

James Procter

Una Marson at the BBC

This essay focuses on the Jamaican poet, dramatist, and broadcaster Una Marson (1905–65) and her turbulent career at the BBC between 1939 and 1946. Drawing on a range of unpublished archival sources, including files recently vetted and released for research since the publication of Delia Jarrett-Macauley's authoritative biography of Marson in 1998, the essay has two primary aims. First, to recover in greater detail and in more holistic terms than has previously been possible the personal story of Marson's professional relationships at the corporation. Second, to pursue what the director of Empire Services described as the "jealousies," "dissentions," and "rivalry" that Marson's appointment provoked during a relatively neglected period of black metropolitan cultural production in the early 1940s.

Aisha Khan

Material and Immaterial Bodies:

Diaspora Studies and the Problem of Culture, Identity, and Race

In Atlantic world diaspora studies, *culture* and *identity* have been foundational concepts in analysis of the meaning and significance of diaspora. This essay argues that the centrality of these concepts is signal in reproducing a contradiction in diaspora theory that undermines its contemporary revisionist intentions. On the one hand, there is emphasis on hybridity and fluidity, while, on the other, diasporas are often encapsulated as discrete, implicitly or explicitly racialized groups, notably African and Indian or Asian. The essay considers key theoretical approaches in diaspora studies and their relationship to this contradiction, compares the deployment of culture and identity in Afro and Indo/Asian diaspora studies, and suggests that looking at the differences and compatibilities between material bodies (diasporic humans and their made objects) and immaterial bodies (diasporic spirits) is a potentially fruitful direction in recognizing the limits of culture and identity and their relationship to racial discourse in diaspora studies.

Christopher T. Bonner

Staging a Dictatorship: The Theatrical Poetics and Politics of Marie Chauvet's *Colère*

This essay interrogates the relationship between politics and literary genre in Marie Vieux Chauvet's *Colère*, the under-studied second movement of her trilogy *Amour, colère, folie* (1968). Specifically, it seeks to demonstrate that Chauvet's formation in theater is central to her politics and poetics. In *Colère*, Chauvet writes the Haitian public sphere's disarticulation under Duvalierism as a *roman-théâtre*, a hybrid genre embedding dramatic conventions into the novel form. This formal innovation gives Chauvet's writing a unique critical purchase, allowing the author to reenact the lifeworld of the Haitian subject of state terror as an ongoing spectacle before a malevolent spectator.

Phanuel Antwi

Dub Poetry as a Black Atlantic Body-Archive

Rereading dub poetry under the pressures of and with the resources of black feminist and queer theory, and treating the practice of dub poetry as a production of a sound archive, one that embodies and aurally animates the intimacies of the black Atlantic, this essay highlights the creative labor of this artistic project (the ways dub poets link sound to body to place to textuality) and helps us consider the conditions under which something new in black modernity is produced. Through this reconceptualization of the art form, the essay draws attention to ways dub extends Paul Gilroy's insights into the black Atlantic and the challenge of experiencing dub as a sound archive but also as a phenomenology that raises questions of embodiment and gendered bodily labor.

Eric Prieto

Rethinking Césaire: Presentation

This essay introduces the central themes of “Rethinking Césaire,” a special section of *Small Axe*, which gravitate in metacritical fashion around the various efforts to refashion Aimé Césaire’s legacy in and around 2013, the centenary of his birth. Included are essays devoted to Césaire’s poetic legacy, his theory of Negritude, his relationship to Marxism, and his intellectual partnership with his wife, Suzanne Césaire. What emerges is a sense of Césaire’s legacy as a living legacy, firmly rooted in a specific historical context but revealing different facets of its structure to successive generations as they seek to understand it in relation to their own preoccupations and challenges.

Jennifer M. Wilks

Revolutionary Genealogies: Suzanne Césaire's and Christiane Taubira's Writings of Dissent

This essay positions Negritude thinker Suzanne Césaire (1915–66) as a cultural critic whose “writings of dissent” remain relevant both in the Caribbean of her birth and the Europe of her death. Although far-right politicians have argued for contemporary France’s return to its white, Catholic (or secular humanist) roots, the historical reality is that French identity has never been uniform or stable. Wilks argues that, although Césaire’s affirmation of specificity may seem contrary to French republican ideals, her writings suggest a means of addressing the cultural-political impasse in which early-twenty-first-century France finds itself. In tandem with the analysis of Césaire’s essays, the essay examines French justice minister Christiane Taubira’s published writings and legislative work as evidence of her related efforts to recast cultural specificity as a source of richness and vitality, the integration of which may very well determine the nation’s future.

