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From *Antillanité* to the Archipelagic

Édouard Glissant's Linked Insularities of Non-Continental Thought

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The pervasive patterns of neocolonialism long at work in the Francophone Caribbean, whereby the islands have been overseas departments of France for over seventy-five years,¹ operate through a strategic metropolitan praxis of prohibition and exclusion that has long undermined a functional framework that enables and valorizes local sociocultural self-affirmation. While France has effectively sought to efface Guadeloupean and Martinican discourses of nationalism by integrating them into an overarching metropolitan framework of domination of the Other and the disavowal of difference, carried out as part and parcel of a universalizing French policy of ethnopolitical homogeneity, the articulation of nationalist counterdiscourses and cartographies of resistance aimed at asserting the vibrancy and independence of a Franco-Caribbean identity have strategically shifted over time from the purely political to the domains of cultural identity and its corollaries of philosophy and performance.

Guadeloupe and Martinique uniquely symbolize the telling ambiguities of political development for the French Caribbean region, for if the 1946 departmentalization law theoretically bestowed the same rights and privileges on Martinicans and Guadeloupeans as on French citizens from any other region -- as those of the Bouches-du-Rhône, for example -- this relationship implied, in effect, ignoring or effacing both a history of slavery, colonialism and racism, and continuing colonial dichotomies of race, economics and geography: over time, the populace of the French Caribbean became the inheritors of a double perspective, marking a transatlantic locational and identitarian anomaly that has increasingly separated them both from their politically independent Anglophone Caribbean counterparts and from the social and cultural materialities of the metropole, to whom they remain inexplicably linked in a complex symbiosis of contentious subordination.

Beyond immediate issues of political autonomy, the primary effects of departmentalization are perhaps most clearly perceived through the economic consequences of French centralization. For example, Guadeloupe is one of the poorest corners of the national territory with an unemployment rate averaging 23 percent, well more than twice the mainland rate; at the same time, departmentalization has also engendered an extraordinary consumer society, one that imports over 95% of everything that it consumes. However, these phenomena tend to go largely unnoticed and underreported in the Hexagon. Significantly, it is by virtue of facts such as these that the long-held perception that a *de facto* condition of colonization is the iron fist lurking within the velvet glove of departmentalization's promises and assertions of equality continues to perpetuate itself.

However, metropolitan gestures toward granting increased autonomy are not always taken advantage of with the approbation or alacrity that might be imagined. For example, a critical double referendum, held in the islands on December 7, 2003, asking the populace to decide on a proposed transformation of their two *régions monodépartementales* into a "new autonomous region" was forcefully rejected by the majority of the population, ostensibly because many feared that this nudge toward self-government would be but the first nail in a French-imposed coffin of enforced independence and its concomitant loss of infrastructural, maintenance, and development costs financed and underwritten by the metropole. Crystallizing these fears, a mass general strike brought both Guadeloupe and Martinique to a standstill for 44 days in 2009. This action was accompanied by huge demonstrations against an elevated cost of living, surpassing by several times that of the metropole, and the severity of prevailing social and economic conditions; protests were often carried out by as many as 100,000 people, and these strikes and demonstrations spread to Réunion by February 21. An agreement with the French government was eventually reached on March 4 on 165 demands, including a 200-euro (\$250) increase in the monthly minimum wage and reduced prices on public transportation, gasoline, food, housing, and water.

In the wake of this uprising, a similar fate befell a subsequent referendum on becoming an autonomous overseas territory, held on January 10, 2010; the proposal was rejected by 79% of Martinican voters, with a turnout of 55%, despite the major strikes against low wages, high unemployment, and an elevated cost of living relative to the metropole of the previous year. With a 48% turnout, 69.8% of the population of French Guiana also voted against the proposal. Clearly, then, determining the range of benefits and disadvantages that attach to and arise from choosing between departmentalization, autonomy, and independence constitutes a multivalent challenge with no clear or easy choices.

Given the longstanding and pervasive complexities and contradictions of this departmental perspective, the regional assertion of Antillean identity

has over time been visibly, diachronically and ideologically inscribed as pluralized patterns of cultural, philosophical, discursive, and ontological resistance. Notably, all of these elements have long been at work in selected philosophical, fictional and cultural texts by Edouard Glissant, the Martinican author, poet, and critic. Glissant's primary accomplishment is perhaps his remarkable mediation of the theoretical and the practical; an extended analysis across decades of fictional and theoretical discourses of the key moments of contestation and representation that have produced the articulative ambiguities of the post-colonial Caribbean discursive subject. Rather than denial, the recognition of agency and the shaping of subjectivity were inscribed as the primary strategies for addressing and implementing the complexities of Franco-Caribbean identity and culture. Through his fiction as well as his criticism, Glissant advocated for an active cognizance of the multitude of factors -- historical, political, cultural, and racial -- which have coalesced over time to give rise to that multivalent ethnocultural entity which is the Caribbean people. He also charted the subjective alienation and fragmentation occurring if the formerly colonized do not consciously acknowledge the insidious legacy of displacement and division which is the continuing trace of the colonial presence. Emphasis is given to the notion that awareness and acceptance of the past must precede the construction and elaboration of an independent cultural identity in the present. Strategizing resistance and articulating alternatives to the colonial legacy necessitates subverting its assumptions and practices from within, exploding the presumptive patterns of subjection inscribed in the intricacies of the master's discourse.

Some of Glissant's late public pronouncements reinforce this longstanding inscription in resistance, like "Manifeste pour refonder les DOM" (2000), or the open letter Glissant wrote with Patrick Chamoiseau to Nicolas Sarkozy in the wake of the 2005 Parisian riots, entitled "De Loin" and whose opening described Martinique as "une vieille terre d'esclavage, de colonisation, et de néo-colonisation." This document amounted to an excoriating and eviscerating attack, steeped in the differential experience(s) of colonial history. It exposed the neocolonial policies and attitudes still extant in France and went on to cite the improbability that "une Nation se renferme aujourd'hui dans des étroites identitaires telles que cette Nation en soit amenée à ignorer ce qui fait la communauté actuelle du monde," and it closed by asserting the transnational fluidity of contemporary identity, "Les identités sont ouvertes, et fluides, et s'épanouissent par leur capacité à "se changer en échangeant" dans l'énergie du monde."² This was followed by "Quand les murs tombent: l'identité nationale hors-la-loi" (2008), "L'Intraitable beauté du monde" (2009), and "10 mai: mémoires de la traite négrière, de l'esclavage, et de leurs abolitions" (2010). We shall look at some of these texts more closely in due course, but for the moment let us note that such documents seem to make it clear that, even in this most late stage of his career, Glissant had not entirely abandoned the activist and oppositional politics that characterized

his earlier career, most notably in the 1950s and 1960s – including especially his co-founding in 1959 of the separatist *Front Antillo-Guyanais pour l'Autonomie* party with Paul Niger, the Guadeloupean poet and political activist -- when his activities led to his being forbidden by Charles de Gaulle from leaving France between 1961 and 1965.

