
Beyond the Word of Man: Glissant and the New Discourse of the Antilles

The imprisoned source of the Lézarde, guarded by thick walls, surrounded by marble tiles, like an idol bedecked with ornaments.

Edouard Glissant, *The Ripening*

By SYLVIA WYNTER INTRODUCTION TO THE ARGUMENT. During his childhood years 1940–44, Edouard Glissant, like all residents of the French colonial island of Martinique, found himself in a lived situation of double blockade. Outside, the United States fleet blockaded the ships of Vichy France. Internally, not only did the presence of the navy and the naval authority of Vichy France as the cause of the U.S. blockade lead to a lack of food on the export-import outpost that was the island, but incidents of direct racism inflicted by the French sailors, as colonial occupiers, led also to an intensified sense of dispossession on the part of the islanders. This second effect was one that was common to all the still colonized population groups of the Caribbean islands, whether Francophone, Anglophone, or Dutch-speaking, since it was based on the common exclusion from all powers of decision-making with respect to our fate in the context of the global conflagration of World War II, and therefore to the recognition that to be a *colonial* was precisely to be excluded from all autonomous processes of decision-making with respect to one's fate as a collectivity.

There was a *specificity*, however—to touch here on one of the major motifs of Glissant's discourse—to the situation of Martinique, as distinct, for example, from my own parallel childhood experience in the then British colonial island of Jamaica. The population of Martinique found itself, willy-nilly, on the side of a France which, having had to accept German domination, was now both an ally to and a neocolony of a Germany determined to found the empire of its Thousand-Year Reich on European "natives" in place of the series of primary non-European "natives" on whose subordination France, like several other European nation-states, had built hers.

Although on the one hand for British colonies such as Jamaica, however helpless to control events, there was a strong sense among the population as a whole that under all the British propaganda there was indeed a core truth which impelled their allegiances, this was not to be so in Martinique. The core truth in our case was that the delirium of the Nazi system of thought, which was based on the taking to a logical extreme of the social Darwinist discourse of "race" that had been put in place in the nineteenth century

as the legitimating "magical thought" of that century's industrial mode of colonialism, would now have to be fought by colonized and colonizers alike. We therefore had the assurance, during the years 1940–44, that we were, as British subjects, on the side of the "good guys," on the side of an opening rather than a regressive dynamics of historical and cultural change.

The situation of Martinique differed not only in the accidental sense of finding itself subordinated to collaborationist rather than to Resistance France, but also in a structural-existential sense; for the dual processes of intellectual and social assimilation specific to the Catholic French model of colonization were already firmly in place in Martinique as distinct from the antithetical processes of intellectual assimilation but of *social exclusion* and economic marginalization which defined the Protestant British model of dominance and subordination specific to the situation of a British colony such as Jamaica.

As a result of these differing models, if a series of widespread social and economic revolts rocked the Anglophone colonies from 1935 onward in the wake of the 1929 economic crash, and if this struggle would lead in Jamaica, for example, to the introduction of limited self-government on the basis of adult suffrage in 1944 and then to formal political independence in 1962, the script of the schema would be different in Martinique, as Glissant reveals in his 1981 essay, *Le discours antillais* (Eng. *Caribbean Discourse*).¹ There the social unrest and psychological awakening of the war and the postwar years led to the French model solution, that of departmentalization, whereby Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana were made into departments of France and into extensions of the French nation overseas.² In the 1970s, as Glissant points out in his chronology of Martinican history from an Antillean perspective, this assimilation would be extended to all areas of economic life. Whatever the increase in "metropolitan privileges" Martinique would enjoy, there would be a decrease in the central privilege of all, that of autonomous input into the processes of decision-making by the collectivity in its own name.

THE ARGUMENT. I have given this brief overview in order to introduce the existential ground from which the root metaphor that is central to Glissant's oeuvre, whatever the genre—poetry, fiction, drama, or prose works such as *L'intention poétique* or *Le*

discours antillais, which defies generic classification.³ This metaphor is that of *blocking*. Its referent is the series of empirical obstacles impeding the Antilles' realization of the full potential of what Glissant defines as "Antilleanness." Glissant sees this blocking at a fundamental level, in the case of both Martinique and the Francophone Caribbean in general, as the effect of the French model of assimilation. Since such a model, although it saves Martinicans from the economic fate of the boat people of independent Haiti, who are turned back almost every day now by the U.S. Coast Guard as they seek to escape in their unseaworthy boats from the inferno of economic misery to which contemporary Haiti is "condemned,"⁴ nevertheless imprisons Martinicans in a specific mode of subordination for which there can be no words within the analogic of our present governing order of discourse and its related episteme or global order of knowledge.

Beverly Ormerod entitled her essay on Glissant's 1958 novel *La Lézarde* (Eng. *The Ripening*) "The Freeing of the Waters: Edouard Glissant's *The Ripening*." Pointing out that Glissant had dedicated one of his latest volumes of poetry, *Boises*, to "every country which is diverted from its course and suffers the failing of the waters" and that one of the final poems in that collection had concluded with a call to "retrace the dried water course, and descend into many absences, to wind along the place of our rebirth, black in the rock," Ormerod shows us how this imperative call and the existential reality of psychocultural "blockade" against which it protests refer us to "the major themes in Glissant's work."

These major themes—namely, the "need to recapture but also to transcend a vanished unrecorded history," and "the struggle to preserve a sense of cultural identity in the face of metropolitan French policies that discourage and inhibit the flow of a specifically Caribbean tradition" in Martinique—are themselves instituted on the basis of the root metaphor and tropic matrix of blocking/blockage. This root metaphor, although already part of what Michael Dash calls "the symbolic patterns" laid down in Glissant's early volumes of poetry from 1953–55,⁵ was to be fully developed in his 1958 novel *La Lézarde*. One could argue that this metaphor is the novel, explaining why, as Ormerod points out, it is as "bare of everyday domestic detail as a classical French tragedy," since its main concern is "the intellectual and emotional development of the characters and the growth of their sense of commitment to the land"⁶ against all the obstacles placed in the way of such commitment.

The metaphor of blocking as the rhetorical strategy of *La Lézarde's* psychocultural imperative is expressed at the level of the novel's character system in the blocking figure or "villain" Garin. The latter's mimetic ideal of power, based on private ownership and therefore on the autarchy of decision-making which it enables, leads him to build his house, the

House of the Spring, over the source of the Lézarde River. Although Thaël, as the Maroon hero and a descendant of those African slaves who had fled to the mountains in repudiation of the plantation system of the lowlands, brings about Garin's death, the process of blocking will be revealed to be, in the trajectory of Glissant's later works, the industrial process itself—in other words, the industrial model of human auto-domestication.

