

DECOLONIAL ECOLOGY

Thinking from the Caribbean World

MALCOM FERDINAND

Decolonial Ecology

Critical South

*The publication of this series is supported by the
International Consortium of Critical Theory Programs
funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.*

Series editors: Natalia Brizuela, Victoria Collis-Buthelezi and
Leticia Sabsay

- Leonor Arfuch, *Memory and Autobiography*
Paula Biglieri and Luciana Cadahia, *Seven Essays on Populism*
Aimé Césaire, *Resolutely Black*
Bolívar Echeverría, *Modernity and "Whiteness"*
Malcom Ferdinand, *Decolonial Ecology*
Celso Furtado, *The Myth of Economic Development*
Eduardo Grüner, *The Haitian Revolution*
Karima Lazali, *Colonia Trauma*
María Pia López, *Not One Less*
Pablo Oyarzun, *Doing Justice*
Néstor Perlongher, *Plebeian Prose*
Bento Prado Jr., *Error, Illusion, Madness*
Nelly Richard, *Eruptions of Memory*
Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa*
Tendayi Sithole, *The Black Register*
Maboula Soumahoro, *Black is the Journey, Africana the Name*

Decolonial Ecology

Thinking from the Caribbean World

Malcom Ferdinand

Translated by Anthony Paul Smith

polity

Originally published in French as *Une écologie décoloniale: Penser l'écologie depuis le monde caribéen* © Editions du Seuil, 2019

This English edition © Polity Press, 2022

Excerpt from *A Tempest* by Aimé Césaire, translated by Richard Miller. Copyright © 1969 by Editions du Seuil. Copyright English translation © 1985 by Richard Miller. Published by Theatre Communications Group. Used by permission of Theatre Communications Group.

Excerpt from *Black Skin, White Masks* by Frantz Fanon. English translation copyright © 2008 by Richard Philcox. Used by permission of Grove/Atlantic, Inc. Any third party use of this material, outside of this publication, is prohibited.

Polity Press
65 Bridge Street
Cambridge CB2 1UR, UK

Polity Press
101 Station Landing
Suite 300
Medford, MA 02155, USA

All rights reserved. Except for the quotation of short passages for the purpose of criticism and review, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

ISBN-13: 978-1-5095-4622-0 hardback
ISBN-13: 978-1-5095-4623-7 paperback

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2021939020

Typeset in 10 on 12pt Sabon
by Fakenham Prepress Solutions, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 8NL
Printed and bound in Great Britain by TJ Books Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall

The publisher has used its best endeavours to ensure that the URLs for external websites referred to in this book are correct and active at the time of going to press. However, the publisher has no responsibility for the websites and can make no guarantee that a site will remain live or that the content is or will remain appropriate.

Every effort has been made to trace all copyright holders, but if any have been overlooked the publisher will be pleased to include any necessary credits in any subsequent reprint or edition.

For further information on Polity, visit our website:
politybooks.com

Contents

<i>Table of Ships</i>	vii
<i>List of Illustrations</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>Foreword – Angela Y. Davis</i>	xiv
 Prologue: A Colonial and Environmental Double Fracture	 1
 Part I The Modern Tempest: Environmental Violence and Colonial Ruptures	 23
1 Colonial Inhabitation: An Earth without a World	25
2 The Matricides of the Plantationocene	36
3 The Hold and the Negrocene	48
4 The Colonial Hurricane	63
 Part II Noah’s Ark: When Environmentalism Refuses the World	 75
5 Noah’s Ark: Boarding, or the Abandonment of the World	77
6 Reforestation without the World (Haiti)	87
7 Paradise or Hell in the Nature Preserves (Puerto Rico)	99
8 The Masters’ Chemistry (Martinique and Guadeloupe)	106
9 A Colonial Ecology: At the Heart of the Double Fracture	114

Part III The Slave Ship: Rising Up from Modernity's Hold in Search of a World	129
10 The Slave Ship: Debarking Off-World	131
11 Maroon Ecology: Fleeing the Plantationocene	144
12 Rousseau, Thoreau, and Civil Marronage	159
13 A Decolonial Ecology: Rising Up from the Hold	173
 Part IV A World-Ship: World-Making beyond the Double Fracture	 189
14 A World-Ship: Politics of Encounter	191
15 Forming a Body in the World: Reconnecting with a Mother-Earth	204
16 Interspecies Alliances: The Animal Cause and the Negro Cause	214
17 A Worldly-Ecology: On the Bridge of Justice	229
 Epilogue: World-Making in the Face of the Tempest	 241
 <i>Notes</i>	 248
<i>Index</i>	301

Table of Ships

Part I The Modern Tempest

<i>Conquérant</i>	25
<i>Planter</i>	36
<i>Nègre</i>	48
<i>La Tempête</i>	63

Part II Noah's Ark

<i>Noé</i>	77
<i>Chasseur</i>	87
<i>Paraíso</i>	99
<i>Cavendish</i>	106
<i>Wildfire</i>	114

Part III The Slave Ship

<i>Espérance</i>	131
<i>Escape</i>	144
<i>Wanderer</i>	159
<i>Gaïa</i>	173

Part IV The World-Ship

<i>Rencontre</i>	191
<i>Corpo Santo e Almas</i>	204
<i>Baleine</i>	214
<i>Justice</i>	229

Epilogue

<i>Soleil d'Afrique</i>	241

Illustrations

Figure 1 Joseph Mallord William Turner, <i>Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On</i> , 1840.	xix
Figure 2 William Clark, “Cutting the Sugar Cane,” in <i>Ten Views in the Island of Antigua</i> (London: Thomas Clay, 1823).	37
Figure 3 Detail from René Lhermitte, <i>Plan, Profile and Layout of the Ship Marie Séraphique of Nantes</i> , c. 1770.	49
Figure 4 The cyclones Katia, Irma and José, 8th September 2017, © NOAA satellites, GOES-16.	64
Figure 5 Thomas Moran, <i>Slave Hunt, Dismal Swamp</i> , Virginia, 1861–2.	88
Figure 6 Soil erosion in Haiti, which maroons towards the sea, 2012. Photo © Malcom Ferdinand.	97
Figure 7 Banana plantation in Martinique, 2017. Photo © Malcom Ferdinand.	107
Figure 8 Anse Cafard Memorial (Mémorial de l’anse Cafard) in Martinique, sculpture by Laurent Valère, 1998. Photo © Malcom Ferdinand.	130
Figure 9 Jason deCaires Taylor, <i>Vicissitudes</i> , 2007, © Jason deCaires Taylor. All rights reserved, DACS/Artimage 2021. Photo: Jason deCaires Taylor.	130
Figure 10 Albert Mangonès, <i>Statue of the Unknown Maroon</i>	

- (*Statue du Marron inconnu*) in Port-au-Prince, Haiti,
1968. Photo © Marie Bodin. 145
- Figure 11 Hector Charpentier, *Memorial to the Abolition of
Slavery* (*Mémorial de l'abolition de l'esclavage*), Prêcheur,
Martinique. Photo © David Almandin. 174

*For my mother Nadiège
and my father Alex*

*To the struggles of the shipwrecked
and the ecological battles for a common world*

Acknowledgments

If writing is a solitary work, these pages are full of the generous inspiration of companions in search of a world-ship. I would like to thank Christophe Bonneuil for welcoming the French edition of this book into Seuil's "Anthropocène" collection, for his reading advice, and for his enthusiasm for this project. A big thank you to the team at Éditions du Seuil who made this book possible. I would also like to warmly thank the entire team at Polity for providing a welcoming atmosphere for this English translation. A special thank you to Natalia Brizuela and Elise Heslinga, who supported the project from the beginning, and to Anthony Paul Smith for the great care, ingenuity and dedication he showed in the translation of the book, turning this process into a joyful encounter. Thank you to Meghan Skiles and Gerry Regan, librarians at La Salle University's Connelly Library, who helped track down and scan many of the English translations of the works referenced here. Based on my doctoral thesis, this book owes so much to my late thesis director Étienne Tassin, to his encouragement-rivers, and to his painting of a cosmopolitan horizon for the world. Thank you to the LCSP team at the University of Paris-Diderot and the members of my thesis committee, Catherine Larrère, Bruno Villalba, Émilie Hache, Justin Daniel, and Myriam Cottias, for their encouragement and crucial support after the thesis. Thank you to the Collectivité territoriale Martinique for its support of my thesis and this book project, as well as the Institut des humanités, sciences et sociétés (IHSS) for its

support of the French edition by awarding me the Robert Mankin thesis prize for interdisciplinary research.

In the writing and post-thesis journey, I was fortunate to receive various forms of encouragement from colleagues and friends. Thanks to Pierre Charbonnier, Audrey Célestine and Silyane Larcher for opening up possible routes. Thanks to Gert Oostindie, Rosemarijn Hofte, Wouter Veenendaal, Stacey Mac Donald, Sanne Rotmeijer, Jessica Roitman and the whole team of the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies for their hospitality within the framework of a postdoctoral fellowship. Thanks to Nathalie Jas, Catherine Cavalin, and the members of the IRISSO whose welcome made it possible for me to prepare this book in agreeable conditions. Thanks to the fellow thinkers whose discussions, criticisms, and re-readings enriched this project: Axelle Ébodé, Yves Mintoogue, Pauline Vermeren, Odonel Pierre-Louis, Jean Waddimir, Jephthé Camil, Kasia Mika, Adler Camilus, Margaux Le Donné, Laurence Marty, Gratias Klegui, Fabania Ex-Souza, Sarah Fila-Bakabadio, Kémi Apovo, Trilce Laske, Alizé Berthé, Grettel Navas, Raphaël Lauro, Sonny Joseph, Sada Mire, Angus Martin, Marie Bodin. Thanks to the collective of l'Archipel des devenirs for the philosophical practice of utopia and the utopian accounts of the world. Thank you to the many colleagues encountered in colloquia (they will know who they are), whose discussions have generously nourished this work. Thanks also to the environmental thinkers who initiated these reflections long before me. My disagreements with some of them are nothing more than a mark of respect. Thank you to the staff of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, whose smiles, handshakes, and sympathy pleasantly accompanied my long days. Thank you to friends for their precious companionship: Rudy, Jacques, Fred, Marie-George, Morgane, Mathieu, Régis, Hassan, Ludivine, Sarah, Benjamin, Luce, Davy, Domi, Jean-No, Gaëlle, Christelle, Olivier, Yannick, David, Wilhem, Cédric, and many others. Thank you to the late Lila Chouli, early decolonial ecologist. Thank you Carolin. Thanks to all the Caribbean ecologists, and especially those from Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, and Puerto Rico, whom I met during my thesis, and whose struggles for Mother-Earth encouraged me to follow this path.

In a modern world that has constantly reminded me of the inferiority of those with whom I share a Black skin, discovering that you are worthy of love, gifted with words, and capable of thinking is an incommensurable task. Alongside the poets, philosophers, activists,

and artists who have guided our Maroon nights and have saved us from infinite bitterness, it was first the fruit of my family that taught me to love and to fight. *Love and Fight*. Thank you Malik for opening up the literary paths of the world. Thank you Youri, Sonny, Wally, Marvin, Papa Jojo, Isambert Duridveau, Tonton Joseph, Nathalie, Vanessa, Loïc, Tatie Carole, Nicolas, Laurence, Tatie Fofo, Johanne, Sandra & co. Thank you to my brother Jonathan Ferdinand, who left us far too soon, for showing me the power and intelligence of sensitivity. Finally, thank you to my father, Alex Ferdinand, for his volcanic-*tchimbé rèd* support and to my mother, Nadiège Noël, for her oceanic support and her victorious light over the world.

Foreword

Malcom Ferdinand's astute analyses in *Decolonial Ecology* moved me to reflect in myriad ways on many of my own core ideas and life experiences over the decades. I found myself thinking that this is a book I wish I could have read years ago, especially when I was attempting to grasp the interrelationalities of gender, race, and class. And even as I thought about the many ways his theoretical and methodological approach might have advanced our thinking then, I also recognized how perfectly his conceptualizations illuminate the frameworks we need for both philosophical and popular understandings of our planetary conditions today.

Whoever recognizes how entangled we are in the chaos of contemporary racial capitalism with its heteropatriarchal contours, and whoever is attempting to imagine emancipatory futures in ways that do not privilege a single component of the crisis, will greatly benefit from spending time with this remarkable text. Ferdinand calls on us to embrace holistic methods of inquiry and responses to crises grounded in the interdependencies that constitute all of us – plants, human and other animals, the soil, the ocean – while recognizing that racism has deposited white supremacy at the very heart of our notions of the human.

When I initially agreed to write a short foreword for this book, I was thinking about my first visit to Martinique in December 2019, when I learned about the devastating impact of the pesticide chlor-decone on the populations of Martinique and Guadeloupe. I still

feel the shock I experienced when I wondered why I had not previously known about this calamitous intersection of racial capitalism and systematic assaults on the environment, including its human expressions. Ironically, the banana plant, which chlordecone was designed to protect from weevils, is one of the few products in the food chain that has not been polluted. This is a part of the world with which I have long experienced a deep spiritual kinship through its literature – especially Aimé Césaire and Maryse Condé – and its popular visual art, as I had the good fortune of meeting Euzhan Palcy in Paris shortly after the 1983 release of *La Rue Cases-Nègres* [Sugar Cane Alley], and I was interested in expanding my awareness about the environmental crisis that is taking place there. As soon as I began to read *Decolonial Ecology*, I quickly realized that, as important as it may be to learn more about one of the world's least recognized ecological disasters, Malcom Ferdinand's research, in closely and complexly engaging with the conditions of the Caribbean and the Americas, radically reframes the way we have been primed to theorize and engage in active protest against assaults on the environment more broadly.

I also found myself overtaken by waves of self-criticism regarding earlier encounters with ways of understanding intersections between antiracism and environmental consciousness. Many years ago, in the immediate aftermath of my own trial and after the successful conclusion of a massive global campaign for my freedom, I helped to establish the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, an organization that continued to advocate for political prisoners and to engage in popular education campaigns about the connections between state violence and structural racism. One of our leaders, now deceased, was a phenomenal organizer named Damu Smith. When he chaired the Washington, DC, chapter of the Alliance, he pushed us early on to incorporate into our efforts what we now refer to as environmental justice. We were largely concerned with contesting political repression and with identifying the persistence of white supremacy and structural racism, especially with respect to the criminal legal system. I continue to regret that we did not then reevaluate the theoretical framework we employed for the understanding of the long history of racial and political repression in the US. Certainly we acknowledged colonialism and slavery as the foundational historical oppressions that enabled the trajectories leading, for example, to the incarceration of Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier. But our sense of the damage spawned by

colonialism and slavery was not nearly as capacious as it would have been if we had grasped the gravity of the connections Damu was urging us to make.

Eventually Damu Smith became one of the founders of the environmental justice movement, to which Malcom Ferdinand refers. On Earth Day, 2001, he spoke at a protest outside the US Capitol in Washington, DC, organized by Greenpeace:

All of us have scores of chemicals in our bodies, in our tissues, in our blood, that come from a host of polluting industries and industrial processes under way throughout the planet. Particularly in the United States and other industrialized countries, we have industries like vinyl and plastic and petrochemical industries that are emitting dangerous toxins that are harming human health and causing many people to die We are being poisoned and killed against our will. ... While everybody on the planet is suffering from toxic contamination, there are some communities that have been targeted, who as a result of that targeting based on race and income are getting a disproportionate share of the planet's and the nation's pollution. People of color, African-American, Latino, Native American, Asian, and poor white folk are getting a disproportionate share of the nation's pollution. As a result the disease and death in those communities is higher. We have got to oppose and challenge environmental racism. (April 18, 2001: Earth Day protest in Washington organized by Greenpeace)

It is also interesting to note that the term “environmental racism” was coined by Dr Benjamin Chavis, who had been imprisoned in connection with the case of the Wilmington Ten from North Carolina and was freed as a result of an international campaign, supported especially in France, spearheaded by the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression. In 1982, he described environmental racism as “racial discrimination in environmental policy-making, the enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of communities of colour for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in our communities, and the history of excluding people of colour from the leadership of the ecology movements” (www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/what-is-environmental-racism-pollution-covid-systemic/).

Environmental racism was and continues to be a crucial concept, one which advances our understandings of the strategic location of

dumps and toxic waste sites and other practices that devalue the lives of Black, indigenous and Latinx people. Ferdinand's work, however, unmasks the logic that impels us to conceptualize assaults on the environment and racist violence as discontinuous and in need of a kind of articulation that preserves the discreteness of the two phenomena to the extent that, when we bring them together in the concept of environmental racism, we tend to misapprehend their deep and fundamental interrelatedness. He asks us not only to acknowledge the part that racism plays in defining who is more vulnerable to environmental pollution but also – and more fundamentally – how racism, and specifically colonialism and slavery, helped to construct a world grounded on environmental destruction. In other words, the racism does not simply enter the picture as a factor determining the way environmental hazards are disparately experienced by human beings but, rather, it creates the very conditions of possibility for sustained assaults on the environment, including on the human and non-human animals, whose lives are always already devalued by racism, patriarchy, and speciesism.

The poisoning of the water supply of Flint, Michigan, in 2014,¹ which resulted from the austerity-motivated switch to the Flint River for the city's water, was clearly linked to capitalist industrialization on land historically stewarded by the Ojibwe. The trajectory that led from the production of carriages to the emergence of the automobile industry with no regard to the deleterious environmental changes included, among other developments, the pollution of the Flint River, especially by General Motors, which is why the river had not been previously considered as a source of water. However, under conditions of austerity, the switch from the Detroit River to the Flint River unleashed a cascade of issues, including the dislodging of lead from the pipes transporting water to the Flint community, where the majority of residents are Black and where over 40 percent live below the poverty line. Revealingly, even before the impact of the lead on the children of Flint was acknowledged, General Motors petitioned to switch back to the Detroit River because the existing supply was corroding engine parts and thus placing the profitability of the company in jeopardy. Apparently it was more important to save the automobile engines than the precious lives of

¹Laura Pulido, "Flint, Environmental Racism, and Racial Capitalism," *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 27/3 (2016): 1–16; DOI: 10.1080/10455752.2016.1213013.

Black children, whose fate recapitulated the violence directed at the Ojibwe people, who were the original inhabitants of the area where the city of Flint is located.

Flint should have been a lesson to the US and to the world that, when Black children's lives are jeopardized by the logic of contemporary capitalism, there are so many more humans, animals, plants, water, and soil that are cavalierly relegated to the realm of collateral consequences, a term that is also used to reflect the far-reaching ravages of what we have come to call the prison industrial complex. Not long after the Flint calamity, the protests on the Standing Rock Sioux reservation demanding a halt to the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline revealed that it had been redirected through the reservation in order to avoid contaminating the water of Bismarck, the capital city of North Dakota, overtly signaling that indigenous lives are inherently less valuable than white lives.

Malcom Ferdinand insists that we not understand such slogans as Indigenous Lives Matter or Black Lives Matter as simple rallying cries that, while certainly meaningful to First Nations people and people of African descent, are otherwise marginal to the project of safeguarding the planet. Instead he encourages us to recognize that the deeper meaning of these assertions is that we cannot retain whiteness and maleness as measures for liberatory futures, even when the presence of such measures is deeply hidden beneath such seductive universalisms as freedom, equality, and fraternity. He recognizes the importance of new frames, new trajectories, and new ways of imagining futures where chemical and ideological toxicities – including insecticides such as chlordecone, along with racism and misogyny – are prevented from polluting our worlds to come.

Angela Y. Davis



Figure 1 Joseph Mallord William Turner, *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On*, 1840.

Prologue

A Colonial and Environmental Double Fracture: The Caribbean at the Heart of the Modern Tempest

Of course, we're only straws tossed on the raging sea ... but
all's not lost, gentlemen. We just have to try to get to the eye
of the storm.

Aimé Césaire
*A Tempest*¹

A modern tempest

An angry red covers the sky, the waves are rough, the water is rising, the birds are panicking. Swirling winds wrap around the destruction of the Earth's ecosystems, the enslavement of non-humans, as well as wars, social inequality, racial discrimination, and the domination of women. The sixth mass extinction of species is underway, chemical pollution is percolating into aquifers and umbilical cords, climate change is accelerating, and global justice remains iniquitous. Violence spreads through the crew, chained bodies are thrown overboard, sinking into the marine abyss, while brown hands search for hope. The skies thunder loudly: the world-ship is in the midst of a modern tempest. In the face of this storm, which finds horizons hidden behind the clouds, vision blurred by the salty waters, and cries covered up by unjust gusts, what course can be taken?

This book seeks to chart a new course through the conceptual sea of the Caribbean. For the Europeans of the sixteenth century, the word "Caribbean," being the name of the first inhabitants of the archipelago, meant savages and cannibals.² Like the character Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, "Caribbean" would refer to an entity devoid of reason. The inspection of this entity by waves of European colonization and their sciences would bring forth economic profits and objective knowledge. This colonial perspective persists today in the touristic representation of the Caribbean as a place where one can take a break on the beach without people and offside to the world. To think ecology from the perspective of the Caribbean world is a reversal of this touristic perspective, driven by the conviction that Caribbean men and women speak, act, and think about the world and inhabit the Earth.³

Many rushed to Noah's Ark when the ecological flood was announced, with little concern for those abandoned at the dock or those enslaved within the ship. In the face of the ecological storm, saving "humanity" or "civilization" would require leaving the world ashore. This desolating perspective is revealed by the slave ship *Zong* off the coast of Jamaica in 1781, painted by William Turner and found on the cover of this book. At the mere thought of the storm, some are chained below deck and others are thrown overboard. Environmental collapse does not impact everyone equally and does not negate the varied social and political collapse already underway. A double fracture lingers between those who fear the ecological

tempest on the horizon and those who were denied the bridge of justice long before the first gusts of wind. As the eye of the storm, the Caribbean makes it necessary to understand the storm *from the perspective of modernity's hold*. Through the Caribbean's Creole imaginary of resistance and its experiences of (post)colonial struggles, the Caribbean allows for a conceptualization of the ecological crisis that is embedded within the search for a world free of its slavery, its social violence, and its political injustice: *a decolonial ecology*. This decolonial ecology is a path charted aboard the world-ship towards the horizon of a common world, towards what I call *a worldly-ecology*. Three philosophical propositions guide the way.

Noah's ark or the colonial and environmental double fracture

The first proposition is based on the observation of *modernity's colonial and environmental double fracture*. This fracture separates the colonial history of the world from its environmental history. This can be seen in the divide between environmental and ecological movements, on the one hand, and postcolonial and antiracist movements, on the other, where both express themselves in the streets and in the universities without speaking to each other. This fracture is also revealed on a daily basis by the striking absence of Blacks and other people of color in the arenas of environmental discourse production, as well as in the theoretical tools used to conceptualize the ecological crisis. With the terms "Black people," "Red people," "Arabs," or "Whites," far from the a priori essentialization of nineteenth-century scientific anthropology, I am referring to the construction of the racist hierarchy of the West that resulted in many peoples on Earth having the *condition* of being associated with a race, culminating in the invention of Whites above non-Whites.⁴ Because of this asymmetry, I refer to those others, non-Whites, by the term "racialized," for it is their humanity that has been and is being contested by these racial ontologies, and it is they who de facto suffer a discriminatory essentialization.⁵ Even though this hierarchy is a socio-political construction that no longer has any scientific value, it should not in turn lead to the denial of the ensuing social and experiential realities (for example, by refusing to name them) or the denial of their violence, including when those realities and violence take place within environmental discourses, practices, and policies.⁶

In the United States, a 2014 study showed that minorities remain under-represented in governmental and non-governmental environmental organizations, with the highest positions held predominately by White, educated, middle-class men.⁷ A similar situation exists in France. Racialized people who have come as part of colonial and postcolonial migration and who collect the cities' garbage, clean public squares and institutions, drive buses, trams, and subway trains, the ones who serve hot meals in university dining halls, deliver mail, care for the sick in hospitals, those whose welcoming smiles at the entrance of establishments are a guarantee of security, are the same ones who are usually excluded from the university, governmental, and non-governmental arenas that focus on the state of the environment. As a result, environmental specialists regularly speak at conferences as if all these people, their stories, their suffering, and their struggles remain inconsequential to the way we think about the Earth. This leads to the absurdity that the planet's preservation is thought about and implemented in the absence of those "without whom," as Aimé Césaire writes, "the earth would not be the earth."⁸ Either this fracture is completely hidden behind the fallacious argument that non-White peoples do not care about the environment, or it is restricted to a subject that is deemed secondary to the "real" purpose of ecology. My proposition here is that *this double fracture be positioned as a central problem of the ecological crisis*, thereby radically transforming its conceptual and political implications.