In early philosophical and political writings articulated in such treatises as *L'Intention poétique* (1969), Glissant elaborated a clear positionality with regard to the pervasive force and influence of colonialism. In “Edouard Glissant: The Poetics of Risk,” J. Michael Dash points to the undeniable influence of Victor Segalen and Michel Leiris on Glissant’s thought during this period. Dash states the force of this influence quite clearly, “From Segalen, Glissant took the idea of diversity and multiplicity in a world threatened by the reductive globalizing force of the West. Segalen was not very interested in the Caribbean but, writing at the peak of French colonial expansion during the Third Republic, he feared the loss of cultural specificity in the face of the relentless spread of Westernization or homogenization.”³ In his acknowledgement, during these early years, of the need for resistance to (neo)colonial homogeneity, Glissant sought to establish cultural specificity as the core of a postcolonial positionality of resistance. Yet, he conceived of this specificity as always changing over time. In Dash’s formulation, “Glissant went on to elaborate a theory in which diversity would continue to evolve because of the unpredictable transformations that would be produced from global creolization. Following the lead of Segalen, Glissant felt that the encounter with the *totalité-monde* was essential to understanding individual identity. For Glissant the real threat to composite cultures came from their atavistic turning inward, from their refusal of the other.”⁴ Here we see an early iteration of the paradoxes and processes of the creolization principle, of the importance of alterity and the acknowledgement of constant change.

Interestingly, the publication of *L'Intention poétique* in 1969 also marks the initial appearance of conceptual corollaries like the poetics of relation and the idea of opacity (*opacité*), both of which would assume an overarching importance in Glissant’s later works. The interconnectedness of relation and resistance is adumbrated through the ineluctable centrality of *opacité*, “The poetics of relation presupposes that each one is confronted by the density (the opacity) of the other. The more the other resists in his thickness or his mobility (without being limited in this way), the more fruitful reality becomes, the more fruitful the relation.”⁵ In the 1980s, Glissant set out to elaborate a number of these Caribbean-centered concepts and positionalities for which he is now best known, beginning with the publication of *Le Discours antillais* in 1981. Here, Glissant lays out the complexities of the discursive foundation and philosophical perspective of *antillanité*, or Caribbeanness, a philosophical position that recognizes both the latent value of historical, colonially-driven patterns of discontinuity, subjection and pluralism inscribed throughout the Caribbean experience and their appropriation for ontological inscription as

well as ethnocultural and subjective self-assertion. *Antillanité* directly responds to the primary defining regional experience of colonization, slavery, racism, and insularity. Glissant's definition of the concept draws on these elements to generate an identity-structure out of the strands of historical experience:

La notion d'antillanité surgit d'une réalité que nous aurons à interroger, mais correspond aussi à un vœu dont il nous faudra préciser ou fonder la légitimité [...] Le réel est indéniable: cultures issues du système des Plantations; civilisation insulaire [...] peuplement pyramidal avec une origine africaine ou hindoue à la base, européenne au sommet; langues de compromis; phénomène culturel général de créolisation [...] persistance du fait africain; cultures de la canne, du maïs et du piment; lieu de combinaison des rythmes; peuples de l'oralité.⁶

On the basis of such a formulation, Glissant brings together the plurality, discontinuity, fragmentation, and dispersal inherent in these historical and cultural elements to create a positive discursive framework for the Caribbean condition. Its concatenation of history, geography, economics, politics, and race engender an experiential matrix grounded in the materialities of ambiguity, displacement, and plurality. Only by affirming the totality of this culture will the framework for the latent concept of Relation emerge in an assured way. Being itself must be reconceived. Clevis Headley explains that

[as] Glissant situates his approach to being from within the context of the being-in-the-world of Antillean historical problematics, Glissant will also offer us a new syntax of being, a logic of being that thinks being otherwise than in terms of the traditional language of being. This new syntax mutates also in the form of various metaphorical visions of being, all consistent with Glissant's ontological project: Creolization of being, opacity of being, archipelago of being, and the orality of being, to name but a few.⁷

In other words, the author of *Le Discours antillais* recognizes that a response that simply negated the tenets of a colonial discourse –thus remaining trapped within those terms -- would erase neither its essential properties nor the scope and substance of its effects, and so is ultimately inadequate to the pervasive binaries of continental universalism; this implicit but ineluctable need for an alternative discourse of agency is grounded in these universalist principles. As Benita Parry formulates it, "[...] a reverse discourse replicating and therefore reinstalling the linguistic polarities devised by a dominant centre to exclude and act against the categorized, does not liberate the 'other' from a colonized condition [...] the founding concepts of the problematic must be refused."⁸ Glissant takes up this conceptual challenge and the corollaries of its consequences by interrogating the basic tenets of a colonialist Western universalism through the prism of the plantation's coloniality of being. Clevis Headley explains this well:

To say that Glissant reenacted the theme of specificity does not mean that Glissant spontaneously embraced a local specificity against the universalism of the European colonialist. Such a reading is too simplistic and politically reductionistic. A more accurate reading of specificity [...] as singularity refutes the historical phenomenon of thinking the ontology of existence in terms of the specificity of European subjectivity generalized to the universal. Glissant thinks specificity, then, with regard to instituting an ontological alternative to the European conception of the subject.⁹

Diverging definitively from the presumptive binaries of colonialism's dominant discourses, then, the valorization of ethnocultural pluralism as resistance and admixture into new possibilities for subjective and textual poetics forms the essence of Glissant's literary and discursive undertaking. In articulating this ontological and ideological alternative to the colonial either/or as the necessary precursor to a truly unencumbered, autonomous, and multivalent identity, Glissant turns his attention to the very terms in which colonially-driven chronologies and linearities were first inscribed: principles of filiation and the obsession with the One.