In this context I should note that the term *Maroon*, which was and is used throughout the Caribbean and the Americas to designate the runaway African slaves who took to the mountains in order to escape enslavement and to reestablish the ancestral cultures of Africa in syncretic variants there, is derived originally from the Spanish word *cimarrón*: that is, the non-tamed, nondomesticated animal. The figure of the Maroon as the nonassimilated Antillean will therefore be central to Glissant's oeuvre,⁷ to its inscription of the "antithetical values" between the rebellious, "nondomesticated" mountains, based on the ancestral African cultural model, and those of the "tamed landscape of the lowlands,"⁸ based first on the model of the plantation, then on that of contemporary France—a model which, I hope to show, is itself instituted for both the French and the Martinicans by the Word of "Man" and its related order of discourse.

A shift will therefore take place in Glissant's work in which the blocked symbol of the river's source in the 1958 novel, and the imperative to which its plot line urges us, that of the freeing of the river from its imprisonment in Garin's House of the Spring, is necessarily transformed. If, in the 1958 novel, the Lézarde River provides the central millennial metaphor of hope and liberation (since it is the image of this river which links the mountain, as "the repository of Maroon memories," with "the unfettered sea" and therefore links the tradition of the Maroon repudiation of the plantation to a new future whose synthesis transcends both that gesture of refusal of, and the plantation slaves' submission to, the course of modern history), in Glissant's later work this mode of millennial hope is shown to be as "dried up" as the actual Lézarde River that had provided its founding analogy. If, however, that earlier river of Glissant's childhood, which with "the mud swirling up from its bed and the logs across it singing a chaotically savage song . . . calling out for a life" and "exultantly free" had been the analogue, in the natural order, of the uprising of a "people in revolt" setting out to claim autonomy over the circumstances which controlled its life, had now been reduced to a gutter in the relentless process of the shantytown urbanization defining the systemic "Third World" peripheries, this drying up of both river and revolt had led to the paradoxical emergence of a new mode of revolt, one which will be specific to the historico-existential situation of the Antilles.

This new mode of revolt is one against the very roots of our present mode of "conventional reason" and therefore of the order of discourse and of its Word of Man, which now serves as, in Pocock's terms, the nonquestionable "paradigm of value and authority"⁹ from which our present order of knowledge (episteme) and its disciplining discourses are, in rule-governed fashion, generated. Glissant's discourse is, I shall propose, an instituting act of this new mode of revolt. As such, it takes part in a new uprising, together with the line of intellectual filiation specific to Martinique, from Aimé Césaire's founding Negritude poem *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (1939; Eng. *Return to My Native Land*) to Frantz Fanon's epistemological break effected in *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1952; Eng. *Black Skin, White Masks*), as well as with the new postcolonial discourse of other writers from the ex-slave Caribbean islands such as George Lamming (whose classic novel *In the Castle of My Skin* was published in 1953), and also with the post-1960s work of Maryse Condé.¹⁰

I want to propose here that this uprising is directed not only at our present order of discourse and at its founding Word of Man, as the Word of the human conceptualized as a selected being and natural organism, but also at the tradition of discourse to which its specific discourse of man belongs: that is, at the tradition on whose basis, from 1512 onward, Western Europe was to effect the first stage in the secularization of human existence in the context of its own global expansion and to lay the basis of the plantation structure out of which the contemporary societies of Glissant's Antilles, as well as the specificity of their Antilleanness, as he insists and reinsists, was to emerge. I want to propose further that we look at all the major themes of Glissant's works as themes which cross-link and cross-resonate with each other from one work, one genre to another and as themes which constitute *acts*. I shall therefore define the following major themes of Glissant's works as performative acts of countermeaning directed against the semantic charter¹¹ or behavior-regulating program, instituted by our present order of discourse and therefore by its related order of rationality or mode of "conventional" or cultural "reason." In this context the major themes of his work are instituted as a magma of themes generated from the tropic matrix of the metaphor of blocking, whose referent is that of the blocked/blockaded existential situation, at the level of the psyche of the Antillean human subject as well as of his or her empirical situation.

Central to this magma, as Beverley Ormerod points out, is history, the theme of an Antillean history which, at present "relegated" to an "obscure" representation, must now be recovered in its fullness in order to reorient our behaviors in the present.¹² Another theme is that of the psychic disorder and cultural malaise, both caused by the nihilated (*néantisé*) sense of identity of the population groups of the

Antilles who, finding themselves subordinated to the universal Word of Man and to the specific view of the past which its Word demands, are also necessarily subordinated to the empirics of the global relation which the behavior-regulating signals of this Word and its story (history) necessarily bring into being.¹³ This theme of psychic disorder and cultural malaise will in turn be linked to that of the Relation, of its poetics and its politics, as well as the macrotheme which is centrally linked to that of the Relation: that of the ongoing "economic warfare" waged by the haves against the have-nots within the legitimating semantic charter of the Word of Man. This in turn will be linked to the theme of the consumerism, material and intellectual, imposed on the islands as places assigned for consumption rather than production in the global system, and to the theme of the devastation of entire peoples imprisoned in the roles assigned them by the "transcendental signified" of Man and by what Foucault calls its "true" discourse.¹⁴

Against the *universel généralisant* of the Word of Man (and its variants: Proletarian, Woman), the central countertheme that will be enacted again and again in Glissant's work is that of the anti-Universal, the theme of the claim to specificity, of the claim to "rester au lieu" (the remaining-in-place) in the specific *oikumene* of the Antilles, in the specificity of its "mode of the imaginary." This countertheme of specificity extends from the Antilles as an Other America to that of the Creole languages themselves, of their syntax, sound, and poetics of rhythm, and confronts their orality to the written nature of the "official languages," to the specificity of the Antillean landscape, of its nonorderly seasons as explosive as the flame tree and the poinciana.

The major theme of a "transphysics" in which being is defined as *l'étant* because it itself is defined by the fact that it relates (*DA*, 251) and is related—which is then linked to the theme of historical models of *structuration* as distinct from *structure*, with the latter an effect of the former—leads to the call for another kind of specificity, for a restructuring based on an endogenous Antillean "work upon itself," able to lead to the putting in play of an autonomous social formation (*DA*, 93–95). Meanwhile, the call for a "transphysics" is linked in Glissant's poetry and fiction to a poetics whose primary referent/topic is, rather than the subjective and intimate life of an individual, that of the blocked individuality and fulfillment of a people, the Antilleans, of their realization as a new collectivity. Against the reality of a colonization of the cultural Imaginary so successful at the level of the assimilation of the psyche, of its mimesis of being, stands Glissant's insistent proposal for the "taking charge of the Word" in order to develop the counterconcept of *métissage* so as to contest the representation of monofiliation, of Genesis (*DA*, 250),¹⁵ of, in our terms, "Man." It is this dual call for, and praxis of, "taking charge of the Word" that I have defined in my title as the New Discourse of the Antilles.

