

**Speculative Eco poetics on ‘The Human’
with Suzanne Césaire, Édouard Glissant, and Audre Lorde**

Emma Krone

Krisis 2024, 44 (1): 19-36.

Abstract

Caribbean thinkers Suzanne Césaire and Édouard Glissant introduce their readers to more-than-human figures – the plant-human and beach walker respectively – that theorize new ways of being. Accompanied by an epistemological shift, the figures disrupt Western colonial binaries and render them inoperative. This paper argues via Audre Lorde’s work that we can understand these speculations on ‘the human’ as a double move of creating one’s being and a new (self-)understanding thereof. The result is an aesthetic strategy that enables experimentation with the category of the human, surpassing reductive universals.

Keywords

Eco poetics; The Human; Caribbean Philosophy;
Suzanne Césaire; Édouard Glissant; Audre Lorde.

Licence

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons
Attribution 4.0 License International License (CC
BY 4.0). © 2024 The author(s).

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.21827/krisis.44.1.40984>

**Speculative Eco-poetics on 'The Human'
with Suzanne Césaire, Édouard Glissant, and Audre Lorde**

Emma Krone

I. Introduction: Between Dialogue and 'Lost Voice'

Suzanne Césaire (1915-1966) and Édouard Glissant (1928-2011) were Martinican scholars who both worked with cultural theory, literary criticism, and philosophy. Their work is concerned with the question of Martinican (self-)representation and identity. This paper engages with two figures that emerge from Césaire's collected essays *The Great Camouflage* (1945) and Glissant's *Poetics of Relation* (1997) that surpass the limitations of Enlightenment categorizations of the human: the plant-human (or plant-man, as translated from *homme-plante*) for Césaire, and the beach walker (also referred to as "a ghostly young man" (Glissant 1997, 122), "the silent walker" (124), and "the voiceless man" (128)) for Glissant. Reading these figures together highlights the importance of the Caribbean land-, sea- and weatherscape for these newly formed identity/ies while also paying particular attention to the role of poetry and poetics in order to arrive at such new formations. I argue that these figures exemplify aesthetic strategies for reimagining binaries between nature/culture, the human/non-human, and reason/sensation by showcasing an alternative to such dichotomous thought. By placing these figures next to one another, we can draw out some of Césaire's and Glissant's shared concerns with respect to the alternative they offer against a rigid conception of 'the human'.

When reading these thinkers together, however, it must be noted that Césaire is a precursor to Glissant, chronologically and theoretically, and that the noticeable affinities between the two invite speculation regarding those of Glissant's ideas that might be attributed to Césaire. While some scholars have argued that Glissant clearly is in dialogue with Césaire (Rabbitt 2008, 121), others question to what extent this can be characterized as a dialogue if the presence of her voice is never acknowledged (Curtius 2016, 523). As she worked in the shadows of her famous husband Aimé Césaire (Curtius 2016, 515; Rabbitt 2013, 44), this is no surprise. The newly found consensus is, however, that Césaire was more important to the Négritude movement¹ and philosophical Caribbean thought in general than she is oftentimes credited for (Praeger 2003, 82; Rabbitt 2008, 124; Rabbitt 2013, 41). The influence she is now granted also extends to Glissant's work, even leading some to argue that in Césaire one finds a "pre-Glissantian 'Poetics of Relation' at play" (Praeger 2003, 48). Looking at Glissant's oeuvre, this influence is mainly detectable in the period of his writing from *Le Discours Antillais* (1981) onwards, where he developed his philosophy from a mainly Martinican perspective to a postcolonial globalized world perspective (Murdoch 2013, 875). This paper however is not concerned with recovering Césaire's 'lost voice' in Glissant's work as other scholars have already done so successfully (see Rabbitt, 2013 and Joseph-Gabriel, 2016). Still, this context should not be overlooked when interweaving both authors. As Joseph-Gabriel has argued, "'The Great Camouflage' is apt both as the title of [Césaire's] final essay and as a description of her entire body of work" (2016, 4-5), in part because she practiced literary evasion

to express her criticism to escape censorship under the oppressive policies of the Vichy occupation (2016, 3), but also because of how her writing has up until recently been camouflaged by other Caribbean theorists.

In this paper, I read the plant-human and beach walker as two figures that create what can be called an ecopoetics (Curtius 2016; Nelson 2020). Here, poetics is understood in Glissant's terminology as "the highest point of knowledge" (Glissant 1997, 140) that gestures towards an opening rather than a limitation of knowledge and being. This poetics turns ecopoetic since both Césaire and Glissant critically read the Caribbean environment as a site that is heavily influenced by colonialism while also offering resistance to it. Their awareness of ecological matters as intertwined with colonial ravage enables a new understanding of the intricacies between the human and the environment as necessarily interlinked. Through their poetic language, entangled with an ecological imagination, these authors forge an aesthetic strategy that reimagines binaries from colonial logic, transforms them, and ultimately renders them useless. This paper proposes a reading with the Caribbean-American writer, activist, scholar, and poet Audre Lorde (1934-1992), which helps us to interpret the plant-human and beach walker as figures that refuse neat categorization. Lorde's poetics and poetry not only resonate deeply with Césaire and Glissant, her theorization also brings a sense of urgency to how poetics and poetry can work against colonial logics. This makes possible a reading of the plant-human and beach walker as crucial experiments with the category of the human. When placed in the context of the limited and racialized Enlightenment vision of the human that excludes certain peoples from belonging to it, these figures reorient themselves such that they deconstruct this category altogether (Nelson 2020, 168), and instead offer an alternative. By considering this as a doubly creative move in new forms of being and thinking, this interpretation is grounded in Césaire's and Glissant's approaches and narratives that surpass normative notions of the human as e.g. white, civilized, and rational. Importantly, it is precisely within sources from people excluded from the domain of 'the human' that we can find fruitful and influential critiques of that exclusionary definition in the first place. Within contemporary studies of (critical) posthumanism, scholars are now considering the works of both Césaire and Glissant (see e.g. Nelson (2020), and Brigstocke and Gassner (2021)). Yet, it is worth emphasizing that the recognition of such authors is not a given, and that these sources remain frequently overlooked. As I hope to show in this article, relating to Césaire and Glissant in particular, the presence of these non-anthropocentric and more-than-human perspectives—precisely in those spaces that suffered from coloniality and its logics—indicates that crucial critiques of 'the human' have existed prior to (Eurocentric) theorizations in posthumanism and provides different possibilities.

In my approach to this subject matter, I will attempt to refuse strict categorizations of thought. That is, against rigid reasonings and stark oppositions between object/text and subject/reader, my approach consists in working within the openness and opacity offered by Césaire, Glissant, and Lorde, inviting associations and juxtapositions into the text. Projecting harsh separations between epistemology and ontology, or writing and reading, would not do their work justice, nor would it be able to advance the alternative that they theorize. I thus do not attempt to find any 'solutions' or 'methods,' but instead

propose, with and through my words, another opening and unfolding.

