Serubiri Moses

A Useful Landscape

1. Language

How is one to conjure an imagination of a world? Édouard Glissant responds by affirming the power of the word. Language[1] seems a natural place to begin given Glissant's advocacy for words, self-expression, and poetics. This impulse in Glissant's thought echoes the Biblical statement "In the beginning was the word."[2] The author's attention to language reveals a site for interventions, refusals, dismantling totality, and bringing "one's world" or "the world" into being. This evokes the term "conjuring" to mean calling an image to mind, or calling a spirit to appear. Glissant calls this an essential process when he suggests that for Martinican people, the Creole language is "our only possible advantage in our dealings with the Other."[3] Glissant's notion of a "world" relates to his theory of literature, in terms such as *tout-monde* (all-world), and *chaos-monde* (chaos-world). These terms emerge from the theorist and poet's engagement with the Martinican landscape ("Our landscape is its own monument: its meaning can only be traced on the underside. It is all history," and "The landscape of your world is the world's landscape"[4]), where he describes contrasting images and forms of décalage. Language, which Glissant holds in sacred regard, is a conjuring of images of world(s) in self-expression, and certainly a site for creation. The sacred and its conjuring recall the Bible's opening statement: "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.[5]

Self-expression, for Glissant, is an advantage to the Martinican people and mirrors the broader political aims of his statement ("We have seized this concession to use it for our own purposes, just as our suffering in this tiny country has made it, not our property, but our only possible advantage in our dealings with the Other – but having seized it does not make it into a means of self-expression, nor has our only advantage become a nation"[6]). I use "political" here to suggest that for the Glissant self-expression is understood politically, considering it to be the rightful inheritance of Africans in Martinique. Indeed, Glissant's references to the "scream" recall the experience of slavery. Rather than the inheritance of land and property in the French colony, he speaks of an affective and intellectual inheritance through sound, language, and expression. Glissant notes that African descendants' relationship to land is ambiguous, based on a history of dispossession and alienation: "The freed slave prefers the area surrounding the towns, where he is marginalized, to working himself on the land."[7] In a meditation on death, Glissant echoes Cyril Lionel Robert James in writing that "the first slaves wished for death in order to return to Africa."[8] Evocation of

Joseph Mallord William Turner, *Seascape with Distant Coast,* c. 1840. Photo: Tate. Copyright: CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported).

African spiritual traditions functions here as the connection between New World Africans and their ancestral land in Africa.

However, historians have alerted us to the immaterial aspects of land in indigenous West African cultures whose descendants comprised the people of Martinique: Igbo people were attached to their land and derived spiritual and cultural meaning from it. They buried umbilical cords on ancestral land, thus, as historian Chima J. Korieh asserts, making "a connection between the living and the land."[9] Igbo people in the Americas responded to dispossession by carrying out various kinds of refusals that included disobedience, rebellion, and suicide.[10] It is no doubt that Glissant's notion of a "collective refusal" follows this severing with ancestral lands, and the impossibility of a land cosmology. That this was a process of psychological severing shouldn't be doubted either. Glissant conceptualizes disidentification with land as a process that works against nationalism, following the idea that nations are territories marked by borders, and tied to the land. The citizenship of African descendants in Martinique is granted, but cast in doubt. Rather than viewing inheritance through land and property, the author views inheritance through sonic and linguistic practices in Creole, noting how it differs from French in that it is not a national language.

