. In Africa we had African peoples’ struggle against Europe and people coming there from colonial powers like France, UK. For us our struggle is from that angle. When I came to America I didn’t even try to become an American. Because I don’t have a kind of history that an African American guy has. So I tend to see the African American more like a friend», i.e. as someone who is close, but still different (FA). At the same time, numerous recent migrants from Africa (as well as representatives of other ethnocultural communities who have experience in communicating with both Africans and African Americans [FA]) strongly believe that today Black Americans are responsible for their troubles because, contrary to the Africans, they do not want to study and work hard, not taking advantage of the opportunities to achieve social and financial well-being American society provides (FA).³² Furthermore, although it may seem strange, these views are shared by some African Americans (FA).

³² Foster, «Gods or Vermin», pp. 34, 41-43; Mwakikagile, *Relations Between Africans, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans*, pp. 40, 120-121; Clark, «African American Identity and the Impact of the “New Diaspora”»; Darboe, «Africans and African Americans», pp. 60-61, 63; Crary, «Africans in U.S. Caught between Worlds»; Blyden, «Relationships among Blacks in the Diaspora», p. 170.

Conclusion

There are significant differences in perception of key historic events among African Americans and recent African migrants to the USA. Moreover, the same events do not have the same importance to the two groups. Still, notwithstanding the differences, cannot there exist, in the minds of African Americans and Africans, the concept of “Black history” as common history of all the people whose roots are in Africa? These issues are quite important in order to understand to what extent historic memory promotes or prevents the formation of a common feeling of belonging to a single whole, namely, the “Black community” in African Americans and Africans.

Very remarkably, on this topic the main divide is not between African migrants and African Americans but between highly educated members of both communities and their less educated representatives. Among the former, opinions differ: some respondents consider Black history a reality while others a fiction. Besides, the views of those who argue that Black history does exist differ: for some of them, explicitly or implicitly, it is the antithesis to “White” history, considering “Black” history as a common bond forged because of the suffering inflicted by the Whites. For others, its foundation lies in the common origin of all Black people from Africa, dating back to the days preceding the appearance of the Whites on the continent (FA). At the same time, among averagely and poorly educated people lacking a broad cultural outlook, respondents from both communities, in particular residents of poor neighborhoods in megacities, strongly believe that the history of Africans and the history of African Americans do not form a single Black history, but rather separate entities (FA). Almost all African American respondents stressed that the main aspect in their history is slavery and the struggle against it, while the Africans did not experience them, thus making their histories different.

In principle, this leitmotif (with the following variation: the main aspect in the history of African Americans is slavery, while in the history of Africans is colonialism) is the essence of the position of all opponents to the idea of a single Black history, regardless of their origin, education and cultural level. Some respondents among Afrocentrists, activists of left political movements, and the Africans who are concerned with establishing strong ties with African Americans explain the popularity of this view by the “white propaganda” that tries to divide Black people by spreading the idea that Africans and African Americans are two different peoples, and that the history of the latter begins only with the slave trade (FA).

Many intellectuals from both communities highlight the toll taken by events of the past and their memory on the mentality and behavior of African Americans and Africans, as well as on their mutual perception and

relationships (FA). Meaningful differences in perception and evaluation of historic events, as well as the absence of feelings of a common history, separate Africans from African Americans, contributing to the establishment of ambiguous and complicated ties between Black communities.

In the words of Femi Ojo-Ade,³³ a Nigerian scholar and diplomat residing in the United States, between African migrants and African Americans, «whether we like it or not, there is a divide, a deep one, a dangerous one...» Another researcher, Msia Kibona Clark, half Tanzanian, half African American, characterizes the relationship between Black communities in the USA as «Dysfunctional at best and hostile at worst».³⁴ At the same time, one of the central points for the ideologists spreading the “Black nationalism” teachings is the postulate that all those whose skin is black and roots are in Africa are “brothers and sisters”. Among our numerous respondents, there were those who agreed with this statement, while others took it with specific reservations (FA). According to one of the interlocutors, Africans and African Americans «share the same historical background: we were exploited. So if you go back to that historical experience we share, we should be calling ourselves brothers and sisters. But if you wanna know from political point, the way we treat each other is not like brothers and sisters, though from the historical point, we should» (FA). Another respondent believes that Africans and Black Americans are brothers and sisters, «but Martin Luther King said: “don’t ever call a man your brother unless he acts like one”» (FA).

For the most part of African Americans and especially for Africans, the postulate of a pan-Black brotherhood sounds like nothing more than an ideological slogan, wrong and even absurd (FA). «I have come to believe [...] that for the most part, our shared sense of identification and affinity begins and ends with the awareness of the commonality of skin color».³⁵ Kalu Ogbaa, a Nigerian scholar and writer residing in America, asks himself a question and answers it: «For example, both groups are victims of racial profiling by the police. Does that then mean that their intergroup relations are good and smooth all the time? Certainly not».³⁶ Another respondent resonates with a similar idea, «I do not believe we are brothers and sisters just because society classifies us based on skin color and on the fact that all black people suffer some form of social discrimination. We are not brothers and sisters just because all Blacks get

³³ Femi Ojo-Ade, «Living in Paradise?: Africans in America», p. 14.

³⁴ Clark, «African American Identity and the Impact of the “New Diaspora”».

³⁵ Godwin Okebaram Uwah, «Reflections of an African-Born Immigrant: Story of Alienation», in Festus E. Obiakor and Patrick A. Grant (eds.), *Foreign-Born African Americans: Silenced Voices in the Discourse on Race*, Nova Science Publishers, Hauppauge NY 2005, p. 24.

³⁶ Ogbaa, *The Nigerian Americans*, p. 111.

their roots from Africa. Brothers and sisters should care for one another» (FA). The “magnetic poles” of the Black communities both attract and repel them; in such a magnetic field, the differences in historic memory among African Americans and recent African migrants to the USA do play a significant role in the relationship among the two groups.