On the one hand, the environmental fracture follows from modernity's "great divide," those dualistic oppositions that separate nature and culture, environment and society, establishing a vertical scale of values that places "Man" above nature.⁹ This fracture is revealed through the technical, scientific, and economic modernizations of the mastery of nature, the effects of which can be measured by the extent of the Earth's pollution, the loss of biodiversity, global warming, and the associated persistence of gender inequality, social misery, and the "disposable lives" that are thereby created.¹⁰ The concept of the "Anthropocene," popularized by Paul Crutzen, winner of the 1995 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, attests to the consequences of this duality.¹¹ It refers to the new geological era that comes after the Holocene, in which human activities have become a major force impacting the Earth's ecosystems in a lasting way. This fracture also conceals a horizontal homogenization and hides internal hierarchizations on both sides. On the one side, the terms "planet,"

Valorization 	Planet, Environment, Nature	Polar bears, wolves, eagles, tigers, elephants, whales ...	Cows, pigs, chickens, sheep, lambs, tuna, salmon, shrimp, conch ...
		Animal fracture	
		Virgin nature, wilderness, forests, mountains, ponds, parks, safaris ...	Cities, urban nature, slums, plantations, oilfields, suburbs, farms, slaughterhouses ...
	Environmental fracture		
	Man, Human, <i>anthropos</i>	White, male, Christian, and upper-class ...	Humans, men, women, poor, sick, racialized, Black, Red, Yellow, Arab, indigenous, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, young, gay, elderly, disabled ...
	Valorization and homogenization		

The environmental fracture

“nature,” or “environment” conceal the diversity of ecosystems, geographic locations, and the non-humans that constitute them. Images of lush forests, snow-capped mountains, and nature reserves mask those of urban natures, slums, and plantations. Also masked are the internal conflicts between nature conservation movements and animal welfare movements, *the animal fracture*, as well as the latter’s own hierarchies in which “noble” wild animals (polar bears, whales, elephants, or pandas) and pets (dogs and cats) are placed above animals that are farmed (cows, pigs, sheep, or tuna).¹² On the other side, the terms “Man” or *anthropos* mask the plurality of human beings, featuring men and women, rich and poor, Whites and non-Whites, Christians and non-Christians, sick and healthy.

I call “environmentalism” the set of movements and currents of thought that attempt to reverse the vertical valuation of the environmental fracture but without touching the horizontal scale of values, meaning without questioning social injustices, gender discrimination, political domination, or the hierarchy of living environments and without concern for the treatment of animals on Earth. Environmentalism therefore proceeds from an apolitical genealogy of ecology comprised of its figures, like the solitary walker, and

its pantheon of thinkers, including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Pierre Poivre, John Muir, Henry David Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, or Arne Næss.¹³ They are mainly White, free, solitary, upper-class men in slave-making and post-slavery societies gazing out over what is then referred to as “nature.” Despite disagreements over its definition, environmentalism remains preoccupied with “nature,” cherishing the sweet illusion that its socio-political conditions of access and its sciences might remain outside the colonial fracture.¹⁴

Since the 1960s, *some ecological* movements have been concerned with addressing vertical and horizontal scales of value. Ecofeminism, social ecology, and political ecology have argued for a preservation of the environment intrinsically linked to demands for gender equality, social justice, and political emancipation. Despite their rich contributions, these green interventions make little room for racial and colonial issues. The colonial and slave-making constitution of modernity is veiled by pretentious claims to the universality of socio-economic, feminist, or juridico-political theories. In the green turn of the 1970s, arts and humanities disciplines confronted the environmental fracture while at the same time sliding the colonial divide under the rug. The absence of people of color who are experts on these issues is striking. From universities to governmental and non-governmental arenas, movements critical of the environmental fracture have marked the boundaries of a *predominantly White and masculine space* within postcolonial, multiethnic, and multicultural countries where the maps of the Earth and the dividing lines of the world are imagined and redrawn.

On the other hand, there is a colonial fracture sustained by the racist ideologies of the West, its religious, cultural, and ethnic Eurocentrism, and its imperial desire for enrichment, the effects of which can be seen in the enslavement of the Earth’s First Peoples, the violence inflicted on non-European women, the wars of colonial conquest, the bloody uprooting of the slave trade, the suffering of colonial slavery, the many genocides and crimes against humanity. The colonial fracture separates humans and the geographical spaces of the Earth between European colonizers and non-European colonized peoples, between Whites and non-Whites, between the masters and the enslaved, between the metropole and the colonies, between the Global North and the Global South. Going back at least to the time of the Spanish Reconquista, when Muslims were expelled from the Iberian peninsula, and the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas in 1492, this fracture places the colonist,

Valorization 	Colonized/slave-making colony	Racialized man (Black, Red, Yellow), Christian and non-Christian, heterosexual	Racialized men and women, rich, poor, sick, urban dwellers, peasants, disabled, young, old, homosexuals
	Colonial fracture		
	Settler-colonist/mainland master	White male, Christian, college-educated, middle-class, heterosexual	Men, women, disabled, poor, sick, young, elderly, urban dwellers, peasants, homosexuals
	Valorization and homogenization 		

The colonial fracture

his history and his desires at the top of the hierarchy of values and subordinates the lives and lands of the colonized or formerly colonized under him.¹⁵ In the same way, this fracture renders the colonists as homogeneous, reduces them to the experience of a White man, while at the same time reducing the experience of the colonized to that of a racialized man. Throughout the complex history of colonialism, this line has been contested by both sides and has taken different forms.¹⁶ Nevertheless, it persists today, reinforced by free markets and capitalism.

From the first acts of resistance by Amerindians and the enslaved in the fifteenth century to contemporary antiracist movements and anticolonial struggles in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, this colonial fracture is being called into question, exposing the vertical valorization of the colonized by the colonist. Anticolonialism, antislavery, and antiracism together represent the actions and currents of thought deconstructing this vertical scale of values. History has shown, however, that these movements have not always challenged the horizontal scale of values that in places maintains the relationships of domination between men and women, rich and poor, urban dwellers and peasants, Christians and non-Christians, Arabs and Blacks, among the colonized as well as among the colonists. In response, movements such as Black feminism and decolonial theory shatter both vertical and horizontal value scales, linking decolonization to the emancipation of women, recognition

of different sexual orientations and different religious faiths, as well as to social justice. However, the ecological issues of the world remain relegated to the background.

The *double* fracture of modernity refers to the thick wall between the two environmental and colonial fractures, to the real difficulty that exists in *thinking them together* and that in response carries out a double critique. However, this difficulty is not experienced in the same way on either side, and these two fields do not bear equal responsibility for it. On the environmentalist side, this difficulty stems from an effort to hide colonization and slavery *within the genealogy of ecological thinking*, producing a *colonial ecology*, even a *Noah's Ark ecology*. With the concept of the Anthropocene, Crutzen and others promote a narrative about the Earth that erases colonial history, while the country of which Crutzen is a citizen, the kingdom of the Netherlands, is a former colonial and slaveholding empire that stretched from Suriname to Indonesia via South Africa, and now consists of six overseas territories in the Caribbean.¹⁷

In metropolitan France [*France hexagonale*], or the Hexagone, environmentalist movements have not made anticolonial and antiracist struggles central elements of the ecological crisis.¹⁸ These struggles remain anecdotal or are even ignored within the extensive critiques of technology (including of nuclear power) carried out by Bernard Charbonneau, Jacques Ellul, André Gorz, Ivan Illich, Edgar Morin, and Günther Anders. The damage caused by nuclear tests carried out on colonized lands, such as the 210 French tests in Algeria and those in Polynesia from 1960 to 1996, is downplayed, but so is the damage caused by the plundering of mines in Africa by Great Britain and France and by the exploitation of the subsoil of Aboriginal lands in Australia, the First Nations in Canada, the Navajos in the United States, and of the Black workers forced to extract uranium in apartheid South Africa.¹⁹ In addition to transforming the Hexagone, nuclear energy has relied on France's colonial empire, using mines in Gabon, Niger, and Madagascar – which have long been in use throughout *Françafrique* – while exposing miners to uranium and radon gas.²⁰ To disavow this colonial fact is to cover up the opposition to nuclear power that has been voiced by anticolonial movements, such as the demand for disarmament made by the Bandung Conference of 1955, or Kwame Nkrumah, Bayard Rustin, and Bill Sutherland's pan-Africanist rejection of "nuclear imperialism" and French nuclear tests in Algeria, or Frantz Fanon's denunciation of a nuclear arms race that maintains the Third

World's domination, or the contemporary demands for justice by Polynesians.²¹ By omitting the colonial conditions for the production of technology, environmentalist movements have missed possible alliances with anticolonial critiques of technology.

Certainly, there were some bridges that were built in light of René Dumont's commitments to the peasants of the Third World, Robert Jaulin and Serge Moscovici's denunciations of the ethnocides of the Amerindians and their collaboration with the group "Survivre et vivre" [Survive and live], which led to a critique of the scientific imperialism that serves the West and the rare support of overseas citizens.²² Today, Serge Latouche is one of the few people in France who has placed the decolonial demand at the heart of ecological issues.²³ Despite these rare examples, colonized others have not had important speaking roles within the French environmentalist movement, cast away with "their" history to a distant beyond that is reinforced by the illusion of a North/South dichotomy. The result is a sympathy-without-connection [*sympathie-sans-lien*] where the concerns of others that are "over there" are recognized without acknowledging the material, economic, and political connections to the "here." It is taken as self-evident that the history of environmental pollution and the environmentalist movements "in France" does not include its former colonies and overseas territories,²⁴ that the history of ecological thinking continues to be conceived of without any Black thinkers,²⁵ that the word "antiracism" is not part of the ecological vocabulary,²⁶ and, above all, *that these absences do not pose any problems*. With expressions such as "climate refugees" and "environmental migrants," green activists appear to be discovering the migratory phenomenon in a panic, while they make a tabula rasa out of France's historical colonial and postcolonial migrations from the Antilles, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. So, it remains a cognitive and political embarrassment to recognize that French overseas territories are home to 80 percent of France's national biodiversity and 97 percent of its maritime exclusive economic zone, without addressing the fact that the inhabitants there are kept in poverty and on the margins of France's political and imaginary representations.²⁷ Aside from such sympathies-without-connection, the encounter between environmentalist movements and thought of the Hexagone with the colonial history of France and its "other citizens" has not yet taken place.²⁸

As Kathryn Yusoff notes, this invisibilization results in a "White Anthropocene," the geology of which erases the histories of

non-Whites, and a Western imaginary of the “ecological crisis” that erases colonial experiences.²⁹ A colonial arrogance persists on the part of present-day “collapsologists” when they talk about a new collapse while concealing the *connections* that exist to modern colonization, slavery, and racism, the genocides of indigenous peoples, and the destruction of their environments.³⁰ In his book *Collapse*, Jared Diamond describes the postcolonial societies of Haiti and Rwanda through a condescending exoticism that places them in a distant off-world [*hors-monde*] and that does not include any scientists or thinkers from these countries.³¹ These people, who are “more African in appearance” according to Diamond, are reduced to the role of victims who lack knowledge.³² The colonial constitution of the world and the resulting inequalities are passed over in silence.³³ The Anthropocene’s claim to universality seems to be sufficient to dismiss critics of the West’s discriminatory universalism.³⁴ Could it really be that a global enterprise, which from the fifteenth to the twentieth century was predicated upon the exploitation of humans and non-humans, including the decimation of millions of indigenous people in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, the forced transportation of millions of Africans, and centuries-long slavery, has no material or philosophical relationship with ecological thinking today? Are the ecological crisis and the Anthropocene new expressions of the “White man’s burden” to save “Humanity” from itself?³⁵ *Fracture*.

On the other side, the racialized and the subalterns who are met with repeated refusals of the world feel this double fracture every day in their flesh and in their stories. W. E. B. Du Bois’s “veil” expanded upon by Paul Gilroy’s “double consciousness of modernity,” Enrique Dussel’s “underside of modernity,” and the “White masks” on Fanon’s Black skin or Glen Coulthard’s Red skin are only different ways of describing this violence.³⁶ From 1492 to today, we must bear in mind the incommensurable resistance and struggles on the part of colonized and enslaved men and women in demanding humane treatment, to engage in a profession, to preserve their families, to participate in public life, to practice their arts, their languages, to pray to their gods, and to sit at the same world table. Yet those who carry the weight of the world see their struggles, like the Haitian Revolution, silenced.³⁷ In these pursuits of dignity – those that focus primarily on issues of identity, equality, sovereignty, and justice – environmental issues are perceived as an extension of colonial domination that fortifies the holds, exacerbates

the suffering of racialized people, the poor, and women, and sustains colonial silence.

A dangerous alternative emerges. Either this legitimate mistrust of environmentalism leads to the neglect of the dangers of environmental devastations of the Earth. Ecological struggles would then be a matter of “white utopia,” or at the very least unimportant when faced with the immense task of reclaiming dignity.³⁸ Or, paradoxically, in their laudable calls for ecological sensitivity, postcolonial thinkers such as Dipesh Chakrabarty and Souleymane Bachir Diagne will have discarded their critical theoretical tools and adopted the same environmentalist terms, scales, and historicities, such as, for example, “global subject,” “whole Earth,” and “humanity in general.”³⁹ The durability of the psychological, socio-political, *and* ecosystemic violence and toxicity of the “ruins of empires” is concealed.⁴⁰ Likewise, one underestimates the colonial ecology of racial ontologies that always links the racialized and the colonized to those psychic, physical, and socio-political spaces that are the world’s holds. This is true whether it is a matter of the spaces of legal and political non-representation (the enslaved), the spaces of non-being (the Negro), the spaces of the absence of logos, history, or culture (the savage), the spaces of the non-human (the animal), the spaces of the inhuman (the monster, the beast), the spaces of the non-living (camps and necropolises), or, if it is a matter of geographical locations (Africa, the Americas, Asia, Oceania), of habitat zones (ghettos, suburbs) or of ecosystems subject to capitalist production (slave ships, tropical plantations, factories, mines, prisons). In turn, the importance of ecological and non-human concerns within (post)colonial struggles for equality and dignity remain understated. *Fracture*.

Here is the double fracture. One either questions the environmental fracture on the condition that the silence of modernity’s colonial fracture, its misogynistic slavery, and its racisms are *maintained*, or one deconstructs the colonial fracture on the condition that its ecological issues are *abandoned*. Yet, by leaving aside the colonial question, ecologists and green activists overlook the fact that both historical colonization and contemporary structural racism are at the center of destructive ways of inhabiting the Earth. Leaving aside the environmental and animal questions, antiracist and postcolonial movements miss the forms of violence that exacerbate the domination of the enslaved, the colonized, and racialized women. As a result of this double fracture, Noah’s Ark is

established as an appropriate political metaphor for the Earth and the world in the face of the ecological tempest, locking the cries for a common world at the bottom of modernity's hold.

The slave ship or modernity's hold

In order to heal this double fracture, my second proposition takes the Caribbean world as the scene of ecological thinking. Why the Caribbean? Firstly, because it was here that the Old World and the New World were first knotted together in an attempt to make the Earth and the world into one and the same totality. Eye of modernity's hurricane, the Caribbean is that center where the sunny lull was wrongly confused for paradise, the fixed point of a global acceleration sucking up African villages, Amerindian societies, and European sails. This "Caribbean world" therefore concentrates experiences of the world that range from colonial and enslaving histories to the underside of modernity, histories which are not limited to the geographical boundaries of the Caribbean basin. This gesture is a response to the absence of these Caribbean experiences within those ecological discourses that nevertheless claim to question the same modernity. While researchers have been interested in the ecological consequences of colonization in the Caribbean and North America, the consequences of global warming, and contemporary environmental politics, the Caribbean is most often seen as the place for experimenting with concepts that come from somewhere else.⁴¹ The colonial gaze is maintained by the scholar who departs from the Global North and carries in his suitcase concepts that are to be experimented with in a non-scholarly Caribbean, before he leaves again with the fruits of this new knowledge, now capable of prescribing the way forward. Such an approach hides the imperial conditions that allowed, in the Caribbean and other colonial spaces, the development of sciences such as botany, the emergence of forest conservation management,⁴² and the genesis of the concept of biodiversity,⁴³ and ignores the other forms of knowledge concerning the environment and the body that were already there.⁴⁴ Above all, one would miss those Caribbean ecologists who go "beyond sand and sun" by holding together social justice, antiracism, and ecosystem preservation.⁴⁵

A contrario, I embrace the Caribbean world as a scene of ecological thinking. Thinking ecology from the perspective of the Caribbean world proposes *an epistemic shift in the conceptualizations of the*

world and the Earth at the heart of ecology, meaning that there is a change of scene from which discourses and knowledge are produced. Instead of the scene of a free, educated, and well-to-do White man wandering the countryside of Georgia like John Muir, or in the forest of Montmorency like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, or around Walden's pond like Henry David Thoreau, I suggest another scene that took place historically at the same time: one of violence inflicted upon men and women in slavery, dominated socially and politically inside the holds of slave ships. North-South power relations, racisms, historical and modern slavery, the resentments, fears, and hopes that constitute the experience of the world, are placed at the heart of the ship where the ecological tempest is seen and confronted.

Within a binary understanding of modernity, one that opposes nature and culture, colonists and indigenous people, this proposition instead highlights the experiences of *modernity's third terms*.⁴⁶ I am referring to those who were dismissed when, in the sixteenth century, the priest Bartolomé de Las Casas, famous in the Valladolid controversy of 1550, defended the Amerindians against the Spanish conquerors with an appeal that was accompanied by repeated suggestions to "stock up" in Africa and develop triangular trade.⁴⁷ Neither modern nor indigenous, more than 12.5 million Africans were uprooted from their lands from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. Hundreds of millions of people were enslaved and kept for centuries in an off-ground [*hors-sol*] relationship to the Americas.⁴⁸ Over and above the social conditions of the colonial enslaved, they were also considered "Negroes," object-beings of a political and scientific racism that indexes them to an inextricable immanence with nature or to an unsurpassable pathological irresponsibility. However, the so-called Negroes also developed relationships with nature, ecumenes, ways of relating to non-humans, and ways of representing the world to themselves. It so happens that these ideas and practices were marked by slavery, by the experience of transshipment in the Atlantic slave trade, and by political and social discrimination for several centuries in Africa, Europe, and the Americas.⁴⁹ Yes, there is also an ecology of the enslaved, of those transshipped in the European trade, an ecology that maintains continuities with the indigenous African and Amerindian communities but is not reducible to either of them.⁵⁰ An ecology that was forged in modernity's hold: *a decolonial ecology*.

Decolonial ecology articulates the confrontation of contemporary ecological issues through an emancipation from the colonial

fracture, *by rising up from the slave ship's hold*. The urgency of the struggle against both global warming and the pollution of the Earth is intertwined with the urgency of political, epistemic, scientific, legal, and philosophical struggles to *dismantle* the colonial structures of living together and the ways of inhabiting the Earth that still maintain the domination of racialized people, particularly women, in modernity's hold. This decolonial ecology is inspired by the decolonial thinking that was begun by a group of Latin American researchers and activists, such as Anibal Quijano, Arturo Escobar, Catherine Walks, and Walter Mignolo, who were and are working to dismantle an understanding of power, knowledge, and Being that has been inherited from colonial modernity and its racial categories. They emphasize those other ways of thinking that emerge from "the spaces that have been silenced, repressed, demonized, devaluated by the triumphant chant of self-promoting modern epistemology, politics, and economy and its internal dissensions."⁵¹

The decolonial ecology that I am proposing is different from this current of thought because the central focus is on the experiences of the third terms of modernity and the slave ship, the fundamental experiences of those Black Africans now in the Caribbean who were uprooted from Africa and enslaved.⁵² This gesture is linked to Africana philosophy, which allows the thinking to resurface, history, and philosophies of Africans and African Americans and is represented by the work of Valentin Mudimbé, Cheikh Anta Diop, Cedric Robinson, Sylvia Wynter, Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Nadia Yala Kisukidi, Lewis Gordon, and Norman Ajari.⁵³ Decolonial ecology aims to restore Black people's dignity in the wake of the battles waged by Aimé Césaire and Maryse Condé, by Toussaint Louverture and Rosa Parks, by Harriet Tubman and Malcolm X, by Frantz Fanon and Christiane Taubira. Finally, thinking from within the slave ship's hold is also a matter of gender. The separation that often took place inside the hold, where men are placed on one side and women and children on the other, underlines the different forms of oppression these third terms experience. Decolonial ecology fully agrees with feminist and, singularly, Black feminist critiques that show the intricacies of gendered domination within the racist constitutions of nation-states, critical work such as that of Elsa Dorlin, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Eleni Varikas, bell hooks, and Angela Y. Davis.⁵⁴

This is not an ecology that is to be applied to people of color and formerly colonized territories, like an additional shelf on a bookcase that is already established, as has been proposed by

some.⁵⁵ Decolonial ecology shatters the environmentalist framework for understanding the ecological crisis by including from the outset this confrontation with the world's colonial fracture and by pointing to another genesis of ecological concern. In this way, I agree with the advances of the environmental justice movements⁵⁶ and postcolonial ecocriticism.⁵⁷ The concepts of "environmental racism," "environmental colonialism," "ecological imperialism," and "green orientalism" describe how environmental pollution and degradation, as well as certain preservation politics, reinforce domination over the poor and racialized.⁵⁸ The critique of the destruction of the planet's ecosystems is then intimately tied to the critique of colonial and postcolonial dominations and to demands for equality. It is just such an ecologico-political struggle that the Haitian novelist Jacques Roumain staged in his 1944 *Gouverneurs de la rosée* (translated into English by Langston Hughes as *Masters of the Dew*).⁵⁹ In 1950, Aimé Césaire exposed the wrongdoing colonialism carried out against the colonized *and* "natural economies":

They dazzle me with the tonnage of cotton or cocoa that has been exported, the acreage that has been planted with olive trees or grapevines. I am talking about natural economies, harmonious and viable economies adapted to the indigenous population that have been disrupted, about food crops destroyed, about malnutrition permanently introduced, about agricultural development oriented solely toward the benefit of the metropolitan countries; about the looting of products, the looting of raw materials.⁶⁰

In 1961, Fanon already associated the process of political decolonization with a radical change in the ways we inhabit the Earth, with a new inquiry about our relationship to the environment, opening the door to other forms of energy, including solar energy:

The colonial regime has hammered its channels into place and the risk of not maintaining them would be catastrophic. Perhaps everything needs to be started over again: The type of exports needs to be changed, not just their destination; the soil needs researching as well as the subsoil, the rivers and why not the sun.⁶¹

In response to global capitalism and postcolonial agreements that maintain these destructive ways of inhabiting the Earth and continue the domination of the formerly colonized and racialized by way of military and financial coercion, the African-American sociologist

Nathan Hare declared in 1970: “the real solution to the environmental crisis is the decolonization of the black race.”⁶² Similarly, in 1986 in Paris, Thomas Sankara denounced the “colonial plunder [that] has decimated our forests without the slightest restorative thought for our tomorrows.”⁶³ Sankara then declared evocatively, “this struggle to defend the trees and forests is above all a struggle against imperialism. Because imperialism is the arsonist setting fires to our forests and our savannas.”⁶⁴

This is also what the participants of the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit affirmed in Washington in 1991, linking the protection of Mother-Earth to decolonial and antiracist demands.⁶⁵ The Kenyan biologist Wangari Maathai, who was awarded the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize for her ecological and feminist commitments in the Green Belt movement, recalls the wounds inflicted upon the Earth by colonial companies that were supported by Christian followers who devalued the practices of indigenous peoples such as the Kikuyu of Kenya, practices that are now recognized for their role in protecting biodiversity.⁶⁶ In this, decolonial ecology is inspired by a range of environmentalist movements in the Caribbean. From Assaupamar in Martinique, to Casa Pueblo in Puerto Rico, to the Papaya peasant movement in Haiti, to the struggles of the Saramaka people in Suriname to save their forest, to the Afro-Colombian feminist and ecological movement led by Francia Márquez, a body of people are articulating a way of preserving the environment in the pursuit of a world free from its (post)colonial inequalities and power relations passed on since the time of slavery. These were the terms Márquez used when she accepted the 2018 Goldman Prize for the Environment:

I am part of a process, of a history of struggle and resistance. It began when my ancestors were brought to Colombia as slaves. I am part of the struggle against structural racism, part of the ongoing fight for freedom and justice, part of those people who hold onto hope for a better life, part of those women who use their maternal love to take care of their land as a place where life thrives. I am one of those people who raise their voices to stop the destruction of rivers, forests, and wetlands.⁶⁷

Decolonial ecology is a centuries-old cry for justice and an appeal for a world.

