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John Drabinski and Marisa Parham, eds. 2015. *Theorizing Glissant: Sites and Citations*. London: Bowman & Littlefield. vii, 175 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1783484089, ISBN-10: 178348408X.

César Augusto Colón-Montijo
Ethnomusicology Program
Columbia University
cac2221@columbia.edu

The collection *Theorizing Glissant: Sites and Citations* makes an important contribution to the field of Caribbean studies through a nuanced and diverse examination of the keywords that lie at the core of Édouard Glissant's vast oeuvre. The book reads as a sort of guide through the central tropes, poetic aims, political contexts, and philosophical questions that motivate the Martinican's thought. The authors gathered in this book approach these ideas from multiple disciplinary perspectives, situating his work in relation to key historical and political processes in Martinique and in the broader Caribbean. Several of these essays also locate Glissant's ideas in counterpoint to those of thinkers such as Gilles Deleuze and Henri Bergson who have been acknowledged as influential references in his work. Others put Glissant in conversation with contemporary theorists such as Luce Irigaray in order to critique the erasure of sexuality in his oeuvre, or to critique the sort of devotion that marks his relation to William Faulkner. Hence, this book should be of interest not only for Caribbean scholars but also for those involved in philosophy, critical theory, literature, and cultural studies, as well as scholars engaged with racial and ethnic matters.

What I appreciate the most about *Theorizing Glissant* is its effort to examine the Martinican theoretician on his own terms. Even when situating him in relation to the philosophers or writers who haunt his oeuvre, the essays in this collection mostly theorize Glissant through the prism of his own nomenclature. The editors, John E. Drabinski and Marisa Parham, make the central aims of the collection clear in their short introduction entitled “Glissant, Creolizing Philosophy.” Its task is to engage critically with Glissant’s hybrid literary, philosophical, and political legacy as a means “to reconsider the meaning of philosophy itself, and thus also to reevaluate what it means to engage in philosophical reflection, to embrace creolizing rather than reifying” (Drabinski and Parham 2015, 2). This book therefore aims to unsettle philosophical inquiry through different analytic enactments of the type of rhizomatic thinking promoted by Glissant.

The essays featured in *Theorizing Glissant* are organized following a rhizomatic structure. The book starts and ends with essays that locate Glissant’s thought in relation to larger political events that marked his life and work. The analyses zoom in and out of his oeuvre, moving from close readings of his key publications to broader Caribbean colonial and postcolonial histories, and back to in-depth reflections about Glissant’s aesthetics. I read this structure as an attempt by the editors to emulate Glissant’s own mode of inquiry and inscription. Throughout, one feels a sense of errantry in how each text navigates the central tropes and political implications of his work. The individual chapters that comprise this rhizomatic reading are so varied and dense—even though some of them are relatively short pieces—that it would be unfair to attempt to provide a comprehensive reading of each text in such a short review. Nonetheless, making a brief summary is key in order to further describe the collection’s scope.

In “Glissant’s *Opacité* and the Re-Conceptualization of Identity,” H. Adlai Murdoch analyzes the concept of *opacité* in order to confront questions about the formation of identities amidst the pervasive patterns of neocolonialism brought by the law of departmentalization in the Francophone Caribbean. The author reads *opacité* as a conceptual means for the creation of relational identities—always in perpetual transformation—that arise out of “the creative resistance to colonial/metropolitan domination, and from complex contestatory relations with other nations and cultures in an ongoing cultural process” (Murdoch 2015, 21). The second chapter, by Seanna Sumalee Oakley, examines Glissant’s modes of inscription as a praxis of philosophy and a politics: Glissant usually acknowledges by name the literary authors he references, but rarely makes direct citations of the Western philosophers who inform his poetics. Entitled “In Citation to the Chance: Glissant,

Citation, Intention, and Interpretation,” this text discusses the spectral presence of Henri Bergson in Glissant’s work in order to propose the idea of “incitation” to describe his indirect philosophical references in contrast to his citations of literary works. The author proposes that such a mode of inscription is telling of the type of epistemic and ontological labor Glissant aims to produce: a project that emerges from the colonial encounter and enacts this encounter critically through the written word. The following chapter, written by Clevis Headley and titled “Glissant’s Existential Ontology of Difference,” continues the task of situating the Martinican in relation to his philosophical references. The central aim of this essay is to portray Glissant as a creative thinker who somehow cannibalizes¹ Gilles Deleuze’s central keywords in order to produce his own ontological project. Divided in sixteen sections, the essay analyzes Glissant’s idiosyncratic interpretation of concepts such as ontology, multiplicity, repetition, identity, the rhizome, the virtual, and the real through the specificity of his Caribbean experience.