2. Collective Refusal

I perceive an ethics of refusal in Glissant's *Caribbean Discourse* (1992). This refusal runs parallel to a major theme in modern African philosophy, "personhood and communitarianism," which forms the basis for a social and humanistic ethics.[11] Glissant can be accused of conflating poetics with politics, culminating in his attempt to define the collective identity of the Creole community largely through the "Creole" language, which itself is viewed as a site for "rebellions." Glissant refers here to the internal oral protocols of Creole as pursuing a counterpoetics that is a "subversion of the original meaning" and a counter-ordering – that is, an "opposition to an order originating from elsewhere."[12] We generally perceive Glissant's political aims in his radical attempts at reorienting the purpose of language in the service of a greater political goal to invent the world: "To declare one's own identity is to write the world into existence."[13] Removed from the "economic dimension," and considered through the political field, "poetics" is the "only weapon." This is a very useful formulation as it challenges the tendency to study politics only through financial and material history. In this sense, the author's overall thesis aims at a divergent articulation of politics through creolization (the collective notion of Creole community), which is inspired by dispersion, but isn't limited to financial systems in its naming of history and historical subjects. Glissant would later trouble this same question of community through further clarifying "diasporization" in the condition of errantry, as the basis for his idea of "relation." Glissant's conception of diasporization is fundamentally linked to his humanist perspective. Africa gave birth to Humanity: the first diaspora, he said in an interview. A diasporic humanism is the basis for what I view as the author's refusal of totality. He writes that the ultimate and absolute manifestation of totality is empire.[14]

For my own purposes, diasporization is thought of as "Being outside," but also "being outside of language."[15] Glissant, also following Sartre, makes this connection between the "diaspora" and the "poetic use of language." The poetic use of language is viewed as a strategy that leads to a "reorientation of Being" in what Glissant might call a "nomadic" space. The advocacy of self-expression as "our only possible advantage in our dealings with the Other" should be considered alongside the author's notion of nomadism, as it points to deeper reflections on African languages undergoing a process of dispersion in the Middle Passage.

Since this collective humanism rests so thoroughly on creolization, Antillean critic and novelist Maryse Condé argues that Glissant's emphasis on a collective identity is a threat to individual self-expression. The problem here is a theory of literature that proves too prescriptive, too instructive, and thus too limiting for creative self-expression. Additionally, Condé views this kind of committed literature as offering only reassuring images that prove seductive, but are, in fact, dangerous.[16]

Condé draws a direct link between this project of creolization and the representational model imposed on the Antillean writer, citing Aimé Césaire's notion of speaking for the voiceless[17] from his *Notebook on Return to the Native Land*, while maintaining that Glissant shares Césaire's ambitions and his belief in the importance of community.[18] Condé's criticism of Glissant can be summarized in her use of a term borrowed from Suzanne Césaire: according to literary critic Dawn Fulton, Condé's analysis suggests that reassuring images of a collective identity are a "smokescreen" that needs to be dismantled.[19] This dismantling is important given the extent to which Glissant's creolization is applied in the international visual arts. Creolization is utilized to remove contradictions, erase differences, and assume parity in large-scale exhibitions and international surveys of

Joseph Mallord William Turner, *Seascape,* c.1835–40. Oil on canvas. 90,2 × 121 cm. Photo: Tate. Copyright: CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported).

art. The application of creolization also gives the false impression that Glissant argued for the globalization of visual art.

Yet Glissant is critical of erasure through protocols of transparency that function to standardize art and language across the globe. In *Poetics of Relation* (1997), Glissant articulates otherness through a lens of "transparency."[20] Writing on myth, he notes that "no myth will ever provide for the legitimacy of the other."[21] He considers that "transparency" functions as a form of "generalization" in which otherness is erased. "It will always be a question of reducing this other to the transparency experienced by one-self. Either the other is assimilated, or else it is annihilated."[22] Treating these as distinct elements – self and other – might we view Glissant's dialectic as similar to Hegel's? Glissant, in fact, follows rather than diverges from Hegel's Christian sources. Glissant's account of "relation" fosters a consciousness in which an ethics of openness is implied within being-in-the-world. To borrow Gayatri Spivak's term, relation is "planetary." It is concerned with "planetary beings" who are, as Glissant might put it, facing the world.[23] Glissant's relation fosters a sense of openness to the world, while Spivak's planetary beings are seen as free agents on the earth. However, that openness is not without contrast and décalage. As Glissant insists, Creole consists of a counter-ordering protocol which functions politically against the imperialism of the French language.

