

## Between Rescue and Expulsion: the Martinique Escape Route, 1940-1941

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This presentation will follow the wartime escape of some five thousand European refugees to Martinique, and the myriad encounters that resulted. This long-overlooked episode speaks to many contemporary concerns, including migration, resistance, encounter, ethnicity and identity, migration and diaspora. The refugees at the heart of this book, who streamed from Marseille to Martinique in 1940-41 included Spanish Republicans, anti-Nazi Germans, Jews, and political and intellectual dissidents of various stripes. Most were wanted by the Nazis. Their desperate quest to reach the Western Hemisphere led them into the limbo of Vichy-controlled Martinique, which for visa related reasons proved easier to reach than New York. Martinique served as a key escape route to freedom, but an ambiguous one, I will argue. Indeed, even the travelers themselves were never really sure whether they had been “rescued” or “expelled.”