THESE THEMES-THAT-CONSTITUTE ACTS: ANTILLEANITY AND THE QUESTION OF BEING. As Glissant said of Fanon, that the latter with his adherence to the Algerian anticolonial revolution had passed over to the act, so I want to propose that with the performative acts of countermeaning put into play by these cross-linking themes, all generated from the phenomenological field of the root metaphor of blocking, Glissant has also "passed over to the act." This act, however, as one impelled by the specific existential circumstances of the Antilles, is defined by a specific mode of uprising, one which calls into question, rising up against, our present mode of being, of subjectivity, the Self.

As long as the human subject, Heidegger pointed out, continued to conceptualize and experience itself as a created being, it would see no necessity to ask questions about being, about in effect our modes of human beingness. After Darwin's *Origin of Species* and *Descent of Man*, however, the universal model of being that had been projected by Western Europe from 1512 onward was displaced from that of the human as a created rational being (that is, of the human species as divinely created to be separate from all other organic species by its rational nature) to that of the human as a selected being. In this new representation, in which the human as an evolutionarily selected natural organism now differed from other forms of organic life only by the fact that it created "culture," the same phenomenon would occur, since the pseudoscientific concept of the human as an evolutionarily selected being would also function to block off any questions about being—about, that is, how as humans we attain to human beingness and do so now in a profane or secular rather than sacred modality.

If Foucault was to raise the question of the historical and therefore relative nature of our modes of subjectivity in the wake of the 1968 cultural revolts in France,¹⁶ this question had been first raised poetically rather than conceptually by Aimé Césaire in his *Cahier*. In the wake of World War II the question was again raised by Fanon and Glissant as well as by writers like George Lamming of the English-speaking Caribbean. However, the question of subjectivity had been impelled, in their earlier case, unlike that of Foucault, by a recognition specific to the Antilles. This was that of the Abject Otherness of the majority of Antilleans, as the descendants of pure or "mixed-race" Africans (and therefore as Negroes), to the Self of Man and its instituted mode of subjectivity/subject, conceptualized as a selected being and purely natural organism.

The recognition here was therefore psychoexistential, that of the need to reject one's own physiognomic Being in order to attain to the Ideal Self or optimal model of the subject, in order to attain to the universal of "Man." It was this awareness that was to be the basis of the challenge later mounted by Antillean writers both to our own mimeticism of being, at

the level of the individual subject, as defined by Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks*, as well as to our cultural and intellectual mimeticism, as explored and called in question by the discourse of Glissant as well as by the overall post-1945 discourse of the ex-slave and ex-colonial Caribbean. As a result, the new synthesis which this discourse seeks was to be based on a "changed quality of consciousness" impelled by the imperative of a "perspective of struggle" sited on the new terrain of being, of modes of subjectivity. This new terrain and perspective was to define the Antillean educated elite, opening them/us onto the possibility of a new intellectual front, outside the orthodox "fronts" of Marxism, liberal nationalism, and feminism.¹⁷

Glissant points out that although the popular groups of the Antilles have waged their struggles persistently throughout Caribbean history, the same has not been true generally of the educated elite. If we make use of Foucault's distinction between an intelligentsia that defines itself as the bearer of a "just-and-true-for-all" truth and the "specific intellectual" as one who works not in the name of a universal—i.e., liberal nationalism, Marxism, and/or feminism—but rather as on the terrain and in the mode of struggle provided by the existential conditions of her or his life to which she or he bears witness, with these conditions defining the specific nature of what that intellectual struggle must be,¹⁸ it is clear that it is only where the terrain of struggle has been that of *being* that the Antillean intellectuals have reenacted the empirical struggles of the popular forces at the level of ideas and of imaginative discourse.

In this context the terrain specific to Glissant's "educated elite" can be seen as that of the struggle over which "order of discourse" (the *ordo verborum*) is to provide the system of meanings through whose mechanism our collective behaviors are to be regulated, over which magma of meanings, therefore, and their transformatively generated signaling systems is to be instituted so as to trigger those identifiable patterns of electrochemical activity in the hedonic reward/punishment centers of the brain, by means of which, I want to further propose, our human behaviors are culturally induced and regulated¹⁹ and our models of being (or modes of *l'étant*) thereby instituted; the struggle, therefore, over which behavior-regulating order of discourse and related mode of the subject it is to be, whether one which continues to impose a situationally blocked destiny upon the peoples of the Antilles, or a new one to be consciously put in place as capable of enabling the liberation of the majority of peoples of the Antilles from their enforced role of Other to the Self, their role of abjectly embodying the hyper-sign by means of whose antonymic trigger alone our collective desire for being on the mimetic model of our present mode of optimal being, Man, can continue to be dynamically and stably induced.

The history of the Antilles from its post-Columbus origins, which Glissant urges us to retrace, to rein-

terpret, has been nothing less than the struggle against this imposed role, that of the lack of being to the first secular models of being in human history. "You suddenly understood," Glissant wrote in *The Ripening*, "that this entire history had been nothing but a fierce collective effort to escape the mean destiny that had been imposed on this world, the petty provincialism that overwhelmed this country, as well as feelings of shame and self-disgust. A supreme effort to identify with the flame tree, the terrible silk-cotton tree, the shimmering sand bar. . . . And you realized . . . that they would no longer tolerate (neither you nor the people) being twisted in a vice, the marks of humiliation. But that also, in this sudden wave of freedom that is suddenly realized, a dark, flaming eruption, reality was already perceived in a new way" (R, 168–69).