Starting by diagnosing the problems of colonial logic as spelled out by both Césaire and Glissant, I will focus on what is at stake in the category of the human. This will be followed by a theoretical reading of Lorde's² work in order to underscore the importance of creative forms beyond already existing normative frameworks—an approach that both Césaire and Glissant ascribe to as well. Then, the plant-human and beach walker are grounded in speculations that ultimately imagine the category of the human otherwise³ and surpass the pitfalls of representation through an epistemological shift.

II. Against Colonial Logic: Neither Annihilation nor Assimilation

When considering how colonial logic functions according to Enlightenment humanism, we must understand its ontological and epistemological claims in the way they work to construct universals. As a longstanding tradition, Enlightenment humanism enabled colonialism under the project of rationality, modernity, and civilization (Nelson 2020, 166). On the one hand, this tradition forged oppositional, binaried categories, such as the Western, rational, and civilized human over and against the exoticized, sensuous, barbaric and animal-like Other. On the other hand, this implies a double standard that relegates liberty, equality, and solidarity to some people, and exclusion from this to others. Enlightenment thought establishes pure difference through racialization (Crawley 2016, 11), resulting in an Enlightenment subject understood as deserving of the measure it upholds, while refusing those standards for the Other, something made explicit with e.g. the Declaration of the Rights of Man (Walker 2012, ix). This doubling is what makes up part of 'the camouflage' in Césaire's work, such that in the case of the Caribbean, this humanism "masked policies of enslavement based on the non-homogeneity of the human species, injustice, and a color caste system for the colonial Antillean subjects abroad" (2012, ix). Then, ontologically, Enlightenment humanist ideals delineate what constitutes 'the human' universally—as a free, rational subject with agency and rights—in reductive and inherently exclusionary ways. And epistemologically it is these reductive antinomies that fail to conceive of the world's complexities and constitute for Césaire "the shackles of absurd logic and so-called Western reason" (Césaire 2012, 35).

Similarly, Glissant condemns colonial logic. He does so, infamously, by developing the concept of transparency that is foundational for Enlightenment Western ideals and that, rather than appearing as something to be strived for, in his work is problematized for its reductive functionality (Simek 2015, 363). Initially, transparency functioned as a tool for liberation and to keep power in check (Simek 2015, 364), but, as Glissant shows, it is also connected to clear, rational thought in the sense of 'comprehending.' Insofar as it is based on *comprendre*, Glissant reads in this an epistemology that seeks to include an object within a structured, hierarchized system by seizing and grasping it, and as such placing it in universal categories (Simek 2015, 365) and thus fixing it ontologically and epistemologically in historical or cultural essentialism. However, as essentialist and excluding perspectives are rejected, any categorizations of e.g. 'the human' as opposed to 'the Other,' but also 'humanity' contra 'nature,' become problematized. The transparency central to Western thought implies a way of measuring an aspect that is valued over

and against one that is disvalued, grounded in a dynamic that either accepts or rejects but always reduces. Glissant explains: “In order to understand and thus accept you, I have to measure your solidity with the ideal scale providing me with ground to make comparisons and, perhaps, judgments. I have to reduce” (Glissant 1997, 190).

For both Césaire and Glissant, this colonial logic tied to Enlightenment humanist ideals has vast consequences for the ways in which the Caribbean is conceived of. First, Césaire and Glissant critique the image that Western colonial logic constructs of the Caribbean as an environment for its incorrectness and incompleteness. Based on an opposition between the natural and cultural world, between sensation and reason, the Western gaze makes the Caribbean a mere tropical paradise and as such manages to reduce the collection of islands to their beauty—some shores to be conquered for colonizers, some vacation spots for tourists. This is expressed in *doudouisme*, the literary tradition that exoticizes Martinique as a place of beauty (Maximin 2012, xxxi), in what Césaire terms “hammock literature” (Césaire 2012, 26) or “tourist literature” that only consists of so much “sugar and vanilla” (2012, 27).

Similarly, in Glissant’s descriptions of Le Diamant, a beach on the southern coast of Martinique that he frequently visited, he warns against this reductive understanding. He does not reject the beach’s natural allure, and neither does Césaire in her discussion of for example Mount Pelée. But both agree there is more to see. Glissant mentions that “without cover” the beach is burning, and he writes:

Beneath the conventional image, the kind one sees developed—or summarized—in publicity films in the United States or Japan, the luxuriously fatal image for selling a country (‘The Antilles cheap’), beneath this insipid façade, we rediscover the ardor of a land. I see the mockery of the image, and I do not see it. I catch the quivering of this beach by surprise, this beach where visitors exclaim how beautiful! how typical! and I see that it is burning. (Glissant 1997, 205)

The outsider mocks the Caribbean by reducing it to a passive and exoticized paradise only to be consumed, conquered, and voyaged to. Yet, this exoticized view of the Caribbean, including its tropical weather- and landscape, its “hummingbird-women” and “frangipani” (Césaire 2012, 40), engage the Western gaze in a game of hide-and-seek, Césaire concludes. It is “too blindingly bright and beautiful to see clearly therein” (2012, 46), especially for those tourist poets that look but have not seen. Césaire and Glissant know: to only see Antillean beauty is to miss the point.

Secondly, then, this reductive image of the Caribbean as an environment to be conquered also aligns its inhabitants with their natural surroundings as passive and submissive. We see this oppressive link between land and identity in Glissant’s conceptualization of the ‘root.’ As exemplary of identity formation through colonial logic and Western thought, root identity legitimizes a (superior) place in a system via narratives of origin, be it geographically, historically, mythically, or through processes of filiation (Glissant 1997, 143). In other words, a root identity is characterized by a quest of finding the root and origin of one’s identity in one language, one nation, one history, one place. Understanding identity via its supposed roots, something which Glissant

rejects, is also emphasized in its relation to the land which as such becomes territorial. Voyaging, discovering, and conquering in this view are ways of understanding one's own root as stronger and more valuable than others' (2012, 17), spelling out a generalizing and reductive understanding of this relationship between land and people. As a result, the people that are 'discovered' and conquered are forced into the identification process of the invaders, making their identity always 'in opposition to'—and thus limited—rather than already existing in and for themselves. This process of identity formation upholds a vision of the world that, as Césaire underscores, implies “coerced submission” to “a system of ‘civilization,’ to a ‘style’ both even stranger to the new arrivals than the tropical land itself” (Césaire 2012, 29). Consequently, colonial logic conceptualizes land and identity according to categories that uphold structures of domination based on a rigid distinction between subject and object. “Either the other is assimilated, or else it is annihilated,” Glissant writes. “That is the whole principle of generalization and its entire process” (Glissant 1997, 49). As referred to earlier, generalization is inherently reductive inasmuch as it contrasts any complexity with an idealized and hierarchized measure. Neither annihilation nor assimilation leads to freedom from domination. As Césaire writes as part of her project of finding possibilities for Antillean self-understanding surpassing colonial logic, to assume that liberation means assimilation is a “disastrous confusion” (Césaire 2012, 31). Here she points to yet another camouflage, where the colonized that mimic Western logic, even though “born from legitimate aspirations” (2012, 32) in the quest for liberation, undermine the project of authentic self-understanding and instead affirm “[r]epression, sufferings, sterility” (2012, 31).