The simultaneous positing of interrogation and assertion through this Glissantian framework has gradually come to articulate and expand the principles of a creole culture initially inscribed in Guadeloupe and Martinique, and extending itself to the wider English, Spanish, and Dutch Caribbean and ultimately to the wider world, drawing on the region's constant creative flux and its insistent patterns of transformation and exchange to inscribe a globalized network of relational being. Some critical work on Glissant divides his writing into two periods: before and after the publication of *Le Discours antillais* in 1981. In the first period some claim that he focuses mainly on Martinique and its social, political and cultural paradoxes and challenges, while in the second he arguably extends his vision, via the concept of the *Tout-monde*, to the postcolonial world as a whole. As I have shown, the seeds of Glissant's later argument were sown from at least the period of the publication of *L'Intention poétique*. To be sure, though, it is only from *Le Discours antillais* on that we can speak of a crosscultural poetics, a groundbreaking concept which had a palpable influence both in the Caribbean and in Western critical discourse. Glissant's crosscultural poetics, then, initially articulated in *Le Discours antillais* but greatly expanded in 1990's *Poétique de la Relation*, generates identity out of a historically- and culturally-grounded Antillean experience. Taking as its premise the notion that Western philosophy was trapped within the process of filiation and its corollary, or presumed effect, of legitimation, the alternative positionality that he proposes, embodied in the concept of Relation, inscribes a nonhierarchical principle of interactive transformation, a relation of equality with, recognition of and respect for the Other as *different* from oneself. Read in this way, our

web of differences no longer traces barriers which divide us, but patterns, positionalities and phenomena whose differential pluralisms and contrasts link us both individually and collectively.

The context of world totality that Glissant identifies and elaborates here derives its fundamental functionality from his critical distinction between *l'Un* and *le Divers*. In his view, both the origin and the contemporary cultural applicability of creolization can be located in their Caribbean iterations of plantation society and its corollaries of hierarchy, ethnocultural diversity and difference. Adopting an alternative perspective predicated on an acknowledgement of and inscription in the composite provides a direct link to the broader concept of creolization. In this vision of *mondialité*, “a new name for the Tout-monde” meant specifically to differentiate it from *mondialisation*, or “globalization in its negative form,” as Celia Britton succinctly points out; the concept presupposes a natural openness to other cultures.¹⁰ In this extended excerpt, Glissant inscribes Relation as the exponential development of a paradigmatic Caribbean experience:

The Caribbean, as far as I am concerned, may be held up as one of the places in the world where Relation presents itself most visibly. [...] Compared to the Mediterranean, which is an inner sea surrounded by lands, a sea that concentrates [...] the Caribbean is, in contrast, a sea that explodes the scattered lands into an arc. A sea that diffracts [...] the reality of archipelagos in the Caribbean or the Pacific provides a natural illustration of the thought of Relation.

What took place in the Caribbean, which could be summed up in the word *creolization*, approximates the idea of Relation for us as much as possible. It is [...] a new and original dimension allowing each person to be there and elsewhere, rooted and open [...] in harmony and in errantry.

If we posit *métissage* as, generally speaking, the meeting and synthesis of two differences, creolization seems to be a limitless *métissage*, its elements diffracted and its consequences unforeseeable. Creolization diffracts, whereas certain forms of *métissage* can concentrate one more time [...]. Its most obvious symbol is in the Creole language [...] Creolization carries along then into the adventure of multilingualism and into the incredible explosion of cultures.¹¹

Ultimately, through this overt link between the archipelagic and the Relational, including the positing of Caribbean complexities as a strategic site of origin, it becomes clear that the foundational principle of this poetics of Relation articulates a means toward developing a compound, non-linear, expressive and representational framework, emphasizing the paradoxical simultaneity of rootedness and openness, of coexistence and limitless connection and transformation as a primary means of thwarting the

persistence of the binary presumptions and positionalities of the colonial trace.

It is in his intent to valorize multivalence and resistance that Glissant upended the colonially-driven singularities undergirding filiation as the longstanding unitary foundation of individual and communal subjectivity, effectively by supplanting the figure of the root with the rhizome as a pluralist spatio-cultural construct grounding the core Caribbean concept of creolization. Read in this way, the last category proposes an insistence on affiliative joining and protean doubling to explode metropolitan legacies of rooted singularity through the compound nature of its very structure. Glissant's positionality has long been characterized by its anathema to rootedness, such that the figure of the rhizome becomes the embodiment of the principles of hybridity, plurality, contact and transformation that form for him the core of the Caribbean experience. Expanding on this vision, creolization should not be read simply as a synonym for hybridity, but rather as a phenomenon of ethnocultural exchange and transformation. And so Relation, as it emerges from the concepts, texts and contexts cited above, adumbrates a non-hierarchical principle of respect for the Other predicated on a series of encounters between various cultures or elements resulting in different identities highlighting diversity and dependence. As Relation gave way to the creolized, limitless exchanges of the *Tout-monde*, Glissant consistently highlighted the intrinsic pluralities and simultaneities of location that characterize this position; as he explains, "It is the rhizome of all places that makes up the totality, and not a uniformity of place in which we would evaporate."¹² In this call for all people to abrogate the singularities and divisions, real or imaginary, that separate them, the novel implications of a simultaneity of location are articulated as an overt recognition of the relativity of place.

Ultimately, then, instead of the colonially-inflected, self-referential notion of one root – grounded in inherited singularities and filiations of nationality, language, and ethnicity, the rhizomatic, multiple-rooted identity will reflect a pluralized, fluid world of migrant subjectivities in the *chaos-monde*. Such linkages allow Glissant to avoid – indeed, to overcome -- the implicit continuity of binaries present even in an anti-colonialist theoretical position; rather, he always stresses the role of spatiality –of place, location and their related corollaries and conjunctions-- over temporality and filiation.

This rethinking of the foundation and implications of filiation is central to Glissantian thought, with major implications for the construction of a relational identity and its necessary integration of *opacité*. The radical reassessment of the subjective implications that attach to the legitimizing linearities of colonially-driven continental thought finds its origin early in his analyses. It is in fact a precursor to his later articulations of Relation, of archipelagic thinking and the centrality of the *chaos-monde*. In the following

extended excerpt, Clevis Headley elucidates the intricacies of this mode of thinking:

Glissant examines the Western's (sic) ontology of being with regards to matters of identity and community. Glissant calls attention to the fact that in the West community and identity have been thought in terms of the logic of filiation. This logic of filiation grounds identity and community in some original event or act such that it is possible to retrace in a linear manner the unbroken historical link between this past and the present. Both the collective memory of the community, as well as the identity of the individual, is (sic) grounded in the logic of linearity [...] In exposing the limitations of the preceding model, Glissant[']s thinking now is located in a novel historical space [...] Glissant does not approach this particular mode of being-in-the-world as a phenomenon to be evaded but rather as an occasion for rethinking being. This rethinking is possible in the absence of the filiation model of self and community that dominated in the Western world. Here there is no linearity, there is no One but rather the ingredients for a morphogenetic emergence for new modes of being.¹³