A world-ship: the world as a horizon for ecology

The third proposition is to posit the world as ecology's starting point and horizon. In this, I follow the intuitions of Hannah Arendt, André Gorz, and Étienne Tassin, for whom nature, its defence, and the ecological crisis involve the *world* above all.⁶⁸ The "world" is to be distinguished from the "Earth" or the "globe," with which the world is often confused. The world would seem to be given from the outset, with the physical interdependence of the globe and the ecosystems of the Earth taken as proof. But, unlike the Earth, the world is not self-evident. Our existence on Earth would be very bleak if it were not also part of multiple *social and political relationships* with others, human and non-human. If the Earth and its ecosystemic equilibriums constitute the conditions for the possibility of collective life, the world in question is of a different nature, as Arendt says:

the physical, worldly in-between along with its interests is overlaid and, as it were, overgrown with an altogether different in-between which consists of deeds and words and owes its origin exclusively to men's acting and speaking directly to one another.⁶⁹

This in-between, made up of actions and words, is not reducible to its material scenes, to the intimate circles of communities, or to the economic exchanges of the markets. What is at stake for the collective experience of the world in stock markets and other transactional arenas of global finance or global economies is quite different from what is at stake in demonstrations that aim to protect democracy or take place in the parliamentary spaces of debate. *Globalization* and *worldization* are therefore two different, even opposing, processes. The first is the totalizing extension and standardizing repetition of an unequal economy on a global scale, one which destroys cultures, social worlds, and the environment. The second is an opening, through the political action of a living together, of the infinite horizon of encounters and sharing.⁷⁰ The problem arises when public scenes, where laws and ways of living together are imagined, are usurped by the capitalist interests of the free market, by lobbyists in particular. The ecological crisis is also the manifestation of what Gorz refers to as the "colonization of the life-world"⁷¹ and what, in his ecosophy, Félix Guattari called

“Integrated World Capitalism,”⁷² referring to the processes by which the financial interests of certain companies and groups such as Monsanto-Bayer or Total dictate to the rest of the world ways of inhabiting the Earth that are violent and unequal.

Certainly, the importance of the concrete aspects of ecological degradation has led some theoretical approaches to focus solely on the economic and material dimensions of the ecological crisis – nature being included in the material – and led to the continued confusion of the globe with the world. In this vein, Jason Moore’s brilliant analyses of “world-ecology,” inspired by Fernand Braudel and Immanuel Wallerstein, the analyses of political ecology by eco-Marxists, and those of global environmental history paradoxically suffer from the same ills that they denounce: they take the material sphere of physical economic forces impacting the Earth as the main focus for understanding the world.⁷³ Undoubtedly, this global understanding of the ecological crisis in terms of humans’ ecological footprints, “unequal ecological exchange,”⁷⁴ or “global limits”⁷⁵ reveals the inequalities between those who consume the equivalent of three or four planets and those who live on almost nothing. And yet, the power of words and political actions are set aside in favor of what can be measured. What remains is what cannot be quantified: suffering, hopes, struggles, victories, refusals, and desires.

This proposition echoes the call of anthropologists and sociologists to focus on other forms of *world-making* carried out by First Peoples who do not share the modern environmental fracture.⁷⁶ However, my suggestion that the world be posited as ecology’s horizon is not exactly a call to adopt specific techniques in relation to the environment, ecosystems, spirits, and human beings. Starting from the constitutive plurality of humans and non-humans on Earth, of different cultures, taking the world as the object of ecology brings back to the fore the question of the *political composition* between these pluralities, and therefore the question of acting together as well. This political approach to the world, in the Greek sense of polis, removes ecology from the single question of the *oikos* (economic and environmental) because, even if the Earth is indeed strewn with houses, fertile spaces for life and exchanges with it, *the Earth is not, however, our home*. If these ecumenes are fundamental, then the Earth cannot be adequately represented as one single *global oikos*. This reduces the Earth solely to the framework of property issues (whose house is it?), cast in the image of the imperial drive to capture and monopolize “territories,” “resources,” and power (who controls it?), like in ancient Greece

where a citizen man enslaves the men, women, and children of the household and repels foreigners. This falls back into a violent territorial and root-identity thinking that Édouard Glissant denounced, a way of thinking that still presents the Earth as *a colonial and slave-making oikos*, and still maintains the colonial ecology model.⁷⁷

*Earth is the world's womb, its matrix.*⁷⁸ From this perspective, ecology is a confrontation with plurality, with others different than myself, leading to the foundation of a common world. It is from the cosmopolitical foundation of a world between humans, and with non-humans, that the Earth can become not only what we share but what we have "in common *without owning it*."⁷⁹ Arendt's proposed world horizon is enriched in two different ways with which she was not originally concerned. It is creolized and marked by the recognition of the Caribbean experiences of colonialism *and* slavery, and it is extended by the political recognition of the presence of non-humans, giving rise to a world between humans and with non-humans. If nature and the Earth are not identical to the world, here, the world *includes* nature, the Earth, non-humans, and humans, all the while recognizing different cosmogonies, qualities, and ways of being in relation to one another.

The starting point for thinking ecology from the world cannot be a point that is off-ground, off-world, off-planet, and it cannot be expressed from a being without a body, without color, without flesh, and without a story. Though the history of the Earth is not limited to Western modernity and its colonial shadow – Asia and the Middle East also had their empires and colonialisms – it is here from this shadow that I wish to contribute with this work to thinking about the Earth and the world. My starting point is the Caribbean and its multiple experiences, with a particular emphasis on Martinique, the island where I was born. I speak first in my name, from my body, and the experiences of my native land. I. A Martinican Black man, I lived the first eighteen years of my life in the rural town of Rivière-Pilote and in the small city of Schœlcher, and the next sixteen in Europe, Africa, and Oceania. I will no longer speak from the usual categories of "Man" (with capital M) or "man" (with a lowercase m), as the Caribbean writer Sylvia Wynter invites us to stop doing. This term reflects the over-representation of the White man of the upper classes who wishes to usurp the human and its constituent plurality.⁸⁰ By claiming to designate both the male of the human species and the entire species as such, this word perpetuates the invisibilization of women, of their places and their actions, as well

as the acts of violence that are committed against them. “Man” has never acted upon or inhabited the Earth; it has always been humans, persons, groups, hybrid human/non-human groups that act, struggle, and meet upon the Earth.⁸¹ To take the world as the starting point and the horizon of ecology is, in essence, to approach the ecological crisis with the following questions: *how can a world be made on Earth between humans and with non-humans? How can a world-ship be built in the face of the tempest?* These are the questions that guide this worldly-ecology.

Reaching the eye of the tempest

These three propositions, those of thinking the ecological tempest in light of the colonial and environmental double fracture (Noah’s Ark) from modernity’s hold (the slave ship) and towards the horizon of the world (the world-ship), allow me to follow Aimé Césaire’s introductory invitation to “reach the eye of the tempest.” Reaching the eye of this storm is not the search for a temporary lull amidst the ills of the world. In the eye of the hurricane, if one lends an ear, the screams of those left behind by the hecatomb can be heard. To reach the eye of the tempest is an invitation to confront the causes of modernity’s destructive accelerations. It is a matter of sailing through the colonial winds of modernity, its misogynistic skies, racist rains, and uneven swells, in order to undo those ways of inhabiting the Earth that are violently dragging the world-ship towards an unjust course. Beyond the double fracture, I propose to patiently sew the thread of another way of thinking about ecology and the world, necessarily producing other concepts. For this ocean journey, I am accompanied by Afro-Caribbean philosophy, which, as described by Henry Paget, is anchored in the Caribbean world’s practices and discourses, in its stories and poems, in its literature and works of art.⁸²

The first part, “The Modern Tempest,” offers a different historical understanding of colonization and slavery in the Caribbean, one that holds its political and ecological configurations together, with a particular focus on French experiences. We will see how the European colonization of the Americas has produced a violent way of inhabiting the Earth that denies the possibility of a world with the non-European: *a colonial inhabitation*. In addition to the genocide of indigenous peoples and the destruction of ecosystems,

this colonial inhabitation transformed the land into the jigsaws of factories and plantations that characterize this geological era, the *Plantationocene*, resulting in the loss of caring and matrilineal bonds with the Earth: *matricides*.⁸³ The turn to the transatlantic slave trade and colonial slavery, to confining human and non-human beings to the world's hold, to the "Negroes," also makes it possible to describe this geological era as a *Negrocene*. These stories, catastrophes, like the regular hurricanes that ravage the American coasts, reinforce the fractures of colonial inhabitation and prolong the enslavement of the dominated, turning the ecological tempest into a true *colonial hurricane*.

The second part, "Noah's Ark," reveals how environmentalism and the technocentric approach to ecological issues lead to the reinforcement of colonial ruptures passed down from colonization. This is carried out through an examination of examples of public policy concerning the reforestation of a park in Haiti, a nature reserve on the island of Vieques off the coast of Puerto Rico, and the consequences of the contamination of Martinique and Guadeloupe by a toxic pesticide called chlordecone. Counterproductively, this approach allows for an ecology that refuses the world and reinforces colonial discrimination and social inequalities: *a colonial ecology*.

The third part, "The Slave Ship," shows the other path that is followed by those who connect protest against ecological degradation with a decolonial critique. Here, the slave ship is no longer just a historical ship but the imaginary scene from which one sets out for a shore, in view of a world made in the image of the *ecology of fugitives from slavery*, the Maroons. Another reading of Thoreau's ecological writing and the actions of his mother and sisters indicates that the decolonial task is not only the responsibility of the colonized, the enslaved, and the racialized but is also the responsibility of free men and women, exemplifying a *civil marronage*. These two examples feature those for whom ecology is intimately linked to a search for a world, to a liberation from their condition as colonial enslaved persons: *a decolonial ecology*.

Finally, the fourth part, "A World-Ship," moves beyond the stalemate of modernity's double fracture which contrasts the refusals and quests for the world in order to suggest paths towards *world-making*. I suggest we conceive of ecological thinking neither as a Noah's Ark nor as a slave ship but in terms of a *world-ship* whose horizon is the encounter with the other. These encounters allow us to *form a body in the world* [*prendre corps au monde*] and to renew

a caring relationship with Mother-Earth. They also make it possible to forge *interspecies alliances* where the cause of animals and the demand for the emancipation of Negroes are seen as common problems. These encounters are only possible if a bridge of justice is built across the environmental and colonial fracture, making non-humans count politically and legally as well as seeking justice for the colonized and the enslaved. This bridge of justice opens up the horizon of a world: *a worldly-ecology*.

Readers will recognize an affinity for the figure of the ship, and particularly that of the slave ship, as a political metaphor for the world. Each chapter is preceded by the names of real slave ships, their historical routes, and their contents, which I freely recount in prose. This choice is intended to give a literary sensibility to the displacement that is required for thinking from the world's hold, while at the same time revealing the other side of modernity that adorns itself with luminous ideals, using names such as *Justice* and *Espérance* [Hope], but which spreads injustice and despair. It also allows us to see that the slave ship tells a story about the world and the Earth. Using this metaphor is above all the recognition of the capacity for ships to concentrate the world within them. From Christopher Columbus's *Niña* to container ships, from trawlers to warships, from whalers to oil tankers, from slave ships to migrant ships capsizing in the Mediterranean, through their functions, routes, and cargo, ships reveal the relationships of the world. Following the extended metaphor of the slave ship gives voice to the ambition of going beyond the double fracture through a sutural writing, passing from one side to the other, in order to weave together presences and thoughts and to stretch the sails of the world-ship facing the tempest.

Part I

The Modern Tempest

**Environmental Violence and Colonial
Ruptures**

1

Colonial Inhabitation: An Earth without a World

Conquérant (1776–7)

On May 21st, 1776, the *Conquérant*, a 300-ton ship, began its journey from Nantes, heading for West Africa. From August to October, while surveying the Gulf of Guinea, the *Conquérant* inspected and chose the materials-bodies for its building site. Among the 400 pieces packed into the hold and the steerage, only 338 survived the bloody swell of the middle passage, reaching Port-au-Prince on January 9th, 1777. After removing the weeds, the forest, and the Red Amerindians, the *Conquérant* joined the Negro joists together into the frame of a colonial inhabitation of the Earth.

The current ecological storm is bringing to light the harm and the problems associated with certain ways of inhabiting the Earth that are inherent to modernity. A long-term [*longue durée*] perspective is required to understand these problems. One must return to modernity's founding moments and processes, which have contributed to today's ecological, social, and political situation. This is why it is important to go back as early as 1492, to the founding moment of the European colonization of the Americas. However, it has to be said that this event remains a prisoner to the modern world's double colonial and environmental fracture. On the one side, anticolonial critique condemns the conquests, the genocide of Amerindian peoples, the violence against Amerindian and Black women, the transatlantic slave trade and the enslavement of millions of Black people.¹ On the other side, environmental criticism highlights the extent of ecosystem destruction and the loss of biodiversity that has been caused by the European colonization of the Americas.² This double fracture erases the continuities that saw humans and non-humans confused as "resources" feeding the same colonial project, the same conception of the Earth and the world. I propose that this double fracture be healed by returning to colonization's principal action: *the act of inhabiting*.

The European colonization of the Americas violently implemented a particular way of inhabiting the Earth that I call *colonial inhabitation*. Although European colonization is plural in terms of its nations, peoples, and kingdoms, its politics, practices, and different periods, colonial inhabitation draws a common thread, which I will describe here with a particular focus on the French experience. The deeds creating French companies, such as the Compagnie de Saint-Christophe, which financed and founded the exploitation of the Caribbean islands, explicitly stated the intention to *render* these islands *inhabited*:

We, the undersigned, acknowledge and declare that We have made and do hereby make a faithful association between Us ... *to render inhabited* and populate the islands of Saint-Christophe [present day Saint Kitts and Nevis] and Barbados, and others at the entrance of Peru, from the eleventh to the eighteenth degree of the equinoctial line, which are not possessed by Christian princes, both for the purpose of instructing the inhabitants of said islands in the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion, and for the purpose of trading and negotiating in said islands for money and merchandise which may be collected and drawn from the said islands and surrounding areas, and brought to Le Havre to the exclusion of all others ³

This inhabiting might seem obvious at first glance. The ones who inhabit would be those who are there, those who populate the Earth. It was quite different, however, as evidenced by the vocabulary used. Plots of forest cleared to plant tobacco or sugar cane were designated as “inhabited” land.⁴ The houses of the enslaving colonists were called – and still are today – *habitations* or *bitations* in Creole. The male occupant of such a *habitation* or dwelling is therefore called a *habitant* or inhabitant. Colonial inhabitation was therefore based upon a set of actions that determined the boundaries between those who inhabit and those who do not inhabit. Lands exist that are said to be “inhabited” and others that are not. There are houses that are *habitations* and others that are not. People populated these islands without being designated as “inhabitants.” Conversely, there were inhabitants that rarely resided in their *habitations*.

By “colonial inhabitation,” I mean something other than a habitat, a style of architecture, or a kind of occupation and culture. If Martin Heidegger has clearly shown that inhabiting (or dwelling) and building are not circumstantial activities of man but constitute, to the contrary, an unsurpassable modality of his being, Heidegger still did not make it possible to understand colonial inhabitation.⁵ Heideggerian dwelling assumes a totalized Earth and a solitary man, immobile in his dwelling. However, philosophically grasping colonial inhabitation requires an interest in these others and their becomings, in these other lands, in these other humans and these other non-humans. This is what the Martinican poet and philosopher Aimé Césaire proposes in his poem *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* [*Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*] which brings to the forefront “those without whom the earth would not be the earth.” Césaire provides a conception of inhabitation that does not “take the other into account,” but which can only be conceived of on the condition of the presence of others. Without others, the Earth is not the Earth, only deserted or desolated ground. *Inhabiting the Earth begins through relationships with others*. Therefore, colonial inhabitation refers to a singular conception with regard to the existence of certain human beings on Earth – the colonists – of their relationships with other humans – the non-colonists – as well as their ways of relating to nature and to the non-humans of these islands. This colonial inhabitation involves principles, foundations, and forms.

Principles of colonial inhabitation: geography, exploitation of nature, and othercide

Colonial inhabitation contains *three* structural principles clearly stated in the deeds of the Compagnie de Saint-Christophe. First, colonial inhabitation is *geographical* in at least two ways. It is geographical in that it is located within the geography of the Earth, “at the entrance to Peru, from the eleventh to the eighteenth degree of the equinoctial line.” It has a determined space, a designated location, an enclosure. On the other hand, colonial inhabitation is *geographically subordinate* to another location, another space. It is important that goods will be produced from these islands and that they will be “brought to Le Havre to the exclusion of all others.” The meaning of this exclusivity of trade, laid down as a principle – the principle of exclusivity – is not exhausted in its economic understanding. Colonial inhabitation is thought to be subordinate to another kind of inhabiting, mainland inhabitation, which is itself thought to be the true form of inhabiting. This means that the inhabitation of the Caribbean islands was conceived of only on the condition that they were geographical subordinate to and ontologically dependent upon European mainland inhabitation.

The second principle of colonial inhabitation is based upon *the exploitation of the land and the nature of these islands*. This is clearly expressed in this excerpt from Richelieu’s 1626 commission to the colonists d’Esnambuc and Le Roissey:

... they [d’Esnambuc and Le Roissey] have seen and recognized that the air is very mild and temperate, and the aforementioned lands are fertile and highly profitable, from which it is possible to derive a quantity of useful commodities for the maintenance of human life [*la vie des hommes*]; they have even learned from the Indians who inhabit the aforementioned islands that there are gold and silver mines, *which would have given them the idea rendering the aforementioned islands inhabited* by a large number of Frenchmen, in order to convert their inhabitants to the Catholic, apostolic, Roman religion ⁶

Far from being just about the “maintenance of human life,” the purpose of colonial inhabitation was the commercial exploitation of the land. It was the possibility of *extracting* products for the purposes of enrichment that “gave the idea” of rendering the island

inhabited. It assumes this intensively exploitative relationship to nature and non-humans.

Finally, the third principle of colonial inhabitation is *othercide*, meaning the refusal of the possibility of inhabiting the Earth in the presence of an other, of a person who is different from a “self” [*moi*] in their appearance, their social affiliations, or their beliefs. Colonial inhabitation is not, however, inhabiting alone. By populating these islands “which are not possessed by Christian princes,” the colonial inhabitant recognizes those other European princes and nations with whom the Earth is shared, based on the “evidence” that the Earth belongs to Christians. It was on the basis of this presupposed evidence that, in his papal bull of May 4th, 1493, Pope Alexander VI reaffirmed the principle that the Earth belongs to Christians and worked out a partition of the islands and the new continent between the king and queen of Castile: Ferdinand and Isabella.⁷ This same recognition of the Christian other within colonial inhabitation was reaffirmed when these new lands were shared with other Christians according to the *amity lines*. Therefore Richelieu decides that the capture of the Antilles is legitimate because these islands are beyond the amity lines. These actions posit inhabitation as being necessarily an inhabiting with the other Christian, an other with whom they agree to share the Earth, and with whom they agree to disagree, to wage war with or against.⁸

There is an obvious contradiction within colonial inhabitation regarding non-Christians. It is a question of rendering these islands inhabited while recognizing that there are already inhabitants there. Likewise, Pope Alexander VI, while pointing to the existence of “many nations [that] inhabit these countries living in peace,” “gives” and “concedes” these lands, as if they were uninhabited. If Europeans made treaties together and signed their deeds, which created Caribbean operating companies as if these islands were virgin, they nonetheless knew that there were people there. This paradoxical relationship is explicit in the deed that created the Compagnie de Saint-Christophe. The first moment that the other appears is when it is said specifically that this other will be reduced to the same, meaning the other will be stripped of all the qualities that make the other different from a self. It is a matter of rendering these islands inhabited and populated “... for the purpose of instructing the inhabitants of said islands in the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion ...” The emergence of the other is only a rope with which this other can be drawn back to a known us, towards

the same European. The other appears only as matter that can be reduced to another “way of the Self [*manière du Moi*],” to recall the expression of the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas.⁹ This dialectic, through which the other is recognized in that they will no longer be other, is the principal ontological violence of colonial inhabitation that consecrates the impossibility of inhabitation with the other. More than the eclipse of the other that Enrique Dussel has analyzed, colonization denies otherness and constitutes *an enterprise of making everything the same, a reduction to the Same*, rendering colonial inhabitation an inhabiting-without-the-other.¹⁰

Foundations of colonial inhabitation: land grabs, massacres, and land clearing

Inhabiting is not self-evident, hence the explicit precision in the deed creating the Compagnie de Saint-Christophe, where it is a question of “*rendering* these islands inhabited,” so that it is this *doing*, in the sense of this acting, that makes inhabitation possible. The acts that colonial man uses to establish his inhabitation constitute the foundations of colonial inhabitation. Three main acts consecrate the principal violence of colonial inhabitation. The first is *land grabbing*. Colonial inhabitation presupposes the obvious legitimacy of the appropriation of these islands by European colonists and the use of any force necessary to carry out this project. Let us remember that the Amerindians did not have the concept of private ownership of the land.¹¹ This usurpation is accompanied by a set of symbolic gestures directed at the same Europeans. For example, the first act of Christopher Columbus when he arrived in Guanahani in 1492 was to rename the island San Salvador and to become its viceroy and governor. This baptism of the island and his self-declaration as governor were explicitly addressed to the members of his expedition and refer to the collective imaginary of the Spanish Crown. Likewise, in the deed of association for the Compagnie de Saint-Christophe, it is specified that it is a matter of a “faithful association between Us.” When du Plessis and de L’Olive arrived in Martinique with the intention of colonizing it, their first act was to plant the cross symbolizing that this land had been taken.¹²

The second act founding colonial inhabitation is *land clearing*. The French “felled” the woods. Far from being merely a circumstance of the French colonization of the Caribbean, cutting down

the forests was a condition for inhabiting it. It was necessary to “kill” the woods for colonial inhabitation to be possible, so that these islands can be “inhabited.” Clearing the land was a very difficult task for the first colonists of Saint-Christophe because of their lack of both experience and tools.¹³ Du Tertre recounts that, when the land was cleared, it released “poisonous vapours” that caused a disease commonly known as *coup de barre* or sudden fatigue, which contributed to a high mortality rate among enlisted men.¹⁴ Myriam Cottias shows that in the Antilles, between 1671 and 1771, recruits had a mortality rate of 25 percent per year.¹⁵ Of course, the French colonists were not the only ones to cut down trees. The Amerindians also cut down trees in order to carry out their own agriculture. The difference is that colonization establishes the following relationship: *to inhabit is to clear the land, to inhabit is to cut down trees. Colonial inhabitation only begins from the moment that the tree is felled.*

Finally, the third act founding colonial inhabitation is *the massacre of Amerindians and violence inflicted upon Amerindian women*. These massacres were the foundation of colonial inhabitation and were recounted at length by Bartolomé de Las Casas.¹⁶ Concerning the French experience in the Caribbean, it was on the ashes of the massacred Caribs that the first French colony in Saint-Christophe was established in 1625 by the first French colonists, under the aegis of d’Esnambuc. The island of Saint-Christophe was occupied by the Caribs, the English, and the French. Pretending that they were avoiding an ambush by the Caribs, who would have tried to drive them out, the English and French, by mutual agreement, decided to massacre all the Caribs of the island and those who would come to it, as Father Du Tertre recounts: “... they stabbed almost all of them in their beds, on the same night, *saving only a few of their most beautiful women in order to abuse them and make them their slaves*; 100 or 120 of them were killed.”¹⁷

This account shows the entanglement of the ideology of colonization with that of male domination, which transcends ethnic boundaries. Colonial inhabitation is explicitly gendered. It is about slaughtering men and raping women, pitting the “savages” against the inhabitants. Colonial inhabitation was established upon the massacre of Amerindians and the possession of the bodies of Amerindian women, a true enactment of the principle of othercide.

Forms of colonial inhabitation: private property, plantations, and slavery

In addition to its principles and its foundations, colonial inhabitation is especially conspicuous in its forms, in its *habitat*. Here, the meaning of the expression “render these islands inhabited” is to be taken in the sense of manufacturing. Colonial inhabitation is the engineering of humans and ecosystems, and it has three main characteristics. The first feature of colonial inhabitation was the institution of private ownership of the land. Plots of land were allocated to individuals – men – so that they would cultivate them, thereby allowing for export and trade with France. The individual titles of ownership participate fully in the collective enterprise of exploitation by colonial inhabitation. Whether the titles were distributed free of charge, as in the early days of the French occupation of Saint-Christophe, but also in Martinique, or if they were purchased, their validity was conditional upon the clearing and exploitation of the land.¹⁸ Several orders made by the Council of Martinique and the king from 1665 to 1743 required owners to clear and cultivate the land.¹⁹ With the introduction of private landownership came the parcelling out of land, similar to the “world of fields and fences” established in New England by European colonists.²⁰ Once a common good among the Amerindians, the Caribbean islands were parcelled out, favoring both the settling of colonists and the collective exploitation of the islands by a number of individuals who intensively cultivated their parcels of land until the soil was exhausted before then moving onto another plot. This focus upon parcels prevented a more complete vision of the effects of this intensive cultivation, seen in the deforestation of the plains and mountains of the colony of Santo Domingo.²¹

Colonial inhabitation’s second main feature was the establishment of the *plantation* as the primordial form of occupation: an ensemble comprising the cultivated field, the workshops and factory, the master’s house, and the shacks of the enslaved. Whether for cotton, indigo, tobacco, or sugar cane, the plantation was the main form of land occupation. While the principle remains the same, its most characteristic form in the French Caribbean from the second half of the seventeenth century was the sugar-cane plantation. As the parcels of land became larger and larger, land pressures increased more and more, occupying all of the plains of the islands. This

arrangement of plantations on the plains of the islands, laid out as early as the seventeenth century, is still visible today. In Martinique, one simply needs to take the road from Fort-de-France to Marin, or from Vauclin to Trinité on the east coast, to realize that all the plains – apart from the villages – are covered with cane fields or banana plantations. The hillsides, however, are home to various households. The privatization of the land and the introduction of plantations was not only a way of occupying these arable lands. The establishment of these plantations as a principle for inhabiting the islands also structured how the rest of the territory would be occupied. The location of ports, the creation of roads and railways, and the construction of parishes were conceived within the framework of this colonial inhabitation. The religious, political, and administrative organization of the territory was designed to turn these islands into lands of intensive monocultures, whose products would be exclusively exported to France.