Thus, colonial logic sets the Caribbean up as a site ready for domination and its inhabitants as objects for exploitation by way of ontological and epistemological universals, i.e. the racialized Enlightenment subject and logic of systematic comprehending, which are limiting and exclusionary. Césaire and Glissant problematize this and seek to offer an alternative beyond either annihilation or assimilation that ultimately remain bound to the colonial project. This alternative is most clearly offered in their speculations on the restricting category of the human as a civilized and reasonable man, as articulated in the figures of the plant-human and the beach walker.

III. Poetics Beyond the European Mode

How can we approach the rejection of universalist constructions in a way that gets us beyond limiting definitions of Enlightenment humanist ideals? The oeuvre of Lorde proves fruitful here. By concentrating on “Poetry Is Not a Luxury” and “The Master’s Tools Will Never Destroy the Master’s House,” this paper theoretically draws out claims that reject ontological and epistemological norms while simultaneously gesturing toward an alternative to the colonial logic spelled out above. In doing so, Lorde is placed alongside Césaire’s and Glissant’s aims of finding new sources for self-formation and self-understanding. First, “Poetry Is Not a Luxury” is interpreted as showcasing an alternative to traditional European ontology and epistemology, centered on a double creation. In addition, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Destroy the Master’s House” reveals the framework necessary for this doubly creative act so as to successfully surpass repression and domination, such that any process of identity formation has access to

options beyond colonial annihilation or assimilation.

Starting with “Poetry Is Not a Luxury,” Lorde writes that “The quality of light by which we scrutinize our lives has direct bearing upon the product which we live, and upon the changes which we hope to bring about through those lives” (Lorde 2007, 36). In a word, this suggests that our experiences of our being and how we come to examine it (“The quality of light”) form our being (“the product which we live”). This displaces the dictum ‘I think, therefore I am’ and instead offers the distillation of experience as a source not only of knowledge but ultimately, as we will see, one of freedom. Lorde continues: “This is poetry as illumination, for it is through poetry that we can give name to those ideals which are, until the poem, nameless and formless—about to be birthed, but already felt” (2007, 36). Poetry as illumination is then a doubly creative process: it creates being and also creates a new (self-)understanding thereof. Importantly, Lorde explicitly positions her articulation of poetry as illumination against normative European reason. However, that is not to say that Lorde reaffirms any opposition between reason and affective sensation.⁴ Rather, taking reason in the normative, narrow sense implies being cut off from knowledge as complemented by both. Lorde continues:

When we view living in the European mode only as a problem to be solved, we rely solely upon our ideas to make us free, for these were what the white fathers told us were precious. But as we come more into touch with our own ancient, noneuropean consciousness of living as a situation to be experienced and interacted with, we learn more and more to cherish our feelings, and to respect those hidden sources of our power from where true knowledge and therefore, lasting action comes. (Lorde 2007, 37)

Lorde explicitly rejects a European mode of living and thinking, as it reduces and rejects forms of knowledge and being that incorporate a multiplicity of experiences outside of abstract universals. Poetry as illumination is then an alternative to rationalized freedom (“we rely solely upon our ideas to make us free”) as this theorization expresses not merely a vision, but a foundation for (future) life (2007, 38). Crucially, this form of poetry, as the title states, is not a luxury but necessary for the very survival of those ways of being and knowing that otherwise end up being annihilated or are forced to assimilate to dominant structures. As Quashie writes on this poetic urgency: “Lorde’s warning that ‘poetry is not a luxury’ becomes clear as a declaration of the inevitability and seriousness of aliveness, of poetic becoming as a necessity for being in the world” (2021, 19). Above all, it is a necessity for oppressed people that cannot fully partake in the domain of ‘the human.’ Poetry as illumination enables experimentation with new ways of being, illuminating these in the epistemological sense, a process that in Lorde’s writing becomes conjoined such that to separate one from the other becomes an unproductive exercise that would again end up reinforcing either thinking or being in the narrow sense.

Neither Césaire nor Glissant theorize from within an intersectional framework, at the very least not to the extent that Lorde does.⁵ Their explicit inattention to gender speaks against Lorde’s emphasis on the poetic as necessary for women (of color) in particular, for example. However, for Lorde, self-definition and social change are

connected—for every non-dominant marker of difference—such that to imagine oneself outside of oppressive categories is the basis for newly found relations to self and others (Collins 2009, 117). Thus, it is in respect to the importance of creative relation that we do find a crucial shared orientation with Césaire and Glissant. Namely, poetic Relation is both an undoing (of colonial logics, of Enlightenment Western reason) and a doing (of being and thinking towards new possibilities). And importantly, this (un)doing takes place within an embodied specificity. The argument is not only about understanding difference, but about doing so differently, precisely also by bringing an awareness of Relation in the first place—between people, places, and things. As Lugones argues, one can find in both Lorde and Glissant a “logic of resistance” (2014, 69). That is, by emphasizing entanglements and coalescence, both gesture toward an opening of difference and seek to strengthen coalitional and anticolonial possibilities from those grounds. And clearly this also accounts for Césaire, whose resistance comes through the vision of the poet who realizes that forgotten relationality with a multiplicity of difference can be rekindled and strengthened. Interdependence is key for Lorde as each relation is lived rather than merely categorical (Lugones 2014, 77). Likewise, interdependence of difference plays a crucial role in Césaire and Glissant.

