



Edouard Glissant and Postcolonial Theory: Strategies of Language and Resistance (New World Studies)

Celia Britton

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Edouard Glissant has written extensively in French about the colonial experience in the Caribbean. Since he is known primarily as a novelist and poet, his theoretical essays have so far remained largely unread by the English-language theorists in this field. This book situates Glissant within ongoing debates in postcolonial theory, making illuminating connections between his work and that of Frantz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Henry Louis Gates Jr.

Focusing on language and subjectivity, Edouard Glissant and Postcolonial Theory moves between an analysis of Glissant's theoretical work and detailed readings of his novels to elucidate a network of related issues. Celia Britton addresses the major themes central to his writing?the reappropriation of history, standard and vernacular language, hybridity, subalternity, the problematizing of identity, and the colonial construction of the Other?and asks provocative questions relating to each. How does the colonized subject relate to a language initially imposed by the colonizer but subsequently, to some extent, subverted and reappropriated? How does this strategic use of language come to function as a crucial mode of cultural resistance? What role can fictional representation play in this process?

This book represents the first presentation of Glissant's incisive theoretical work and analysis of his immensely powerful and subtle novels in the context of postcolonial studies. By juxtaposing them, Britton illuminates the significant contribution Glissant has made to this theoretical endeavor.

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