3. Legitimacy and Land Possession

Colonial history is a history of property accounted for in world-scale financial systems and imperialism. Creolization strikes against imperialism via the internal protocols of the Creole community and via counter-ordering the French language. Thus, if a diasporic community is not legitimized through colonial property, what alternatives foster legitimacy? In *Poetics of Relation*, legitimacy is understood through filiation. While this term signals blood lineages and ancestry, Glissant is careful to precisely name filiation as the basis for colonial history. The author discusses filiation in relation to both land and violence, recalling colonial property and its violent acquisition, citing "a hidden violence of filiation" and "a claim to legitimacy that allows a community to claim its entitlement to the possession of a land."[24] Land possession is aligned, in Glissant's conception, with colonial territorial processes, similar to Spivak's use of the term "worlding" to describe colonial mapping as "worlding the world on uninscribed earth."[25] These statements follow Glissant's own doubts about African descendants' citizenship in Martinique, the massacre of the Arawak on the island, and his ambiguity toward the nation-state and its borders as a legitimating form. In addressing notions of wandering, errantry, and rootlessness – all considered "approaches" in *Poetics of Relation* – Glissant theorizes about identity by pushing against fixed and unchanging notions of being. These "approaches" or methods of argumentation oppose blood lineages as a source of authenticity and legitimacy. Once again, Glissant advocates nomadism. What he refers to as an arrow-like nomadism is understood via Creole languages, in their multiplicity, oracy, and ultimately their counter-ordering of French imperialism in Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, and elsewhere.

Troubling the discourse of the nation like Sigmund Freud before him, Glissant turns to Egypt, a Biblical and mythical place. This is consistent with his use of Biblical terms such as "creation," "word," and "void," as well as his conception of language as conjuring an imagined world. I suspect that Biblical stories offer Glissant sources to counter blood inheritance, in the same way that Freud's research into Moses (*Moses and Montheism*, 1939) took place amidst the popularization of race purity as the basis for white nationalism in 1930s Europe. At the same time, Glissant goes against the idea of conquest and discovery that legitimizes violence against the Other as well as the "worlding" of their world – that is, the dispossession of their land. By advocating self-expression, nomadism, and orality, Glissant distances himself from colonial totality, reflecting his desire for a national literature.[26] It comes then as no surprise that Glissant would write that "to declare one's own identity is to write the world into existence."

Glissant's position for a community held together through a Creole language in *Caribbean Discourse* is reaffirmed in his attempt to "reconcile Hegel with the African griot" in *Poetics of Relation*.[27] Following commentary about the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Glissant adds a footnote: "Hegel, in book 3 of his *Aesthetics*, shows how the founding works of communities appear spontaneously at the moment in which a still naive collective consciousness reassures itself about its own legitimacy, or not to mince words: about its right to possess a land."[28]

The footnote stresses "naive collective consciousness" and legitimacy. Here we encounter two major threads that run through Glissant's thinking: (1) the idea of roots; and (2) the idea of collective consciousness. While I have focused so far on self-expression, language, and the political ambition of a theory of literature, there is a Hegelian phenomenology in both *Caribbean Discourse* and *Poetics of Relation* that emerges in his articulations of collective consciousness. Thus, Condé's critique allows us

to clarify Glissant's attention to the collective as being of a mythical and religious status. Glissant's "collective" is motivated by the uprootedness of diasporization, as well as the uplifting of New World Africans after slavery. His collective consciousness emphasizes the concept of *tout-monde* (all-world) and the act of facing the world as a position, directly relating to Hegel's *Weltanschauung* (worldview) and *Weltgeist* (world spirit). While Glissant utilizes these tools to describe history in the interest of Creole community and the emergence of a national literature, they may still function as a smokescreen. This is the equivalent of stereotypes that provide comforting images of unity, while erasing difference. I liken this to present debates about the stereotypical but reassuring images of kings and queens in Africa.