As stated earlier, there are more affinities between Lorde’s exploration of processes of identity formation beyond colonial logic and both Césaire’s and Glissant’s projects. Césaire’s and Glissant’s own approaches to writing reflect Lorde’s idea of the workings of poetry as illumination. In their accounts, Césaire and Glissant work through juxtaposition and association rather than through establishing direct correlations and causality. In Glissant’s case, this can be seen as an “enactment of its own poetics,” as Glissant’s translator argues, that does not seek to establish “irrefutable proof” (Wing 1997, xii). The ambiguity of his language then makes the reader meander through the text, striving to understand it fully while also being aware that comprehension is never to be completed if the project of poetics as opening rather than closure is to be upheld (Glissant 1997, 20). As with Lorde’s illuminating poetry, what is brought to the fore is the space created for new relations—in language, between associations, in-between the lines. Such an approach is crucial, for it challenges the universal and thwarts fixed categories, denying the reader a generalized summary while instead offering opacity that works “against this reductive transparency” (Glissant 1997, 62). A concept coined by Glissant, opacity goes against the need to uncover and understand all (Simek 2015, 363, 369). When we understand the ontological and epistemological as inseparable, as Lorde claims, then the poetic is yet another expression of this opacity. Like Glissant, and as if in tandem with Lorde, Césaire practices the poetic to obfuscate any fixed understanding and stimulate interpretative possibilities. Her collected essays vary in structure and style, forging a destabilized narrative⁶ that enables a certain openness. Working with Surrealism,⁷ in the words of Césaire the poet becomes a prophet: one who sees beyond binaries and has access to “forgotten ties with the diversity of the world” (Césaire 2012, 23). This resonates with Lorde when she writes of “ancient and hidden” dark places of possibility within us that are this “incredible reserve of creativity and power, of unexamined and unrecorded emotion and feeling” (Lorde 1985, 36-7). Unchecked by hyper rationalization and categorization, it speaks of an awareness based on intuition, dreams,

imagination, and feeling. To approach Césaire, Glissant, and Lorde through rigorous and mere logical analysis is to miss this crucial aspect. The task of seeking alternatives to exclusionary categories of ‘the human’ based on colonial logic is carried out in the works of Césaire and Glissant most strikingly within their own imaginative speculations. That is, with the introduction of the figures of the plant-human and beach walker.

IV. An Ecological Imagination of Creolized Figures

By emphasizing the complexity of the Caribbean environment and its intertwinement with its ‘Othered’ inhabitants, binaried oppositions are revealed to be contradictory. Rather than establishing a fixed historical origin for the Martinican, Césaire and Glissant ascribe the fragmented Caribbean islands as determining. Césaire explicitly asserts the plant-human as a fundamental Martinican identity that is both vegetative and human-like:

Like a plant, he abandons himself to the rhythm of universal life. There is not the slightest effort to dominate nature. ... His favorite phrase: ‘Let it go.’ By that, understand that he lets himself be carried along by life, docile, light, un-insistent, non-rebellious—in a friendly way, lovingly. Obstinate moreover as only a plant can be. Independent (independence, autonomy of the plant). Surrender to self, to the seasons, to the moon, to the more-or-less long day. Fruit harvest. And always and everywhere in the slightest manifestations, the primacy of the plant, the plant trampled underfoot but still alive, dead but reviving, the plant free, silent, and proud. (Césaire 2012, 30)

As a figure that embodies both plant and human, Césaire’s construction of Martinican identity suggests ambiguity between an active subject (“independence, autonomy of the plant”) and passive object (“he lets himself be carried along by life”). Likewise, strict categorizations that define the human over and against its environment become muddled. Furthermore, he troubles distinctions between life and death: invested in the “rhythm of universal life,” the plant-human is also always excessive in its resistance (even when trampled, he is “dead but reviving”). Evidently, this echoes the aim of her project: to provide Martinicans with a sense of self beyond colonial oppressions, pointing to their being as in excess of this oppression and resisting the exoticist gaze (the figure is both “un-insistent” and “obstinate,” he is “non-rebellious” but “free”). The disruption of binaries is crucial for this.

With Glissant, the beach walker cannot be understood as separate from his surroundings either. In two easily overlooked chapters of his canonical *Poetics of Relation*, Glissant introduces the figure in an anecdotal-like encounter, imagining meeting him at the beach of Le Diamant. However, the figure remains spectral, remaining true to opacity. “It doesn’t feel right to have to represent someone so rigorously adrift,” Glissant writes, “so I won’t try to describe him” (Glissant 1997, 122). Without clear descriptions, we become familiar with the figure through the beach and the sea. The environment is characterized by its ambiguity and the beach walker embodies this through a repeated questioning of borders between the environment and the figure. In between the rainy season and the dry season, the sand at the beach changes colors from white to black.

As a result, the sand and soil become blurred and seemingly indecipherable in between changing seasons (1997, 122). The beach of Le Diamant is framed by the *mornes*, the hills deep in the forests, and the sea, representing an illegible alternation that refuses a strict order. There is no ‘fixed’ perspective to understand the beach from: even in a brief moment, the borders between land and water, beach and ocean, are muddled. Importantly, the beach is not only destabilized but animated by Glissant, as he makes his readers aware of the sea that seems to keep “alive some underground intercourse with the volcano’s hidden fire” (1997, 121) as well as the movements of “this rhythmic rhetoric of a shore” (1997, 122). As with Césaire, a clear distinction between acted and acted on, subject and object, is refused. From this ambiguous site, the beach walker emerges as a “ghostly young man” (1997, 122) walking tirelessly and silently around. His path traces “a frontier between the land and water as invisible as floodtide at night” (1997, 122), Glissant writes, aligning him with the previously described undecipherable border between land and sea. By emphasizing more-than-human materialities like the sand, silt, and sea, and entangling them within his poetics, Glissant imagines the human away from an Enlightenment notion of rooted identity towards one in Relation with its environment. Just as we have seen with Césaire’s use of the vegetative, an *ecopoetics* is created. As a figure that is described as nameless, voiceless, and without language, approaching him directly becomes impossible. This parallels his speechlessness with that of the sand and the volcano, reaffirming the intricate connection between the beach walker and the beach: in this juxtaposition Glissant points the reader to all the minute and imperceptible signals of both as he interprets them carefully. It is precisely because the sand is “the color of confusion” (1997, 125) (i.e., in between its seasons and thus neither black nor white) that Glissant can read Le Diamant, and the beach walker, as “cyclical, changeable, mutating, running through an economy of disorder” (1997, 125); a place and figure that undergo transformations while still functioning as a unity. We can understand then that the beach and the beach walker are intertwined with one another through Glissant’s poetic construction, suggesting a shared languageless character grounded in the ambiguity of the shores and its seasonal changes. Furthermore, as the beach walker continues wandering, he is described as nearly disappearing in the landscape (1997, 127), rendering both unconfined and mutable. Thus, we understand that perhaps Le Diamant cannot speak, that perhaps the beach walker is silent, but that neither are lacking in communication. Their signals transgress language as a defining, limiting, and reducing principle and instead point to the openness of *ecopoetics*. In threading some of Glissant’s associations together, oppositions between nature and culture, life and non-life, and human and non-human fade into a chaotic intertwining.

