

Kreolisierung

Given the social setting of early New World colonies, the encounters between Africans from a score or more different societies with each other, and with their European overlords, cannot be interpreted in terms of two (or even many different) „bodies“ of belief and value, each coherent, functioning, and intact. The Africans who reached the New World did not compose, at the outset, groups. In fact, in most cases, it might even be more accurate to view them as crowds, and very heterogeneous crowds at that. Without diminishing the probable importance of some core of common values, and the occurrence of situations where a number of slaves of common origin might indeed have been aggregated, the fact is that these were not communities of people at first, and they could only become communities by processes of cultural change. What the slaves shared at the outset was their enslavement; all – or nearly all – else had to be created by them.

Mintz, Sidney & Richard Price (1992 [1976]): The Birth of African-American Culture. An Anthropological Perspective, mit einem neuen Vorwort [Originalausgabe unter dem Titel: An Anthropological Approach to the Afro-American Past], Boston: Beacon Press, S. 18.