In abandoning the linear predictability of filiation in favor of the randomized unpredictability of affiliation, its inscription in and emergence from 'a novel historical space' relocates singular sites and strategies of origin into a multivalent space of encounter and exchange. This shaping force of alternate subjectivities posits pluralism and relationality as the generative ground of identitarian possibility. Put another way, if the interpenetration of languages and cultures that lies at the core of the process of creolization makes of the Caribbean a composite society, then we can posit contact and chaos, cultural relativity, exchange and transformation as key tools in the polyvalent system of being and thought to which this Relationality gives rise. For Glissant, such an inscription in composite perspectives provides a direct link to the phenomenon of creolization, "We can make conjectures about what these composite cultures [...] gain by being able to choose among many different experiences [...] and [...] syncretize them into a new form."¹⁴ The constantly shifting and variable process of creolization emerges from these patterns of intersection, change, exchange, and synthesis. Glissant frames this alternative, generative framework by stressing patterns and principles of combination and substitution rather than division and rupture:

j'appelle créolisation un phénomène de mélange, non seulement des individus, mais de cultures dont les conséquences sont imprévisibles, imprédictibles. Il n'était ni prédictible ni prévisible qu'une bande de nègres absolument réduits à l'animalité par le système esclavagiste ... aient créé de véritables langues que sont des langues créoles, à partir du <<petit nègre>> qu'on leur enseignait pour les besoins de leur travail

... La créolisation n'est pas un trou <<bouillon-sac>> dans lequel tout se mélange; la créolisation garantit et conserve les éléments distincts qui la composent mais n'établit pas d'hierarchie entre ces éléments. Autrement dit, le tissu élémentaire du vivant n'est pas le semblable, c'est le différent.¹⁵

What I call creolization is a phenomenon of mixing, not only of individuals, but of cultures, where the consequences are completely unpredictable. It was neither predictable nor foreseeable that a ragged band of blacks, absolutely reduced to an animal-like condition by the slave system ... would have produced real languages with creole structures out of the pidgin that was taught to them so that their work could get done ... creolization is not a sort of "broth-bag" that mixes everything up; rather, it preserves and guarantees the distinct elements that make it up but does not impose a hierarchy among these elements. In other words, the elemental condition here is not resemblance, but difference (my translation).

In sum, then, through the infinite openness and fluidity of its material praxis creolization draws on and embodies the diversity and intersectionality of the collective Caribbean experience. Lorna Burns explains how creolized identities emerge from these ever-expanding networks of cross-cultural exchange:

Glissant's fundamental assertion is that being cannot be understood apart from lived experience, and that lived experience must acknowledge crosscultural exchange and the creolized identities that have resulted ... Underscoring creolization as a process, as a becoming, in opposition to fixed, essentialised identities ... Glissant here promotes creolization as a mixed identity that refuses to solidify into a specified and fixed model.¹⁶

Looked at in this way, Glissant's vision of a creolized world order arguably puts into place key principles "of openness, of *errance* and of an intricate, unceasing branching of cultures," as Michael Dash puts it, that would ultimately lead, through a broadening and refining of this position, to the heterogeneity and interconnectedness of the transformative conjoining that characterizes the creole.¹⁷ Over time, Glissant repeatedly returned to this position, glossing and expanding on it numerous times. For example, in *Introduction à une Poétique du Divers* he writes:

The active creolization going on within the belly of the plantation – that most unjust and sinister world – is nevertheless creating itself, but it leaves the 'Being' struggling [...] Creolization requires the heterogeneous elements put into relation to 'intervalorize' themselves: [...] And why creolization rather than hybridity ['métissage']? Because creolization is unforeseeable, whereas one can calculate in advance the

effects of hybridity ... creolization is hybridity with an added value, namely unforeseeability.¹⁸

Here we can see that this infinite conjoining and intermixing of cultures on a world scale expands outward from its genesis in/on the plantation. By inscribing critical new spaces and boundaries for these alternative concepts, then, Glissant insists on both intersection and unpredictability as key characteristics of this process, "La créolisation est la mise en contact de plusieurs cultures ou au moins de plusieurs éléments de cultures distinctes [...] avec pour résultat une donnée nouvelle, totalement imprévisible par rapport à la somme."¹⁹ Such a pluralist positionality deliberately stands in stark contrast to the implicit fixity and singularity of filiation, and Lorna Burns explains this dichotomy clearly, "filiation fixes identities and is closed to the possibilities of cross-cultural mixing."²⁰ In sum, then, creolization should be read as an intersectional concept of resistance and affiliation, mediating the fluid circulation and transformation of new individual and collective subjectivities.

Thus the principal task of indigenous counterdiscourses of resistance and autonomy must be to confront the alienation and exclusion, ethnic conflict and cultural difference enacted by universalist concepts of belonging and citizenship, countering their presumptions of singularity by inscribing instead an alternative framework grounded in intersection and interdependence. In a critical move, Glissant draws on the historic paradigm of the Caribbean *nègre marron* as the symbolic incarnation of a new, transnational identity structure:

It seems that the ancient marronage, which was the quest for new traces, is once again operating, for all of us. In other words, ambiguity, discontinuity, traces, and remembering, creolization, with its unpredictable results, are not signs of weakness. They contribute to this unprecedented conception of identity that I have been discussing. They counter the massive assertions of the thinking associated with the Conquest [...] multiculturalism is not disorder, not extinction [...] we can imagine diffracted times coming together, without this imperial linear conception of time that Columbus brought with him."²¹

The detailed inscription of such a countervailing stance deliberately and strategically links key *lieux de mémoire* from the colonial past to the post/colonial present; this paradigm subverts the dominion of an all-encompassing authority by positing the ambiguity, displacement and discontinuity intrinsic to the colonial trace as now inherent in paradigmatic patterns of post/colonial identity. By appropriating and articulating the key concept of difference as relation, Glissant articulates new possibilities of knowledge and performance for claims of national and communal identity.

This is a critical turn in the development of Glissant's more recent thought and writing, and its core principles lay the groundwork for the ongoing development of the concept of *opacité* as a key praxis grounding the relationships between individuals and between communities. We have seen that Glissant's thought articulated such a concept as early as the publication of *L'Intention poétique*, but its fundamental elaboration can be clearly observed in the opening pages of *Le Discours antillais*. Here, Glissant adumbrates a critical distinction between *le détour* and *le retour* as a mediatory figure for communities struggling to achieve self-awareness and self-articulation. The former principle frames a multivalent construct whose very heterogeneity functions in direct contrast to *le retour*, whose hegemonic unities are grounded in the singularities of continental thinking. From the latter perspective, the resulting obsession with the One stands in direct contrast to a subjectivity framed and contextualized through multiple paths and patterns, challenging the boundaries and limits of nation and community as an insistence on resistance forges alternative praxes of subjectivity:

There is no detour when the nation has been possible ... Detour is the ultimate recourse of a population whose domination by an Other has been hidden; the principle of domination, which is not evident in the country itself, must be sought elsewhere. This is because the mode of domination (assimilation) is most effective when camouflaged.²²

Of critical importance here is the inevitable encounter with the Other, in that its context and trajectory – especially where camouflaged domination masks pervasive contemporary praxes of neocolonialism -- arguably determine the shape and substance of the emergent community. Notably, the critical matrix of this formative experience is inevitably and strategically framed through the crucible of Caribbean history. Lorna Burns insightfully observes that “it is of fundamental importance to Glissant's writings that the historical experience of slavery is understood as both a violence and a potentiality for creativity ... Loss and the creation of something new, this is a recurring trait in Caribbean thought and is at the heart of creolization theory, making possible transculturation.”²³ Seen in this way, the encounter with the Other and its incorporation of Caribbean principles and praxes that contest domination and valorize resistance allows Glissant to inscribe *opacité* more broadly both as a key armature of subjective resistance and as a counter to the universalizing assumptions of Western colonial culture.