However, there are valid questions to be raised as to whether Césaire and Glissant do not merely repeat aspects of colonial logic. First, by emphasizing nature as being so closely knit with the constructions of the plant-human and beach walker, the authors seem to stress that to be Caribbean is to belong to nature. However, it must be noted that neither Césaire nor Glissant make true essentialist claims, even though Césaire writes of the plant-human as the Martinican’s “true nature” (Césaire 2012, 32). As we have seen, the figure is characterized by growth, change, contradictions, and what she calls “the most unremittent intermixing” (2012, 33). Similarly, Glissant does not simply overidentify the

beach walker with the environment, calling for a ‘return to nature’ or an irretrievable past. When he argues for the need of a “dis-appearing” into one’s surroundings, into the mountains, and into “the depths of the volcano” (Glissant 1997, 206), a theorization of a being that rejects rigid distinctions between the human and its surroundings while instead affirming a multiplicity of relations is brought to the fore. We can understand this as Glissant’s “right to opacity” (1997, 189), a right to not be known, grasped, and reduced, thus complicating transparency. That this is articulated specifically as being closely intertwined with one’s natural surroundings can be interpreted as an echo of the important figures of the *marrons*, the fugitive enslaved people that escaped from the plantations into the *mornes* as a form of resistance and survival, a resistance that, importantly, was strengthened in part by their relation to the geographical surroundings (1997, xxii-iii). Thus, by emphasizing an ‘identity in flux’ that cannot be contained categorically or transparently, essentialist traps are avoided.

Secondly, when it comes to the environment itself, Césaire and Glissant do not construct it according to the aforementioned colonial reading as an exotic, passive, sensuous paradise. They acknowledge its beauty but explicitly refer to natural disasters as crucial to the Caribbean: natural disasters evoke both the beauty and the destruction that is part of the Antilles. Thus, the Caribbean coasts are not merely passively receiving, as if only reactive to the colonizers reaching its shores. They are sites that are actively resisting as a location that is not only changed but also changes, obscuring the oppositions between subject and object underlying such a natural view. Rather than repeating colonial logic that stresses mastery over land and sea, this move by Césaire and Glissant can be read as “[an] act of geological agency” (Nelson 2020, 174) and a geographically contextualized “thinking from the shoreline” (Brigstocke and Gassner 2021, 361). This is clearly addressed with the figures of the plant-human and beach walker, who destabilize the nature/culture and human/non-human antinomies. The cyclone, like the volcano and the earthquakes, moves beyond an imaginary in which passive laws of nature constitute a mere backdrop against which plantations and slavery take place (Nelson 2020, 174, 175). Throughout her essays, Césaire shifts focus from the Caribbean’s supposed harmonic beauty to its disequilibrium (Césaire 2012, 39). Similarly, Glissant makes us aware of the island’s hidden “volcanic nature” (Glissant 1997, 124) and the beach’s burning quality. As we have seen, beyond the exoticized gaze, he points the reader to all the minute and imperceptible signals that can be read off of the land-, sea-, and weatherscapes. Le Diamant’s beauty may draw tourists, but it also poses a threat and refuses to be controlled. In other words, the turbulence makes the Caribbean always excessive in respect to the view of ‘The Antilles Cheap’. Describing the Caribbean beyond this view, Glissant argues against this image sold on postcards. He makes the demand to love the earth including all of the “suffering of human cultures,” including the “prisms of poverty” and all the pollution and violence that is unleashed when cultures meet in colonial ravage (Curtius 2016, 529; Glissant 1997, 156). For if we fail to do so, we will reduce it to its beauty—and both Césaire and Glissant know how fatal such an image can be.

Césaire’s and Glissant’s use of this ecological imagination can be understood as guided by the concept of creolization, referring to a multiplicity of diversity that generates new dimensions when cultures meet (Glissant 2008, 82). Even though Césaire does not

refer to the concept as such, it is still present in her text, and arguably later developed by Glissant as a “limitless *métissage*” (Glissant 1997, 34). Creolization can make sense of how relations are distributed and importantly how new connections are mutually forged. Considering the context of the Caribbean, we can see that the site from 1492 onwards—historically, culturally—involves Africa and Europe, and extends its reach to other continents as well.⁸ As Guadeloupean novelist and critic Maryse Condé points out, “the Caribbean, even as a geographical expression, is difficult to define” as it lacks clear borders, racial unity, a fixed language (Condé 1998, 61). Césaire acknowledges this and enables a view that crosses spatial borders and historical time periods in her essays. This expansion is also supported by Glissant who writes that

[the] Caribbean Sea is a sea that ‘diffracts.’ Since 1492, it has been a preface to the continent ... a place of passage, of transience rather than exclusion, an archipelago-like reality, which does not imply the intense entrenchment of a self-sufficient thinking ... but of relativity. (Glissant 2008, 81)

Instead of affirming the fixed determinations originating from colonial logic, Glissant points to the necessarily intertwined and relational identity formations occurring through (coerced) contact between cultures. This is not exclusive to the Caribbean, but in his view most visibly expressed in it:

What took place in the Caribbean, which could be summed up in the word *creolization*, approximates the idea of Relation for us as nearly as possible. It is not merely an encounter ... but a new and original dimension allowing each person to be there and elsewhere, rooted and open, lost in the mountains and free beneath the sea, in harmony and in errantry. (Glissant 1997, 34)

Any process of creolization, then, is subject to continuous change, making identity (as language, people, or place) unstable, but not discontinuous. It is within change and a vast array of expressions that continuity is approached (1997, 98).

Beyond this exoticized and destructive gaze, the Caribbean since 1492 is a place of creolization, including the ecological perspective, as Césaire and Glissant have shown with the figures of the plant-human and the beach walker. We see this again in Césaire when she imagines her island from the window of the Pan American Airways system in one of her essays, where tourists “bring forth the disinfectants, or the ozone” while, as viewed from above, the islands “take on their true dimensions as seashells” (Césaire 2012, 40). As such, the Caribbean archipelago becomes a site of conflict that takes the form of the imperialism, mass tourism, and ecological destruction shaping present and future. This connects the question of the environment with that of the human, questions that can no longer be separated, and posits them as necessarily linked with a colonial logic (Nelson 2020, 176). Emerging from a Caribbean archipelago that is both a tourist attraction and a polluted, harmed paradise, the plant-human and beach walker embody this too. Their opacity—based on creolized constructions—defends complexity and guards against reduction such that, for both Césaire and Glissant, the ambiguity that

processes of creolization engage with also generates ontological and epistemological excesses that ultimately undermine colonial enterprises.