Finally, the third fundamental feature of this colonial inhabiting was *the mass exploitation of human beings* via a hierarchical organization of production that featured a master and servants. Regardless of their origins or skin color, this exploitation of human beings was *a condition* of colonial inhabiting. We can see this intertwining of colonial inhabitation and human exploitation in the official vocabulary of French royal and colonial authorities, where the word “inhabitant” is confused with “master.” One example can be seen in the edict of the intendant of Martinique of January 7th, 1734, which “forbids the masters to have their coffee sold by their Negroes,” and where article 1 specifies that “the inhabitants who have their coffee transported by their slaves, outside of their residence [*habitation*], give them a note signed by them”²² *The inhabitant is the master, the master is the inhabitant.* The enslaved are the Negroes, those who do not inhabit.

As an inextricable condition of colonial inhabitation, the exploitation of human beings gave rise to various forms of colonial servitude and slavery. Here the epithet “colonial” is not a historical indicator but reflects the fact that this domination of human beings is carried out in order to continue colonial inhabitation. This was first the case with the enslavement of the Amerindians, which was particularly intense in the Spanish experience in Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica. In the French experience, this colonial slavery was, in the early days, marked by recourse to White indentured servants. These people were enlisted to work for thirty-six

months and received a salary that was paid at the end of this period. The domination of these people, whose social conditions did not allow them to pay for the crossing, had already begun upon their departure from the French ports. In addition to the promises of riches to be found on the islands, some were even “rounded up.”²³ Others, often prisoners in the jails of Nantes castle and the Bastille, were literally deported, including women.²⁴ In the Antilles, the working conditions of these “early fellers [*défricheurs*]” were harsh.²⁵ The inhabitant, on whose behalf the indentured servant was working, could “transfer” the rights he had over that servant to another inhabitant, giving rise to a trade.²⁶ The development of sugar plantations, as well as the slave trade in the second half of the seventeenth century, prefigured the end of French indentured servitude. For the masters, it was more “profitable” to invest in a lifelong labor force [*main-d’œuvre*], the enslaved, and so the treatment of indentured servants became all the more harsh as the masters wished to limit future competition.²⁷ The government tried unsuccessfully to preserve the use of indentured servants by requiring that ships departing from French ports have a certain number of indentured workers aboard.²⁸

This mass exploitation of human beings found its fullest expression in the establishment of the transatlantic slave trade and the enslavement of Black Africans in the Americas. Acknowledging without ambiguity the insertion of this history into a global history of humanity and the various kinds of servile relationships found there, it is important not to bury the specificities of these Caribbean enslavements to avoid offending certain political inclinations.²⁹ The main difference in comparison with other slave trades is not only down to its intensity over a few centuries, its transoceanic distances, or its dehumanizations. *The difference lies in its colonial character. Colonial inhabitation was the purpose of this slavery.* Finally, the exploitation of human beings continued after the abolition of slavery through various forms of forced labor, including indentured servitude. The political history of the former French colonies of the Caribbean is a history of the maintenance of colonial inhabitation and its plantations and the recourse to different workforces.³⁰

With its principles, its foundations, and its forms, colonial inhabitation joins together the political and ecological processes of European colonization. The enslavement of men and women, the exploitation of nature, the conquests of lands and indigenous peoples, on the one hand, and the deforestations, the exploitation

of mineral and soil resources, on the other, are not two different realities but are elements of the same colonial project. The European colonization of the Americas is just another name for the imposition of a singular, violent, and destructive way of inhabiting the Earth.

	Principles	Foundations	Forms
Relationships to the land	Geographical and ontological dependence	Land grabbing	Private ownership of the land
Relationships to non-humans	Exploitation of non-humans	Land clearing/deforestation	Plantations
Relationships to other humans	Othercide	Massacre of the Amerindians and domination of women	Servitude and enslavement

Characteristics of colonial inhabitation

Since 1492, this colonial inhabitation of the Earth has spread, on a global scale, its plantations and factories, its geographical and ontological dependencies between cities and countryside, between countries of the North and those of the South, as well as its misogynistic enslavements. Parallel to the standardization of the Earth into monocultures, this colonial inhabitation erases the other, the one who is different and who inhabits otherwise. *Colonial inhabitation creates an Earth without a world*, leaving open the question posed by the poet-singer Gil Scott-Heron in “Who’ll Pay Reparations on My Soul?”: “What about the Red man/Who met you at the coast?”³¹

2

The Matricides of the Plantationocene

Planter (1753)

On January 20th, 1753, the *Planter* left the port of Liverpool and set sail for the Guinea islands. The Caribbean islands have already been conquered. The Red skins cleared of woods, the felled forests, and flayed soils still think of the love of a Mother-Earth that has been torn away. All that is missing are the inputs. From March to October, the ship scours African trading posts in search of Negro manure. Out of the 368 sacks of fertilizer-bodies on board, 68 are vaguely remembered to have decayed in the putrefying belly of the ship, seeing their names diluted into the greying Atlantic. Arriving in Kingston on December 7th, 1753, the *Planter* sowed the 300 hollowed-out bodies into Jamaica's plantations. Through colonial alchemy, the villages of Guinea, the Amerindian deities, the trills of the woods, and dancing of the clay became brown sugar, cotton, tobacco, coffee, and indigo, brought back to Europe. The *Planter* made the Earth and the world into a Plantation.

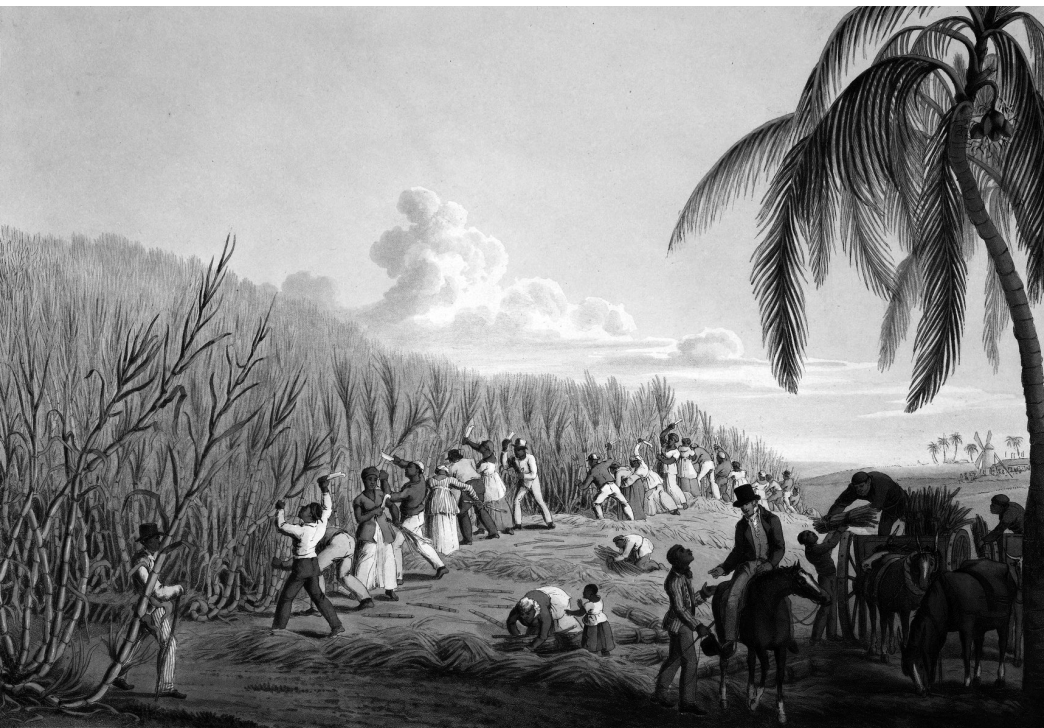


Figure 2 William Clark, "Cutting the Sugar Cane," in *Ten Views in the Island of Antigua* (London: Thomas Clay, 1823).

At the center of the colonial inhabitation of the Earth is found the *Plantation*. Already experimented with in Madeira in the fifteenth century, the Plantation has covered the plains and hills of the Caribbean islands with its gown of cotton, indigo, coffee, and sugar.¹ A violent, patriarchal, and misogynistic system, the forced transformation of the Caribbean islands translates into massive environmental destruction, a true “biological revolution” that overturned the pre-1492 ecosystems.² Simply listing, one after another, the different “environmental impacts” of the Plantation would hold us inside modernity’s double fracture. The destruction that has been caused would be taken as very “environmental” against a very “human” socio-political background. In order to heal this double fracture the *relations* formed by these destructions have to be identified, relations that bind together the humans (the colonists, the enslaved, and indigenous peoples) with non-humans. Colonial inhabitation is an ecological engineering of the Earth’s landscapes by plantations to create profits for European colonists, what Alfred Crosby calls *ecological imperialism*;³ a *socio-economic and political imperialism* that subjugates humans and non-humans to these plantations; and an *ontological imperialism*, meaning the imposition of a singular understanding of what the Earth is and what those who exist upon it are. Abandoning the environmentalism of the expression “environmental impacts,” I use the expression *matricides of the Plantation*. Beyond ecosystemic changes, colonial inhabitation also forced an end to the understanding of the Caribbean as mother-islands and mother-lands, which means the end of an image of the Earth that, as Carolyn Merchant describes, served as a “cultural constraint restricting the actions of human beings.”⁴ European colonization destroyed a set of matrical and caring bonds that had woven together the Caribbean islands before 1492.

The end of a nourishing earth: from *conucos* to plantations

One of the first matricides is found in the radical reversal in how the Caribbean islands are conceived, changing from an understanding of the lands as having their primary purpose in accommodating and feeding the people who are found there to one whose function is to enrich a few shareholders and owners. In his *Histoire naturelle et*

morale des îles Antilles de l'Amérique, Charles de Rochefort recounts that the Caribbean peoples were tied together with the Earth in a matrilineal relationship: "They say that the Earth is the good Mother who provides them with all the things they need to live."⁵ Indeed, the work of the geographer David Watts shows that the three main groups of Amerindians who populated the Caribbean before 1492, the Ciboneys, the Arawaks, and the Caribs, had a careful and efficient use of the land, subordinate mainly to a subsistence logic. The Ciboneys, whose traces are found in Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Trinidad, were a hunting people without agriculture. Their diet consisted mainly of seafood, some land animals, and many wild fruits. Centralized as early as 250 BC in the Greater Antilles, the Arawaks practiced an agriculture called *conuco*. On an area of land allotted to a family, tubers such as manioc root (from which "cassava" is prepared), sweet potato varieties, malangas, Jerusalem artichokes, and yams were cultivated together, taking advantage of the fertility of the soil while preventing its erosion. Finally, the people referred to as "Caribs," who settled in the Lesser Antilles around 250 AD, also practiced a *conuco* kind of agriculture, simply planting an additional tuber: the arrowroot. This agricultural system of *conuco* allowed for a well-thought-out working of the land, which allowed the Amerindians' needs to be met with little degradation, preserving various kinds of ecological equilibrium.⁶

Colonization marked a reversal of this logic, an overthrow of this Good Mother. From 1492 to 1624, it was a matter of extracting commodities that provided both those who went on these expeditions and the royal Crown the opportunity to enrich themselves. With this in mind, the Spanish established a policy of extraction through the search for and exploitation of gold mines in Hispaniola (the present-day island of the Dominican Republic and Haiti), Puerto Rico, and Jamaica. The depletion of gold resources led to the development of commercial agriculture and animal husbandry. From 1519 to the end of the century, the Spanish Caribbean, particularly Cuba and Hispaniola, developed an economy based on the sugar industry and the sale of cowhides. Extraction was replaced by intensive agriculture around the Plantation.

The presence of other European nations in the Caribbean during the sixteenth century (Holland, England, and France) was initially the work of freebooters. It was not until the seventeenth century that a permanent presence from these nations was established, first on the islands of Barbados and Saint-Christophe (now Saint Kitts).

From 1624 to 1645, the French and the English shared the island of Saint-Christophe, driving out the Caribs who lived there. Saint-Christophe and Barbados were also the first islands to be colonized with the plan to draw wealth from them not through extractivism but through the Plantation. From 1626 to 1639, tobacco, indigo, and cotton were cultivated. Virginia tobacco's strong competition led planters to switch to other crops. It was at this time that sugarcane cultivation and the sugar trade gained momentum, opening a second phase of intensive agriculture. Whether for cotton, tobacco, or the dominant sugar industry, the logic of land use remained the same: *intensive exploitation of the land as a resource serving the ends of commercial export and the financial enrichment of a few overseas shareholders and local colonists*. The mother-lands that nourished the Amerindians became lands to be exploited for the colonists.

The ecumenal rupture: a “land-without-*manman*”

The matricides of the Plantation are also seen in the destruction of the loving relationships through which the Amerindian peoples related to these islands and fashioned their landscapes. More than the loss of individuals, the genocide of the Amerindians also means the loss of cultural and agricultural practices and beliefs animated by concern for these mother-lands. Apart from the Amerindian groups that still exist in Dominica and Saint Vincent, and the traces that are found in the genes and practices of the Caribbean peoples of today, these stories and cosmogonies were silenced and drowned in a flood of blood.⁷ These reference systems that people used to understand their experiences and how they related to the land were extinguished. The disappearance of these peoples led to a rupture in what the geographer Augustin Berque calls “the ecumene,” meaning a rupture in the geographical and ontological relationship of humanity to the Earth's surface, making the Earth a human Earth and humanity an earthly humanity:⁸ an *ecumenal rupture*.

If all was not lost, and if practices such as sweet potato and cassava cultivation persisted, the protective understanding of the land and nature still disappeared. These principles and practices were part of a cosmogony that held the living environment to be sacred, composed of its many spirits and non-humans. Colonial inhabitation resulted

in the disappearance of this particular sacralization of the land, one which commands concern for the land. That is why Édouard Glissant claims the sacred was uprooted.⁹ It is in this sense that the massacres of the Amerindians were also a matricide. The colonized land is no longer a Mother-Earth: it has become a *land-without-manman*, a *motherless land*.¹⁰ A land whose referential belief system made it into a womb, a matrix, that is no more. Conversely, the other side of this colonial matricide is infanticide. This is not simply a matter of the murders or deaths of those who considered themselves children of this land, who was their mother. Above all, this is about the erasure of the idea that the inhabitants of these lands are the children of these lands. These lands are not the mothers of any of these inhabitants, and the inhabitants are not the children of any of these lands. On the other side of the Atlantic, the slave trade also constituted an ecumenal rupture for the African captives who were violently separated from the familiar world of African lands. The African Mother-Earth disappears behind the horizon, while colonial slavery prevents the enslaved from turning the American land they encounter into a new Mother-Earth.

Contrary to Glissant's claim, this ecumenal rupture was not the end of the sacred in the lands of the Americas. If the Caribbean sacred was "uprooted," these lands were made sacred again by the Europeans of the Catholic, apostolic, Roman religion. As soon as they arrived in the Caribbean islands, the Europeans hastened to cover them with a new consecration, carried out through the ceremonies of land grabbing, the action of planting the cross, and various hymns. The patriarchal dimension of colonial inhabitation is explicit in this colonial sacredness, as demonstrated by the first verses of the *Te Deum* sung by de L'Olive and his companions upon their arrival in Martinique in 1635:

Te Deum laudamus [we praise You, God],
Te Dominum confitemur [we acclaim You, God],
Te aeternum Patrem [You are the eternal Father],
Omnis terra veneratur [All the Earth worships You].

Colonization meant the transition of a land that revered a mother to a land that revered a father. This sacralization was the first function of the Fathers and the various religious members who accompanied this French colonial enterprise. The Christian sacralization of these lands came not from a need to preserve them but,

on the contrary, to ensure their ownership and to allow for their colonial exploitation. From the pope to the reverends and missionaries, the religious authorities gave their blessing to this colonial inhabitation. Prayer was inserted into the daily rhythm of work on slave-making plantations in the eighteenth century, as described by Father Labat.¹¹ It was not only the evangelization of the Caribbean peoples that was presented as the will of God, but colonial inhabitation as well. It was a *Christian colonial inhabitation*. As described by the historian of Haiti André-Marcel d'Ans, the landscape was "dis-indigenized."¹² After the genocide of the Amerindians, everyone who arrived in the Caribbean knows that there is a Mother-Earth somewhere else, be it in Europe, Africa, India, or China. But these lands were reduced to being only lands, only resources. They became *lands-without-manman*, motherless lands.

Ruptures in the landscape, biodiversity, and metabolic exchange

The matricides have caused, at the material level, at least three kinds of important rupture in the equilibrium of the ecosystems of the Caribbean islands: ruptures in the landscape, in the composition of biodiversity, and in the metabolic exchange. Ruptures in the landscape are mainly the result of deforestation, being the condition for the Plantation's existence. Although cultivated by the Amerindian peoples before 1492, the islands were covered by forests. While the first tobacco, coffee, and cotton plantations had already led to land clearing, the development of the sugar industry in the second half of the seventeenth century increased the intensity of land clearing in an unprecedented way. The forests of Barbados and Cuba were almost completely cut down.¹³ The French colonies were not unscathed. In his *Voyage à la Martinique*, covering the years 1751 to 1756, a century after French colonization, Thibault de Chanvalon notes the extent of deforestation:

We realize today with regret that we hastened to discover the island from all sides, and to cut down the woods. ... these virgin lands, which had never been cleared, because not as much was needed for an entire Carib people to live on as for only one of us, ... we had planted coffee in these lands everywhere, without examining their situation, which was necessary; the greed for profit, meanwhile,

meant that many people planted much more than they could maintain.¹⁴

“The greed for profit” caused an unprecedented deforestation in the Caribbean, destroying the habitats of animal and plant species and resulting in the extinction of some. Deforestation also affected the soils, which became more compacted because of the increase in the area exposed to rain. As the soil is no longer held back by the roots of the trees, they erode more easily, taking with them, according to Chanvalon, “a kind of manure accumulated over so many centuries, and that is for good reason called the cream of the earth here.”¹⁵ Losing this “cream of the earth” was a direct consequence of the general deforestation of the French islands.

The ensuing plantations caused *ruptures in biodiversity*, meaning ruptures in the biological equilibrium of the ecosystems comprising their groups of animal and plant species whose respective predations ensure an overall maintenance of their numbers. In addition to this logic of intensive exploitation, the Plantation also means a homogenization of crops and consequently of the biological components of the land. The rupture happens when the forest, encompassing its various species, is replaced by the dominance of a particular plant species, such as sugar cane. The resulting high prevalence of food for certain kinds of insects then disturbs the number of species present on a plot of land. On the scale of an island, the implementation of the sugar plantation leads to biological equilibrium (where a diversity of plant and animal species are distributed according to biotopes and geographical areas) being replaced by a gridded layout of three or four plants. This homogenization of ecosystems creates the rupture in biodiversity.

Finally, the Plantation also altered the metabolic exchanges between various non-human elements and colonial society, causing a *metabolic rift* as well. The concept of a metabolic rift was brought to light by the German chemist Justus von Liebig and was taken up by Karl Marx in his critique of the British agricultural industry.¹⁶ Marx points to the disruption caused by the British agricultural industry in the metabolic exchange between society and nature. By exporting nutrients from the countryside to the cities without any recirculation being assured, the industry strips the soil of the countryside and diminishes its fertility, resulting in, Marx says, “an irreparable rift in ... [the] metabolism prescribed by the natural laws of life.”¹⁷ As early as the sixteenth century, one of the main

features of colonization was the exploitation of these lands without any form of recovery for their extracted nutrients. From the middle of the sixteenth century to the seventeenth, the cultivation of cane was carried out without manure. As this sweet grass was cut close to the ground, all the nutrients extracted from the soil were transformed and sent to Europe in the form of sugar without ensuring the redistribution that would guarantee the fertility of the soil. These “unequal ecological exchanges”¹⁸ have allowed empires and colonizing nations to externalize their environmental burdens outside of their continental territories, transforming their peripheries into plantations, into material and human extensions designed to satisfy the desires of the center. This is the colonial metabolic rift that impoverishes Caribbean soil for the benefit of European palaces.

Colonial inhabitation established the principle that the function of these islands is to satisfy the desires of a handful of men. This understanding is still at work in several Caribbean islands today, including Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Puerto Rico. Despite the availability of large areas of fertile and arable land, the same agricultural plantation economy devotes most of these lands to the export of monocultures, without providing for the food needs of the inhabitants of the islands. They remain dependent to a very large extent on imports. From the cultivation of sugar cane to bananas, from oil industries to carefree tourist industries to “tax havens,” the same understanding of these islands as material to be exploited runs across the Caribbean. The Plantation in the Caribbean consecrated the following principles: “You shall not feed upon your island” and “Your island shall not feed you.”

The matricides that are visible in the Caribbean are the other side of a global engineering of the Earth’s landscapes into plantations. This colonial inhabitation was reinforced by the large-scale immigration of Europeans between 1820 and 1930 to former colonies in temperate zones with a climate similar to Europe, such as Australia, Brazil, or the United States, which Crosby calls “Neo-Europes,”¹⁹ reproducing the same agricultural and livestock products *and* the same names for cities, regions, and even countries in Europe, such as “New South Wales”, “New England”, or “New Zealand.” We must understand in this ecosystemic sense Fanon’s reference to colonists as “a species” that replaces the indigenous inhabitant and renders the biological, cultural, and linguistic environment in the colonist’s image.²⁰ The pretence of novelty that

kills the present inhabitants while reproducing the frameworks of the old lands is an integral part of European colonization. *The matricide of the plantations is also the erasure from the world of the names of Mother-Earth.* What follows is the willingness of the descendants of colonists today – whether they are in the minority as in Martinique and South Africa or in the majority as in the United States and Australia – to proclaim themselves the true owners of these lands, of the Earth. However, traces remain: Amerindian names such as “Madinina” (Martinique), “Karukera” (Guadeloupe), and “Ayiti” (Haiti/Santo Domingo), which remind us that these islands were once mothers.

From colonial inhabitation to the Plantationocene

The words and other means used to describe the destruction of the Earth's ecosystems are not politically neutral. These descriptions also contain normative elements that influence what responses are possible.²¹ By making Man – *anthropos* – its subject, the Anthropocene suggests in turn that it is this same apolitical “Man” who should respond to it, covering up the violent processes of one fraction's domination over ever larger groups of humans and non-humans. Other terms have been proposed, such as “Capitalocene,” “Phagocene,” or “Anglocene.”²² The term “Capitalocene” has the advantage of reconnecting the developments of capitalism and the British industrial revolutions with the material transformations of the Earth's landscapes and of opening onto potential critiques of capitalism.²³ Nevertheless, the term “Plantationocene,” proposed by Anna Tsing and Donna Haraway, is the best placed to translate the development of the colonial inhabitation of the Earth, revealing five fundamental dimensions.²⁴

At the material and economic level, instead of some abstract capital, the Plantationocene refers to the global reproduction of a plantation economy in several forms. It recognizes that plantations are assemblages of humans and non-humans (agricultural in the sense of vegetable plants or in the sense of the English word *plants*, meaning factories) as the places, the mechanisms, and the organizations of production, the centers of the scene and of the times (*cene*). It reveals unequal ecological and metabolic exchange, non-renewable uses of energy and materials. *At the*

historical level, the Plantationocene re-establishes a historicity of global environmental changes that does not erase the colonial and slave-making foundations of globalization. The proposal by the geographers Mark Maslin and Simon Lewis that the beginning of the Anthropocene be dated to the European conquest of America, which left geological traces, moves in this direction.²⁵ The genocides of the Amerindians, the enslavement of Africans, and their resistance are then understood within the geological history of the Earth and of time.²⁶ *At the geographical level*, the Plantationocene allows for an understanding of the relationships and dependencies driving the global changes based upon plantation logic. The Plantation is not limited to the boundaries of landownership or the factory. It refers to spatial global injustices, power relations, and dependencies between locations in different parts of the Earth. The violence of the Plantation is usually confined to some faraway place over there, while the finished products are consumed in some peaceful place here.

At the political level, more than the extension of a plantation economy, the Plantationocene refers to the global imposition of a plantation *politics*. More than commercial exchanges, the Plantationocene refers to the era when the pursuit of plantations dictates the orientations of public institutions, universities, state services, and even the tastes of consumers, as Sidney Mintz has shown, meaning it ordered how people live together and inhabit the Earth.²⁷ The result is an aesthetics of repetition, a uniformity of what is planted, of ways of consuming, of dressing, and of thinking about the world.²⁸ Whether on agricultural plantations or in factories, the Plantationocene sheds light upon the human violence that is found in places of production, upon racial and misogynistic hierarchies, upon inequalities, upon forms of slavery and worker misery, and upon health risks posed by machines and toxic chemicals, thereby exposing the political production of the Negroes of the world: beings whose exploitation and social misery are combined with exclusion from the world. This plurality, in turn, makes it possible to inscribe feminist struggles and resistance against slave-making plantations and factories as fundamental geological features of our era, even if these traces may not be measurable by some instruments.