The latter part of the footnote on the "right to possess land" reflects Glissant's thoughts on Martinique's nineteenth-century Africans, who were only vaguely landowners. I use the term "vague" here following Glissant's suggestion that rather than the life of a peasant farmer, most free Africans in the Antilles wanted to live urban lives in Pointe-à-Pitre and Fort-de-France. He stresses that Africans did not immediately purchase land in large settlements after slavery was abolished. (Glissant does not engage maroon settlements that emerged during slavery. Rather than re-rooting, he recommends a horizontal movement inspired by Deleuze, framing errantry as a way of life.) I suspect that for Glissant, land ownership would mean a revision of uprooting. Legitimacy was attained via land ownership. Glissant's Christian model would suggest that Africans on the island did not inherit land from colonizers. The question set up here concerns history. Legitimacy through filiation, and inheritance, would have serious implications for the history of modern Martinicans. If New World Africans were not legitimized through colonial inheritance or land ownership after abolition, how were they to be legitimized in history?

4. Poetics

In order to address the question of legitimacy, we must address the role of the poetics of language in Glissant's books. There exists continuity between Glissant and the griot writers, as they are called in the Caribbean. Glissant, an advocate of poetics, was taught in Martinique by the poet Aimé Césaire. Maryse Condé suggests that the differences between Glissant and Césaire have been exaggerated.[29] Césaire was one of the central griot writers of négritude. Certainly, the work of the griot writers was founded in their intellectual calls for liberation through a praxis of language. According to philosopher D. A. Masolo, the négritude form was primarily poetic and "its content was pluralism." Drawing his readers to the questions of otherness and cultural hierarchization, Masolo continues: "The value of pluralism was built around an ontology that accepted diversity or otherness without hierarchical judgements of human worth based on racial or cultural characteristics."[30]

Philosopher Souleymane Bachir Diagne engages another figure of négritude, Jean-Paul Sartre, whose introductory essay "Orphée Noir" was published in the *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache* (1948), edited by Leopold Senghor. "When these black poets meet" in the space of the poetry anthology, Sartre writes, it is not merely to praise Africanity, as Wole Soyinka might hold.[31] Nor is it "continental Africanity welcoming home her children who had left." Soyinka's statement ("a tiger does not proclaim his tigritude") continues to be referenced in contemporary debates involving race in Africa. But as Diagne, following Sartre, suggests, négritude is "the attempt to overcome a primordial dispersion of all into the darkness outside Being."[32]

In Glissant's *Caribbean Discourse*, self-expression confronts the totalizing thought of conquest: "A scream is an act of excessiveness." Thus a "poetics of excess" emerges adjacent to a discourse on land, whether considering its dispossession or the right to possess it. In *Poetics of Relation*, Glissant faults the mythical "opacity" of narratives of Christianity and other religions before finding in this mythical opacity the counter-narrative to modern "transparency." By positioning opacity in opposition to "transparency," the author issues his defensive articulation of the "right" to opacity. What fosters legitimacy of the diasporic subject who is "outside-of-Being" here is the imaginary (in Lacan's sense) of one's story beyond the judgment of the other. In Manthia Diawara's documentary *Édouard Glissant: One World in Relation* (2010), Glissant advocates the right to opacity in a way that recalls the statement "Thou shalt Love thy neighbor as thyself."[33] Yet, when speaking about the French language and its use in colonial domination, he is equally concerned about "language presented as universal."[34]

Here the relationship between legitimacy and the inheritance of language is presented as an economic question following colonization and empire. In a postcolonial reading, Glissant uses Samir Amin's idea of delinking to describe Caribbean islands as "self-centered" economies, perhaps a mirror of his notion of the "archipelago of languages." Following Amin, Glissant is suspicious of what he deems a "whole made up of peripheries" set up in the service of a center,

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Paul Gauguin, *Martinique Landscape*, 1887. Oil on canvas. 117 cm x 89.8 cm. Photo: Scottish National Gallery. Public domain.

