




Caribbean literature:

A multiplicity of connections



Carlos Eire

○ We like our
paradoxes
nice and
complex.
The more
labyrinthine,
the better



... THEY HIT
UPON THE
VERY CUBAN
IDEA OF
COMBINING
THE KILLER
PEPPERS AND
THE FIRE
ANTS.”



○ creolisation, **Antillanité,**
chaos,

○ **meta-archipelago,**
RHYTHM, **machine,**
mangrove,

○ **Relation**

Key concepts

- House/home
- Identity
- Diaspora
- Migration
- World/history
- Body

1. Transnational connections

○ Négritude:

- ± 1935 ---

○ Aimé Césaire

- 1913-2008

○ Leopold Senghor

- 1906-2001

○ Léon Damas

- 1912-1978

○ Harlem Renaissance

- (±1920-1930)

○ 1930

- Cuba-> Paris (Alejo
Carpentier (1928-1939))

2. Home:

1960s-1970s

2. Home: 1960s-70s

Anglophone lit

- 30
- 40
- 50
- 60 Federation 1958-62:
effort to unify the region
- 70 Naipaul, Lamming,
Walcott, Brathwaite
exile
community,
landscape,
autobiography

Francophone lit

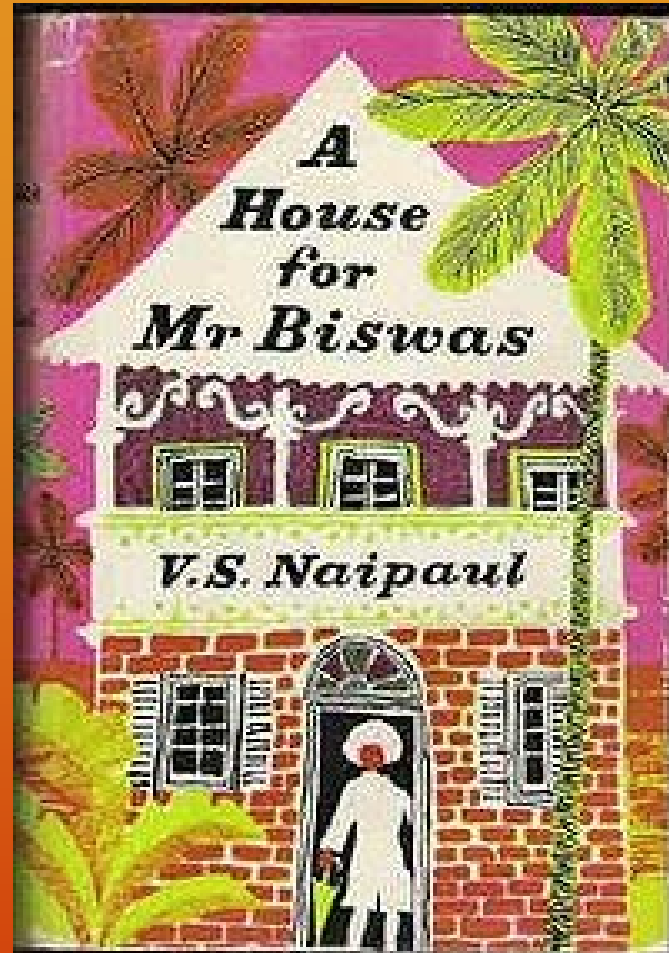
- 30 Négritude
- 40
- 50
- 60
- 70

Houses:

Jamaica

Kincaid

Beryl Gilroy



ILE DE GORÉE, DAKAR



Homi Bhabha

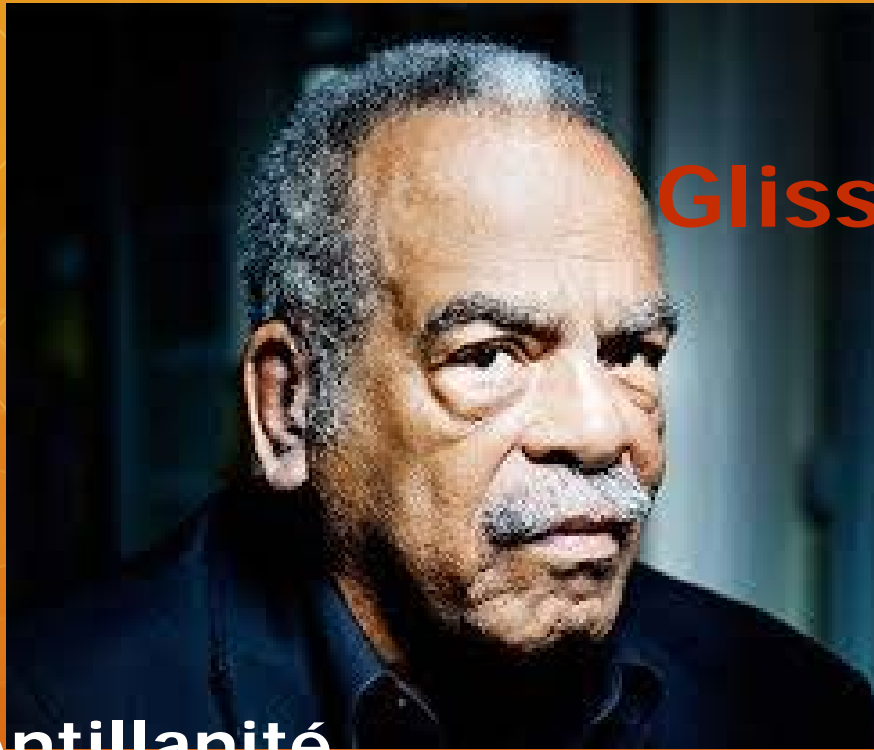
○ “unhomely”

3. Identity – diaspora:

The 1980s

Aimé Césaire, 1939





Edouard Glissant 1928-2011

Antillanité

- Reaction to Négritude
- The specific nature of Caribbean identity in its full cultural multiplicity
- By the Americanization of all cultural elements

Créolité

- The creolisation of all cultural traditions in the Caribbean
- Literary movement in 1980s
- Chamoiseau
- Bernabé
- Confiant

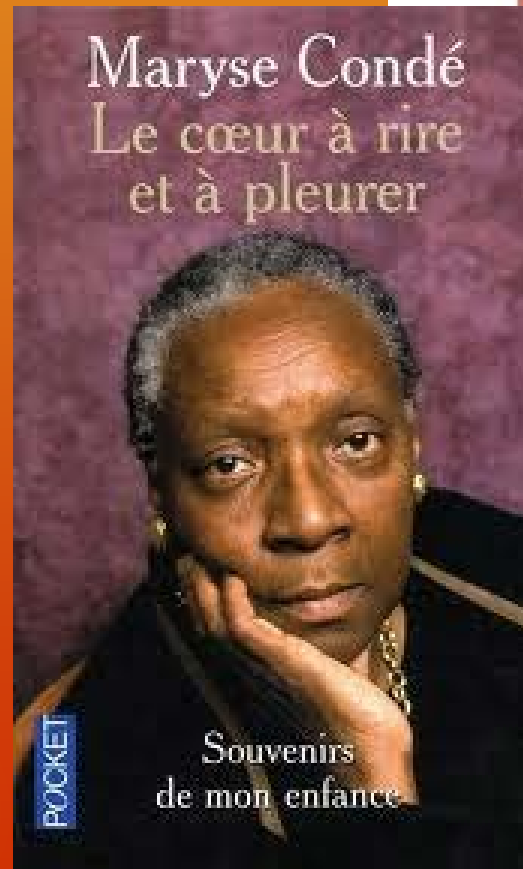
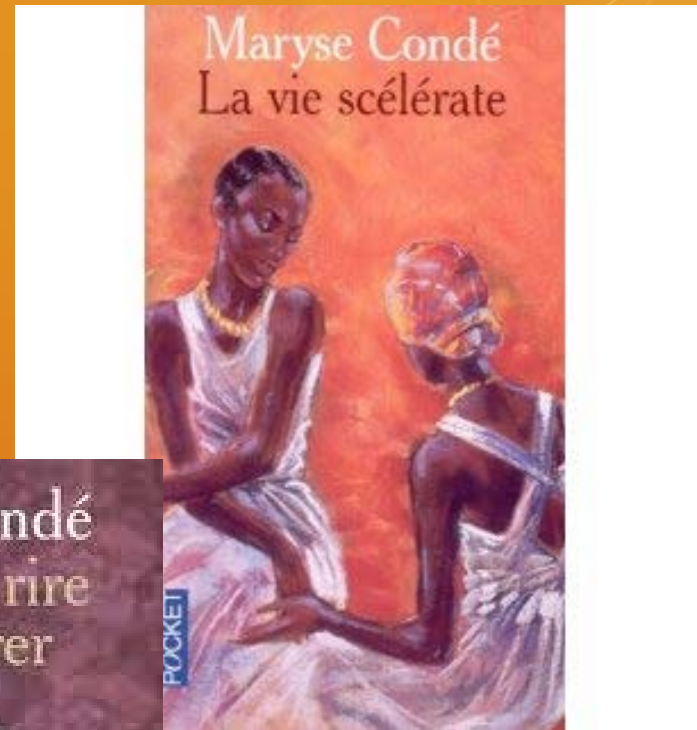
Anglophone lit