At the cosmopolitical level, if the Anthropocene attempts to define this era as one where landscapes and non-humans are profoundly disturbed in comparison to the previous era, then it is

contradictory to use a term that obscures the presence of these same non-human elements. By taking the organization of these exchanges between humans and non-humans as its main discursive scene, the Plantationocene exposes the singular relationships that a minority on the Earth use to impose one type of worldly arrangement with non-humans: one of compulsive and standardized exploitation. It highlights the disturbances of biodiversity and ecological degradation caused by the plantations.

In their forms, in their techniques, in their “means” of production as well as in their products, the Earth’s plantations today are no longer those of the seventeenth century. Beyond agriculture, plantations also take the form of industries that extract the rare minerals that are found in computers and mobile phones and of the terrestrial and marine “plantations” of oil wells. Whole segments of humans and non-humans are enslaved in order to continue this colonial inhabitation. The Plantationocene also signals therefore the globalization of the Earth’s colonial inhabitation *and* this subordination of the world to the Plantation: the global production of an Earth-without-*manman* and humans without a Mother-Earth.

3

The Hold and the Negrocene

Nègre (1790–1)

On November 9th, 1790, the *Nègre*, a 395-ton French ship, departed from the port of Nantes for the Gulf of Guinea, leaving the political turmoil at dock. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen would not withstand the humid and salty winds of the Atlantic. In the vicinity of Bonny in southern Nigeria, 263 voices are locked in the hold of the French Revolution. On June 16th, 1791, after a 41-day crossing, the *Nègre* reached the town of Cap-Français, today Cap-Haïtien of Haiti, to supply the colonial industry. Of the men, women, and children who had been loaded on board only an indistinct and combustible material was unloaded: the Negro, the ebony wood. Yet, a few weeks later, in August 1791, this talking material rose up as a fist of revolt, and the plantations of the Le Cap burned with the desire for freedom.

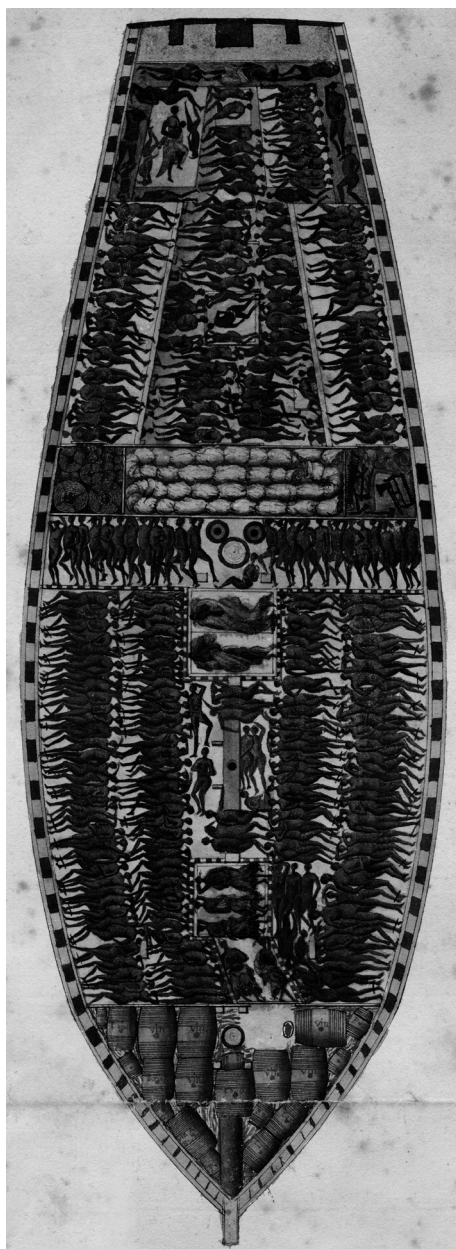


Figure 3 Detail from René Lhermitte, *Plan, Profile and Layout of the Ship Marie Séraphique of Nantes*, c. 1770.

The colonial enslavement of Black people and the transatlantic slave trade together constitute one of the most intense forms of slavery in the European colonization of the Americas. For nearly four centuries, millions of people were uprooted from their lands in Africa, and many more were forced to work on rural plantations and serve in the various workshops of the cities. Today, while Black colonial enslavement is recognized as a crime against *humanity*, how it is understood remains trapped in modernity's double fracture. With good reason, academic research, literature and visual art, heritage discourses, and museum practices have focused primarily on slavery's political oppression, its social conditions, and its intimate, economic, and legal dimensions, as well as on the multiple strategies of resistance against it. However, this primary interest has perhaps given the impression that slavery was a concern only for the fates of human beings. Environmental changes might be important consequences but would be independent of slavery *per se*. Conversely, for those interested in the environment, the colonial enslavement of Black people would be one element among others in terms of the ecological transformation of the plantation system. Yet these two aspects are intrinsically linked and participate in the same colonial inhabitation. In order to heal this fracture, I am going to reposition the enslavement of Black people both as a violent way of being in relation to other human beings through a *hold politics* and as a destructive way of inhabiting the Earth and of being in relation to non-humans that constitutes the *Negrocene*.

Hold politics

[When I was carried on board] I was immediately handled and tossed up to see if I were sound by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me. ... I was not long suffered to indulge my grief; *I was soon put down under the decks*, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across I think the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely.¹

From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, at least 12.5 million Africans were loaded onto slave ships, stowed in the hold and steerage, sent from Africa to the Americas, and likely to live out this scene as told by the formerly enslaved Olaudah Equiano in his autobiography. The spaces of the hold and the steerage deck – central to the historical experiences of those who were carried away and to their descendants, to the memories and imaginations of slaveholding societies – also represent foundational political arrangements of the modern world. For several centuries, it was accepted and considered appropriate to be in relationship with the other, or, more precisely, to *handle [traiter] human beings by placing them in the hold*. As Equiano describes it, the slave ship's hold immediately calls forth an infernal space filled with violence and agony. Whipping, rape, malnutrition, torture, and ill treatment on a daily basis, combined with a morbid and stifling overcrowding, resulted in deaths at every crossing. Between 1514 and 1866, nearly 2 million people expired in this hold of the modern world. More than a mere violent technical arrangement of navigation that saw bodies-in-chains enclosed therein, this hold also symbolizes *a relationship to the world and a way of relating to the other*. Placing others in the hold is not circumstantial. This is certainly not the only way in which these men, these women, and these children could travel together on the same ship. On the contrary, placing others in the hold is the gesture that inaugurates the slave-making relationship to these Black men, these Black women, and these Black children. This slave-making relationship does not fade away with debarkation, the physical exit from the slave ship's hold, even though its forms are different. The captives of the slave trade and those enslaved on the plantations find themselves bound in the same hold of the world.

The refusal of the world

Placing others in the hold establishes a set of relationships between humans – between European colonists and African captives, between male masters and enslaved men, between female masters and enslaved women – that constitutes *the politics of the hold*. Through this set of political and social arrangements that enslave and circumscribe the existence of human beings, the primary aim of hold politics is to keep certain human beings offside of the world. The

colonial enslaved person is not solely someone who is mistreated, someone who is legally the possession of another human being, and someone who does not receive a wage for his work. The colonial enslaved person is also kept in an alien relationship to the world. Hold politics represents this line that is drawn between human beings and denies some the same qualities as others, that excludes some from the dignity of an existence where a scene, an Earth, a world are shared. So the enslaved Black African transshipped to the Americas is not even that “other” suggested by the historian Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau.² The first meeting of the European slave trader with the African captive who will be reduced to slavery took place without a discourse directed towards him or her, without a dialogue – which is to say, without first considering that there is an other whose face demands the recognition of something irreducible.³

The other of the European slave-trading captain on the West African coast was the merchant, this non-captive African, not a future “slave” in the Americas – at least not at that time – with whom the sale of human beings was negotiated. We are in a different relationship from the encounter of the Europeans with the Amerindians. The otherness of the Amerindians is admitted without any ambiguity, even when they were to be reduced to the European same. The enslaved Black person is denied that quality of being a human other. *The enslaved is not the other, they are “the off of” [hors de].* Recognition of the French colonial enslaved Black person’s presence is conditional upon keeping them *off of* a common scene, *off of* an Earth and a common world. Enslaved Black people were those to whom *the world is refused*.

The refusal of the world is not some short and succinct action that heralds the end of a relationship and subsequent separation where, as separated, everyone will then live in their own corner of the Earth. On the contrary, this colonial enslavement of Black people in the Americas consisted of a *refusal of the world as a mode of relation*. Equiano was not simply thrown below deck; he was kept alive and in a relationship with the crew *from inside the hold*. He experienced the double violence of the slave trade that locked him in the hold *and* of slave biopolitics that forced him to live a certain way. This means a way of relating to the other where an intense closeness is created – the other is the closest, within the intimacy of the home, on the ship or on the plantation – without that other being recognized as other. Less loud than the crack of the whip, the colonial enslaved person’s off-world situation is revealed

by a set of ruptures imposed by the politics of the hold within their relationships to ancestral and community affiliations, relationships to the land, and relationships to nature and other political arenas, as seen in the French experience of the colonization of the Caribbean.

Destruction of community ties and affiliations

The first rupture is with the familiar world of the lands of Africa. People are forcibly removed from their communities, their villages, their familiar lands and skies, in order to be transported to the Americas. This *first rupture* is multiple. The slave trade's abductions first of all meant rupture with the collective communities of sociability, political organizations, cultural and cultivation practices, of family ties and rituals associated with certain plants, certain trees, graveyards and other places throughout these African lands. The transatlantic slave trade also brought about an ecumenal rupture, the rupture of the relationship between individuals and communities to their lands, to places, to the location of their village, but equally to a rich body of non-humans. Diets, relationships to animals, to plants, to waterways, to cultivated lands, to trees, to stars, and to spirits, all of these were interrupted.

Finally, the physical and psychological violence was accompanied by a rupture in the relationship with the body. The captive individual, chained, encased in holds and steerage decks, can no longer have the same relationship with their own body. This dispossession of the body caused by captivity, these ruptures of communities, and the ruptures of the ecumenes led to the loss of the arts and artistic practices. It is songs, prayers, and incantations that disappear because the collective moments, scenes, and places where they took place are no longer there. Artistic addresses, outfits, talents, and aptitudes are lost. Singers no longer sing; dancers no longer dance. Carpenters, musicians, painters, sorcerers, physicians, weavers, merchants, and hunters can no longer practice their arts. It might be argued that amongst these captives were some who had already been reduced to a state of slavery in Africa. However, in addition to the fact that this type of slavery was practiced on known soil, it involved regimes of affiliation and a few "protective" points of reference. Equiano, one of the few Africans reduced to slavery in Africa *and* in the Americas, who was able to write an autobiography after he gained his freedom, stated that he "preferred" his situation

as an African slave in the face of the horror inspired by the slave ship.⁴ Hold politics produces people whose ancestral and community affiliations are fragmented or even torn apart. However, these ruptures do not mean that *all* was lost. Modified or reinvented beliefs, knowledge, arts, and agricultural practices persisted in the Black Americas.⁵ The introduction of African rice, which according to the legends of the Maroons was secretly carried in the hair of a Black woman, the rites of Brazilian Candomblé, Haitian Voodoo, or Cuban Santería, or the martial arts of Danmyé in Martinique or Capoeira in Brazil, all of them attest to the survival of African cultures and offer spaces of resistance.⁶

Loss of body, loss of Earth

Hold politics establishes an uprootedness, a rupture in the relationship of the enslaved to the land. This may seem strange. After all, the “field slave” is the one who works the land and knows its rhythms. Being as close as possible to it, far from a rupture, there would be on the contrary a great closeness. However, this rupture in the relationship to the land is located in the paradox of a closeness that exists without the possibility of assuming political responsibility. This rupture concerns first of all the relationship to private property. Legally, the enslaved is not master of their person, or of their body. They do not own themselves. The enslaved person belongs *to*, as stated in Article 44 of the 1685 *Code Noir* [Black Code], declaring the enslaved person to be a being of movable property.⁷ This legal non-possession of oneself and one’s offspring results in the loss of one’s own body. Since the enslaved do not legally own themselves, as stipulated in Article 28, they cannot be landowners: “We declare that slaves cannot have anything that does not belong to their masters ...”⁸

The impossibility of taking part in decisions related to the aims of land use, as well as in decisions regarding the crops and food cultivated on that land, also makes evident the rupture of the relationship to the land. The enslaved have no share in colonial inhabitation. Excluding the enslaved from political economy made it *impossible for the enslaved to take any political responsibility for the use of the lands they inhabited*. They find themselves enslaved to a rhythm and intensity of work, to a set of tasks, and to a social hierarchy that all structure their existence and the world they live in,

including their relationships to other enslaved people, their family relations, the places they inhabit, their possibilities of movement and speech, without being able to take part in the organization of these structures. This does not mean that the enslaved are irresponsible, as if it were a question of some character trait or a psychological disposition of some kind. This means that the enslaved are kept offside of responsibility, as regards both the land and the colonial world. *Hold politics produces off-ground individuals.*

This “non-control” over daily life and alienation from the world was not absolute. This is due to two different movements. First, through their actions, the enslaved exert a measure of influence over the colonial project and create spaces of control. Enslavement was always met with various forms of resistance. Feigned sickness, poisoning beasts of burden and other enslaved people, marooning, sabotage of workshops, and theft symbolized the ways that the enslaved slowed down and impeded the colonial project, exercising limited control over it. How the inside of their shack was organized, the food grown in the Creole gardens, the prepared dishes, the dances, the intimacy and complicity that could be formed with other enslaved people, the songs, laughter, prayers, and other spiritual practices, all constituted *spaces of one’s own within a world organized and governed by the other.*

The limits of this condition of non-responsibility also emerge from the limitation of colonial powers. Faced with the obligation to “feed” those they had enslaved, the masters chose to allocate plots of land so that the enslaved could grow their own food. In being allowed to cultivate these areas for themselves, the enslaved assumed their first and only political responsibility in relation to the land of the colonies. As the anthropologist and ethnobotanist Catherine Benoît explains, “This garden represented the first form of appropriation and construction of territory for the enslaved.”⁹ These experiences of freedom were important and generated a space of agricultural creativity of their own, a space to oneself for a time. However, the responsibility assumed by the enslaved has a secondary character. This responsibility does not call into question the structural organization of the colonial world. It is fragmented and subordinate to the overall non-responsibility regarding land management and the economy of the island. In other words, *it was only upon the condition of the enslaved person’s generalized denial of responsibility with regard to the lands of an island as a whole that any partial responsibility was de facto conceded.* This is the political

reality of the Creole garden. The enslaved know this land better than anyone else; it is the companion of their servile condition, and yet they remain a stranger to the land.

Off-*polis*: the engineering of a non-political being

By explicitly forbidding the participation of slaves in the legal, administrative, and political decision-making bodies of the colonies, hold politics produces off-city (off-*polis*) beings, as made explicit in Article 30 of the Code Noir:

Art. 30. Slaves will not be able to take part in offices or commissions of the public service, neither to be named agent by anybody except their master to manage or administrate any trade, nor to become referees, experts or witnesses in civil or criminal trials. If they are called to testify, their evidence will only be used as a statement of case to help judges to clarify the case, and it will not be used for a presumption, a conjecture, or an evidence.¹⁰

The second part of this article highlights another dimension of this exclusion, linked to the speech of the enslaved. They can be heard, “called to testify,” meaning they can emit phonemes, sounds, but this arrangement in a legal proceeding should not give rise to equal consideration. The enslaved person is placed off-stage [*hors-scène*], off-*logos*, and is not recognized as a political subject, offside of the human condition of the *zoon politikon*. Carrying out any activity that could be political was forbidden, as stated in Article 16, which prohibited the gathering of slaves.¹¹ The only actions approaching political matters in which the enslaved can take part and be considered agents of the world are acts of war. In the French colonies and everywhere else in the Americas, the enslaved were conscripted into armies to fight against foreigners and even against other enslaved people. The only “political” language fashioned for the enslaved is that of war and combat – in short, command and violence.

The enslaved did not allow themselves to be confined to “movable property.” “The assimilation of a human being to an object, or even to an animal [non-human] animal,” Claude Meillassoux reminds us, “is an untenable and contradictory fiction.”¹² They created spaces within the system of oppression, retaining capacity as actors, an *agency* capable of negotiating margins and concessions. Some

even managed to lodge complaints and be heard.¹³ However, these weapons of the weak did not constitute a frontal challenge to their off-world placement.¹⁴ *Violence* was indeed the condition *sine qua non* that both brought hold politics to heel and recognized the enslaved as agents of the world. The colonial authorities did not consider the enslaved to be political subjects until they were humiliated in war or as a matter of fact. This was the case for many Maroon communities from Brazil to Jamaica to Suriname, all of whom, having thwarted the colonial military apparatus, signed treaties as contracting parties. Similarly, it was only after Bonaparte's multiple humiliations by Toussaint Louverture, Dessalines, and their companions that a political arrangement with the other was possible. The political subjectivation of the enslaved, through which he or she is precisely no longer a slave, is not violence in itself, although it does have a political significance. One of the strengths of Jacques Rancière's work is that it shows that equality in war does not necessarily lead to political equality or to the constitution of a political community.¹⁵ In the Americas, this equality in war and the humiliation of the colonial powers was the precondition for the recognition of an other and the possibility of a composition of the world with the other. There is no possibility for civil disobedience here. Rising up out of the hold is not mere talk. *It is necessarily a violent outburst that, alone, makes speech, the scene, and the world possible, but not certain.* In summary, hold politics is the engineering of beings detached from their ancestral affiliations, the land that they cultivate, the nature of which they walk alongside, and the world through which they travel: *Negroes*. This is one of the fundamental dispositions of the experience of the enslaved in the Americas: strangeness to the world and to the Earth as a foundational condition for a despised social existence.

The specificity of the condition of enslaved Negresses

This strangeness to the world is compounded by the sexual domination of enslaved women. In the French Antilles, women work, like the men, in the fields and in the factories/workshops in conditions that are dangerous, with poor nutrition and poor access to adequate health care. In the seventeenth century, fewer enslaved women than enslaved men meant that a greater proportion

of enslaved women worked in the fields, while the rest took on other tasks such as washing, sewing, and housekeeping. Working in the kitchen as well, they were more often accused by masters of committing poisonings than enslaved men were. The colonial fracture overruled any gender alliances: enslaved women were no better treated by female planter mistresses, who were often complicit in their torture. Moreover, the enslaved Negresses symbolize the joint exploitation of the land and their wombs. The baby born to the enslaved mother was the property of the master. Enslaved women were therefore exploited both for their productive function and for their reproductive function in order to compensate for the numerical imbalance between enslaved men and women in the plantations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁶ As Christina Sharpe notes, the Plantation transforms Black wombs into slave holds.¹⁷ Finally, they were sexually abused by male masters, but also sometimes by enslaved men.¹⁸ This domination of women, the linchpin [*chevilles ouvrières*] of colonial inhabitation, was at work throughout the whole of the Americas.¹⁹

The Negrocene

But I also know a silence
 A silence of twenty-five thousand negro corpses
 Twenty-five thousand railroad ties of Ebony Wood²⁰
 Jacques Roumain, *Bois-d'ébène*, trans. Joanne Fungaroli and
 Ronald Sauer

Non nou sé bwa brilé (Our name is “burnt wood” [*bois brûlé*])
 Eugène Mona, “Bwa brilé”

In addition to its socio-political dimensions, colonial slavery denotes a way of inhabiting the Earth, of using its resources, and of relating to non-humans. I call this the *Negrocene*. The Negrocene names the era when the productive work of the Negro, directed at expanding colonial inhabitation, played a fundamental role in the Earth's ecological and environmental changes.²¹ The material and energetic dimension of colonial slavery can already be seen in the colonial vocabulary used to refer to the so-called cargo of the slave ships. As Jacques Roumain's poem *Bois d'ébène* testifies, the Africans who were captured, sold, transported, and enslaved were commonly

referred to as “Negroes” or “ebony wood” so that the expressions “transatlantic slave [*négrière*] trade” and “ebony wood trade” are interchangeable. Just as slave ships were named *Nègre* and *Négresse*, so were others named *Ébène* and *Ébano*.

What is evoked first of all by this naming is a similarity between the color of the captive African’s skin and the color of the inside of trees belonging to the Ebenaceae family, which have a very hard interior wood, with a color that is close to black. Nevertheless, something else lies beneath this name. The Black Africans are not compared to trees that are alive in a forest and radiant in their branches, but to *wood*, to the *matter* that is extracted from the living being and will be used to supply the Plantation’s workshops and houses. Just as the forests of the Americas were cut down and then burned beneath cauldrons of cane juice, the ebony wood of Africa was carried away to sustain colonial inhabitation, making the transatlantic slave trade a human deforestation of Africa. The designation of Black Africans as “ebony wood” discursively transforms these human lives into an energy “resource.” The transatlantic slave trade and the politics of natality creates the fantasy that they are a renewable resource.²² According to the words of the Martinican singer Eugène Mona, the Negro is a *bwa brilé*, a piece of wood literally consumed in the mechanical fire of the Plantation.

Just as with oil, gas, coal, and wood, modernity has also manufactured a Negro energy. As Andrew Nikiforuk notes, from ancient Greece and the Roman Empire to the transatlantic slave trade, slaves constituted a fundamental energy source, equivalent to contemporary fossil fuels.²³ The lifestyle of a minority of the planet rested on what Fanon denounced as the exploitation of “substance” from empty bellies, from the domination of the “enslaved of this world, toiling in the oil wells of the Middle East, the mines of Peru and the Congo, and the United Fruit or Firestone plantations.”²⁴ As the island of Trinidad moves from chattel slavery to oil, fossil fuels would be, in a way, the new slave energy extracted by the “labor” of the machines that power the world’s economies.²⁵ More than a “human parasitism” of the planter-master upon the enslaved-host, the Negrocene describes *an unjust way of inhabiting the Earth* where a minority feeds upon the vital energy of a majority that is socially discriminated against and politically dominated.²⁶ As the other side of the Plantationocene, the Negrocene signals the geological era where the extension of colonial inhabitation and the

destruction of the environment is accompanied by the material, social, and political production of Negroes.

The Negrocene is not the same as the “racial Capitalocene” that Françoise Vergès has suggested,²⁷ a concept that would take into account the exploitation of the racialized labor force alongside environmental destruction. The Negrocene is not a racialized Capitalocene for the simple reason that the word “Negro,” as I use it, is not a synonym of “Black” or “race.” Here I am following Eric Williams’s non-racializing approach to slavery, rendering racism the result and not the cause of the economic and energy exploitation of a group of human beings who contributed to the development of British capitalism.²⁸ The essentialism anchored in the use of the word “Negro” has led to the erroneous belief that this social and political condition was inherent in the skin of Black people and concerns only human beings. Here the word “Negro” no longer designates a skin color, a phenotype; it does not even refer to an ethnic origin or specific geography. It refers to all those who were and are in the hold of the modern world: the off-world. Those whose social survival is marked by an exclusion from the world and who are reduced to their “value” as energy. The Negro is White, the Negro is Red, the Negro is Yellow, the Negro is Brown, the Negro is Black. The Negro is young, the Negro is old, the Negro is a woman, the Negro is a man. The Negro is poor, the Negro is a worker, the Negro is a prisoner. The Negro is brown-forest, the Negro is green-plant, the Negro is blue-ocean, the Negro is red-earth, the Negro is gray-whale, the Negro is black-fossil. Negroes are the many (human and non-human) off-worlders whose vital energy is forcibly dedicated to fuel the lifestyles and ways of inhabiting the Earth of a minority while being denied an existence of their own in the world.