thus contending that it is "necessary for these peripheries to have a self-centered economy."[35]

Thus, how do we escape totality? How do we escape the deployment of the kind of totalizing language used in the discourse of conquest and discovery? What is legitimation in the space outside-of-Being? Glissant juxtaposes the existential questions of Sartre with the economic theories of Amin. He also juxtaposes Antillean landscapes with isolated self-centered economy. It is a mélange, to use another term favored by Glissant. Much later, he will discuss island economies with respect to economic scale.[36] Glissant's Hegelian dialectic and its world consciousness is substituted, perhaps momentarily, for "smallness."

5. Horror

"The Open Boat," a chapter in Glissant's *Poetics of Relation*, is an island-and-sea narrative. The chapter recalls Melville's *Moby Dick* and its descriptions of the "dark" interiors of the whale. It also recalls epics such as Homer's *Odyssey*, the ark in Genesis, and the majestic waters in Exodus. By positioning it at the "beginning" of *Poetics of Relation*, Glissant introduces the kind of Biblical themes that are key to his philosophical arguments. The "beginning" in itself signifies both "creation" and "language," as mentioned earlier. This is consequential to Glissant's ideas on writing the world into existence. That is, the world which is to come will emerge from language as an act of creation, again reflecting the statement "In the beginning was the word."

The chapter faces toward darkness in its "beginning" and "creation" – that is, the creation of people of African descendant in Martinique, who were "wrenched from their everyday, familiar land, away from protecting gods and tutelary community."[37] Glissant views Africa distantly as the "inaccessible land," and locates the starting point of Caribbean discourse in this movement across waters and its experiences of horror.[38] "This boat is a womb, a womb abyss," he writes.[39] Glissant's philosophy thus ventures towards darkness, and finds within that darkness a miraculous beginning. He considers "the horrors of the slave trade as [a] beginning."[40] His explanation of the abyss takes into account the implications of creation through language, alerting us to the fact that the term "abyss" carries an optimism but then suggests decay: "In actual fact the abyss is a tautology: the entire ocean, the entire sea gently collapsing in the end into the pleasures of sand, make one vast beginning, but a beginning whose time is marked by these balls and chains gone green."[41]

Glissant's view of darkness recalls the Bible and Homer. In *Caribbean Discourse*, Glissant describes "suffering without witness" and exclaims, "What suffering came from the unknown!"[42] This language evokes the kind of suffering found in Gehenna, the place of punishment in the Bible, which Matthew 18:9 chillingly characterizes this way: "It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than with two eyes to be thrown into the Gehenna." On page 5 of *Poetics of Relation*, Glissant compares the horror of the Middle Passage to the bodily pain and torture endured in Gehenna: "The second dark of night fell as tortures and the deterioration of person, the result of so many incredible Gehennas." In addition, the first part of this sentence recalls Homer: "To the black palace of eternal night: 'Still in the dark abodes of death I stood.'"[43] How is being in Gehenna different from being in normal circumstances? Emmanuel Levinas writes about what the experience of horror does to consciousness: "Horror is somehow a movement that will strip consciousness of its very 'subjectivity.'"[44]

Returning to Sartre, how does Glissant's emphasis on darkness suggest a Being outside, and a reorientation of Being? Being in the darkness, writes Glissant, can be viewed as a "measured disorder."[45] As Levinas suggests, modern European philosophy has a blind spot when it comes to this space of being outside of normal circumstances, viewing it as inconsequential.

I suspect that Glissant's adjacent focus on "excess" might help clarify his attention to the "dark interiors" in which the abyss is synonymous with birth, death, and language. Understanding that "order and disorder" are the basis of much theorization on being, Glissant turns to "the excessiveness of order" and the aforementioned "measured disorder."[46] In his theory of a literature of *chaos-monde*, Glissant describes both order and chaos as "the edge of the sea," revealing the landscape as a key source for this theory, which challenges totalizing scientific laws. Glissant advocates a non-totalizing science within this *chaos-monde*, revealing an optimism about the "unknown" and "unseeable" that constitute "suffering without witness."