TO PERCEIVE REALITY IN A NEW WAY: FROM A LOSS OF TRUST IN PHYSICAL NATURE TO A LOSS OF TRUST IN OUR MODES OF SUBJECTIVITY, OF BEING. Césaire's *Cahier*, with its calling in question of this Ontological Lack role, had emerged in the same historical landscape as that of the Harlem Renaissance and Langston Hughes as well as that of the Cuban author Nicolás Guillén's *son* poems. As Hughes had brought the form of the blues, of jazz (of Glissant's oral), into the written poetry, Guillén had not only brought the Afro-Cuban musical form of the *son* and its drum poetics into written Spanish poetry but had also, with his *negro bembón* (thick-lipped Negro) thematics—"Why do you get so angry?" one *son* runs, "when they call you *negro bembón*? When you have a most beautiful face, and Caridad [your woman] loves you and gives you everything?"²⁰—ironically brought out into the open the imposed role of Physiognomic Other that the black was made to play in the Greek Ideal esthetics of the post-Enlightenment bourgeoisie.²¹ Whereas Césaire's *Cahier*, with its symbolic inversion of the "sacral" metaphysics of *blanchitude*, was the founding counterdiscourse of the Antilles, the later discourses of Fanon and Glissant were the continuation of the act of poetic uprising against the role imposed on the black population groups of the New World as the embodied bearers of Ontological Lack to the secular model of being, Man, as the negative conceptual Other term to its instituting Word.

I use the term *Word* here in a special sense. Julia Kristeva has pointed out that the epochal mutation of Christianity lay in the fact that it summed up and conceptualized all the earlier ritual representations of the Abject, or modes of Otherness from which one had to separate oneself aversively if one were to realize being as it was optimally represented, and had done so in the symbolic concept of Original Sin.²² As a result, the Ontological Lack or absence from "true" being, as one made applicable to all mankind, was now represented as having been brought into the

world by the event of Adam's act of disobedience or Fall, within the narrative schema of the Genesis origin text. With this shift, all humans were now made the recipient of this Adamic negative inheritance and were therefore bearers of this universal mode of the Abject. Redemption from this legacy, for the layman, could only be obtained through the ritual processes of baptism into orthodox feudal-Christian identity. Because the original ritual construct of the Abject or of Pariah Otherness had been translated into the *concept* of Ontological Lack, the order of knowledge of scholastic theology had been elaborated, as the Word of the Christian, upon the a priori premise of an Ontological Lack of being as that of human enslavement to Original Sin. Since the concept of enslavement to Original Sin was embodied in the social category of the prebaptismal Laity or lay intelligentsia, whereas that of the "redeemed Christian" was embodied in the category of the celibate Clergy (whose procreation was that of Spirit rather than in that of the "fallen flesh" of Adam's heirs), the empirical binary Clergy/Laity categories of the feudal-Christian order had "verified" the conceptual categories of scholastic theology before the challenge of humanism and the rise of our present "lay" orders of knowledge or *studia humanitatis*.

However, with the political and cultural revolution of humanism, and the establishment of the monarchical state on the basis of the new Machiavellian discourse of civic humanism, the concept of the Abject as that of Adamic enslavement to Original Sin was transferred to that of potential human enslavement to its own lower sensory nature. In place of the Laity, the new hybridly secular and religious mode of Ontological Lack was now embodied, outside Europe, in the binary opposition between the European settlers and the New World peoples (*indios*) and enslaved peoples of Africa (Negroes). Inside Europe itself it would come to be embodied in the oppositional categories of the Sane (rational nature) and the now asylum-interned, the Mad (as Foucault has traced), together with the categories of the jobless and the poor, now coclassified with the Mad as the embodiment of irrational sensory nature. A shift had therefore been effected from the Word of the Christian to that of rational-nature Man.

Humans, as Peter Winch points out, never live merely animate lives.²³ Rather, we live our lives according to the regulatory representations of that which constitutes symbolic *life* and of that which constitutes its Lack, its mode of symbolic *death*. Group categories, whether that of the Laity or that of the indio/Negro/Mad, who embody the Ontological Lack are therefore the signifier of symbolic "death" within the conceptualization of optimal being specific to each order, whereas, as in the case of Original Sin, the construct which embodies the Lack of Being everywhere serves as a nonquestionable paradigm of value and authority on which each culture's order of rationality or mode of conventional reason is then rigorously and objectively elaborated.

At the end of the eighteenth and during the nineteenth century the construct of an atavistic, genetically dysseleced Lack of normal human nature took the now purely secular place both of Original Sin and of the earlier hybridly religio-secular construct of Sensory Nature. The new Lack was now conceptualized as that of a lack of racial "normalcy" and was embodied in the recently freed Black/Africoid population, who now took the place of the prebaptismal Laity as conceptual Other, as the embodiment, that is, of the "dysgenic human subject" in place of the "fallen natural man" of the feudal-Christian schema. The negative inheritance was no longer from Adam in Genesis, but rather from, ostensibly, the processes of natural dysselecion, within the new secular-origin text of evolution.

In place of the pre-baptized Laity or "fallen natural man" it was the *Nigger* as atavistic human that now had to be aversely withdrawn from as the condition of realizing being according to the criteria of the purely secular and therefore first nonsupernaturally guaranteed model of being in human history. The new order of "true" discourse and of knowledge would be as elaborated on the premise of Ontological Lack as that of dysgenic atavistic human nature as earlier that of the feudal order had been elaborated on the premise of Original Sin and that of the monarchical and landed gentry's on the premise of sensory nature.

Foucault has traced the discursive processes by means of which our present model of being, Man, was instituted on the represented analogy of a natural organism at the same time as the disciplinary discourses of our present order of knowledge that were to institute it as such, was enabled to displace those of the earlier classical episteme and its partly secular, partly religious model of being. The latter model had been grounded on the premise that the hierarchies of its social order had been as divinely ordered as the chain of being of the natural order, which was itself believed to be based on an ascending ladder of the organic species, each of which had been instituted, as a species, by divine fiat, so that once the ground of this analogy and the system of "true" discourse based upon it had crumbled in the wake of Darwin's *Origin of Species* and the rise of the new discourse of evolutionary biology, the supernatural "space of Otherness" inhabited by God could no longer serve to stabilize the representation of optimal being as that of the rational human defined by its divinely created rational nature. Instead, in the shift which now occurred from the representation of rational-being Man to that of Man on the model of a pure natural organism, a new "space of Otherness" term now took the place of that of God. This new term was that of "Race."