Capitalism globalized colonial inhabitation with the help of increasingly sophisticated technical devices such as drilling. They thrust down into the soil to retrieve the fossil energy that makes this violent form of inhabiting the Earth possible. In the same way, this economy thrusts its drilling hands into the world’s hold to satisfy the desires of a fraction of those who are on the Earth. The Negro slave well in the Gulf of Guinea from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century is today the oil well supplying Europe and the United States, which is once again enslaving local communities such as the Ogoni people of Nigeria, defended to the death by Ken Saro-Wiwa.²⁹ The result is a modernity that has made the Earth a Negro, as Alice Walker notes: “Some of us have become used to thinking that

woman is the nigger of the world, that a person of color is the nigger of the world, that a poor person is the nigger of the world. But, in truth, Earth itself has become the nigger of the world.”³⁰

Indispensable cogs of the ecosystemic and geological transformation of the planet, enslaved Negroes inhabit the Earth in different ways from those of the masters, sealing the inequalities that exist between those who inhabit *habitations* and those who reside in *shacks*. The master’s habitation is meant to last. It embodies the trace of the slave-making world and more singularly the trace of the colonist’s place. This trace of colonial inhabitation is long-lasting. Today these “habitations” are being transformed into museums throughout the Americas. Conversely, the enslaved person’s shack, as Du Tertre described it, has a temporary nature.³¹ The enslaved do not inhabit; their habitat is not meant to last or leave a trace. In the Negrocene, the difference between the habitation and the shack is repeated. On the one side, habitations of castles, palaces, buildings, complexes, and solidly built factories. On the other, there are ghetto shacks, public housing slums, and shantytown shacks from Nairobi to Rio de Janeiro, via Soweto and New Delhi, as well as the shacks of stables, factory farms, and battery farms. Off-ground, Negroes do not inhabit. The capitalist economy finds its geographical translation in the daily material and energetic procession of all of the Earth’s Negroes, going from their shacks to the masters’ habitations. As Joseph Zobel describes it in his novel *Black Shack Alley* in Martinique, David Goldblatt in his photographs of the people transported from KwaNdebele in South Africa, and Hugh Masekela in his song “Stimela,” Negroes flow towards the mills of colonial habitation.³²

Yet, as the poet Serge Restog reminds us, “Nèg-là pa ka mò kanmenm” (despite everything, the Negro does not die).³³ The Negroes of yesterday and today have found ways to resist and leave their traces in the world. The Negrocene is also the era of these silent and subterranean forms of resistance that sometimes rumble into volcanic eruptions. In contrast to the Anthropocene, which is interested only in the habitations of the masters and their factories and mills, writing about the Negrocene also involves unearthing the traces of those to whom the world was denied. The importance of an archaeology of slavery is clear here, but one that is no longer confined to above-ground structures but, as Patrice Courtaud suggests, is devoted to “the exploration of the buried world.”³⁴ The dominant no longer have the sole claim to historicity: it is

also found in the stubborn geological forms of resistances inside modernity's hold and in the cries gushing out proclaiming existence in the world.³⁵ Yes, slavery and the slave trade are crimes against humanity. Perhaps one day there will be the recognition that they constituted an ecocide as well, a crime against the Earth and the conditions for life upon it. From Mackandal to Mandela, from Solitude to Rosa Parks, from Queen Nanny to Wangari Maathai, from Toussaint Louverture to Ken Saro-Wiwa, from John Brown to Aimé Césaire, the Negrocene is also the time of forests of resistance to the Earth's destruction and of reverberating desires for a world.

4

The Colonial Hurricane

La Tempête (1688)

On leaving La Rochelle in July 1687, *La Tempête* headed towards the West African coast. With its 28 cannons and its captain, Jean-Baptiste du Casse, this 300-ton frigate carries the swift covetousness of the Compagnie Royale de Guinée over the water. With its repeated gusts of wind from November 1687 to February 1688, *La Tempête* sweeps the landscapes of Guinea, marking in passing the locations for King Louis XIV's future colonial trading posts: Issiny, Commendo, and Acara. After spilling its eager downpours over gold and African bodies, it withdrew, taking 303 Black men and women across the Atlantic. *La Tempête* hits Martinique on the morning of June 15th, 1688, watering the masters' plantations with the blood-red salt of the 287 survivors. Returning to France laden with sugar, *La Tempête* completed its colonial cycle.

*Prospero – We brewed up the storm you have just witnessed,
thereby saving my possessions overseas and bringing the
scoundrels into my power at the same time.*

Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest*¹

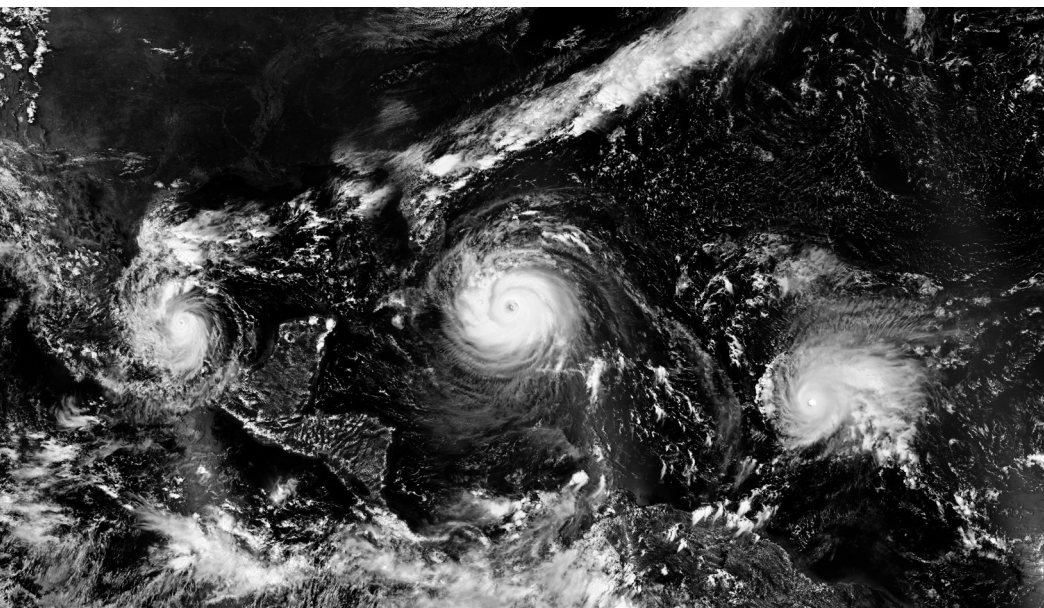


Figure 4 The cyclones Katia, Irma and José, 8th September 2017, © NOAA satellites, GOES-16.

The colonial hurricane

On September 8th, 2017, weather satellites captured three hurricanes, Katia, Irma, and José, feasting together on the coasts of Central America and the ridge of the Caribbean islands. With seventeen events including six major hurricanes (Harvey, José, Maria, Irma, Katia, Ophelia), the 2017 hurricane season was the most active since 2005, causing hundreds of billions of dollars in damage and thousands of deaths.² José, Maria, and Irma are just the latest in a long list of Category 4 or 5 hurricanes on the Saffir–Simpson scale that, along with Hugo, Katrina, and Matthew, have devastated the Caribbean in recent decades. Hit in particular by hurricanes, the Caribbean is one of the places where climate change’s devastating effects are being felt forcefully and regularly. Year after year, images of desolation and suffering flood the television channels for a few days. Bodies lie speechless among the ruins of concrete and sheet metal or float in the limbo of anonymous blackness. Tumultuous rivers can’t find their way back to the restful paths of their beds. Experts declare the incommensurability of the event once again, an event that tears apart lives as if they were the tops of coconut trees and disturbs the idyllic image of paradisiacal hotels warmed on white sands. The freakish [*monstrueuses*] storms correspond to the “monstrous” looters who, fearing neither God nor man, will turn themselves into scavengers of collapsed landscapes. For a while, the televised news seems to be a science-fiction film and the Caribbean Sea becomes the open eye of a monster.

As a storm, the ecological crisis encounters now the Caribbean world and its colonial foundations. The discursive register of the freakish and catastrophic is a hindrance to critical social and political thinking about these hurricanes and other contemporary ecological problems, as it places the Caribbean, its inhabitants, and these events in an off-world space, far removed from European centers. And yet, disasters caused by Atlantic hurricanes are neither “natural” nor politically neutral in terms of their causes or their consequences. To grasp the political meaning of these storms one has to go inside the ship. Leaving the realm of the freakish for the fabulous, one can find a political form of thinking through the encounters between natural disasters, such as hurricanes, and the colonial world that is already present in the imaginaries of the Americas and in artistic works concerned with this region.

In the Black American imaginaries of the United States, Atlantic storms are commonly associated with the transatlantic slave trade. Originating off the coast of Africa, making their way to the Caribbean basin and the Gulf of Mexico, and then heading back to the North Atlantic towards Europe, these storms are a reminder of the trace of this historic crime for which no justice has been done. In this imaginary, the storm is no longer only a spiral of winds and torrential rains. It is charged with the memory of the ancestors who were lost in the Atlantic and with rage have come aground the American coasts. In this movement, the storm behaves like a slave ship recalling past injustices and reinforcing contemporary inequalities: the storm becomes a colonial hurricane. What I call *colonial hurricane politics* is the set of strategies and schemes that turn these partly natural disasters into profitable events that reinforce the world's colonial foundations, increase the wealth of the masters, and exacerbate the enslaved person's subjection and misfortune. Through their artistic productions, William Shakespeare, Aimé Césaire, Joseph Conrad, and William Turner reveal three principal characteristics of colonial hurricane politics, three ways that the tempest appears in the world as a colonial hurricane.

Shakespeare and Césaire: when the tempest serves the masters' interests

In his 1610 play *The Tempest*, Shakespeare tells the story of the adventure of Prospero, the duke of Milan, who, through a ruse carried out by his brother Antonio, finds himself destitute and isolated on an island. Prospero has lived there with his daughter Miranda ever since. He shares the island with an enslaved person, Caliban, who has a deformed body, and a spirit with supernatural powers, Ariel, who is also enslaved. One day, a ship passes off the island with Alonso, the king of Naples, his son Ferdinand, Antonio, and other passengers on board. The play opens with a storm that sinks the ship, throwing the passengers ashore, a tempest that will ultimately ensure Prospero the recovery of his duchy and the continuation of slavery for those he has enslaved. One of the elements Aimé Césaire highlights in his rewriting of the play as *A Tempest* is this singular collusion between the master Prospero and the storm.

Far from being the result of chance, the tempest is the work of the master, the result of Prospero's "art."³ *The master produces the*

tempest. However, the “art” that the master uses to create the storm comes not from his own magical powers over the elements but from his ability to command and exploit Ariel, whom he has enslaved, and it is Ariel who will create this tempest. The slave-making relationship that causes the storm is in turn *a tempest that serves the master*. By marrying his daughter Miranda to Ferdinand, the king’s son, Prospero reclaims his duchy. Prospero is the one who thrives thanks to the tempest. The tempest also consolidates the slavery of the enslaved. At the end of the play, the enslaved Caliban, who despised the master, repents for having tried to get rid of his master, promises to be “wise hereafter” and to do everything possible to be in the master’s good “graces.”⁴ *The tempest therefore reinforces the slavery of the enslaved and the master’s position.*

Work in the humanities and social sciences confirm this colonial hurricane politics, advantageous for the masters, when they show that so-called natural disasters are above all the result of certain ways of inhabiting the Earth, social constructions, economic models, and political choices that increase inequalities and exacerbate power relations. These inequalities are reflected in both the causes and the effects of hurricanes. In terms of causes, although the Caribbean contributes relatively little to climate change, one of the consequences of the latter is the intensification of hurricanes that hit the region.⁵ In terms of the consequences, the damage results mainly from vulnerabilities in this basin that are historically and politically constructed. It is inhabited by populations that are kept in poverty and made extremely economically dependent upon international institutions and former colonial powers. Four of the territories most impacted in 2017 (Puerto Rico, Sint Maarten, Saint Martin, Saint Barthélemy) are non-sovereign territories, dependent upon the United States, the kingdom of the Netherlands, and France, respectively. The extent of the material damage follows from certain choices in terms of town planning and agriculture. The construction of housing in flood-prone areas along the coasts makes them more vulnerable to rising water levels during hurricanes. The erosion that is caused by the massive deforestation of Haiti’s hillsides increases the flood volume and the damage caused by each hurricane. Similarly, the choice to make the French Antilles banana islands enshrines the fragility of an economy that is based upon a giant grass’s annual resistance to winds of more than 200 kilometers per hour.

Given the social and political constructions of these disasters, given their differentiated effects which cause the poorest, minorities,

women, and the elderly to suffer the most, it will seem impossible to understand why they continue year after year unless one recognizes that these disasters and their effects benefit certain people. Certain people have an interest in the continuation of these inequalities, of these ways of inhabiting the Earth, and therefore in the continuation of these disasters. As Aimé Césaire shows, the tempest devised by the master is the storm that makes it possible for him to preserve his overseas products, all while taking possession of human beings, like a slave ship.

Conrad and Katrina: when the tempest creates the world's holds

More than an impoverishment of the poor, colonial hurricane politics re-creates the world's hold during these chance events. The relationship between the tempest and the world's hold is highlighted in Conrad's novella *Typhoon*. Inspired by real events, Conrad traces the history of a ship in the nineteenth century, the *Nan-Shan*, which carried Chinese indentured servants who had served the seven years of their contracts back from Thailand to China. The crew was English, led by Captain MacWhirr and his first mate Jukes, while below deck were 200 Chinese, along with their money. Along the way, this ship encounters a violent typhoon that places it in danger. Conrad is already known for his critique of imperialism in *Heart of Darkness*, and in this short story he stages the encounter of the colonial world with a typhoon, another name for a hurricane in the seas of Asia.⁶ The English crew represents colonial power, running the ship and possessing technological knowledge of it through the ship's engineer. On the other side, the Chinese, pejoratively called "coolies," are found in the steerage deck, the world's hold.⁷ This typhoon results in an even more difficult experience for the "coolies," for those who are below deck. Conrad describes five moments in the colonial hurricane's constitution.

In the first moment, *the course of discriminatory carelessness*, Conrad shows how the damage caused by the typhoon is primarily the result of the decision of this world-ship to ignore warnings, knowing full well that those below deck will suffer heavy consequences. Fully aware of the storm on the horizon and warned about the dangers facing the Chinese, the captain refused to change course, choosing instead to preserve his financial interests by conserving coal

and casting doubt on the predictions. The second moment is that of *ordeal* [*calvaire*] for those in the hold. Thrown in all directions, the Chinese find themselves bloody and their savings scattered. The third moment is that of *continued carelessness*, showing a clear disdain for the Chinese *during* the storm. The fourth moment is *infernal chaos*, the consequence of the overexposure of the Chinese passengers to the tempest and abandoning them to their fate. What results is a situation that finds the Chinese tearing each other apart, trying to get back the few pennies they saved during their hard labor, leaving “a regular little hell in there.”⁸ Rather than let some of them get out, the crew locked the door, placing a lid over a simmering inferno.⁹ The fifth moment of the politics of the colonial hurricane is its denouement in the form of *discriminatory redistribution*. After the typhoon, the entire savings of the Chinese passengers found themselves in the hands of the crew, who, alone, decided how the money would be disposed and redistributed to the Chinese.

Moments	The hurricane seen from the world's hold
1	The course of discriminatory carelessness
2	Ordeal
3	Continued carelessness
4	Infernal chaos
5	Denouement: discriminatory redistribution

The five moments of the colonial hurricane as seen from the world's hold

The notoriously tragic movement of Hurricane Katrina across the southern United States in August 2005 illustrates the politics of the colonial hurricane. The colonial layouts of the US cities in Hurricane Katrina's path are marked by social inequality and structural racism. The population of New Orleans was 67 percent Black, 28 percent White, 3 percent Latino, and 2 percent Asian.¹⁰ The city had a poverty rate of 28 percent compared to the national rate of 12 percent.¹¹ In an analogous way to those who survive in the hold, New Orleans residents literally live *below sea level*. The poorest live in flood-prone areas, while the wealthier live above the floodplain. Moreover, before 2005, the state of Louisiana and, particularly, the city of New Orleans were also characterized by a dilapidated public education system. Comprised of 96 percent Black students, classes

take place in classrooms that require renovations and without qualified teachers. The majority of White students attend private schools.¹² Before 2005, New Orleans was one of the most segregated cities in the United States.¹³

Hurricane Katrina staged the five moments narrated in Conrad's story. The *course of discriminatory carelessness* was set long before Katrina arrived. The authorities knew that the protective dykes and other infrastructure around the city where poor people lived were inadequate.¹⁴ Giving an order to evacuate to those who were unable to do so, since they lacked transportation, resources, and infrastructure, was therefore an admission of abandonment, a structural lack of concern for those put into the hold. The authorities abandoned these inhabitants to "decks full of water," described by Conrad, even before the storm.¹⁵ *The ordeal* of the people of New Orleans was terrible. More than 2,000 people died, more than 2.5 million homes were damaged, and about 1 million people were displaced – all with the media hungry for images of bodies floating in the water. Estimates place the damage at nearly \$300 billion.¹⁶ With regard to the reactions of high-ranking government representatives, and especially President George W. Bush, *the continued carelessness* was vividly documented by the media. Alerted by the head of the National Hurricane Center, Bush chose not to cut short his thirty-day vacation and did not change his official journey.¹⁷

Infernal chaos began after a few days, with the first reports of crime, looting, rape, and murder, and became evident after what happened inside the Superdome. This American football stadium was the shelter of last resort for many families with no other place to go. The authorities had planned provision for 15,000 people for three days, yet this site hosted more than 30,000 people for five days. Pieces of the roof were stripped away, water entered every nook and cranny, the ventilation system stopped working, and the building's electricity, which was intended to supply power to equipment to help the sick as well as to power refrigerators, was maintained by an emergency generator only, threatening to be swallowed up by the water at any moment. The temperature inside the building rose to 27 degrees Celsius and the bathrooms were quickly overwhelmed. Brawls broke out. There were several reports of rape. There were three deaths. Foul smells, humidity, scorching heat, darkness, unsanitary conditions, crowding, and insufficient food; these people were literally in the world's hold. On August

31st, powerless in the face of a worsening situation, National Guard troops put barbed wire around the Superdome to protect themselves from these refugees while penning them inside. In the space of a few days, Katrina reproduced the apparatus of the slave ship's hold from out of the Superdome.

Finally came the end of the storm, its denouement as the moment of *discriminatory redistribution*. The post-Katrina period also gave witness to a reinforcement of social inequalities. The shock doctrine of what Naomi Klein calls "disaster capitalism" took the education system of New Orleans as its prey. Less than two years after the floods, most public schools were replaced by "charter schools" as "publicly funded institutions run by private entities."¹⁸ The hurricane was an opportunity to get rid of social benefits, to open up public services to the private sector, and to continue pushing out the poorest. To get through Katrina, the poorest, the oldest, women, the elderly, people of color, all included as Negroes, were literally locked in the world's hold.

Turner and the *Zong*: the pretext-tempest for throwing the world overboard

In his 1840 painting commonly referred to as *The Slave Ship*, a detail of which is found on the cover of this book, William Turner displayed in color the deadly practice of using the tempest as a pretext to get rid of the wretched of the Earth. Probably haunted [*habité*] by his investment as a young man in a slave-making sugar company in Jamaica, Turner paints the scene of a slave ship confronting rough seas.¹⁹ The enslaved are still in chains as they are thrown overboard before being devoured by sea creatures that shed the blood of these bodies upon the surface of the sea. At first glance, this painting, whose true title is *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On*, might suggest a *natural causality* between the hurricane and the expulsion of the dead and dying from the slave ship. In this regard, the clouds that cover the sky might herald a hurricane with strong winds, which the ship would not be able to withstand in its current state. This misfortune would require the crew to lighten the ship by getting rid of those who have already died and those who will not survive in order to save the ship and the others. As a hurricane approached the ship, the slavers would have been *forced* to throw the dead and

dying overboard. However, it is precisely this deceptive trick of the colonial hurricane that Turner critiques in his painting.

If, indeed, the sky turns blood red with the setting sun, the sea starts to swell and dark clouds appear on the horizon, the hurricane is not yet here.²⁰ Turner, who is also a specialist in painting storms, does not draw a hurricane in this painting; he draws the gesture by which the enslaved have just been thrown overboard, with chains on their ankles and wrists, their hands stretched out towards the sky, looking for a rift in the world through which they could escape this sea that is painted with their own blood. The hurricane is not the starting point of the scene. The gesture of *throwing* is the starting point.²¹ It would assume far too much “humanity” on the part of the slavers to believe that the crew would have taken care to keep the dead onboard ship during a voyage of up to several months, waiting to give them a burial on land. The dead were thrown overboard throughout the voyage, rewarding the sharks that regularly followed such ships.²² The relationship expressed by Turner is exactly the opposite. The hurricane, the dead and dying, and the slavers are found in a causal relationship that follows the order given in the title of the painting: *Slavers Throwing; The Dead and Dying; Typhoon Coming On. The tumbling of the enslaved overboard by the slavers is what creates the dead and dying, a crime that in turn creates the typhoon, meaning the catastrophe*. Far from its being bad luck, Turner suggests that the typhoon is the fruit of the slavers’ violent acts carried out against the enslaved.

It might seem far-fetched to claim that the crime of slave trading produced the colonial hurricane were it not for the true story of the ship *Zong* that inspired Turner’s painting. On August 18th, 1781, under the command of Captain Collingwood, the slave ship *Zong* departed the coast of Ghana for Jamaica with 442 captives and seventeen crew members on board (far too many for its tonnage).²³ After a navigational error that lengthened the journey time, the ship faced a water shortage on November 28th. The crew came together and made the fatal decision to throw the enslaved overboard! On November 29th, fifty-four women and children were thrown into the water, followed by forty-two men on December 1st, left to drown and be a feast for the sharks. This atrocity found a capitalist and colonial rationality in the insurance contracts for slave-ship voyages. The departure of a slave ship required substantial initial capital, and so shareholders took out insurance on that capital against “perils of the sea,” insurrection, and exceptional circumstances that might

result in the loss of the human cargo. However, compensation would not be granted if the enslaved died a “natural” death due to lack of food and water, ill treatment, or the consequences of navigational errors.²⁴ It was therefore more profitable for the *Zong* slavers to throw the enslaved to their deaths than to keep them alive, provided they fallaciously pretended a hurricane or some similar unforeseen event had taken place. But crew members report that it had rained as early as December 1st and the days following. *Water*. No more shortages. Too late, the temptation of the colonial hurricane was too great for them to stop there. They plunged thirty-six more people to their deaths in the next few days. In the face of this inhumanity, ten more jumped to their deaths of their own free will.²⁵

On the return of the *Zong* to Liverpool, William Gregson, the representative of the ship’s shareholders and a wealthy slaver, demanded compensation from his insurer, claiming that the loss of the enslaved was the result of an exceptional event and not the deliberate choice of the crew to sacrifice them. The insurer’s refusal to pay the crew for the enslaved who were thrown overboard led to a trial in 1783 (*Gregson vs. Gilbert*). An initial decision ruled in Gregson’s favor and required insurers to pay £30 per enslaved person thrown overboard. After the testimony of the first mate James Kelsall, this initial decision was overturned on appeal. The legal difference of opinion concerned only the issue of “compensation” for the crew, not the criminal nature of the act. No criminal charges were filed for voluntarily throwing 142 men and women into the sea. With this nameless crime, the slavers produced the typhoon that is coming. The disaster is the result of actions humans take even before the unforeseen event happens. Sometimes the unforeseen event even becomes a sordid opportunity to get rid of those who are denied the world. The hurricane becomes an excuse not to live with the other and to throw the world overboard.

The politics of the colonial hurricane and global warming

The colonial hurricane shows that the ecological crisis is not a complete re-examination of the world. On the contrary, it reinforces colonial domination and oppression. Hurricanes accelerate the world, contract it, stretch it, and reveal its structural fractures, as well as radicalize its lines of non-sharing, lines which differentiate

with whom the world is shared and with whom it is not shared. Yes, climate change is the consecration of the Prosperos of the world, those who profit from disasters, and the continuation of the suffering for the Calibans and Ariels of the Earth. As described by Césaire and Shakespeare, the climatic tempest is born out of the masters' exploitation of the enslaved through a capitalist production laden with greenhouse gases, which widens social inequalities and perpetuates injustices that are openly admitted to. When the warning given by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) about the lack of actions of countries to limit global warming did not cause any change, it brings to mind the *course of discriminatory carelessness* of *Typhoon's* Captain MacWhirr, who prefers to save his money and continue to produce coal. It is well established that this carelessness will bring misery, that it will reproduce the holds for the wretched of the Earth, as Conrad and Hurricane Katrina demonstrate. Some already think climate change is evidence of a demographic surplus on the scale of the Earth.²⁶ As with the *Zong*, climate change will then be welcomed as a way to profitably get rid of the world's Negroes: those who are exploited, who take up the least space, and who emit the least will be the ones who are surplus. The sole injunction to "survive the tempest" without any concern for those who populate this ship becomes a disaster in itself.

So what ship are we going to build in the face of the storm?

Part II

Noah's Ark:

**When Environmentalism Refuses the
World**

5

Noah's Ark: Boarding, or the Abandonment of the World

Noé (1748–9)

The modern skies thundered in 1492, heralding an unremitting four centuries of slave-making rain. The colonial flood is about to cover the Earth. On this morning in October 1748, in the port of La Rochelle, Captain Thomas Palmier, with a vigilant eye, looked over the *Noé*, a 70-ton ship that would preserve his wealth and his own people. All that was missing was the wood, which would be taken from the other side of the horizon, in the Gulf of Guinea. Travelling the Gold Coast from March to May 1749, the *Noé* recklessly devours the forests of those who will be sacrificed and chooses those who will be enslaved. Seventy-five pairs of humans in chains are loaded into the hold. But this time, leaving Accra in June 1749, a sudden surge turned the *Noé*'s plans upside down. The headwinds prevented it from leaving land, throwing it off the coast of Benin and then onto the island of Bioko. Then, for a whole day, the boat was assaulted by Negroes, the ones who were denied the world on land just as on the open sea. The *Noé* took on water. Submerged, Palmier set fire to the powder kegs. In that explosion, with the liberating leap of the captive-bodies, sixty-one cries for a common world sank into the deep, shouting out from the deathly sea foam against the injustice of a slave-making ark.