- 60 Naipaul, Lamming,
- 70 Walcott, Brathwaite
exile, community
- 80 Creole, orality,
performance, dub poets
 - Gender
 -

Francophone lit

- 30 Négritude
- 50
- 60 magical realism, social
realisme, alienation, insanity
- 70-90 gender **Simone Schwarz-Bart**
- 70 Edouard Glissant 1928-2011
- 80 "Errance," wandering,
plurality and syncretism
- Antillanité (1970...)
- Créolité (1980...)

1987
Identity,
diaspora



Diasporic Identity



- Paul Gilroy. *The Black Atlantic*
- Transnational definition of
- Black identity

Diasporic identity

- * There is not one "true" identity in this family

- * All voices in the diaspora should be heard and connected

- * Family is one, in spite of differences in color or residence

○ BUT:

- A fixed point of orientation remains indispensable for identification

4. Migration

The 1990s

Migratory identity

- *Identity resides in your own "mythology" of journeys

○ 1997

- **ROUTES**

- **NOT**

- **ROOTS**

- (Gilroy)



Anglophone lit

- 60 Naipaul, Lamming,
- 70 Walcott – “exile”,
community
- 80 Creole
- 90 hybridity, sexuality
- Jamaica Kincaid Antigua - VS
- Caryl Phillips St Kitts - Britain
- Dionne Brand Trinidad – Canada
- Edwidge Danticat Haiti - VS

Francophone lit

- 30 Négritude
- 50
- 60 magical realism,
alienation, insanity
- 70 Edouard Glissant
- 80 “Errance,” wandering,
syncretism
- 90 nomadic
identity/fragmentarisation
- Maryse Condé Guadeloupe-Frankrijk-
Afrika-VS
- Gisèle Pineau Guadeloupe - Parijs
- Dany Laferrière Haiti - Canada

Francophone lit

- 30 Négritude
- 50
- 60 magical realism, alienation, insanity
- 70
- 80 syncretism
- 90 nomadic identity

Hispanophone lit

- 30 social engagement
 - experiment
- 40 ...
- psychological novel
experiments with style, lo real maravilloso (Carpentier, Cabrera Infante)
- 60 ...
- After 70 two different directions:
- Cuba: social realism
- Exile: experiment
- 80

Franstalige lit

- 30 Négritude
- 40
- 50
- 60 magical realism, alienation, insanity
- 70
- 80 syncretism, diaspora
- 90 nomadische identiteit

Nederlandstalige lit

- 30 Albert Helman (Lodewijk Lichtveld) 1903-1996 social commitment, cosmopolitanism
- 40
- 50... Boeli van Leeuwen island life (1922-2007)
- 60... Tip Marugg (1923-2006)
- 70... Astrid Roemer syncretism, transnational network
- Frank Martinus Arion (1936-2015) social commitment, views of ordinary people
- 80 Ellen Ombre
- 90 Cynthia McLeod, Cándani (Sarnami)
- 00 Marilyn Simons, Annel de Noré, Anette de Vries, Karin Amatmoekrim (Javaans-Sur)

5. Body, world and history

The 1990s and after

○ Above the individual level:

○ World

○ History

○ Below the individual level:

○ Body

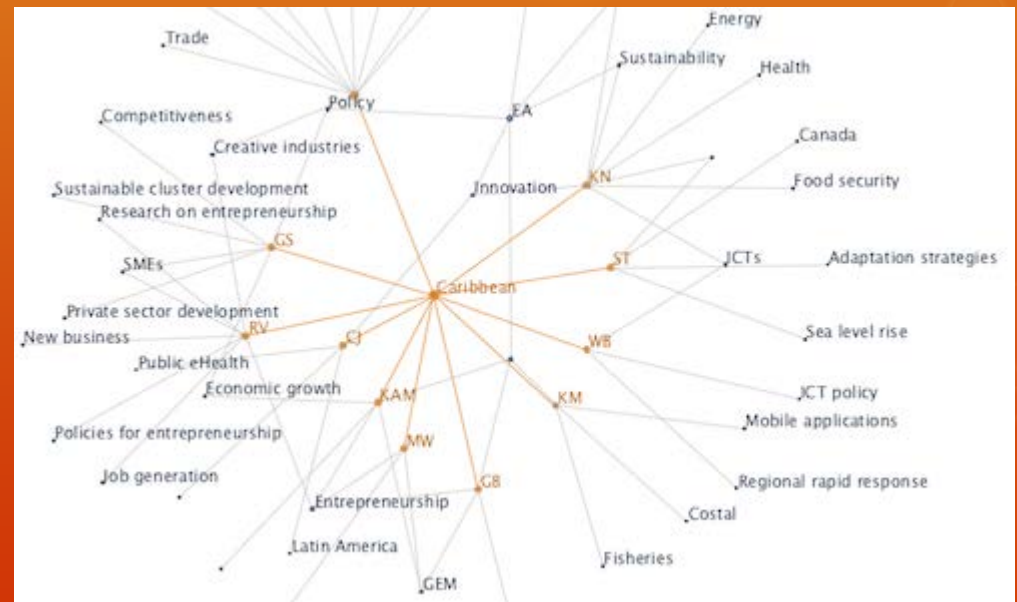
Not the point, but the network

Glissant

Benitez-Rojo

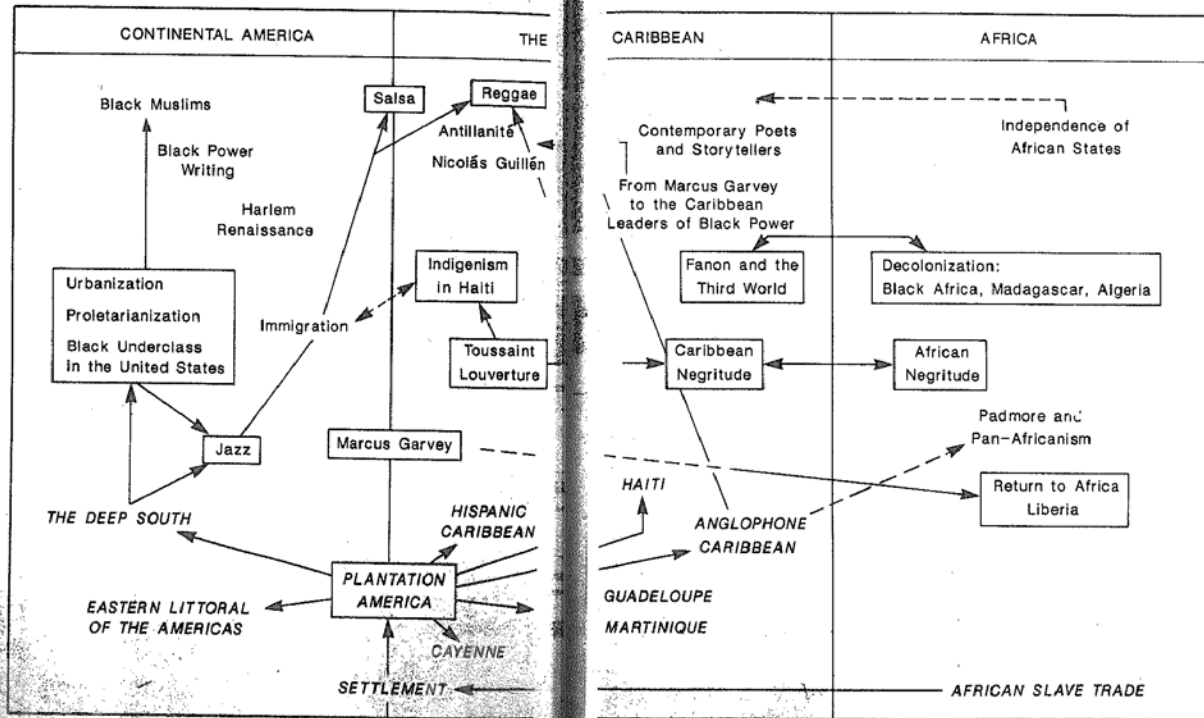
The Repeating Island

(1989)



A Caribbean Network

Glissant, week #13



Search for a material foundation
of identity

○ **BUT:**

... in history?

○ It is difficult to give
an account of history

○ - much is unknown

○ - much is painful

○ - very complex: what
is reality?

○ ...or in the
body?

○ “It is the
sweetness
in them
that makes
them
burn....”

○ Julia Alvarez