Wlad Godzich recently defined the role that all "spaces of Otherness" play with respect to the instituting of human societies. He argued that "for a society to know itself" it "must know where its legitimacy lies," that "furthermore it must have a

sense that its order is neither anarchic nor nonsensical but must be . . . the realization of true order." Even though "its intelligibility" may be a challenge to our limited cognitive means, it must possess it in principle. "If all these conditions obtain," he continues,

. . . order and change are both possible and the society is assured of continuity. But for that to occur, the foundational principles cannot be found in the society at large but must be located in a space of otherness that ensures that they remain beyond the reach of human desire and temptation. This space of otherness is either absolute or mediated through the institutions of the state. In other words the society carries a heavy burden of debt to this space of otherness; it owes its meaning, its organization, its capacity to act upon itself, and thus its ability to manage order and change. This is the foundational debt of meaning that pervades all institutions, including the academic disciplines.²⁴

The proposal I want to make here, in the context of Glissant's differentiation of the concept of structuration from structure, is that as the feudal God was the supernatural "space of otherness" of the Christian and was, however remotely, still partly the guarantee of the human, defined as the owner of a "rational nature" which distinguished it as a category from organic species, the construct of *Nigger* as well as that of the non-European *native* now came to serve as the inversion of the divinely instituted realm of the supernatural and therefore as the extrasocietal source, "beyond the reach of human desire and temptation," since both *Nigger* and *native* were now projected as being genetically, if no longer divinely, predetermined to be a mode of Lack defining an ostensibly evolutionarily determined mode of "normal" human being, Man. Both *Nigger* and its transformatively generated semanteme *native* now functioned at the level of empirical reality as the embodiment of the dysgenic Other, as "proof" therefore of the functioning of an infranatural process of genetic selection as the new that-which-is-in-itself that guarantees the now purely secular model of the absolute subject in its bourgeois conceptualization.

Glissant's reconstitution of the hitherto repressed historical beginnings of the Antilles—that is, of the deportation of the ancestors of the majority peoples of the ex-slave polities from their originally autocentric model of being, their reduction to the status of *pieza* (i.e., of being so many units of extractable labor capacity),²⁵ of their passage in chains across Columbus's newly navigable ocean sea, with the slave trade (*le Traité*) coming to constitute the founding origin of today's Antilles—places a new focus on the question of being, that of the Antilles as well as that of the human in general, for it was the slave trade, as a culture-specific origin, which posed the central dilemma charted by Glissant in his fiction. This dilemma was that of the choice between the alternative thrust of *marronaje*, of Maroon identity, and of its defense of a still-autocentric tribal-lineage model of being secured by a retreat to the mountains and to

the ancestral past, or that of the entrance into the mainstream flow of historical events only at the price—paid by the majority—of one's submission to a new imposed and nihilated (*néantisé*) identity.

Nevertheless, it was this second alternative that would lead to the psychic trauma from whose basis, paradoxically, the new discourse of the Antilles would be compelled to initiate its new acts of revolt, since whereas he had been the Other as slave before the abolition of slavery, now, after slavery, the Antillean found himself as colonial "native" and "Nigger," instituted as another mode of Otherness, as the Lack of the autonomous and absolute subject, Man. As a result, in order to realize optimal being according to the specifications of the new model of being, the majority Antillean subject had, and has, to split itself so as not to coincide with itself. Like the layman of medieval-Christian Europe who could realize optimal being as a baptized, redeemed feudal-Christian subject only through his or her autophobic aversion to prebaptismal being as the embodiment of "fallen natural humanity" enslaved to Original Sin, the Antillean subject had also to become reflexively autophobic to its own specific physiognomic being as the condition of its attaining to the middle-class model of desire, of being.

The specificity of the problem particular and unique to the Antilles was and is therefore an existential one, in that in order to attain to optimal being on the model of secular Man, to attain to being human, the Antillean subject had to be against not only the specificity of its own physiognomic being (Césaire, Fanon) and the specificity of its own Antillean kinship based on the "peculiarity of its own history" as the only people who had been denied human status (Césaire), but, as Glissant will further develop and extend, to the specificity of its own Creole language, of its own landscape and lived existential history, the specificity of that to which Glissant gives name, of its Antilleanness. It is the psychic costs of this contradiction which were protested against, in the acts of discursive revolt from Césaire to Glissant, that begins to insert a "new and changed quality of consciousness," that of a new loss of trust which reenacts the earlier loss of trust that had led to the earlier revolt of the Laity and therefore to the rise of humanism, of the natural sciences, and the modern world system.

In *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* Hans Blumenberg argues that both the post-fifteenth-century epistemological "leap" of Western Europe, which ushered in the Modern Age, and the rise of the natural sciences cannot be understood outside the "changed quality of consciousness" which had been initiated, *inter alia*, by the counterreaction to the nominalist currents of thought of high scholasticism. The latter's Aristotelianized Unmover of God creating only for the sake of His own glory had implied both that the physical world "is no longer reliably arranged in advance for man's benefit" and that therefore "the truth about it was no longer at man's

disposal."²⁶ Both Columbus and Copernicus, as representatives of the first Christian-humanist counter-reaction to this, had counterprojected the original Christian image of the caring-father-God in whose image man had been made: Columbus asserting that because God had made land for the salvation of souls, there had to be more land than water, there had to be imaginary islands like Antilia between Spain and India, if one sailed west;²⁷ and Copernicus asserting that because the "world was intended" by God for man, the heavens could be dependably known precisely because it had been "constructed on our behalf by the best and most trustworthy Master Builder of everything."²⁸

However, the second phase put into play by Descartes displaced the first phase of self-assertion with a more total one. Here the Cartesian's discourse's acceptance of the nominalists' destruction of trust in the providentiality of physical nature for man's sake, as well as of their removal of "inherent purpose" from the cosmos, led both to its own consequent prohibition of any "propositions in the natural sciences from a purpose that God or nature could have had in their production" and therefore inevitably to the development of a "new theoretical attitude." In this new attitude, physical reality freed from an *a priori* anthropocentrism could now be conceptualized as "having to be altered and produced in accordance with human purposes, to the extent [such a] reality proves to be inconsiderable for men" (*DA*, 209).

In our contemporary Antillean case the loss of trust has been that of any necessary providentiality for our sake of the always rhetorico-discursively instituted modes of being/subjectivity, and the modes of cultural reason, and imaginative discourse which sustains them, for our Antillean—for our human—sake. Meanwhile, the new theoretical attitude here is that of the conceptualization of these modes of being/knowing/feeling, and the systems of meaning which induce and institute them, as modes that will now have "to be altered and produced in accordance" with our now-conscious purposes "to the extent that each such mode proves to be inconsiderate" for the full realization of the specific Antillean subject, of the concrete human subject.