A third thing to consider is that even when taking into account how this creolized understanding of the Caribbean rejects an essentialist approach connecting the Caribbean to nature as such, we must question to what extent Césaire and Glissant might reiterate the colonial strategy of invisibilizing Indigenous peoples. As Newton argues, many theorists of the Caribbean that employ the concept of creolization—as e.g. a metaphor for modernity and globalization—rely on claiming “aboriginal ‘absence’” (2013, 111). In other words, this type of argument implies that the Caribbean is significant, historically and culturally, *since* it has been influenced by the West (i.e. post-1492 by way of colonization) and *because* it also is capable of influencing in turn by contributing to (Western notions of) modernity. This is problematic because, as seen earlier with Césaire’s argument against the “camouflage” of colonial mimicry and Glissant’s argument against identity in opposition, this would prove one’s worth to the West by being like the hierarchized and idealized measure it imposes, ultimately forming a reductive (self-) understanding. Moreover, while focusing on the Caribbean as a place of creolization, in Caribbean scholarship the term “Indigenous” is frequently employed to refer to post-1492 Caribbean people of nonaboriginal, diasporic origin, thus conflating the two terms (Newton 2013, 117-8). And even if Caribbean Aboriginality is acknowledged pre-1492, “it is usually to observe that Europeans murdered them all” (2013, 117). Ultimately, this removes Caribbean Indigenous peoples from being part of any potential domain of the human, while also revoking their stories as a crucial part of an alternative narrative against Enlightenment colonial thought. But, as Forte shows:

Whether in terms of demography, symbolic meanings, cultural practices, political organization, or mere commemoration, the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean have, far from vanishing, become more visible than ever. The only way one can ‘miss’ seeing them is by choosing not to look. (2006, 3)

Thus, this choice of Aboriginal absence is in line with colonial logics and has, inadvertently, pervaded Caribbean scholarship. And indeed, Glissant observes that it is difficult to determine who is ‘native’ to the Caribbean. However, rather than ignoring this question in total, he problematizes the question of land ‘possession’ and its ‘legitimate owners’. He writes:

[In] the Caribbean would this be Caribs and Arawaks or other older and, consequently, more legitimate and ‘determining’ populations? The massacre of the Indians, uprooting the sacred, has already invalidated this futile search. Once that had happened, Antillean soil could not become a territory but, rather, a rhizomed land. Indeed, Martinican soil does not belong as a rooted absolute either to the descendants of deported Africans or to the *békes* or to the Hindus or to the mulattoes. But the consequences of European expansion (extermination of the Pre-Columbians, importation of new populations) is precisely what forms the basis for a new relationship with the land: not the absolute ontological possession

regarded as sacred but the complicity of relation. (Glissant 1997, 146-7)

As stated before, the conceptualization of a root identity necessitates an origin story for territorial land. But, instead of upholding this colonial logic, Glissant shows the unavoidable and complex entanglement between Indigenous, massacred peoples and Caribbean identity since 1492. Importantly, Césaire's and Glissant's conceptualization of "Relation," creolization and "unremitting intermixing" brings this colonial legacy to the fore, forcing us to relate to and rethink with it. Notwithstanding Césaire's differing vocabulary, she is clear in arguing against the Négritude poets who idealized a 'return' to roots in Africa, instead emphasizing Martinique and the Caribbean as "a space for the convergence of complex, multicultural influences" (Joseph-Gabriel 2016, 3). Roots, for Césaire, remain complex as the Middle Passage and plantation system have obscured this form of relation (Condé 1998, 65). However, she notes that "the women of four races and dozens of bloodlines, [they] are there no longer Yet they are there" (Césaire 2012, 40), suggesting the complex dynamic between presence and absence that Indigenous and diasporic people in the Caribbean are involved in (Maximin 2012, xvii).

Ultimately, Césaire and Glissant only engage briefly with the question of Aboriginal presence, yet it marks a crucial aspect in their work. Clearly, their works start with the events of 1492, identifying its problematics that have left and are still leaving their mark. Importantly, creolization in Césaire's and Glissant's works does not idealize modernity, nor does it collapse creolized identity together with Indigeneity or Aboriginality. Instead, it functions so as to complicate the question of belonging in the Caribbean. By shedding light on this complexity, we can also trace this logic of rootedness and origins in the first place. This moment of creolization, intertwinement, and intricacy is thus kept alive rather than assumed to be obsolete. Can this bring awareness to the colonial legacy affecting both Aboriginal and diasporic peoples of the Caribbean? It is important to note that colonial and imperial logics run deep and it is a convoluted process to expel them from all of our assumptions. Challenging and rendering visible the roots of our thinking is necessary in order to trace its histories and dominant narratives. Especially when wanting to find alternative directions for our futurities, the concept of Relation might help us to do so. To return to the entanglement between what Newton calls "modern 'Caribbean-ness' and indigeneity" is in part to recognize its complexity and to find an openness for new ways of relating (Newton 2013, 121). Just as we might refer to Césaire's and Glissant's conceptualization of Relation/creolization in order to strengthen the connection with the diversity of the Caribbean from 1492 onwards, we might also employ it to conceive of the past as a diverse one full of entanglements, reaching back into histories that remain tied to our present and futures.

V. Speculative Aesthetics: A (Dis)orientation toward Decolonial Futurities

If we consider Césaire's and Glissant's figures with the work of Audre Lorde in mind, we not only come to understand how this colonial logic resting on binaries becomes problematized but also how it is fundamentally transformed. By refusing 'colonial tools' of e.g. rationalism, reductive transparency, and rooted identities, Césaire and Glissant render them useless. As such, they expand and deconstruct the ontological and epistemological claims foundational to the narrow sense in which they are understood in

the colonial context.

In her famous essay “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House,” Lorde articulates a dialectic strategy that brings differences together such that new forms are generated. Without arriving at a precise methodology—which would preemptively restrict the openness so crucial to poetics—the essay points us to an approach that demands genuine creativity based on differences that can give rise to new forms of being (Lorde 2007, 111) and new futurities developed to accommodate those that exist in excess of normatively defined and accepted categories (2007, 112). Bridging Lorde’s two essays is the argument that if we take being and thinking in the European mode as centered on rationality and civilization as tools in an attempt to destroy the foundation of the structures that are held up by these ideals, “genuine change” (2007, 112) will not be the effect. Even though temporary adjustments might be made, the mere tolerance or acknowledgement of difference is not sufficient when the terms of tolerance and acknowledgment remain exclusionary. This once more emphasizes the need for multiplicitous forms of being/knowing drawn from experience in this creatively double way outside of the ‘Western toolbox’ in order to further a futurity that does not rest on either annihilation or assimilation, so as to contribute to genuinely new possibilities.