As the elaboration of this critical concept takes shape, it becomes increasingly clear that colonial policy and praxis, and their corollaries of racism and slavery, domination and submission, play a critical role in articulating the contestatory positionality of an alternate subjectivity. Its beginnings lie clearly in Relation, as Patrick Crowley writes, “This movement towards multiple others, this openness to exchange and multiple transformations ... is about fertile contacts and fruitful synergies, the outcomes of which cannot be predicted and which escape determination

within a proliferating mode of a being that resists hierarchy. That is, *Relation* refutes notions of identity imposed by a system that would transcend a relational subject position.”²⁴ This results in a foundational framework in which *Relation* and *opacité* are intricately and necessarily related, as Crowley continues, “Within this notion of *Relation*, Glissant locates *opacité* as a means of preserving the irreducible kind of identity that maintains what is diverse, what is culturally specific [...] Glissantian *opacité* [...] has to do with that which cannot be reduced to categorical systems of thought that would recuperate alterity by making it understandable, by rendering it transparent.”²⁵ This marked historical tendency to define the other through patterns of difference, inferiority, and exclusion, an extraordinary capacity for categorical singularity that marks the inscription of its own superiority in the West’s writing of history and culture, from the inscription of slavery only as a metaphor for metropolitan social repression by Rousseau and Voltaire, to Hegel’s dismissal of Africa as a territory defined by non-history, to more recent and contemporary rationalizations of the exploitation marking the colonial enterprise as the ‘white man’s burden,’ give rise to zones of psychosocial and psychocultural resistance in the individuals and communities of the dominated. In a critical gesture, these ‘wounds of history’ will come to reside inevitably in the core of postcolonial subjectivity as it contests the presumptions of Western universalism; as Glissant writes in *Le Discours antillais*, articulating this concept lies in the capacity to “Développer partout, contre un humanisme universalisant et réducteur, la théorie des opacités particulières [...] consentir à l’opacité, c’est-à-dire à la densité irréductible de l’autre, c’est accomplir véritablement, à travers le divers, l’humain. L’humain n’est peut-être pas l’«image de l’homme» mais aujourd’hui la trame sans cesse recommencée de ces opacités consenties.”²⁶ [Develop everywhere, against a reductive and universalizing humanism, a theory of specific opacities (...) to consent to opacity, that is to say, to the irreducible density of the other, is to accomplish in a real way, through diversity, a human objective. Today the human is perhaps not “the image of man” but rather the endlessly expanding framework of agreed opacities (my translation)].

Read in this way, opacity, inextricably linked here to recognizing the other as subject, is now extended to a more broad-based vision of an interlinking of human cultures.

Critically, this definition of the human defines itself through its contestation of the reductive universalism that arrogated to itself the right to define, or even to erase, the other; the necessary gesture of resistance that this paradigm elicits inscribes itself now as a relational form of agency. Eric Prieto provides us with a definitional perspective on this complex yet critical identitarian elaboration, “For Glissant, the zone of opacity of any individual or community is something that cannot be communicated, that part of its identity which remains inaccessible to outsiders. Glissant uses the term

opacity to designate the fundamental core of our identity; opacity is the guarantee of our individuality.²⁷ It is important to note, however, that recognizing and integrating the zone of opacity denotes a simultaneous recognition of subjectivity and an acceptance of its difference; extending this *schéma*, then, individuals and communities are inscribed as intrinsically relational, meaning that opacity itself is linked to, and indeed, is a product of creolization as it is mediated by both culture and history. Glissant himself puts it this way:

Creolization is not what is disturbing within the core of a given culture, even though we know that many cultures were and are dominated, assimilated, taken to the edge of erasure [...] Creolization does not lead to the loss of identity, to the dilution of being. It does not suggest a renouncing of the self. It suggests distance (a distancing) driven by the fossilized shattering of Being.²⁸

It is by drawing on the principles and practices, and even the contradictions of opacity as they are inscribed here that Glissant would envision patterns of subjective assertion and cultural interaction for the modern world.

Such a perspective amounts to a complete revision of traditional systems of being and thought, those inherited from the European hegemon and which are grounded in absolutes, fixities, hierarchies, and either/or binaries he terms ‘continental’; instead he favors an alternative system which, inscribing his key principles of errantry and Relation, valorizes the forging of unforeseen connections and ways of becoming, and which by contrast he strategically terms ‘archipelagic’. By appropriating this non-binary, archipelagic framework of the Caribbean experience to undergird unpredicted patterns of thought and encounter, Glissant creatively joins the principle of creolization to the emerging concept of archipelagic rather than continental thought, “What I call creolization is encounter, interference, shock, the harmonies and disharmonies between cultures, in the material totality of the world [...] The examples of creolization are endless and we should note that they first took shape and developed in archipelagic rather than continental contexts.”²⁹ These subversions and transformations of binary chronologies and continuities that transcend the universalist presumptions of the either/or revise and rewrite the fundamental singularities of boundary and location, sameness and difference, inclusion and exclusion, and are fundamental to any understanding of the archipelagic, as the following extended excerpt from the Introduction to a recent reader on the subject explains:

Archipelagic comparisons take as their subject a field of objects with multiple, triangulated, networked relations rather than the more typical modes of one-to-one comparison between two paired objects of analysis. Archipelagic thinking, grounded as it is in assemblages of island, continent, and sea, requires a conceptualization of the global that is forced to do more, geographically, geohistorically, and geopolitically,

to differentiate islands from each other while theorizing their connectivities and commonalities [...] archipelagoes [...] are defined not only as a system of islands but also as a set of humanly constructed relations between individual locations (islands, ports, cities, forts, metropolises, communities). The archipelagic is conceived, therefore, as a set of relations that articulates cultural and political formations.³⁰

Ultimately, the strategic, simultaneous inscription of commonalities and differences intrinsic to an archipelagic approach realigns long-established historical perspectives and teleologies and their corollaries of belonging and relation, and mediates the emergence of compound, non-traditional forms of identity and representation deliberately not predicated on the singular.