One of Glissant's most telling distinctions is that with respect to the uniqueness of both the Antillean and the New World black situation, so that, whereas for the Indochinese or African subject the end of the colonial experience was the *end of an interruption*, this was not to be so in their case. Rather, because Antillean societies "did not pre-exist the colonial act, but were literally the creation of that act," one cannot "speak of structures disturbed by colonialism, of traditions that have been uprooted." For the Indochinese and the African there could be a return, after independence, to the old ancestral bases of identity, on which to meet the challenge of coping with a contemporary reality, but this could not be so for the ex-slave polities of the Caribbean. Only the Maroon

in his or her mountain retreats, as exemplified by the Longoué family in Glissant's fiction, remained to remind of what that ancestral mode of being, of subjectivity, had originally been. For the majority who had submitted to the "domestication" processes of the plantation order, however, and who had come to live their imposed identity, a unique psychoexistential situation had developed. Once freed from slavery, in order to realize being according to the specifications of the new mode of subjectivity, I had to experience my own Antillean-*nègre* physiognomic features as an object of abjection, of aversive phenomenological loathing—as Other, therefore, to the mode of the ego in which I had been conditioned, as Other to the I in which I thought, acted, had been "domesticated" to desire, dream. I had to become reflexively aversive to the specificity of my concrete being now made into the embodiment of the non-autonomous Nigger-Other, whose signifying negation alone made my mode of the conditioned ideal self experienceable at the level of affect.

In the new governing code of "life" and "death" the slave and Caliban symbol of sensory-nature Otherness had been displaced by the empirical figures and hyper-signs of "natives" and "Negroes," both men and women, in the context of the nineteenth-century European order of discourse, so that the Hottentot woman with her steatopygous buttocks and Hottentot "apron" became the signifying category of an ostensibly atavistic mode of human female sexuality. The European prostitute, like all lower-class women to varying degrees, was therefore assimilated to the abject category of the Hottentot woman in medical and criminological discourses;²⁹ similarly, as Fanon shows in his critique of the North African syndrome of the mainstream colonial psychiatry of the time, the mental illness of native Algerian men was diagnosed as "proof" of the fact that they were decorticalized, born as atavistic throwbacks without a frontal cortex, as proof therefore of a genetically determined mode of human differential value.³⁰

If, as Glissant argues, the colonial structures of the Antilles were put in place with Western Europe's first colonial act, Shakespeare's projection of Caliban as a symbol of the first "native" or nihilated (*néantisé*) peoples was isomorphic with this originary putting in place and with the instituting of the model of structuration based on the ontological axioms of the rational-nature/sensory-nature dichotomy that was to be as fundamental to the colonial (or Other) social formation of the Antilles as it was, at the same time, to the secularizing monarchical state of Western Europe, in which politics was to be emancipated from morality by the new reasons-of-state discourse of civic humanism. Thus, as Glissant points out in the *Discours*, the Caliban theme had been a constant with Caribbean intellectuals: Fanon, Lamming, Césaire, Fernández Retamar (*DA*, 231). This is due, I propose, to the fact of these writers' recognition of the analogical similarity between Caliban as the first hybrid form of the

secular Other and its mode of the self, and the "Nigger" and "native" as the second form of the Other to the *propre* of the now purely secular mode of the self, Man; to their intuitive recognition, therefore, of the Caliban symbol and the native/Nigger symbol as embodied constructs of the code of symbolic "death" for the two variants of the Self by means of which the West would desupernaturalize the representations of "life" and "death" that are instituting of human "forms of life." . . .

CONCLUSION. "1492. Les Grands Découvreurs s'élancent sur l'Atlantique, à la recherche des Indes. Avec eux le poème commence."³¹ In 1992 it will be five hundred years since Columbus sailed across an ocean sea that was logically nonnavigable within the a priori conceptual schema and mainstream mode of "conventional reason" of the feudal-Christian episteme. To contradict that a priori schema, Columbus would base on a series of empirical mistakes his insistence that the East and the source of the spice trade could be reached by sailing west across the ocean sea. One of these mistakes was his projection, after Toscanelli, of the existence of imaginary islands between "Spain and India." One of these islands was named Antilia. A second mistake was that the islands he *did* reach were indeed the westernmost part of the East Indies.

In his early epic poem *Les Indes* (The Indies; 1955) Glissant had centered on Columbus's misconception within the context of the opposition, as Dash points out, between the reality and "the illusion that they sustain in people's minds." "And if the Indies are not where you are," Glissant has Columbus say in his poem, "I do not care. Indies you will be. West Indies, so that my dream will be" (128). The point was exact. It was the "illusion" of the imaginary geography of Antilia and of the Indies that enabled Columbus to call into question the "sacred" and conventional geography of his time. This geography, as Lynn Thorndike points out, was still based on an Aristotelian physics and on its a priori notion of "natural place." In this conceptual a priori view, given that the element of water normally submerged the element of earth except in cases of "unnatural motion," the ratio of the former element to the latter would have made the voyage impossible, given the vast distance that would have to exist between landmass and landmass. Columbus had therefore based his counterarguments on the postulate of the Christian humanist anthropic principle (and on the empirical error) that there had to be more land than water, seeing that God had made the Earth for the "salvation of souls." With his voyage he had therefore sailed out of the conceptual inferential schema in which human knowledge of the geography of the earth had still to be subordinated to the "public languages" of scholastic theology and its "transcendental" behavior-regulating Word of the feudal-Christian, out of the latter's paradigm of value and authority, and "true" discourse. His voyage, in spite

of his own factual errors, would therefore, together with Copernicus's challenge to the then still "sacred" Ptolemaic astronomy a half-century later, lay the basis for the emancipation of human knowledge of physical nature (and, after Darwin, of organic nature) from its millennial traditional role of verifying the "paradigm of value and authority" or, in Glissant's phrase, the "transcendentally intolerant" Word of each order's sociogenic principle or code of "life and death." This emancipation of human knowledge and therefore of human autonomy with respect to its knowledge of physical and organic nature is of course expressed in the natural sciences.

This cognitive autonomy with respect to natural science was, however, only won on the basis of an epochal secularization of human modes of being, which, however, in order to effect its own mutation from the sacred to the profane by means of the then-revolutionary counterdiscourse of humanism, also had to reestablish its own absolutizing "space of Otherness" on the basis of a Las Casasian "error of natural reason." This error, which is as founding to our contemporary world system as Columbus's, was based on the self-representation of the two secular models of the human: that of Rational Man (whose symbolic Other was the *indio*, the Negro, the Mad) and, at the end of the eighteenth century, that of Man as a selected being and natural organism (whose dysselected symbolic Other was the Nigger, the native, the poor, the nonfit) as the universal human, "man as man." In consequence, the "conventional reason" or episteme specific to the sociogenic principle of each necessarily represented themselves as firstly reason-in-general, then as the "objective truth" of liberal positivism, and in its proletarian variant as the "scientific truth" of historical materialism.