Césaire exemplifies this strategy, since she indubitably disrupts studies by multiple European thinkers and ends up destroying their theoretical grounds.⁹ In one of her most cited passages, Césaire terms this cannibal poetry, referring to “a rewriting and magical appropriation of the literature of the *other*” (Condé 1998, 62) implying “a selective eating of the Other” (Walker 2012, x-xi). Seemingly engaging with colonial logics, Césaire in fact questions it by consuming it only to ‘spit it out’ in the face of the colonizer. The colonizer is only left with its crumbs. In this way, it becomes a weapon against colonial logic’s reasonings (Curtius 2016, 518). In other words, rather than borrowing European tools, she carefully takes them apart and creates her own new sources. Especially for the plant-human, she works against the twentieth-century German scholar Frobenius, a self-taught ethnologist and archaeologist who concerned himself with the study of African civilizations. His formulation of the African Atlantis theory hypothesized a ‘lost’ and white civilization “that left a ‘residue’,” ultimately shaping African culture including its technology, military, and architecture (Nelson 2020, 171). This implies that African society’s progressive aspects could have only been accounted for by postulating the necessity of a hidden white ancestor. Its essentialist and racist grounds notwithstanding, Négritude contributors such as Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sédar Senghor in fact praised the theory, as it conceived of African culture as advanced, and in part extended it (2020, 171). But Césaire’s perspective was more critical, and is in line with Lorde’s appeal for finding tools outside of European structures. Following Joseph-Gabriel and Nelson, it is suggested that Césaire’s reading of Frobenius ought to be understood as a deliberate misreading rather than a simple reiteration thereof (2020, 171). The plant-human as such does not maintain the opposition between mysticism as primitive and passive and rationality as civilized and active that Frobenius argued for. Moreover, the plant-human is in reference to Frobenius’s opposition between the Ethiopian plant-human and the Hamitic animal-human (*homme-animal*) (Césaire 2012, 5). Against the plant-like Ethiopian who “does not seek to understand phenomena—to

grasp and dominate facts outside himself” (2012, 5), we get the Hamitic animal-human, who is defined by “the conquest of the right to live through violent struggle and conquest” (2012, 5). This binary provided Frobenius with grounds for racial essentialism, but with Césaire it is transformed into a foundation for interrogating the human based on an intermingling of these features within both African and “so-called higher civilizations of Europe, Asia, and America” (2012, 6). Thus, a clear distinction between ‘civilized’ and ‘primitive,’ or ‘active conquest’ versus a ‘passive letting be,’ cannot be maintained, either geographically, culturally, or racially. By positioning the figure of the plant-human against Frobenius, Césaire centralizes the question of the human on her own terms. Part plant, part human but neither truly, the plant-human is excessive of the categorical limitation of human/non-human classifications. In other words, Frobenius’s account of cultures and their linear development is based on the question of who can be counted as subject and what can be considered its backdrop. As such, it is structured according to linearity and opposition between subject and object, which Césaire disrupts. Rather than following Frobenius’s “successive stages” (2012, 8-9) from plant to animal grounded in scientific racism (Nelson 2020, 171), Césaire proposes an authentic way of being that does not engage with colonial logic based on domination, conquest, and oppression, nor on values of progress and advancement. Her account is subversive, such that “Whites-Blacks, Europeans-Africans, civilized-savage” (2012, 38) are no longer categories to refer to.

Dismantling the tools of the oppressor, then, not only has consequences for the way that colonial logic functions to establish the Other, but also how it arrives at a sense of the self. “Slavery still [runs] rampant,” Césaire writes, yet the French “seem determined to tolerate not even the slightest shadow being cast upon [their] visage, one must dare show, on the face of France, illuminated with the implacable light of events, the Antillean stain” (Césaire 2012, 41-2). The ecopoetics that run through her essays mirror an image of colonizers through which they “dare not recognize themselves in this ambiguous being, the Antillean” (2012, 43). Césaire shows that it is not only the Martinican that defies neat categorizations of the human. Purity becomes an illusion as the contradictory logic that Western civilizations require in order to gain a sense of self is exposed, and creolization is the result. “[The French] know that the *métis* have a part of their blood,” she writes, “that they are, like them, of Western civilization” (2012, 43).

In addition to this deconstruction of colonial logics, Glissant tackles the ‘master tool’ of Western reason in his negotiation between transparency and opacity, which becomes crucial for his reframing of a thinking from the shoreline (Brigstocke and Gassner 2021, 361). He suggests replacing knowing as comprehending and seizing—an Enlightenment understanding—with giving-on-and-with (*donner-avec*) as an understanding according to processes of creolization (Glissant 1997, 212). Central to giving-on-and-with is the notion that one cannot know all, nor should one attempt to do so. Just as the opaque beach walker can disappear into his surroundings—and let its surroundings disappear into him—Glissant’s model displaces Enlightenment humanist aims of imposing categorizations and projecting normative notions of the human. Echoing Lorde’s call that we must go beyond colonial logic if we wish to counter it, Glissant acknowledges that merely comprehending diversity is insufficient. For seeing and understanding difference

can still enforce hierarchies, however subtle, with a normative universal notion as its grounds (1997, 17). He goes to great lengths in showcasing how reason is limiting and reductive, and thus fails at its project of understanding everything in its totalitarian stance. Opacity is thus not merely a right, but also part of any creolized world where cultures, languages, and peoples meet. The beach walker in particular not only expresses such a displacement of thinking through its open and malleable relations with the environment, but furthermore signifies this epistemological and ontological shift by way of how his opacity refuses a transparent approach. Emulating poetry as illumination that both informs and constitutes one's being, Glissant's creolized world vision rejects being and understanding in the narrow sense and proposes his Poetics of Relation "in which each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other" (1997, 11) instead.

If we take Lorde seriously, moving beyond oppositions is necessary to render them inoperable. We come to understand that the dual and simultaneous constitution of being/knowing in the broad, poetic sense returns in Césaire's and Glissant's speculative ecopoetics on 'the human.' By refusing a separation between the ontological and epistemological, and by forging a doubly creative act that creates the plant-human and beach walker as newly imagined possibilities, these figures are no longer 'opposed to,' which would structurally posit them as limited from the start. Instead, the figures are (dis)oriented to decolonial futurities. "Decolonization will have done its real work when it goes beyond this limit" (1997, 17), Glissant writes. The freedom and genuine change that Lorde alludes to can thus only be accomplished by removing the initially imposed limitation. In this case, it is the plant-human and beach walker that work to destroy this limit so as to open up new possibilities of identity formation. Crucially, for both Césaire and Glissant, the resulting speculative aesthetic is not only a strategic move, but also necessary—just as Lorde's poetry as illumination suggests—when considering the pitfalls and problems of representation regarding the Caribbean within a colonial order. Taking aesthetics as an entry point moves beyond mere critique or abstract theorization. Rather than gravitating towards universalizing its subject/object, speculative aesthetics specifically opens up "new channels of thought, experience and practice" and with that values experimentation, play, possibility, and vitality in the search for new forms of understanding for their interrelations (Brigstocke and Gassner 2021, 360).