Noah's ark: an imaginary of environmentalist discourse

The 1960s and 1970s are marked by the beginnings of a global environmentalist movement that included the Earth summits, the birth of green political parties, the actions of non-governmental organizations, the recognition of Earth Day in the United States, and the Club of Rome report in 1972. Alarms were raised about the degradation of the planet's ecosystems, the depletion of natural resources, and the loss of biodiversity. These alarms present a vessel containing humans and non-humans wandering through an infinite space or sea as an imaginary representation of the world and the Earth. This vessel remains the key to salvation in the face of *the* catastrophe foretold: *Noah's ark*. The idea of *Spaceship Earth* took off from there and gained momentum in the speeches of Adlai Stevenson II, the American ambassador to the UN,¹ and in the writings of the economists Kenneth Boulding and Barbara Ward, the agronomist René Dubos, and the architect Buckminster Fuller.²

This scene is also found in James Lovelock's writings about his Gaia hypothesis, which he proposed in 1970.³ Lovelock likens the planet Earth to a living entity that is capable of self-regulation, allowing it to preserve the optimal physical and chemical environmental conditions for life on the planet.⁴ He is clear, however, that his given name for the Earth, *Gaia*, is not a reference to the deity, as if the Earth were a living, sentient being, but instead echoes how *sailors* in English refer to *their ship* with the personal pronoun "she."⁵ The ship is also found in the writings of Anthropocene proponents such as Paul Crutzen, Will Steffen, and John R. McNeill, who see humans as would-be *stewards* of an Earth system. They evoke this ship within the colonial grammar of a colonist sailor, as a "human enterprise" that with his geological action has "propelled" this Earth system towards a "planetary *Terra incognita*."⁶ This choice of words calls to mind both the names of the fictional spaceship in *Star Trek* and NASA's first real space shuttle (OV-101), as well as the voyage of the British colonist-explorer James Cook on his ship *Endeavour* (synonymous with "enterprise"), which set off in search of *Terra Australis incognita* in 1769.

Boarding politics

Such a scene lets us see the unity of the Earth. The planet is *one* and humans live on the same planet. However, Noah's ark is also *a political metaphor*. It sets the stage for possible ways of thinking socially and politically about how to deal with the ecological crisis. As a world scene at the heart of modern environmentalism, Noah's ark also includes a *politics of boarding*.⁷ It symbolizes actions and discourses being set in motion that have as their function the constitution of this political and metaphorical boarding of a world faced with *the* disaster. This boarding is to be taken not as transitional, says Hicham-Stéphane Afeissa, but as the aim of the action in the face of the disaster.⁸ Such a boarding in the face of the "Flood" is exactly what Michel Serres has suggested.⁹

To board Noah's ark is to have first established, from a singular point of view, a set of limits that applies both to the amount of "vice" the Earth can support and to the capacity of its "ship." Climbing aboard Noah's ark means leaving Earth and protecting yourself behind a wall of anger aroused by some undifferentiated "us." It means accepting the survival of *some* humans and *some* non-humans as a principle of social and political organization, which results in legitimating the act of a *violent boarding selection*. By "boarding politics" I mean the political and social *dispositions* and *engineering* designed to determine what and who is counted and boarded onto the ship *and* what and who is abandoned, imposing both an off-ground relationship to the Earth and a socio-political organization determined only by the logic of surviving the aforementioned disaster.

Loss-bodies

By confusing the globalized Earth with the world, Noah's ark's boarding politics creates people who are conceptually stripped of their respective cultural identities and historicities by reducing them to *loss-bodies*.¹⁰ The ecology of Noah's ark implies *the loss* of the names, cultures, and subjectivities of those on board. In this imaginary, the ark does not come to ensure the survival of persons, communities, cultures and arts, or stories, meaning the preservation of a set of relationships to others, collective practices, or even

ecumenes. The cultural diversity of the world and the plurality of histories are erased in favor of a scene where only the number of loss-bodies to be saved is counted. The passengers on board are merged into a homogeneous and singular whole, a true mirror of the Earth as a totality. "Drowned" in these "gigantic masses," Serres says, the subjects disappear.¹¹

This staging of the loss-body is striking in speeches dealing with the issue of "climate refugees." Certainly, the drastic changes caused by climate change will give rise to large movements of people. However, in contrast to the work of anthropologists, environmentalist discourses that settle for the terms "migrants" or "climate refugees" construct a subject that is conceptually trapped in between the place they come from and the destinations they may come to, and so they remain suspended between the dock and the ship like a faceless body, stripped of their name, familial, cultural, and community affiliations, their desires, and their capacities for action: monstrous and racialized figures.¹² This homogenization at work for humans also concerns non-humans, who are generally referred to only by the equally homogenizing terms "biodiversity," "Earth," or "ecosystems." For example, Norman Myers, the inventor of the term "diversity hotspot," depicts the loss of biodiversity literally as a sinking ark.¹³ So humans and non-humans form a single indistinct material going into the ark.

Astronauts on Earth

The boarding politics of this scene paradoxically produces an off-ground relationship to the Earth. The Earth is no longer humans' cradle, their foundation, their *arche*. It becomes a vessel for humanity wandering through an infinite space. But, through this passage from cradle to spaceship, the Earth is untethered from that first phenomenological quality for humans that is described by Edmund Husserl as a "ground-Earth", the referent by which "movement and rest [are] given as having their sense."¹⁴ Turning the Earth into a spaceship or a vessel does not correspond to a translation of some reference point, for example the move from geocentrism to heliocentrism, but consists in removing any fundamental spatial reference point from which the experience of the Earth is thought, resulting in an *absence of ground*. The transition from the cradle to the vessel consists then in *tearing up*

the ground and getting rid of the matrical and nourishing quality of Earth.

The consequence of this matricide is a relationship of strangeness for humans on Earth that results in humans without land. The Earth is no longer the cradle-home of human beings but a permanent paradoxical temporary condition, *a humanity without a home of their own*. Humans then populate the Earth as true *astronauts*, as expressed by both Serres and Lovelock:

How far up must we be flying to perceive her thus, globally? We have all become astronauts, completely deterritorialized: not as in the past a foreigner could be when abroad, but with respect to the Earth of all humankind.¹⁵

Astronauts who have had the chance to look back at the Earth *from space* have seen what a stunningly beautiful planet it is, and they often talk of the Earth as their home.¹⁶

Here lies an important paradox of global environmentalist discourse. It is only possible to make the Earth a "home" through a radical strangeness in relation to the Earth "of all humankind." Contrary to what Bruno Latour suggests, Lovelock does not think about Earth "from here below."¹⁷ It is only possible to make the planet a home if we move away from it, very far away, and look back at it *from* some point in space. This paradox is striking in Yann Arthus-Bertrand's documentary film *Home*, which explicitly adopts the off-ground perspective of a flying machine. Taking the astronaut as the reference point for an Earth-home means adopting an off-ground perspective, one where it is impossible for the narrator to live. If "Earth" can only be said from the astronaut's off-ground point of view, then "Earth" is literally uninhabitable. Humans are no longer Earthlings but unattached *nauts*. Uninhabited, the Earth is desolate. Unattached, humans are uprooted.

Abandoning the world: the Noahs

At the political level, the principal problem of the scene where Noah's ark faces the ecological storm is how it amalgamates the story and survival of *one* family, Noah's family, with the story and survival of the world. This amounts to confusing the *oikos* (the home) and the *polis* (the city). But one cannot use the same narrative

or the same focus for a household and for the world. To say that the Earth is humanity's home is to reproduce across the whole of the Earth the exclusionary fantasy that aims to hide the plurality of actors and avoid the human political task of composing a world with other people: living *together*. This boarding politics is nothing less than an abandonment of the world. By erasing the many subjects, this ecology of Noah's ark erects a global subject, "Man" or "humanity." By boarding, one leaves the subjects on shore and gives birth to humanity. As Serres proposed, everyone would then be called Noah.¹⁸ While this actor announces the universal within its global claims, he nevertheless remains very specific. He is given voice and pronounced from a particular center, the countries of the North, former colonizers, and mostly by men. Therefore Noah's ark announces not the end of many subjects but instead the imposition of one subject, a particular identity over the other subjects: that of Noah, the patriarch, father, and legitimate representative of the Earth's inhabitants. Let us recall that in Genesis the son of Ham was cursed by Noah with these words: "Cursed be Canaan; lowest of slaves shall he be to his brothers."¹⁹ Since Ham and his descendants are thought to have subsequently populated Africa, this episode in Genesis was used by both European slave traders and Arab Muslim slave traders to justify the enslavement of Black people.²⁰ So the Noahs are not those who are actually called Noah, carrying their culture with this name. Noahs are those whose names are covered by a humanity that claims to be universal but is in fact discriminatory.

History exposes this colonial constitution of boarding in the face of the disaster. In July 1761, the slave ship *Utile*, chartered by the Compagnie française des Indes orientales (French East Indies Company), took on board 160 Malagasy men, women, and children at the port of Foulpointe in Madagascar with the intention of selling them in Mauritius. It was a special slave ship because there were also 142 crew members on board. En route, the frigate hit a sandbank off Tromelin Island and sank. Some of the enslaved who were locked in the hold perished in the shipwreck. The entire crew and the rest of the Malagasy managed to reach the shore of this flat and deserted island of 1 square kilometer. With the debris recovered from the ship, a new ship was built: an *ark*. On September 27th, 1761, after actively taking part in the construction of the ark, the eighty-eight remaining Malagasy were abandoned, while the masters and the freemen embarked, relieved. Fifteen years later, only seven women and a baby were found alive on the island.²¹

On the wharf as well as on board, this abandonment of the world heralds the end of living together. The world that human beings establish through their political activists, their cultural practices, and social lives must be put on hold for the duration of the disaster. Who can say what is going on inside Noah's ark? The cinematic and literary representations of this episode focus mainly on the policing practices that lead to some being allowed to board and others being denied. Since the catastrophe is presented as being permanent, the end of the world between human beings comes to be the aim of this Noah's ark ecology. The relationships on board are defined negatively, meaning they are defined by what does not happen there. "A single unwritten law thus reigns on board," Serres says, "the divine courtesy that defines the sailor, a nonaggression pact among seagoers, who are at the mercy of their fragility. The ocean threatens them continuously with its inanimate but fearsome strength, seeing to it that they keep the peace."²² When faced with wars of colonial conquest and world wars, this desire for peace can only be shared. But not all peace is the same. This peace, driven by the logic of survival, can result in a series of nameless acts of violence, as with the slave ships *Noé* and *Utile*. As it is presented, peace on board is not peace *between* different groups or individuals, since these groups are dissolved into a homogeneous whole. It becomes a total peace, as an absence of all activity: the end of the world between those who have gone on board is presented as the condition for salvation in the face of the disaster. Yet, "True peace is not the absence of tension," Martin Luther King, Jr. says, "but it is the presence of justice."²³

Figures of the world's refusal

Under the guise of good intentions, this Noah's ark ecology reproduces the mechanisms of enslavement and domination between those who enter the ark and those who do not, between the chosen and the excluded. Noah's ark is an imaginary scenario for a globalizing environmentalism that produces beings who have to abandon their social and community affiliations, leave Earth, *and* leave the world. By engendering loss-bodies, astronauts, and Noahs, Noah's ark symbolizes the *refusal* of an encounter with the other and with the Earth, an encounter that carries the possibility of a world. The abandonment of the world, of the Earth, and its multiple

human and non-human relationships becomes the condition for the boarding and survival. Therefore, Noah's ark generates a set of political figures – that is to say, figures that represent different ways of implementing this politics of boarding. The scenario of Noah's ark reveals five main figures of the world's refusal.

The first figure, *the unconcerned*, refers to the active approach that erects a psychic and/or physical wall in front of the face of other people, which determines the boundaries for objects that are cared for. The *unconcerned* one implements an active epistemic ignorance, which functions to untie, to break the concrete relationship with the other, to refuse the world, thereby locking themselves up in solipsism that is naive but very violent as well.²⁴ The unconcerned sailor navigates the Earth with a perception of the world that is desensitized to others. They do not taste the food of poor people, do not smell the stench of industrial plants and their sites, do not touch the skin that has been turned cold by misery, do not see racial and gender discrimination, and do not hear the cries for a world. *The unconcerned one's refusal of the world is the abandonment of concern for the other.*

The second figure is that of *the xeno-warrior* (or *xenocider*). The *xeno-warrior* is the figure that partitions the world into borders between an “us,” those who will be the healthy and legitimate ones, and a “them,” those who will be the ones responsible for the storm and are therefore an enemy. They deny the right to having rights for those who do not belong to the national community. This us and that them do not exist before the tempest. They are the results of the xeno-warrior's action. By confusing the world with their own body and the body of their community, the xeno-warrior sees the other as the pathogenic and contaminated element that must be removed through an immune-response ecology. In a putrescent mixture of racism, antisemitism, terrorism, xenophobia, and misogyny, crossing through the tempest translates into a war that is aimed purely and simply at the elimination of the other.

The third figure is that of the *sacrificer*. Geared up with (neo-)Malthusian arithmetic and geopower²⁵ on a global scale, the sacrificer is the figure who decides with scientific legitimacy who represent the world's surplus, foreigners or not, and sacrifices them. Paul Ehrlich's invention of the “population bomb” is an example.²⁶ The latter are not simply thrown overboard. They are truly sacrificed. This means that their elimination is narrated as the unfortunate but necessary condition for calming the skies

and the seas that have been agitated by the ecological tempest's divine thunder. The sacrificer is not performing an office that has been given to them by some higher authority. Through their gestures and their speeches, they *fabricated* the necessity of this vile exchange: ecosystem preservation in exchange for the lives of Black people, the poor, and other subalterns. Garrett Hardin proposes this equation in his lifeboat hypothesis, which defends the sacrifice of the poor and people of color.²⁷ This is also the calculation that Holmes Rolston has proposed, privileging nature over those who are starving in some cases.²⁸ This is also what the Black American lawyer and novelist Derrick Bell criticized in his short story "The Space Traders," in which the United States accepts an offer from extraterrestrials to hand over all the country's Black people in exchange for gold and technology that depollutes the soil.²⁹ Those who are eliminated are therefore sacrificed to ensure the salvation of the sacrificer and their people. The sacrificed are not those who are no longer objects of concern; the sacrificed are those who count only as those to-be-sacrificed-by-the-sacrificers. Those who have been affected by nuclear testing in order to guarantee the standing of the nation, those in the slums who are given the world's garbage as a place to live, those whose diseases who are the consequences of the mad rush of modern industrial and capitalist society. Bearing the weight of their world on their head – and not upon their shoulders – the sacrificer carries out their work over others, expelling them from the world with the good conscience of a chosen one who has been invested with a mission of the highest importance.

The fourth figure is that of the *master-patriarch*. The master-patriarch turns the people on board into their slaves. The enslavement of others to a set of intolerable tasks and situations is presented, analogously to the sacrificers, as a necessary evil for this ark's survival. They will be admitted on board only on the condition that they are kept out of sight of the world, in the ship's hold or steerage. On board, but off-world. Nothing prevents Noah's ark from taking the form of a slave ship. Like the undocumented and subalterns, they are counted as being on the world's margins.

Finally, the fifth figure is that of the *world devourer*. Here attention is no longer focused solely on the ark itself, the assertion of its edges and borders (the unconcerned one), the elimination and sacrifice of others (the xeno-warrior and the sacrificer), or on the conditions of life on board (the master-patriarch). The world devourer is the figure whose mode of existence is actively engaged

in the consumption of other forms of life and other ways of being in the world. This is the one who is going to destroy the forests and the valleys inhabited by indigenous people, as well as the fertile lands, ecosystems, and human-scaled local economies, so that they can build their ark and run their sails and rigging. The existence of their world is synonymous with the consumption of other cosmologies: "my world at the expense of the others' world." These five figures represent five ways of implementing the ecology of Noah's ark. The politics of boarding consequently results in people being abandoned, eliminated, sacrificed, enslaved, or devoured so that this boarding can take place.

The world's refusal	
The unconcerned one	The other's abandonment
The xeno-warrior	The other's elimination
The sacrificer	The other's sacrifice
The master-patriarch	The other's enslavement
The world devourer	"My world at the expense of the others' world."

Figures of Noah's ark

The ecology of Noah's ark, synonymous with a refusal of the world, is influential in many countries. The Caribbean is no exception. The three chapters that follow, on the cases of Haiti, Puerto Rico, and the French Antilles, describe scenes where environmentalism has been explicitly translated into the refusal of the world.

6

Reforestation without the World (Haiti)

Chasseur (1769–71)

On October 24th, 1769, the *Chasseur*, a 180-ton ship, left the port of Nantes. With a biting anchor, taut sheets, and a sharply tapering bow, the *Chasseur* set out to conquer the ebony forests of West Africa. A long year spent along the coast was favorable for predation. At the Angolan port of Malembo, 234 pieces entered the belly of the *Chasseur*.¹ After a two-month crossing, 201 Africans were unloaded at the port of Cap-Français in Santo Domingo on March 24th, 1771. Here, the *Chasseur* completed its task: the depopulation of the world's forests.



Figure 5 Thomas Moran, *Slave Hunt, Dismal Swamp, Virginia*, 1861–2.

Technocentric discourse and the off-world

Deforestation and the resulting loss of biodiversity is a major problem. Nevertheless, the ecology of Noah's ark limits it to an environmental and technical issue that may be adequately described by an assortment of figures, the number of hectares of forest cut down, and the number of species that have gone extinct. In turn, reforestation policies are also limited to their numbers, which, however indispensable they may be, are not sufficient to capture the violence inflicted upon human and non-human communities or even the loss of the world that is caused. A striking example of this environmentalist understanding of deforestation can be found in Haiti. As the first Black republic, Haiti is known as much for its political instability and chronic poverty as for the assumed extent of its deforestation. The country is 75 percent mountains and 25 percent plains. When Christopher Columbus arrived in 1492, the island was 80 percent covered by forest.² At the time of independence in 1804, after three centuries of colonization, most of the Haitian plains had already been deforested to make way for sugar-cane and indigo plantations.³ In 2015, the FAO (The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization) estimated that forest cover represented only 3.5 percent of Haiti's territory.⁴ While Haiti is indeed experiencing serious deforestation and consequent soil erosion, this figure remains an exaggeration. Scientific analysis using high-resolution satellite imagery places forest cover at around 30 percent.⁵ The persistence of this exaggeration, spread in an image from a 1987 issue of *National Geographic*, in Diamond's book *Collapse*, and in Al Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, contributes to a catastrophic story about Haiti by turning it into an off-world monstrosity, the environmentalists' favorite anti-example.⁶

The consequence of this technocentrism, which confirms the off-world, is an understanding of reforestation *without the world*, one where the increase in forest cover is not accompanied by the recognition of a common world where Haiti and its peasant farmers would occupy a dignified place. What follows are reforestation techniques that are confined to the off-world. As pictured in the famous painting *Paradis terrestre* by the Haitian painter Wilson Bigaud, ecological issues are reduced to the physical contours of the forests and their quantitative measurements. There is irony in a

naïve art market for tourists in Pétionville and Port-au-Prince where they buy paintings of lush hillsides that have been painted by local artists from the deforested hills.⁷ These images convey the environmentalist fantasy while leaving out the social and political realities of those who made them. Images that leave out the world.

Unjustly blaming Maroons and peasants

A discourse that is still dominant in Haiti emerges from this reduction of deforestation to the forest alone, a discourse that assigns blame for deforestation to the Maroons and peasants without a trial. This discourse is based on the fact that Maroons and peasants have indeed cut down trees. While escaping from the slave plantations of the plains, the Maroons found refuge in the hills, cutting down some trees here and there so that they could make a place for themselves and build their huts. Peasants are singled out for their farming practices and charcoal production. Erosion forces peasants to cultivate land on slopes that are steep, inaccessible, and nutrient-depleted, causing a reduction in yields and in their incomes. To get by, some cut down trees to make charcoal that can be sold in the cities. The majority of households in Haiti cook their food by burning charcoal.⁸ Peasant farmers with less access to basic public services, such as health care, education, and good quality water, find themselves forced to continue the deforestation of the hillsides in order to improve their living conditions and those of their children.

The discourse that holds the poor and marginalized responsible for the Earth's deforestation is a discourse of *injustice*. Haitian peasants experience chronic poverty associated with social discrimination between rural and urban dwellers that, in places, overlaps with the colonial distinction between Blacks and Mulattos. A climate of mistrust persists between the city and the countryside, where the same peasants who provide food for the cities find that there is no room for them there. They find themselves confined to an existence off-world, inside of a *péyi andeyo*, a "country-offside."⁹ This exclusion from the city is also the result of being abandoned by the Haitian state. While being the largest productive force in the country, the peasantry finds itself neglected by state services and often oppressed, as was the case during the period of Duvalier's dictatorship (1957–86).¹⁰ The countryside is only

invested in during elections in order to reap votes. The Haitian state is satisfied with the liberalization of its basic services, which leaves the fate of the rural population to the whims of projects that belong to NGOs and international donors. Blaming the peasants for deforestation is just an extension of the Haitian state's lack of taking responsibility. Environmentalists demonstrate *sympathy-without-connection*, willingly acknowledging the domination of the peasants, but without connecting the ongoing deforestation to their own lifestyles. By limiting deforestation to the single scene of the forest, to the single act of cutting made by the hands of peasants, this environmentalism of the rich adopts a post-material vision of nature and loses sight of the world.¹¹

Reforestation without the world; or, the sacrifice of peasants

Reforestation policies have made planting trees their goal, not the composition of a world. In being held responsible, peasant farmers literally become the *targets* of the technical "solutions" that are provided. This *reforestation without the world* takes three distinct forms in Haiti. The first is as an environmental police force that aims to prevent farmers' hands from cutting down trees and working the land on the steep slopes. What becomes of this ecological gesture is the act of *driving out the peasants* from this idyllic image of the forest. It is in this sense that many members of local ecological associations present the end of the Duvalier dictatorship as the end of an ecological order in Haiti, leaving a situation they describe as "anarchic."¹² This environmental police force takes up the gestures of the colonial marshalcy, whose job it was to chase Maroons from the woods, as illustrated by Thomas Moran in his painting *Slave Hunt, Dismal Swamp*.

The second proposed solution is the implementation of a set of agricultural methods, ethno-technologies, and the deployment of new technologies capable of reducing dependence upon charcoal. There are experiments with agroforestry and ingenious combinations of crops, such as shaded coffee or fruit trees, in order to bring together the preservation of plant cover with a way of using the land that provides an income for the peasant farmers. Attempts that aim at replacing the use of charcoal as fuel in household technologies range from solar and gas stoves to renewable energies such as

organic briquettes, bagasse, solar thermal energy, biomethanization, and various other biofuels.¹³ Finally, the third solution is a form of social engineering that acts on a number of social "variables" (income, household size, education, types of crop) that influence tree cutting in Haiti.¹⁴ Proposals linked to forest conservation practices would address both declining agricultural productivity and deforestation.¹⁵

These three solutions are necessary and play a part in facing up to the extent of the widespread deforestation. Obviously a better organization and a better agreement is essential to improve peasant farmers' living conditions, which could take the form of rallies or "coubites" as organizations such as Mouvement paysan Papaye take part in. However, far from implementing shared political responsibility, environmental policies continue down the paradoxical path of insisting that those they deem irresponsible bear the responsibility.¹⁶ They place the responsibility for reforestation on the shoulders of the peasants, entailing a threefold sacrifice on their part.

The *sacrifice of the body* appears in the implicit demand to set aside any concern for the peasants' bodies echoed by the environmental police. The peasant must contain their hunger, as well as their desire for a place in the world, for the common good of preserving forest cover. This paradoxical accountability of the irresponsible, which continues to place the ecological fate of the country upon the peasants' already bent shoulders, leads to the *sacrifice of Atlas*. Condemned by Zeus to carry the celestial heavens, Atlas is the titan who puts aside his existence in order to prevent the sky from falling onto the heads of the other inhabitants of Earth. Conversely, peasant farmers do not have to hold up the sky but become the ones who must hold down the Earth. They are to assume this literally titanic responsibility, which allows the rest of Haiti to continue to exist. Finally, this understanding of reforestation also requires a *sacrifice of justice* on the part of the peasants. Driven into a form of existence where their only means of subsistence comes from the land and the ecosystems that shelter them, peasants are kept socially on the margins of the world. For even if reforestation policies take the form of social engineering, these policies do not constitute social justice. Providing the hospitality of a world for those who were excluded from it is not their goal; rather, they aim for the clarity of an environmental image without peasants' hands.