In both cases, in order to secure the cognitive closure and "hermeneutic circle" necessary to sustain their founding respective a priori, the orders of rational knowledge that were elaborated had necessarily to continue to institute themselves as processes of symbolic thought and therefore as modes of Lyotard's millennial tradition of "narrative knowledge" rather than as thought on the model of that of the natural sciences. Since both modes of "cultural reason" were enabled to effect the mutation of human social knowledge from the sacred to the profane only on the condition that they elaborate themselves with rigorous reference to the objective "internal standard" of their codes of antithetical life and death (Prospero/Caliban or Man/Nigger), in order so to provide the rigorous behavior-regulating system of meanings inducing of the collective behaviors that were and are integrative of the first secular modes of kind and of human beingness in history—according therefore to a sociogenic internal standard which specifies, as the genome specifies for organic species, what we are selectively to know of the World.

We cannot, however, given the ongoing destruction of our planetary environment—Glissant's "dried-

up" riverbed of La Lézarde—as well as the reality of large-scale global poverty and of the population explosion in the shantytown archipelagoes to which this poverty leads, continue to regulate our behaviors half by process of scientific thought and half by the millennial processes of symbolic thought generated from "the paradigm of value and authority" of our present absolute model of human nature, Man, of its transcendental Word. If at the level of physics Einstein's theory of relativity has put an end to the Newtonian concept of absolute space and time, the theory of the Big Bang revealed that even ostensible constants like the "laws of nature" had their origin in time, whereas the revelation of a subatomic quantum world has deabsolutized our earlier notion of physical reality, this process of relativization has not occurred at the level of our social knowledge, that is of our "human sciences." There our "error of reason" with respect to the premise of an absolute "human nature," as one based on our belief in a relation of *pure* continuity between the genetically regulated modes of organic life and the always rhetorico-discursively regulated modes of human life, still represents our present model of the human, Man, as being as absolute as Newtonian space and time before Einstein.

The "war" waged by the new discourse of the Antilles is a war waged against that error. Since the fixity of "Man" and its model necessarily depends on the fixity and nonvalue of the *nègre*, Césaire's revalorization of the *nègre*, Fanon's genial replacement of ontogeny with sociogeny, and Glissant's projection of *l'étant* in place of *l'Être*, together with his reclaiming of the specificity of the history, landscape, and historical-existential being of Antilleanness, all call into question and refute the premise of an acultural and absolute model of the human. The new discourse of the Antilles therefore goes "beyond the Word of Man" in that it is impelled to replace the latter's postulate of "man as Man," of an ontogenic subject, with that of an everywhere culturally relative—because rhetorico-discursively cum neurophysiologically instituted—mode of the human subject and therefore of the relativity also of its necessarily negatively invested mode of the Abject, of Ontological Lack, of the "Negro" as a "different kind of creature," as the only group (as Césaire pointed out) excluded from human status within the symbolic logic of the Word of Man and of its absolute model of the human.

The postulate of human life as a phenomenon which does not preexist each culture's "order of discourse" but comes into being simultaneously with it, as a third level of existence defined by the fact of its being regulated in its behaviors by the discursive-neuronal patterns of its culture-specific modes of "mind" or systemic consciousness, by, in effect, the hybrid correlation between the *ordo naturae* of our neurochemical brain states and the *ordo verborum* of our systems of meanings, necessarily impels both the Antillean and the human subject beyond our present

"order of discourse" and episteme into "realms" beyond "conventional reason." This new realm, I shall propose here, will necessarily be that of a reinvented *studia humanitatis* or science of the human, which takes as its object of inquiry the correlation between our rhetorico-discursively instituted systems of meanings and the neurochemical signaling field that they orchestrate and which can therefore isolate and identify the rules of functioning of the meaning-neural dynamics which govern our behaviors, instituting us as specific modes of that hybrid logos/bios mode of existence: the human. It is clear in this context that Glissant's Antillean human subject, coming to realize its cognitive autonomy not merely with respect to its knowledge of physical and organic nature but with respect to its knowledge of itself as a mode of life which exists *outside* the symbolic circuit of organic life, must therefore now accept the full responsibility of its position as a "free outcast" who confronts "the rest of nature as a trial, task, issue and enigma, as an alien abode" and therefore as the causal source of our own Good, our own Evil.

Both the Antillean and the human subject are therefore now called upon to realize the fullest measure of their possible autonomy, on the model of Glissant's hero Thaël; for although all the other young urban people of *La Lézarde* must go through the rite of passage, as Beverley Ormerod points out, it is Thaël for whom the rite will entail the greatest and most final rupture. As the descendant of the Maroons of the mountains, Thaël has been compelled in the wake of World War II and the emerging political struggles of the island to leave the certainty of his ancestral retreat in the mountains in order to join in the struggle for the future that was being fought out in the lowland plantation plains. To do so, however, he must leave behind the "invisible roads" of a nonconscious past in order to attain to a "true age of reason," one that can enable him to take the "measure" of the universe, not only of that which lies around him, but of that inside him as he leaves behind the certainty of the transcendental for the provisional.³²

It is this imperative of a shift from ontogeny to sociogeny, from *l'Être* to *l'étant*, and the new frontiers of being and knowing that such a shift opens, that is to be, I believe, the gift of the New World to the Old, the gift specifically of that Other America, the Antilia of both Toscanelli's and Columbus's imaginary geography of some five centuries ago; today the Antilia of Glissant's dream for a fully realized archipelago, for the *avenir* of its small countries, for its collective free, as his oeuvre incites them to be, in their acts, in their desire. "Mais les Indes sont vérité" (I, 95).

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¹ Edouard Glissant, *Le discours antillais*, Paris, Seuil, 1981. See his analysis of the difference between the two colonizer models,

pp. 206-7. An English edition, *Caribbean Discourse*, J. Michael Dash, tr., is to appear from the University Press of Virginia in late 1989. Citations use the abbreviation DA where needed for clarity.

² Martinicans were educated in the representational system of the French nation-state. The latter's "origin," which all blacks, whites, and in-betweens recited, began with the litany "Our ancestors, the Gaels." Within the context of "the intolerance" of the nation schema there could only be a single Origin. More than one Origin, as in the case of more than one language, would be, as Glissant notes, logically "seditious" (DA, 319).

³ In one sense an essay, in another "cultural sociology" or "autoethnography," *Le discours antillais* is properly transgeneric. In the line of Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, the book best exemplifies what I have defined as a "new discourse" specific to the Antilles. Both texts defy our present generic classification.

⁴ The term is taken from the title of Fanon's book *Les damnés de la terre*, Paris, Maspéro, 1961. The term *damnés* is translated literally as "condemned" to mean those systemic areas that are as condemned to "poverty" by the logic of our present order of knowledge as heretics were condemned to burning within the logic of the order of knowledge of scholastic theology. The powerful phrase was coined by Jacques Roumain, the Haitian writer.