Other theorists have also explored the status of this "dark abode." Derrida, affirming Glissant's challenge to scientific laws, describes alterity as "an excess which overflows the totality of that which can be thought."[47] Lacan stresses that "a logic is already operative in the unconscious."[48] Evidently, with the abyss and this space of darkness as a site of creation, Glissant wrestles with the limits of scientific knowledge.

6. Exodus as Double

Glissant's awareness of the law is tied to his understanding of legitimacy. After describing the massacre of the Arawak, the indigenous people of Martinique, Glissant suggests that Martinican soil does not belong to African descendants.[49] He describes the forced movement of millions of people to the Western hemisphere using a legal term: "deportation." Deportation is a legal form of expulsion involving border authorities and state governments. It is defined as the act of removing a foreigner from a country. Is Glissant commenting on the laws in Africa when using this term? Does he imply that the millions uprooted were foreigners in Africa? Or does "deportation" become ambiguous in describing national laws that are also Biblical? Answering these questions is not the aim here. I am merely drawing attention to the way Glissant addresses the forced movement of Africans.

Glissant's narrative of diaspora unfolds as a Biblical exodus in which an Egyptian pharaoh enforced laws upholding slavery, and in which those who fled Egypt did so to escape captivity.[50] According to literary theorist Hortense Spillers, this interpretation of "fleeing the scene of captivity and dismemberment" is prominent in African-American sermons.[51] Using "exodus" as a term of ambivalence, *Poetics of Relation* reveals a situation of "suffering without witnesses." Glissant, who was teaching in the United States at the time, and who later wrote a book on William Faulkner, presents a theory of literature with a double ambition: (1) to inspire creative practitioners to form this Antillean literature of mélange, creolization, and *chaos-monde* as a model to rethink language and alterity; and (2) to serve as a political manifesto that opposes the re-colonization of the islands, expands on economic and political questions concerning land, borders, and states, and calls attention to the predicament and suffering of Martinicans in the post-slavery period.

If the setting for this predicament is Egypt, it is no different from the African-American preachers for whom Egypt references a place of captivity. The exodus has a double meaning: the dispersion out of Africa, and the attempt to escape captivity. Spillers suggests that the African-American sermon not only "catalyzes movement, but embodies it."[52] By way of example, she discusses Malcolm El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, better known as Malcolm X, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., both of whom embody the political and moral urgencies of public speech within the African-American community.

In King's 1968 sermon "I've Been to the Mountaintop," the "I" of the sermon travels through time.[53] He pauses and reflects on the different "ages," repeating, "I wouldn't stop there." One of the places King time-travels to is the "dark dungeons of Egypt," here echoing the Bible and Homer's *Odyssey.* King goes on to describe a journey "through wilderness on toward the promised land," anchoring his sermon in a re-visioning that combines Biblical historical interpretation and the political urgencies of the 1960s:

> Whenever Pharaoh wanted to prolong the period of slavery in Egypt, he had a favorite, favorite formula for doing it. What was that? He kept the slaves fighting among themselves. But whenever the slaves get together, something happens in Pharaoh's court, and he cannot hold the slaves in slavery. When the slaves get together, that's the beginning of getting out of slavery. Now let us maintain unity.

Given that King's sermon is a rebuke of racism, segregation, white supremacy, and the various US administrations that enforced Jim Crow laws, "Pharaoh" here is not the historical Egyptian pharaoh of the Bible, but rather US law enforcement and political leaders who excluded African-Americans from civic life. It is in this double sense that Glissant's Egypt is not situated in the real Africa, but in an imagined one. This imagined Africa, for Glissant, shapes the political urgencies of the post-slavery Caribbean. *Poetics of Relation* thus attempts to "flee captivity" by reconstructing the history of the Martinican people through a sea-and-island narrative that consists of "exodus" and the mélange of island landscapes.

