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## Divining the Past: The Linguistic Reconstruction of 'African' Roots in Diasporic Ritual Registers and Songs

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I examine the assumptions underlying scholars' use of etymological reconstruction to connect ritual registers in African 'sources', and to thereby reclaim African diasporic history by recovering 'lost' or hidden meanings. I compare practices of practitioners of Cuban Santería, who engage in textual and performative 'divinations' of hidden or lost modes of 'temporal telescoping' through which an African past becomes transcendent and ritually immanent. I su

modes of historical subjectivity can illuminate the efforts of linguists and other scholars of the African diaspora with hidden memories and meanings and in 'temporal telescoping'. I argue that scholars of African diasporic religion are careful to issues of time, historical consciousness and historicity, especially as they are embedded in our own local historiographic interpretive practices.

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