Max Hantel’s “Toward a Sexual Difference Theory of Creolization” proposes an invigorating critique of Glissant’s concept of creolization that I find to be a key contribution in the volume. Putting Glissant in conversation with the radical feminist thought of Luce Irigaray, Hantel describes creolization as the product of a patriarchal grammar. He confronts the erasure of sexuality in one of the Glissant’s most known metaphors: the womb abyss. The author asks a compelling question: where are the real women and mothers who also traveled through the abyss of the Middle Passage but are left out of Glissant’s poetic conceptualization of the womb abyss? Hantel proposes that reworking this concept through the lens of sexuality allows theorists of creolization “to articulate feminine desire beyond constitutive lack, to reinsert the female body into the narrative of the literal birth of a new people, and to fight the solidification of identity into a knowable and countable form” (Hantel 2015, 99). This is a solid contribution to recent critical discussions about the concept of creolization.²

If the previous chapters focused on Glissant’s philosophical work, Hanétha Vété-Congolo’s “*The Ripening’s* Epic Realism and the Martinican Tragic Unfulfilled Political Emancipation” focuses on a novel in order to examine the intricate relationship between the poetic and the political that pervades his legacy. A close reading of *The Ripening*, a novel published in 1958, this essay is at its core a critique of departmentalization as a failed political endeavor, and a critique of the relation between intellectuals and the peoples whose voices they claim to represent through their literature. The focus on literature continues in Chapter Six, entitled “Breadfruit, Time, and Again: Glissant reads Faulkner in the World Relation.” In this essay, Marisa Parham adds yet

another keyword to the larger discussion of Glissant's poetics: breadfruit as a heavenly food and a metaphor to think critically about Glissant's Caribbean discourse. This is a critique of his reading of Faulkner, and of the apparent sacredness that Faulkner has gained for him. The text discusses Glissant's concept of deferred revelation, a storytelling tactic that consists of postponing the revelation of a secret, which he describes as Faulkner's great contribution because it "offers an alternative model for understanding the United States and, by extension, the play of power in the Americas" (Parham 2015, 134). Parham reads such tactic of deferral as central to Glissant's own narrative about Faulkner in his book *Faulkner, Mississippi* (1996), and suggests that such a relation through deferment is revealing of a sort of sacredness that marks Glissant's relation to Faulkner.

In the final essay of the collection, entitled "Aesthetics and the Abyss: Between Césaire and Lamming," John E. Drabinski, analyzes the political impact of Glissant's work by putting him in relation to Martinican intellectuals Aimé Césaire and George Lamming. Drabinski discusses how key elements of their intellectual and political projects are connected through a shared but very diverse interest in theorizing a potential Caribbean aesthetics of home and exile. In tracing such an intellectual genealogy, the author specifically seeks to analyze how in Glissant's case such an aesthetics, and the very concrete ways in which his theorization emerges from his relation to Césaire and Lamming, give origin to one of his most important philosophical keywords: errantry. Throughout, this essay provides a reflection about the connections between specificity and universality in the articulation of a Caribbean aesthetics. What differentiates Glissant's project, Drabinski proposes, is that while Césaire and Lamming have an anxious relation with fragmentation as something that must be overcome, Glissant "characterizes fragmentation as originary, irreducible, and central to the meaning and method of *Antillanité*" (157; emphasis in the original). According to Drabinski, it is from such an understanding that the concept of errantry relates the connection to land, home, and deterritorialization that pervades Glissant's ontological, epistemic, and aesthetic project.