Carrie Noland

Césaire, Chamoiseau, and the Work of Legacy

After the death of Aimé Césaire in 2008, several Martinican writers published homages to the poet/statesman, indicating thereby their own place in the legacy he established. This essay studies one such homage, Patrick Chamoiseau's *Césaire, Perse, Glissant: Les liaisons magnétiques, un essai* (2013). Chamoiseau's attempt to weave Césaire into a tradition that includes Saint-John Perse, Edouard Glissant, and—most prominently—the French poet René Char leaves us with many questions: What is the complex geography of legacy? What happens when substantially different poets are pressed into the same heritage? What is the proper time and place of a poet or a poem? What is the work of legacy? How might the effort to memorialize a poet detach us from the material conditions of his or her emergence?

Souleymane Bachir Diagne

Rereading Aimé Césaire: Negritude as Creolization

We need to reassess our reading of Negritude literature. Justice is not done to the literary, philosophical, and political movement founded by Aimé Césaire, Léon-Gontran Damas, and Léopold Sédar Senghor when it is simply considered an essentialist reversal of colonial essentialism. When Senghor declares that Negritude is not an essence but an existence, he is precisely calling attention to the fact that its literature was produced during more than fifty years, with contradictions, rectifications, palinodes. This contribution is an invitation to reread Negritude in general, and Césaire's works in particular, as a movement and not an essence. It is a reflection on Césaire's latest work, *Nègre je suis, nègre je resterai* (*Negro I Am, Negro I Shall Remain*), which is a response to those who considered Negritude something of the past to be superseded by the movement of creolization. What that response says is that Negritude is creolization.

Nick Nesbitt

From Louverture to Lenin: Aimé Césaire and Anticolonial Marxism

This essay argues that Aimé Césaire remained committed to a nonaligned, tricontinental Marxism well beyond his resignation from the Parti Communiste Français in 1956. It describes this commitment positively in relation to “black Jacobinism” as well as the limitations of Césaire’s Leninist commitment to recuperative modernization.

Charles Forsdick

Translation in the Caribbean, the Caribbean in Translation

Those working on the Caribbean have regularly adopted the figures and practices of translation in their work and also have devoted attention to the study of various translational processes. The presence of the Caribbean in translation studies remains, however, considerably less evident. This essay reflects on this missed cross-disciplinary rendezvous, foregrounding the importance of questions of cultural translation in a Caribbean context but at the same time considering the practical intralinguistic and interlinguistic underpinnings of any analysis of translation in the Caribbean (and of the Caribbean in translation). Drawing on a number of examples, ranging from the relief effort following the Haitian earthquake in 2010 to current CARIFORUM and CARICOM language policy, the discussion focuses on the region as a translation zone. The essay concludes that although the Caribbean may be usefully defined in terms of translation, it is also essential—in reciprocal terms—that wider discussion of translation should itself be actively “Caribbeanized.”

Hortense J. Spillers

Art Talk and the Uses of History

In a reading of Huey Copeland's *Bound to Appear: Art, Slavery, and the Site of Blackness in Multicultural America*, Spillers examines the stakes and implications of the work against the broader perspective of black artistic practices in the sociopolitical context of the United States. Looking in detail at aspects of Copeland's quartet of painters, she brings questions of aesthetics alongside present-day political concerns.

Stephen Best
Come and Gone

Huey Copeland's *Bound to Appear: Art, Slavery, and the Site of Blackness in Multicultural America* can be categorized as the most recent in a long line of scholarly investigations into what has come to be called "the afterlife of slavery"—the general preoccupation with establishing the authority of the slave past in contemporary black life—and the first to explore that subject in the field of contemporary art. Best notes that when we reverse the thesis of slavery's afterlife and reconceptualize it as the basis for a historiography of slavery, we can tend also to hypostatize aspects of the slave past as missing from the visual field and in need of recovery—as, in one way of phrasing it, bound to appear. Best contends that this last entailment is not always tenable or justified by the historical record, and he invites us to consider other ways of predicating of loss.

Huey Copeland

Flow and Arrest

Art historian Huey Copeland takes on Hortense J. Spillers's and Stephen Best's engagements with his book *Bound to Appear: Art, Slavery, and the Site of Blackness in Multicultural America* (2013). In responding to the two essays, Copeland lays out the ideological conditions from which his work emerged, clarifies the book's primary assumptions and interventions, and lays out the future directions of his own work as a mode of reflexive artistic writing. Throughout, he aims to complicate and expand our understanding of what is made possible for critical inquiry in the productive encounter between art history and black studies.