Importantly, Glissant sees Europe itself as now becoming subject to the unpredictable pluralities of this transformational process, “Ce qui est bien maintenant, c'est que l'Europe s'archipelise. C'est-à-dire qu'au delà de la barrière des nations, on voit apparaître des îles qui sont en relation les unes avec les autres. [...] Il semble donc, selon moi, que faire l'unité de l'Europe, signifie développer ces îles, au détriment peut-être de la notion de nation et par delà des frontières nationales” (*Europe/Antilles*, 1998). As European paradigms of nation and its corollary of systemic hierarchies of self and other are increasingly contested and supplanted by the creative ambiguities and linked insularities of archipelagic thought, the functional framework for these ideas becomes truly global, as we see in this extended excerpt:

Today this systematic thought, which I also like to call ‘continental thought,’ has failed to account for the generalized non-system of the world’s cultures. Another form of thought is developing [...] stemming from a vision of the poetics and the imagination of the world. I call this thought ‘archipelagic,’ that is non-systematic, inductive thought that explores the unexpected in the world-totality and reconciles writing with orality and orality with writing. What I see today is that the continents are turning themselves into archipelagos [...] The Americas are ‘archipelagizing,’ they are forming themselves into regions across national frontiers [...] Europe is ‘archipelagizing.’ The linguistic and cultural regions, crossing the barriers between nations, are islands, but open islands, and that is the principal condition for their survival.³¹

What this passage makes clear, in their deliberate choice of a specific postcolonial positionality and their philosophical displacement of the continent in favor of the archipelago, is the extent to which such positional perspectives can trace their origins to the open-ended and transformational exchanges of Glissant’s earlier Caribbean-themed principle of *antillanité*. Here, the creative discontinuities of Caribbean materiality position it as a resistive framework that compels the systematic binaries of continental thought governing the erstwhile colonial framework to give way to the interlinked, multivalent insularities of archipelagic thought, as borders and

boundaries which had heretofore demarcated continents, countries and cultures cede to new regimes of philosophy and positionality dominated by patterns of regionality that favor zoned spatiality over the restricted confines of the nation-state.

To sum up, then, this critical trajectory, from creolization and Relation to opacity and the archipelagic, can be described as the articulative cornerstones – distilled across several decades – of Glissant’s thought. Viewed holistically, the careful, diachronic construction of these linkages and their origin in a plantation-based ontology extends itself to a creativity born of transformation that resists singularities of domination..Aragorn Eloff agrees in his overview of Glissant’s work, finding in Glissant’s concept of the chaos monde an apt expression of Glissantian ontology:

Transforming the idea of the rhizome ... Glissant proposes that thinking in the specificity of the Antillean context, which he also refers to as the practice of *creolization*, or as *archipelagic* as opposed to continental thinking, only happens in *Relation*, across dense, decentred networks of connection that relate other to other, *le divers* (different) to different, without reducing them to the same. This is thinking and practice as a necessary response to life after uprooting, a mode of survival within the Plantation and the colony that necessarily involve a *digensis* of multiple origins and a complex intermingling of languages, values and ideas – a composite that does not become a fixed identity but, true to the constant creative unfolding of possibility that defines the world as process, or what Glissant calls the *chaos-monde*, remains open to new beginnings and otherness.³²

By articulating this complex mode of thinking, Glissant is able to locate and isolate interlinked Westernized patterns of universality and conformity as intrinsic forms of ideological and sociocultural dominance to be resisted through the strategic wielding of *opacité*. Contesting this (unacknowledged) sameness ultimately clears the way for the new possibilities emerging from this alternative framework:

This mode of relation, or *relation-identity*, in turn forms the ethical framework of Glissant’s most well-known ... works, *Poetics of Relation* and *Caribbean Discourse*. In these late texts he challenges the idea of liberal cosmopolitanism, seeing the dominant Western conception of universality as a mechanism of ideological conformity that turns difference into sameness in order to dominate it, and calls instead for a practice of *opacity* as a necessary component of political projects that seek to overcome oppression and create new possibilities for life.³³

In the resulting network of contact and communication, it is the conceptual and epistemological inscription arising out of the geographical structure of the archipelago that (re)locates this relational network toward an

interconnected, non-hierarchical world. Indeed, in his last published work, *Philosophie de la relation*, Glissant insists on this point, “The archipelago is this non-unique original reality, from which the following imaginaries spring: simultaneous notions of belonging and of Relation”.³⁴

In other words, if here the figure of the archipelago is inscribed as both symbol and catalyst of pluralism and diversity, it immediately separates itself in an important way from continental systems and their binary corollaries of universalism and totality; this critical division becomes clear as he continues, “Wherever a propensity toward the archipelagic subtended global diversity, by way of contrast the aim of continental thought was to impose a unicity which was facilitated by such perspectives, and the latter in turn quickly organized themselves into systems of thought.”³⁵ Viewing the globalized world in this interconnected way shifts our perspective on any economic and political lineages drawn on continental conceptualizations, since they are effectively subverted by archipelagic thinking. Michael Wiedorn explains this well, “The archipelago is neither closed nor contained; it is an opening. It has neither beginning nor end in time or in space, or even in our conception of it ... For Glissant, system thought was proper to continents and stood in sharp contrast to archipelagic thought ... Archipelagic thought is ... a source of creation and creativity.”³⁶ And so importantly, not only are openness, interconnectedness and creativity valorized in this new visualization, its structures and implications effectively dis-place and re-place its binary-based predecessor. Glissant explicitly links this archipelagic thought to patterns of resistance, “We also come to realize that archipelagic thought eventually supplants continental thought [...] and that resistance subsists in every periphery. You don’t see it, and in any event you wouldn’t recognize it, because you don’t even recognize the existence of peripheries.”³⁷ From this discursive gesture, meant to sweep away those thought-systems that gave rise to slavery, colonialism and racism by assimilating the perspectives and positionalities of the periphery to the burgeoning scope of the archipelagic, it is increasingly clear that this new world, inscribed in and enriched by resistance, is the product of modernity’s ever-expanding networks of cultural connection and expression, where Relational creativity enables in turn the complex articulations of a world in contact with itself.