⁵ Michael Dash, introduction to his translation of *La Lézarde* as *The Ripening*, London, Heinemann, 1985, p. 3. Subsequent citations use the abbreviation R where needed for clarity.

⁶ Beverley Ormerod, *An Introduction to the French Caribbean Novel*, London, Heinemann, 1985, p. 39.

⁷ See DA, pp. 104-5, where Glissant discusses the definition of the phenomenon of *marronnage* (running away) as a "fundamental cultural opposition to the new order imposed on the slave."

⁸ Dash, p. 1.

⁹ J. G. A. Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History*, New York, Atheneum, 1971, p. 6.

¹⁰ Whereas from inside the Francophone literary tradition the comparative differences between Glissant and Césaire loom large, from the perspective of the Caribbean as a whole it is the similarities, the line of filiation, between Césaire, Fanon, and Glissant that stand out. So, although there are differences among their individual perspectives—for example, Glissant's emphasis on cultural *métissage* rather than on Césaire's *négritude*, as well as his stress on the linkages between the Antillean islands rather than on Césaire's return to the African connections—these differences are not contradictions. Without Césaire's *négritude* and the revaluation of the African connection, Glissant's later concept of *métissage* would have been meaningless. One should note a "Bloom-type anxiety of influence" at work here that leads Glissant to emphasize his differences with the earlier writer. However, if we see Césaire's *négritude* as an act of uprising against the *blanchitude* by means of which the representation of the generic human (Man) was totemized in the Indo-European population group, in the same way as postsixties feminism has been an uprising against the representation of the male sex as the generic self, then Glissant's work can be seen as an evolutionary variant, defined by the different moment in history that it is called to address, of Césaire's founding poetic paradigm and can be seen as part of its completion.

¹¹ Pierre Maranda, "The Dialectic of Metaphor: An Anthropological Essay on Hermeneutics," in S. R. Saleiman and Inge Grossman, *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1980.

¹² Ormerod, p. 36, where she cites Glissant's preface to his play *Monsieur Toussaint*, Paris, Seuil, 1964, p. 219.

¹³ I have coined the word *empirics* to refer to what Foucault defines as nondiscursive practices in his lecture *The Order of Discourse*. See *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, A. M. Sheridan Smith, tr., New York, Pantheon, 1972.

¹⁴ "True discourse," Foucault suggests, can function as a "regime of Truth" only on the basis of processes of exclusion and selectivity and therefore on areas of repressed and forbidden knowledge.

¹⁵ My one area of strong disagreement with Glissant is cited here. He proposes that it is *métissage* and its affirmation as a value that contests the West's postulate of "filiation" as the guardian of a

unique and single origin of race. I argue, on the other hand, that since the nineteenth century representation of the Indo-European as the generic human as well as the idea of a generic or "normal" mode of human being "totemized" in a one race, with all other population groups being its Lack, was and is a function of the instituting of generic "Man," defined by the Word of Man, Césaire's *négritude*, which refused the black's imposed role as conceptual Other to the representation of generic Man, not only calls in question our present order of being and knowing but dispenses with the need for the word *mestizaje* itself, since the syncretism of culture can now be seen as a *recombination* of cultures (Native American, Judeo-Christian, African) into a new Caribbean and American synthesis, whereas the term *mestizo* (mixed) becomes simply the recombination of two variants of the human genome—rather, that is, than a *mestizaje*. The "notion of race" therefore ceases to function as it does in the Word of Man as the ground of human being.

¹⁶ Michel Foucault, "The Confessions of the Flesh," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, C. Gordon, ed., New York, Panther, 1980, p. 207.

¹⁷ These "fronts" are essentially part of what Glissant calls the "universel généralisé." As such they have been central to what he defines as the intellectual mimeticism of the thought of many of the Antillean and so-called Third World educated elite. One can speak here of a universal proletarianism and genderism on the model of Glissant's analysis of universal humanism, in *DA*, p. 385.

¹⁸ Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power" in *Power/Knowledge*, pp. 127–28.

¹⁹ This postulate is based on a seminal article by the biologist Danielli, "Altruism and the Internal Reward System or the Opium of the People," in the *Journal of Social and Biological Structures*, 1980, no. 3, pp. 89–90.

²⁰ Nicolás Guillén, *Motivos de son*, Havana, Imprenta Rambla, Bouza, 1930.

²¹ See George L. Mosse, *Towards the Final Solution: A History of European Racism*, New York, Fertig, 1978, p. 20.

²² Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Leon S. Roudiez, tr., New York, Columbia University Press, 1982, p. 17.

²³ Peter Winch, "Understanding a Primitive Society," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 1964, pp. 307–24.

²⁴ Wlad Godzich, afterword to Samuel Weber, *Institution and Interpretation*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987, p. 161.

²⁵ The *pieza* or "piece" was a male slave around twenty-five years old, in top physical condition. Two young boys, for example, would then make up one *pieza* for purposes of the trade. The term reduced the slave to his or her pure physical-labor capacity.

²⁶ Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, R. M. Wallace, tr., Cambridge, Ma., MIT Press, 1983, p. 205.

²⁷ See Bjorn Landstrom, *Columbus: The Story of Don Cristóbal Colón, Admiral of the Ocean Sea, and His Four Voyages to the Indies*, New York, Macmillan, p. 166.

²⁸ Blumenberg, p. 205.

²⁹ Sanders Gilman, "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Towards an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth Century Art, Medicine, and Literature," in *Race, Writing, and Difference*, H. L. Gates, ed., *Critical Inquiry*, 12:1 (Autumn 1985), pp. 204–42.

³⁰ Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*, Haakon Chevalier, tr., New York, Grove, 1968.

³¹ Edouard Glissant, *Les Indes*, Paris, Seuil, 1955; reprinted in *Poèmes*, Paris, Seuil, 1965. The citation here is from page 77; subsequent citations refer to the 1965 edition and use the abbreviation *I* where needed for clarity.

³² As Ormerod points out, the members of the young group in *La Lézarde* are shown as following the "paths of questing adolescence"; as such they find themselves on those "fragile invisible roads, which a man leaves behind when he attains the true age of reason, when he . . . takes the measure of the universe around him" (51). See also the original French edition of the novel, p. 106: "Chemins invisibles que quitte l'homme quand il entre dans l'âge de ses vraies raisons . . . et qu'il mesure l'univers autour de lui."



GLISSANT WITH HIS DAUGHTER, 1972



PARIS, 1988 (Photo: *Joséphine Guattari*)