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1
The title of this article is derived from the Brazilian song "Inútil Paisagem" (Useless landscape), composed by Antonio Carlos Jobim, with lyrics by Aloysio de Oliviera, pointing to Édouard Glissant's theory of the landscape of Martinique, from which he derives his theory of literature. My title inverts the song's melancholia about loss to reflect the affirmative attitude of Glissant's theory.

2
John 1:1.

3
Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays* (University of Virginia Press, 1992), 167.

4
Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 11; Glissant, *Poetics of Relation* (University of Michigan Press, 1997), 33.

5
Genesis 1:1.

6
Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 167.

7
Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 160.

8
Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 59. C. L. R. James: "Suicide was a common habit, and such was their disregard for life that they often killed themselves, not for personal reasons, but in order to spite their owner. Life was hard and death, they believed, meant not only release but a return to Africa." James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (Vintage, 1989), 15–16.

9
"Land was not just a factor of production. It remained a link with the ancestors. For instance, the umbilical cord of a newborn child is buried in ancestral land – that way the Igbo can make the connection between the living and the land and between the land and the ancestors." Chima J. Korieh, "The Igbo Diaspora in the Atlantic World: African Origins and New World Formations," in *Igbo in the Atlantic World: African Origins and Diasporic Destinations*, ed. Raphael C. Njoku and Toyin Falola (Indiana University Press, 2016), 180.

10
Igbo in the Atlantic World, 161, 116, 142.

11
Kwame Gyekye, "African Philosophy," in *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. Robert Audi (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

12
Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 165.

13
Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 169.

14
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 28.

15
Souleymane Bachir Diagne, *African Art as Philosophy: Senghor, Bergson and the Idea of Negritude* (Seagull Books, 2007), 26–27.

16
Dawn Fulton, *Signs of Dissent: Maryse Condé and Postcolonial Criticism* (University of Virginia Press, 2008), 20–21.

17
Maryse Condé, "On the Apparent Carnivalization of Literature from the French Caribbean," in *Representations of Blackness and the Performance of Identities*, ed. Jean Muteba Rahier (Bergin & Garvey, 1999), 91–97.

18
Maryse Condé, "Order, Disorder, Freedom, and the West Indian Writer," *Yale French Studies*, no. 83 (1993): 121–35.

19
Fulton, *Signs of Dissent*, 21.

20
For Glissant's thoughts on "transparency" and "opacity," see the chapter "Transparency and Opacity" in *Poetics of Relation*, 111–20.

21
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 49.

22
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 49.

23
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Planetary," in *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*, ed. Barbara Cassin et al. (Princeton University Press, 2014).

24
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 143.

25
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "The Rami of Simur," in *Europe and its Others, Vol 1: Proceedings of the Essex Conference on the Sociology of Literature* (University of Essex, 1985).

26
Condé, "Order, Disorder, Freedom."

27
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 21.

28
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 16.

29
Condé, "Order, Disorder, Freedom."

30
D. A. Masolo. *African Philosophy in Search of Identity* (Indiana University Press, 1994), 10.

31
Wole Soyinka said during a 1964 conference in Berlin: "A tiger does not proclaim his tigritude, he pounces. In other words, a tiger does not stand in a forest and say, 'I am a tiger.' When you pass where the tiger has walked before, you see the skeleton of the duiker, you know that some tigritude has emanated there." Quoted in Jan Heinz Jahn, *Neo-African Literature* (Grove Press, 1969), 265–66.

32
Diagne, *African Art as Philosophy*, 26–27.

33
Matthew 22:34–40.

34
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 28.

35
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 28.

36
Édouard Glissant: One World in Relation, directed by Manthia Diawara (Third World Newsreel, 2010).

37
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 5.

38
Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 167.

39
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 5.

40
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 74.

41
Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 6.

42
Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 159–71.

43
Homer, *Odyssey*, trans. G. H. Palmer (Houghton Mifflin, 1891), 173.

44
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