This archipelagic framework also analeptically and proleptically confirms the conjunction of encounter and transformation whose complex and multiple creolizing consequences became the foundation of Caribbeaness, making its geopolitical and ethnocultural multivalences the enabling matrices of a new agential and subjective structure, “Continentalism has also stymied general acknowledgement of the Caribbean as an archipelago of jolting geopolitical diversity, with multiple political affiliations (in addition to independent nation-states, we see affiliations with the Netherlands, the United States, Britain, France, the European Union, etc.) mediated by proliferating modes of governmentality (territory, department,

protectorate, municipality, commonwealth, and others).”³⁸ Deploying the perspectives and positionalities that attach to this framework is where the archipelagic, and the full range of its resonances and implications, begins.³⁹

Clearly the island is key here, and the properties of sea and soil that conjoin and extend the geographic, metaphoric and ontological properties intrinsic both to its insularity and to its articulation of the archipelago stand in stark contrast to the strict binary divisions undergirding continentalism’s fixed worldview. This ductile, variable interactivity “holds in productive tension the insights produced by such newly emerging fields as island studies and ocean studies, attentive to the materialities of archipelagic existence as well as to the ways in which the island’s wide deployment as a metaphor has continually exerted influence on those materialities.”⁴⁰ Assessing the linkages between creolization and the archipelagic, then, reveals the shaping force of the concept of the archipelago as an idea, or an approach, that abandons notions of boundaries and fragmentation in favor of an interactive, productive assembly of island, mainland, and sea. Asserting the differences from the divisions and limitations of continental binaries inherent in this approach allows us to “view, represent, talk and write about, or otherwise experience disjuncture, connection and entanglement *between and among* islands. In doing so, we first assume, *a priori*, and then seek to map, the existence, implications and affect of archipelagic relations.”⁴¹ And so, by stressing the dynamics of an in-betweenness that produces continuity from contiguity, the result is a malleable and transformational philosophical and metaphoric framework, one that projects “a re-presentation of identity, interaction, space and place that comes across in different combinations of affect, materiality, performance, things.”⁴² Here, interconnection and interaction are the core sites and strategies of the analyses that result.

The emphasis on articulating philosophical and ontological principles outlined here by no means denotes the abandonment of Caribbean-centered concerns on Glissant’s part. In contradistinction to the contrast between ‘early’ and ‘late’ Glissant noted by some, the author maintained a dedicated interest in the political and sociocultural materiality of the Caribbean condition, an interest that was deliberately and discursively articulated on a number of occasions. One telling example of this is the “Manifeste pour refonder les DOM,” later “Manifeste pour un projet global,” originally published in *Le Monde* on 21 January 2000. In this key text, co-written with Patrick Chamoiseau, Gérard Delver, and Bertène Juminer, Glissant (re)traces the realities of the political and economic paradoxes of the departmentalization process in the French Antilles:

La départementalisation a mis en œuvre des processus indéniables de modernisation, d’élévation du niveau de vie, d’amélioration générale des conditions d’existence et des rapports sociaux, mais elle s’est aussi pervertie en un syndrome d’assistantat généralisé, de dépendance accrue, et d’une anesthésie qui se renforçait à mesure que les transferts

publics augmentaient en ampleur. Il faut ajouter le mal-être généralisé et l'invalidation des pouvoirs locaux renvoyés à leur impuissance à chaque passage d'un grand commis gouvernemental porteur de subsides et de décisions [...] Par la départementalisation la France nous a fait accéder à son monde. Il nous faut accéder par nous-mêmes aux horizons du monde.⁴³

Here, little has changed since the revelations of *antillanité* in 1981's *Discours antillais*. The economics of metropolitan centralization have resulted in an assimilation into *la plus grande France*, an absorption whose broad cultural implications and economic corollaries must now be resisted:

La transformation progressive du tissu économique et social de la Guadeloupe, de la Guyane, de la Martinique ne peut se faire en dehors de la mise en œuvre d'un projet global qui préparerait l'avenir en tenant compte du présent.

Un tel projet ne saurait être imposé d'en haut, il devrait être l'affaire de tous, débattu par tous Il ne serait pas viable s'il ne favorisait pas, dans la chair même de notre lieu, des vitalités culturelles, linguistiques et artistiques, capables d'éveiller notre regard et de renouveler notre imaginaire de nous-mêmes et du monde. Ce projet ne serait pas viable s'il n'est pas total, c'est à dire s'il n'englobe pas tous les secteurs d'activité, agriculture, tourisme, agroalimentaire, médecine, pêche, communication, lutte contre la pollution, système éducatif, secteurs de production et de consommation, etc.⁴⁴

Ultimately, by outlining the need to re-site the communitarian foundations of the Caribbean condition into a more amenable framework that eschews the linearities and displacements of *mondialisation* for the affiliations of *mondialité*, Glissant turns the ambiguities and contradictions of French Caribbean geopolitics into a more comprehensive perspective on the archipelagic subject and her/his being-in-the-world. Here, in a world vision characterized by connectivity, relation, opacity and plurality, we encounter Glissant's globalized vision of the *tout-monde* and its companion concept, the *chaos-monde*. This ever-shifting malleability of place and the encounter(s) that emerge from it are an attempt to engage the "chaos-world" to identify patterns of non-linear connection and relation, merging them to enhance the possibility of locational and perspectival multiplicity. Read subversively, the *tout-monde* is literally a methodology for destabilizing the world's (post)colonial hierarchies and temporalities.

Conclusion

And so, as the continent confronts the archipelago, it is the encounter with the Other, with its principal corollaries of conflict and exploitation, that ultimately determines the subjective path of the emergent community. Once

again, for Glissant, the critical discursive matrix is strategically framed by and through the crucible of Caribbean history.

In *Le Discours antillais*, Glissant gave a preliminary outline of *opacité*, the theoretical stance that would become an increasingly central part of his writing and thought; he overtly established it as a counter to Western praxes of colonialism and domination, “Nous réclamons le droit à l’opacité [...] l’élan des peuples néantisés qui opposent aujourd’hui à l’universel de la transparence, imposé par l’Occident.”⁴⁵ While making *opacité* the axis of this framework of recognition and resistance, he stated early on his vision of the circumferent, all-subsuming role of a Western universalist ontology in this regard, “L’Occident n’est pas à l’ouest. Ce n’est pas un lieu, c’est un projet.”⁴⁶ Early on, then, opacity became necessary to articulating a non-conflictual human subjectivity within a resistive framework that effectively contests colonial corollaries and hierarchies of domination and submission.

Clearly this key Glissantian concept of *opacité* is critical, then, functioning as “a form of ontological self-defense,” as Headley puts it. It is clear that Glissant draws on Caribbean principles and praxes of domination and resistance to inscribe *opacité* both as a key armature of subjective resistance and as a counter to the universalizing and appropriating assumptions of Western colonial culture. As we have seen, further unpacking opacity imbues it with the capacity to counter the objectification intrinsic to continental systems of thought and vision while extending it to a more broad-based vision of an interlinking of cultures that allows for, and valorizes, difference. As Headley explains, “without the ontological armor of opacity, one is left vulnerable to the oppressive gaze of transparency that demands the right to assimilate the Other within the Same. So as Glissant would have it, we must unleash opacity against the alienating and objectifying notion of transparency.”⁴⁷ Clearly, then, an overriding concern here is *opacité*’s role in resisting the objectification and domination that is the corollary of continental discourses.