Theorizing Glissant ends with the poem "Marronage between Past and Future: Requiem for Édouard Glissant," written by Neil Roberts. Such an editorial decision should not come as a surprise if one considers the coherence with which the book enacts the hybridity of Glissant's oeuvre. This poem reads as both a mode of poetic theorization and as an expression of mourning. Marronage, yet another keyword in Glissant, becomes in Roberts's verses a means to theorize a poetics of errantry. Roberts versifies Glissant's multiplicity as an intellectual, and poses a set of questions that index the project that grounds this collection:

rethinking philosophical inquiry from the specificity of Caribbean histories. Roberts writes,

A poeticist, a historicist,
A playwright, a novelist,
A philosopher, a theorist,
A heretic, a prophet

But why must Caribbean thinkers be all of these or none?

Why do I wonder if you, Césaire, and Fanon made a pact back in '46?

Why did you die on continental landscape if you believed in small islands?

Why do I care, why do Antilleans care, *why* does the *tout-monde* care?

These poetic questions allow us to think about the haunting presence that Glissant maintains in the work of contemporary Caribbean thinkers. In a similar way to how Césaire, Fanon, Lamming, Faulkner, Deleuze, and Bergson haunt his thought, he has become a specter for those who—like the authors compiled in this collection—engage critically his political, poetic, and philosophical project of mapping the concept of the *tout-monde* from a Caribbean perspective; that is, those who engage with the idea of a prophetic vision of the past as a means to imagine possible futures through the spectral force that Glissant's oeuvre maintains in his afterlife.

In his essay, Drabinski proposes that an aesthetics cannot “be dislodged from the site of its articulation, transmission, and reception” (2015, 141). I find these words useful to also think about the theoretical labor produced by the thinkers who have been assembled in *Theorizing Glissant*. The authors come from liberal arts institutions like Amherst College, Dartmouth College, Bowdoin College and Williams College, or from relatively small research institutions like the University of Washington and Tufts University. Additionally, this book is part of the series *Creolizing the Canon*, published by Rowman & Littlefield International in partnership with the Caribbean Philosophical Association. The book series rethinks canonical theoreticians through the lens of creolization as a means of rendering philosophy otherwise. I read this volume as a successful enactment of this editorial project, and its production within such institutional assemblages as telling of Glissant's nomadic endurance.

Notes

- ¹ I use the concept of cannibalization in the sense presented by Viveiros de Castro (2014).
- ² See Palmié (2006) and Khan (2007) for recent critiques on the concept of creolization.

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Rosamond S. King. 2014. *Island Bodies: Transgressive Sexualities in the Caribbean Imagination*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida. 261 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8130-4980-9.

Margarita Mergal
Escuela de Comunicación
Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras
margaritamergal@gmail.com

Voy a comenzar comentando dos vocablos que Rosamond King utiliza en su título. Primero, el adjetivo "transgresivas" refiriéndose a las sexualidades y segundo, el sustantivo "imaginación", referido al Caribe. También quiero comentar su concepto *Carib global* pues me parece conceptualmente obscuro, como también su uso conceptual de los vocablos "transgresivo" e "imaginación". Sí me parece muy bien su inclusión de la diáspora caribeña en el Caribe global, algo no muy común en los análisis de esta compleja área geopolítica e histórica. De paso, no debemos suponer que todo el mundo conoce bien el mapa del Caribe. Un buen mapa acompañando su texto ayudaría mucho.

Según el diccionario de la Real Academia Española (RAE), los vocablos en cuestión se definen de la siguiente forma: *transgresión*. Acción y efecto de *transgredir*: quebrantar, violar un precepto, ley o estatuto; e *imaginación*. 1. Facultad del alma que representa las imágenes de las cosas reales o ideales. 2. Aprensión falsa o juicio de algo que no hay en realidad o no tiene fundamento. 3. Imagen formada por la fantasía. 4. Facilidad para formar nuevas ideas, nuevos proyectos, etc. Por si acaso, ya que el libro de King está escrito en inglés, según el diccionario Random House: *imagination*. 1. *the act of imagining*. 2. *the faculty of imagining*. 3. *Psychol. the power of reproducing images stored in the memory under the suggestion of associated images or recombining former experiences*