In conclusion, the plant-human and beach walker diffuse antinomies between the human and non-human, beyond bittersweet *doudouisme* and rooted identity, while destabilizing Western colonial logic, in accordance with the Lordean task of moving outside of the limited toolbox. This creates the possibility for genuine change and new, creative futurities grounded in the ecopoetic as an opening toward the opaque. When Lorde shows us that we require ideas outside of the European mode in order to approach freedom as a foundation for new futures, Césaire's plant-human and Glissant's beach walker alter the universal human and reveal not only how inapt it is for Martinican identity/ies, but realize it as utterly inoperative for the colonial Enlightenment subject itself. These figures, creolized as they are, both show how to destabilize a colonial worldview and how to contribute to decolonial reimaginings thereof.

Notes

- 1 It must be noted that Suzanne Césaire did depart from the Négritude movement as she did not advocate for a return to an African past. For her, Martinican diasporic identities cannot be reduced to a resurrection of lost African roots. Instead, Césaire places emphasis on creolization (see Condé 1998, 63-5).
- 2 For an in-depth theorization of Audre Lorde's poetry as black aliveness, see Kevin Quashie (2021).
- 3 'Otherwise' here is in reference to otherwise possibilities, as written about by Ashon T. Crawley in relation to Black Study: "Otherwise is a word that names plurality as its core operation, otherwise bespeaks the ongoingness of possibility, of things existing other than what is given, what is known, what is grasped" (2016, 24).
- 4 In an interview with Adrienne Rich, Lorde rejects reinstalling such a dichotomy, in particular between reason belonging to the White male and feeling to the Black woman: "[Ultimately], I don't see feel/think as a dichotomy. I see them as a choice of ways and combinations" (2007, 100-101).
- 5 An intersectional reading of Césaire and Glissant is beyond the scope of this paper. Nelson argues that Césaire's opaque attention to intersections between race and gender might be best understood in light of the productive potential between feminist trans-corporeality and the posthumanist model, where the gendered *homme-plante* signifies an embodiment freed from femininity as constructed through the patriarchy (2020, 168). For more on gender and Glissant, see "Toward a Sexual Difference Theory of Creolization" (2014). Here, Max Hantel argues that Glissant's work relies on conceptual femaleness, by way of e.g. the ocean (*la mer*) and the mother (*la mère*), and argues for an understanding of poetical creolization as fundamentally related to sexual

difference. Additionally, consider "Opacity in Open Air: Producing Queer Outsides through Glissant's Poetics of Relation" by M. Garea Albarrán for a queer reading based on Glissant's work offering a theorization of an outside of the gender binary.

- 6 For more on the narrative space that Césaire creates in her collected essays, see "Unthinking Mastery with Suzanne Césaire" by Sara Kok (2024).
- 7 In "Unthinking Mastery with Suzanne Césaire" (2024), Césaire's allegiance to Surrealism and her reworking of it so as to reject dichotomous thought is analyzed in further detail.
- 8 In "The Geography of Identity", Rabbitt expands on the relationship between geography and Martinican national identity in the Caribbean (2008, 123).
- 9 Césaire's collected essays reference a vast array of other European authors, poets, and theorists, ranging from Bréton to Nau. See Curtius (2016) and Kok (2024) for how Césaire theorizes these anew.

References

- Brigstocke, Julian, Günter Gassner. 2021. "Materiality, Race, and Speculative Aesthetics." *Spaces & Politics of Aesthetics Forum* 7 (2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2373566X.2021.1977163>.
- Césaire, Suzanne. 2012. *The Great Camouflage: Writings of Dissent (1941–1945)*. Edited by Daniel Maximin. Translated by Keith L. Walker. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2009. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.
- Condé, Maryse. 1998. "Unheard Voice: Suzanne Césaire and the Construct of Caribbean Identity." In *Winds of Change: The Transforming Voices of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars*. Edited by Adele S. Newson and Linda Strong-Leek, 61-66. New York: Peter Lang.
- Crawley, Ashon T. 2016. *Blackpentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Curtius, Anny Dominique. 2016. "Cannibalizing Doudouisme, Conceptualizing the Morne: Suzanne Césaire's Caribbean Epopoetics." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 115 (3): 513–534. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-3608620>.
- Forte, Maximilian C. 2006. *Indigenous Resurgence in the Contemporary Caribbean: Amerindian Survival and Revival*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Garea Albarrán, M. 2024. "Opacity in Open Air: Producing Queer Outsides through Glissant's Poetics of Relation." *Krisis | Journal for Contemporary Philosophy* 44 (1): 37-51.
- Glissant, Édouard. 2008. "Creolization in the Making of the Americas." *Caribbean Quarterly* 54 (12): 81-89.
- . 1997. *Poetics of Relation*. Translated by Betsy Wing. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Hantel, Max. 2014. "Toward a Sexual Difference Theory of Creolization." *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy* 22 (1): 1-18.
- Joseph-Gabriel, Annette K. 2016. "Beyond the Great Camouflage: Haiti in Suzanne Césaire's Politics And Poetics of Liberation." *Small Axe* 20 (2): 1–13. muse.jhu.edu/article/622465.
- Kok, Sara. 2024. "Unthinking Mastery with Suzanne Césaire." *Krisis | Journal for Contemporary Philosophy* 44 (1): 5-18.
- Lorde, Audre. 2007. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press.
- Lugones, María. 2014. "Radical Multiculturalism and Women of Color Feminisms." *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* 13 (1): 68-80.
- Quashie, Kevin. 2021. *Black Aliveness, or a Poetics of Being*. Durham: Duke University Press.

- Murdoch, H. Adlai. 2013. "Édouard Glissant's Creolized World Vision: From Resistance and Relation to 'Opacité.'" *Callaloo* 36 (4): 875-889.
- Nelson, Lauren L. 2020. "Suzanne Césaire's Posthumanism: Figuring the *Homme-Plante*." *Feminist Modernist Studies* 3 (2): 162-179. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24692921.2020.1794464>
- Newton, Melanie J. 2013. "Returns to a Native Land: Indigeneity and Decolonization in the Anglophone Caribbean." *Small Axe: A Journal of Criticism* 17 (2): 108-122.
- Praeger, Michele. 2003. *The Imaginary Caribbean and Caribbean Imaginary*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Rabbitt, Kara. 2013. "In Search of the Missing Mother: Suzanne Césaire, *Martiniquaise*." *Research in African Literatures* 44 (1): 36-54. <https://doi.org/10.2979/reseafrilite.44.1.36>.
- . 2008. "The Geography of Identity in Suzanne Césaire's 'Le Grand Camouflage'." *Research in African Literatures* 39 (3): 121-131. muse.jhu.edu/article/242676.
- Simek, Nicole. 2015. "Stubborn Shadows." *Symplokē*, 23 (1-2): 363-373. <https://doi.org/10.5250/symploke.23.1-2.0363>.

Biography

Emma Krone is a research master student in the Department of Philosophical Anthropology and Metaphysics at Radboud University Nijmegen, and a master student in Comparative Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam, in Amsterdam. Her research primarily focuses on forms of poetics in decolonial frameworks.