The acceptance and practice of opacity, then, are crucial to the elaboration and articulation of a transformational, transnational subjectivity. But the principal implication of these stakes suggests strongly that the *pensée continentale* that it contests – a universalist approach promoting the old colonial discourses that sought to systematize claims of Caribbean non-history whilst inscribing an assimilationist discourse of binaries featuring hierarchical patterns of domination and submission among its people -- will ultimately be displaced by an active articulation and valorization of cultural intersectionality and identitarian self-assertion, posing a long-needed challenge to the assumptions and corollaries of a nationalist universalism.

- ¹ In this regard, see the *International Journal of Francophone Studies*, special triple Issue, “Departmentalization at Sixty: The French DOMs and the Paradoxes of the Periphery,” ed. Adlai Murdoch and Jane Kuntz, 11 no. 1-3 (2008).
- ² Patrick Chamoiseau and Edouard Glissant, “De Loin”, Potomitan, accessed January 11, 2023, <https://www.potomitan.info/articles/deloin.php>.
- ³ J. Michael Dash, “Edouard Glissant: the Poetics of Risk,” *Small Axe* 36 (November 2011): 104.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 105.
- ⁵ Edouard Glissant, *Poetic Intention*. trans. Nathanaël. (Brooklyn, NY: Nightboard Books, 2010), 24.
- ⁶ Edouard Glissant, *Le discours antillais* (Paris: Seuil, 1981), 422.
- ⁷ Clevis Headley, “Glissant’s Existential Ontology of Difference,” *The C.L.R. James Journal, Special Issue on the Work of Edouard Glissant* 18, no. 1. (2012): 59-101; see p. 60.
- ⁸ Benita Parry, “Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse.” *Oxford Literary Review* 9 (1987): 27-58; 28.
- ⁹ Headley, “Glissant’s Existential Ontology of Difference,” 79.
- ¹⁰ Celia Britton, “Globalization and Political Action in the Work of Edouard Glissant.” *Small Axe* 30 (November 2009): 1-11; see 11.
- ¹¹ Edouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*. trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 33-34.
- ¹² Edouard Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole World*. trans. Celia Britton (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2020), 109.
- ¹³ Headley, “Glissant’s Existential Ontology of Difference,” 80-81.
- ¹⁴ Edouard Glissant, *Faulkner, Mississippi*. trans. Barbara Lewis and Thomas C. Spear (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999), 115.
- ¹⁵ Edouard Glissant and Patrick Chamoiseau, “La créolisation et la persistance de l’esprit colonial,” *Cahiers Sens public* 2, no. 10 (2009): 25-32; see p. 25.
- ¹⁶ Lorna Burns, “Becoming-postcolonial, becoming-Caribbean: Édouard Glissant and the poetics of creolization”, *Textual Practice* 23, no. 1 (2009): 99-117; see 101.
- ¹⁷ J. Michael Dash, *Edouard Glissant* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 147.
- ¹⁸ Edouard Glissant, *Introduction to a Poetics of Diversity*. trans. Celia Britton (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 8.
- ¹⁹ Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole World*, 37.
- ²⁰ Burns, “Becoming-postcolonial, becoming-Caribbean,” 101.
- ²¹ Edouard Glissant, “Creolization in the Making of the Americas,” in *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas*, ed. Vera Lawrence and Rex Nettleford (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1995), 268-275; see 274.

- ²² Edouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. trans. J. Michael Dash (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1989), 20.
- ²³ Burns, "Becoming-postcolonial, becoming-Caribbean," 106.
- ²⁴ Patrick Crowley, "Edouard Glissant: Resistance and Opacité," *Romance Studies* 24, no. 2 (July 2006): 105-115; see 106.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 106.
- ²⁶ Edouard Glissant, *Le Discours antillais* (Paris: Seuil, 1981), 245.
- ²⁷ Eric Prieto, "Edouard Glissant, *Littérature-monde*, and *Tout-monde*," *Small Axe* 14, no. 3 (November 2010): 111-120; see 115.
- ²⁸ Glissant, *Traité du tout-monde*, 25; my translation.
- ²⁹ Edouard Glissant, *Traité du Tout-Monde: Poétique IV* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 194; my translation.
- ³⁰ Yolanda Martinez-San Miguel and Michelle Stephens, ed., "Introduction: 'Isolated Above, but Connected Below: Toward New, Global, Archipelagic Linkages,'" in *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Toward New Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2020), 1-44; see 7, 13.
- ³¹ Glissant, *Introduction*, 26.
- ³² Aragorn Eloff, "Wandering the Shoreline with Edouard Glissant," Newframe, accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.newframe.com/wandering-shoreline-edouard-glissant/>.
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ Edouard Glissant, *Philosophie de la relation* (Paris: Gallimard, 2009), 47; my translation.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 50; my translation.
- ³⁶ Michael Wiedorn, "On the Unfolding of Glissant's Archipelagic Thought," *Karib: Nordic Journal for Caribbean Studies* 6:1, no. 3 (2021): 1-7; see 5-6.
- ³⁷ Glissant, *Philosophie de la relation*, 86; my translation.
- ³⁸ Brian Russell Roberts and Michelle Ann Stephens, ed. "Introduction," in *Archipelagic American Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), p. 9.
- ³⁹ I analyze many of these facets of Caribbeanness in my "Introduction: Non-Sovereignty and the Neoliberal Challenge: Contesting Economic Exploitation in the Eastern Caribbean," in *The Struggle of Non-Sovereign Caribbean Territories: Neoliberalism Since the French Antillean Uprisings of 2009*, ed. H. Adlai Murdoch (Rutgers UP, 2021), 1-52.
- ⁴⁰ Roberts and Stephens, "Introduction," 10.
- ⁴¹ Elizabeth McMahon, Carol Farbotko, Godfrey Baldacchino, Andrew Harwood, and Elaine Stratford, "Envisioning the Archipelago," *Island Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2011), 114. Emphasis in the original.
- ⁴² McMahon, Farbotko, Baldacchino, Harwood, and Stratford, "Envisioning the Archipelago," 114.
- ⁴³ Patrick Chamoiseau, Gérard Delver, Edouard Glissant, and Bertène Juminer, "Manifeste pour refonder les Dom," *Madinin'Art*, accessed January 14, 2023, <https://www.madinin-art.net/manifeste-pour-refonder-les-dom/>.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Glissant, *Le discours antillais*, 11-12.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 12.

⁴⁷ Headley, “Glissant’s Existential Ontology of Difference,” 92.