The parc de la Visite massacre of July 23rd, 2012

This technocentric framework for reforestation and the sacrifice expected from the peasants found a revolting illustration in the massacre of peasants on the outskirts of the parc de la Visite in July 2012. Parc de la Visite was created in 1983 by a decree of Jean-Claude Duvalier's government, which struck an agreement with the forty-two families who were living there at the time. Reaching to an altitude of more than 2,000 meters, this park covers 2,000 hectares, 300 of which are covered with *Pinus occidentalis* and sections of broad-leaved trees.¹⁷ Located on the Massif de la Selle in south-east Haiti, this secondary forest is home to numerous endemic animal and plant species that help make Haiti a biodiversity "hotspot." Forest birds, having few other habitats, come to shelter in parc de la Visite. Located in Seguin, a communal section of the town of Marigot, the park straddles the Sud-Est Department and the Ouest Department. In addition to its biodiversity, parc de la Visite rests upon an aquifer that supplies nearly 3 million people with drinking water. Today, la Visite is one of only two national parks in Haiti.

Since 2012, there has been a conflict between, on the one side, peasants who live on the outskirts – or in the interior, this being one of the points of contention – and practice subsistence farming, and, on the other side, the government and a local association called the Seguin Foundation who are working to preserve and reforest this park. Peasants residing on the outskirts of the park were considered by the government and the Seguin Foundation to be responsible for the deforestation that took place inside the park. The conflict between the peasants, the government, and the association came to a head in a dramatic scene on July 23rd, 2012. Continuing the reforestation policy of the park, around noon, a delegation of representatives of the Haitian state, accompanied by a number of "hired men" [*hommes de peine*], arrived in front of some of the houses of the 142 families living in and around the park to evict these peasants.¹⁸ This delegation included the departmental delegate for the Sud-Est Department, the police commissioner, the government commissioner, the justice of the peace for the commune of Marigot, the minister for the environment, the minister for the interior, all accompanied by seven police cars and an ambulance. On that day, before these representatives of the state, the peasants refused to leave their homes, a refusal they had already expressed in meetings

with the government representatives that were held between April and May of the same year. After multiple summonses, the representatives and the hired men of the state began to smash the walls of the first houses with the help of sledgehammers. In the midst of shouting and protests, a brawl broke out. Along with the use of tear gas canisters, gunshots were fired. What resulted reflects the imbalance of power between the stones of the peasants and the guns of the representatives of the state. Among the peasants, four adults were killed and two children were reporting missing, and one person was wounded on the policemen's side. Seven houses were destroyed and two oxen were killed. Two peasants were arrested and imprisoned for two months without a trial. Although high-ranking state officials were present and witnessed this scene, to my knowledge no investigation was conducted by the country's judicial system.¹⁹

Neither the state nor the police acknowledged responsibility for these peasants' deaths and disappearances. Labeling them "accidental," the government does not even recognize the need for a judicial inquiry. Its only act was to contribute financially to the funerals, and then only under pressure from MINUSTAH (the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti). In the same way that the state offered these peasants a sum of money to leave the park, the state gave 150,000 gourdes (about 1,420 euros) to the families of the victims so that they could proceed with their funerals and bury the bodies. The state's action consists of *hiding the bodies* as witnesses to the unjust sacrifice of the peasants. Discriminatory situations, disparities in access to basic services, and glaring social inequalities have to be silenced, hidden in the face of this ecological imperative. In spite of the state's desire to hide this crime, to silence their protests, the peasants of la Visite erected a large concrete tomb in the middle of the park which resembles a small house, where the four people who died on July 23rd, 2012, are buried. A real building in the middle of the woods with an iron cross that is more than 3 meters high and stands out in full view. This tomb inside the park, in a gesture of defiance, is one of the traces that remain of those who were denied a place in this world.

At the origin: colonial inhabitation and the Maroon fracture of the world

If the peasants are indeed those who in part carried out the deforestation of Haiti in the twentieth century, they are in no way

responsible for this deforestation. A range of other demographic, economic, and political factors contributed to this reality. Let us keep in mind the important export of wood from Haiti (mahogany, campeche, guaiac), which is described by Alex Bellande and was sent to Europe and North America from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries.²⁰ Sawmills were present at parc de la Visite and in the pine reserve on the Massif de la Selle on commission from American investors.²¹ In addition to disputes over ownership and farming practices, which do not allow for long-term consideration of land, we also have to consider the twentieth century's increase in population, the Haitian state's indifference to plant cover, and the lack of an alternative source of fuel. Similarly, the Creole pig eradication campaigns under US and Canadian pressure to control the African swine fever virus in the late 1970s and early 1980s robbed countries of an important source of income and increased their dependence upon charcoal.²² Furthermore, trees have an important symbolic purpose in voodoo, whether they are mango, calabash, palm, avocado, or especially mapou.²³ This symbolic power is so great that, in their twentieth-century antisuperstition campaigns, some Christian churches thought they were fighting against voodoo by cutting down these *arbres-reposoirs* (sacred trees).²⁴

Yet, while these socio-economic, religious, and political factors are determining factors, the real origins of deforestation lie elsewhere. Placing this phenomenon within the perspective of a *longue durée*, as Fernand Braudel invites us to do, the seeds of the contemporary deforestation of Haiti are first found in the island's colonization. If the colonial period was not directly responsible for the deforestation that took place in the following centuries, it nevertheless laid the foundation for a way of inhabiting the Earth that I have been calling *colonial inhabitation*. In that colonial inhabitation, clearing the forest was synonymous with inhabiting the land. The first major land clearings and the resulting deforestation were originally the work of an extreme exploitation of Haiti's soil, particularly through the cultivation of sugar cane. In addition to soil depletion, the forests that once covered the plains were quickly cut down. In 1782, the Swiss traveler Girod de Chantrans claimed that "there are no more forests left except those that crown the hillsides."²⁵ Having exhausted the plains, exploitation continued in the mountains with the cultivation of coffee. This colonial economy established as early as the sixteenth century an understanding of inhabiting this land that went unquestioned by

the Haitian Revolution and the various political regimes that have existed up to the present day.

In addition to this colonial inhabitation, the massive deforestation of Haiti was made possible by the absence of a common world, or, more exactly, by a *Maroon fracture of the world*. If marronage was manifest through the experience of life and culture in the mountains, which in some places led to trees being cut down, this phenomenon above all established a fracture within the colonial world. The colonial authorities of the plains refused responsibility for the hillsides and the mountains, while the Maroons who took flight into the mountains could not take responsibility for the ones who were persecuting them. The result is a divided constitution for how the world is experienced and of ways of inhabiting the land in Haiti, as if the plains and mountains made up two different and impermeable worlds. From the time of colonial slavery to the present day, this Maroon fracture of the world persists between the dwellings of the plains and the Maroon camps of the hillsides, between Henri Christophe and Alexandre Pétion in the aftermath of the revolution, but also between peasants and city dwellers during the Duvalier dictatorship.²⁶ Deforestation remains the consequence of this centuries-long oppression of the peasants on the plains who were condemned to an existence off-world, in a *péyi andeyo* (a country-offside), and who had no other means of survival than farming on these sloping lands.

Consequent to deforestation, soil erosion in Haiti is also a manifestation of this Maroon fracture. During the rainy season the soil slides down the slopes of the mountains and the hillsides and ends up in the Caribbean Sea. "The ground is going away," a representative of one of Haiti's largest peasant associations told me. The many "slips" of soil from the hillsides and the mountains are more than just the number attached to the cubic meters lost and the estimated figure of financial losses, but above all attest to the lack of common ground holding them together. Soil [*sols*] erosion in Haiti is evidence of the lack of common ground [*sol*] between the city people and rural people. The ground in question cannot be quantified; it cannot be reduced to its geological and ecological meanings, or to its financial quantification. This ground is also not the physical archi-ground marked out by Husserl as the ground from which other bodies' movements make sense.²⁷ The ground in its geological sense, as the condition for human life and for their physical ability to stand upright and feed themselves, can be the



Figure 6 Soil erosion in Haiti, which maroons towards the sea, 2012. Photo © Malcom Ferdinand.

place where inhabiting together happens only when it is a ground covered by a fabric Arendt calls a “web of human relationships,”²⁸ where humans talk to each other, act together within spaces and infrastructures designed for this purpose. This soil then becomes a ground of a different kind, a true *ground for living together*.²⁹ Therefore, the geological and ecological problem of soil erosion in Haiti remains one of the aspects of the philosophical problem concerning the construction of a common world since the time of colonization.

World-making to reforest the Earth

The fracture of the world between plains and mountains and between city dwellers and peasants that is at work in deforestation is not found exclusively in Haiti. On a global scale, the Earth’s deforestation also attests to this lack of a common world, where the violence of deforestation is externalized to a distant country on the other side of the horizon. Haiti’s reforestation policies and the

massacre of the parc de la Visite demonstrate that the realization of a shared Earth, the realization of an *inhabiting-with* has not given rise to an *inhabiting-together*. The realization of being present with others on the same Earth has not given rise to an increase in dialogue between urban dwellers and peasants, between the minister for the environment and charcoal men, between the residents of the plains and the inhabitants of the country-offside. On the contrary, the realization that there is a physical and ecological interdependence between these worlds has resulted in this fracture being reinforced, an extension of the domination and sacrifices of the peasants: a reforestation without the world.

In Haiti, as elsewhere, reforestation without the world is one iteration of a Noah's ark ecology that uses the pretext of an environmental flood to deny the world to those who are already marginalized. Peasants must be removed from the image of Haiti's parks and wooded areas. Yet, this is precisely where a common world is at stake. This is precisely where real political inventiveness is needed. Is it not possible to imagine ways of being together that would ensure these people have a dignified place in the world? Is it not possible to imagine that these peasants, like their Maroon ancestors, could be established as the forests' first line of defense, taking part in a common enterprise? When was it decided that there are too many peasants on a land which they know better than anyone else? Deforestation concerns more than the preservation of land and biodiversity and the integrity of ecosystems; deforestation raises the question of the possibility of a world in the wake of colonization and enslavement. This is the alternative I wanted to point out here. Either reforestation policies will continue to maintain this rupture between the countryside and the cities, between the hillsides and the plains, between peasants and city dwellers, and between Haiti and the world. Or the responses to this deforestation and erosion will become the levers used to compose a world where everyone inhabits it together, where the human dignity of the Haitian peasants is recognized. This appeal resounded in my interview with Mr Antoine, one of the peasant farmers of the parc de la Visite in 2012: "They [the government] have to make room for us so that we can continue to live, because *sé moun nou yé* [we are people]!"

7

Paradise or Hell in the Nature Preserves (Puerto Rico)

Paraíso (1797)

In 1797, the Brazilian ship *Paraíso* sailed into the waters of the Gulf of Benin and anchored off the city of Bagadry in present-day Nigeria. On the bridge, Captain João de Deus and the entire Christian crew rehearse the daily acts that will make the dreamed garden appear in this kingdom here below. This marine paradise once again announced the end of the world for those who do not have the same gods and whose color is foreign to Eden. Prices are negotiated, villages are raided, and Black skins are stamped. Under the bridge, 258 souls were led into the underground paths of the hold. Twenty-eight were lost there in the Atlantic-Lethe. Upon the return to Bahia, quenched by the Black waters of the plantations and gently rocked by the faint Red breath, the *Paraíso* encloses her magnificent garden on the blazing earth of an infernal world.

Paradise: a colonial laboratory

Western colonists and environmentalists find common ground in the search for paradise on Earth that conceals the other's existence. Added to the violence inherent in considering indigenous bodies, colonial spaces, local lands, and tropical nature to be a paradise for Westerners is the epistemic, imaginary, and political exclusion of these bodies, spaces, lands, and natures from a common belonging to the Earth and the world. They become the others beyond the sea, *the ones overseas*. The pursuit of paradise on Earth is only the transformation of one part of the Earth into life-size *laboratories* of modernity, into colonies. Even before the laboratory's knowledge production and scientific experiments, it is a place isolated from the world, where a relationship of power takes place between a laboratory technician and an object, a material, a human-animal, or a non-human one, *where what is not allowed outside is permitted within*. Inside the laboratory, morality and justice, if not suspended, are at the very least weakened. It is from this colonial and environmental connivance that Richard Grove points to the eighteenth-century invention of the Western environmental consciousness on the "islands of paradise," meaning within European tropical colonies. Grégory Quenet reminds us that the colonies played the role of a "laboratory for imaginaries, practices, and knowledge."¹ Protecting paradise on Earth morphed into a new Western civilizing mission, a new White man's burden that, having been shaken by the decolonizations of the twentieth century, is now being rediscovered with a new vigor and a new legitimacy through scientific advancement. We forget, however, that, in the colonial laboratory of paradise, the colonized, like guinea pigs, are enslaved to the desires of the laboratory technician.

Today this theme lingers in environmentalist writing that seeks to recover or defend paradise just as much as it lingers in the representations of the Caribbean and other former European colonies with regard to their landscapes, their bodies, or their status as tax havens.² One of the images most commonly associated with the Caribbean in the imaginaries of European and North American countries is that of white sandy beaches warmed by a sweet sun, dotted here and there with well-stocked coconut palms and wandering shade. There is also the luxuriant nature of wet forests, soothed by cheerful birdsong and gushing white rivers. This last image is perpetuated

today by the discourse of an “exceptional” biodiversity that has to be saved from careless and faceless hands. In the tropics, lagoons and mangroves offer themselves lasciviously to the eye and to the coming of the true historical actor. The inhabitants of these islands are reduced to servile-bodies carrying fish, rum, and marijuana, or as the object-bodies of sexual fantasies. This invented paradise is made up of lapped-at skin-springs, arborescent swollen breasts, and generous phallic woods. These fantasies about paradise, today embodied by hotel plantations on the coasts, coexist peacefully within poor countries, marked by food insecurity and profound violence. From Santo Domingo to Cuba, from Haiti to Curaçao, from Grenada to Puerto Rico, these paradises easily accommodate the ordeals of their surroundings.

Vieques: paradisiacal nature reserve or hell

The small island of Vieques, located off the coast of Puerto Rico, invites you to such a “paradise.” It has the shape of a long rectangle, measuring 34 kilometers long by 4 kilometers wide, and is part of the Puerto Rican Commonwealth, dependent upon the United States of America. Vieques is today renowned for its white sandy beaches, its two bioluminescent bays, and its nature reserve. Behind this image of paradise, however, lies the history of colonial and military domination by the United States. From 1941 to 2003, Vieques was used by the United States Navy for military purposes. The US Navy occupied 105 of the island’s 136 square kilometers, or more than three-quarters of its surface area, which were divided into two zones: a zone to the west reserved for ammunition storage and one to the east used as a bombing range. Vieques became a military laboratory and a testing area for weapons and bombs of all kinds, including napalm, military-grade flares, and depleted uranium weapons, while the 10,000 inhabitants remained confined to a narrow strip in the middle of the island.³ The French Navy was also invited to use Vieques for military exercises in December 1985. The island was bombed an average of 180 days a year. In 1998, 23,000 bombs were dropped on the island.⁴ The jobs that accompanied the US Navy’s presence in Vieques were not enough to make up for the hell endured by its inhabitants. For almost sixty years, the inhabitants had to live in a country that was bombed and exposed to soil contamination by

heavy metals from the munitions that were used or stored there and that posed serious health risks.

This situation lasted until 1999, when David Sanes, a Vieques resident employed by the US Navy, was accidentally killed by a bomb. Following Sanes's death, demonstrations were held by the local population, but also by the inhabitants of the main island of Puerto Rico, attracting the support of US and Puerto Rican personalities such as Robert Kennedy, Jr., Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, and Willie Colón. On February 21st, 2000, with the support of religious authorities, the largest demonstration in the history of Puerto Rico at the time was held in San Juan and brought together between 85,000 and 150,000 people.⁵ On May 4th, 2000, more than 200 people who had been occupying the bombing site for more than a year were cleared out and arrested by federal authorities.⁶ In the face of these demonstrations and international pressure, the US Navy withdrew from the western part of the island in 2001 and from the eastern part in 2003, closing the Roosevelt Roads military base on the main island.

At the end of the bombing operations, the US government made a decision that was surprising, to say the least. While the population hoped for the return of the land that had been occupied by the navy, accompanied by a complete clean-up, the land was handed over to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the purpose of turning it into a "nature" reserve. The 32.5 square kilometers of the western part of Vieques used by the navy were returned to various local and federal agencies: 17 square kilometers to the municipality of Vieques, 3 square kilometers to the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico, and 12.5 square kilometers to the Department of the Interior, which immediately turned it into a national wildlife refuge managed by the USFWS. In 2003, the 59 square kilometers of the eastern portion were turned over to USFWS, expanding the refuge's area to nearly 72 square kilometers. The land and adjacent waters of this reserve are now home to four endangered species of plants and ten endangered species of animals.⁷ Since then, the beaches of this refuge have been nesting sites for leatherback turtles, hawksbill turtles, and green turtles.

Colonial heterotopia

This a priori paradoxical intimate cohabitation between the fantasy of places that are paradise with the significant destruction of

ecosystems and human life is at the heart of a founding principle of the colonization of the Americas: *colonial heterotopia*. Michel Foucault defines heterotopias in opposition to utopias as “absolutely different” [*absolument autres*] places.⁸ In heterotopia, places (*topos*) are assigned uses and practices that are different (*hetero*) from those of a geographical center or of a norm. Paradise or hell, the Caribbean colony is the laboratory where everything is permitted and morally admissible, unlike in the metropolitan center. While slavery was prohibited in the European territory of France from 1315, it was legally regulated in the French colonies until 1848.⁹ The birth of the Enlightenment was accompanied by the intensification of the most atrocious forms of dehumanization.¹⁰ This same colonial heterotopia is characteristic of the Plantationocene, which accepts a violent, racist, and misogynistic organization inside of the plantation while condemning it at the point of sale for its products. This is the underside of Western democratic societies pointed out by Achille Mbembe, the politics of enmity that promotes justice here in order to spread injustice there.¹¹ This colonial heterotopia was manifest in attempts to re-create Eden in the colonies of the Americas and Asia, giving rise to a series of botanical gardens such as Pierre Poivre’s Monplaisir garden in Mauritius. Beyond their beauty and scientific interest, these gardens were concomitant with conquest and enslavement. While celebrating Puerto Rico’s and Vieques’ idyllic beaches for tourism, there was no hesitation by the United States when it came to dropping their bombs of Agent Orange on Puerto Rico’s El Yunque forest and napalm on Vieques.

The violence of the blank page

The desires for endless riches and the desires for protection within the gardens of paradise transform the humans and non-humans of the Americas’ landscapes into blank, mute pages offered to the ink of colonial fantasies. This blank page [*page blanche*] acts like the veil described by W. E. B. Du Bois, which denied the world to those who were already there and which permeates the landscape with its presence.¹² This blank page imposed by colonization and brought back by modern environmentalism leads to a triple erasure of the world. Firstly, this erasure of the world is at work in *an environmentalist understanding of the reserves*, the refusal to meet with others, to recognize their histories and their places, as

well as their ecumenal practices. Reserves are therefore associated with the twofold process of evicting indigenous peoples from the places where they live and inventing a new understanding of these lands as “virgin” or “wild.” As was the case in Yosemite Park, the American invention of nature as a *wilderness* (a wild land without human beings) led to the expulsion of the Amerindians and the erasure of their history.¹³ The preservation of the environment as justification for colonization was explicit in the case of the French colonization of the Maghreb in the nineteenth century. Diana Davis shows that the French Empire completely fabricated a narrative about the destruction of nature at the hands of the indigenous in order to legitimize French colonial expansion.¹⁴ The genocides of the Amerindians and the matricides described in the first part of this book are the violent features of this erasure of the world.

The Vieques reserve was explicitly associated with the *expulsion of the local inhabitants* through the action of the US Navy. This seems all the more peculiar because it is difficult to deny the presence of human hands at work on the land that had been bombed and damaged for sixty years. Yet this is precisely what the United States did through the “Spence Act,” which turned land that had been used as a bombing site into a refuge for wildlife, a “wilderness area.”¹⁵ In a 1980 report following environmental critiques made by the then governor, Romero Barceló, the navy defended its practice by stating that the environmental impacts of their activities, including soil erosion at certain points and some damage to vegetation, were relatively minimal and could simply be mitigated.¹⁶ With regard to wildlife, apart from some indirect effects related to habitat destruction or losses due to “misplaced” munitions, the navy argued that its presence and activity had been beneficial, creating a “sanctuary effect.”¹⁷ By preventing locals from entering these areas, the US Navy claims to have had a positive impact on biodiversity, an impact that is then logically extended by the nature reserve.

The designation of land that was bombed for sixty years as a nature reserve made it possible to conceal both the domination carried out by the US Navy and the resistance to that domination by the inhabitants of Vieques. Some members of the US Fish and Wildlife Service enthusiastically describe how birds took up residence in the craters left by the bombing or in the bunkers where munitions were stored. These traces that were stamped into the soil of Vieques by the developments of the greatest military power

on Earth, the cause of a series of wars and suffering throughout the world, are hidden by the naive harmonious landscape of birds drinking at a pond. Yet, traces of the world's violence remain. This land is polluted and is not safe for people to enter. This reproduces the astronaut-humanity ecology of Noah's ark where the Earth that is to be preserved is thought about from the perspective of an unlivable place. The inhabitants continue to be driven from the land and confined to this narrow strip at the center of the island. This is *de facto* exclusion because the dangerous pollution makes it impossible to go there. The local inhabitants and authorities are politically excluded from land management and from decisions related to their use. In this sense, for the local population, the internal transfer from the US Navy to the US Fish and Wildlife Service was seen as an extension of a colonial land grab.

So-called paradise is established by expulsion from the world. While nature reserves are important tools in a panoply of ecological actions, they are transformed into hell as soon as they are cleared of worldly concern. Environmentalism, which focuses only on what happens within the boundaries of the reserves, therefore finds itself at an impasse. It conceals the world, the very world that made these reserves necessary. In Puerto Rico, as elsewhere, a movement for environmental justice has emerged from these waters, forcefully echoing the voices of those who made this island a Mother-Earth.¹⁸

8

The Masters' Chemistry (Martinique and Guadeloupe)

Cavendish (1757)

In the port of Liverpool, on June 6th, 1757, the British ship *Cavendish* set sail for the Atlantic coast of Africa. Like the tobacco of the same name, the *Cavendish* compressed 170 leaf-bodies within the wood of the slave ship so that a Negro material, moist and sweet, could be extracted that would perfume the plantations. Captured en route by the French, the ship was brought to Guadeloupe, and 151 dried-out bodies were unloaded as colonial manure to be spread on the hillsides of Basse-Terre. At the end of sugar cane's reign, another Cavendish, the dessert banana variety, docks in Guadeloupe. The Cavendish carries within its flesh working-class miseries and racist hierarchies, misogynistic warehouses and shaded pain, toxic storms and collapsed landscapes, in order to extract in return a profitable, tender, and savory taste that enlivens the palates of the North. From catastrophes to progress, the masters' chemistry has transformed the Earth into a resource and the world into a Plantation.



Figure 7 Banana plantation in Martinique, 2017. Photo © Malcom Ferdinand.

The toxic condition of the Plantationocene

The Plantationocene reduced the world to a market of consumable resources when it made the plantation the principal mode of inhabiting the Earth. Human and non-human inhabitants find themselves enslaved to technologies that are used to transform the Earth into resources, including the use of toxic chemicals in industrial agriculture. Apart from the consequences for the climate caused by greenhouse gas emissions, the Plantationocene reveals itself through the global spread of toxic substances used as technologies for governing nature. The European program for the regulation of toxic chemicals, REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals), lists more than 143,000 chemical substances that are declared for commercial use.¹ Present in the soil, in the water, in animal and vegetable foods, in the air, and in our own bodies, they are neither visible nor perceptible through the sense of smell. However, these compounds pose significant health risks for humans and non-humans.² A World Health Organization (WHO) study attributes 4.9 million of the deaths in the year 2004 (or 8.6 percent of total deaths that year) to chemicals and 86 million years of life lost due to the diseases they cause.³ The Stockholm Resilience Center has identified the spread of these toxic chemicals as one of the nine limits to safe conditions for human life on Earth.⁴ Since the industrial revolutions of the nineteenth century and the development of the chemical industry, these products generated by human activity have shaped one of the conditions for human and non-human life, *the toxic condition of the Plantationocene*.

While everyone is exposed to these contaminated ecosystems, not everyone has contributed to it in the same way, not everyone suffers the same consequences, and not everyone has the same means of protecting themselves. In particular, there remain groups of wealthy masters whose financial interests coincide with the long-term contamination of the Earth. *The masters' chemistry* refers to this configuration of colonial inhabitation where the toxic condition is both the consequence of the capitalist exploitation of these ecosystems by these masters and the cause that reinforces the domination of these territories by the same masters.

Chlordecone in the French Antilles: toxic forms of violence and domination

The contamination of Martinique and Guadeloupe by an organochlorine compound called chlordecone ($C_{10}Cl_{10}O$) (also known as Kepone) also tells the overall story of the toxic condition of the Plantationocene and its masters' chemistry. A member of the same family as DDT, chlordecone (CLD) is a compound manufactured first in the United States, and then later in France, which has been used as a pesticide in more than twenty-five countries for domestic pest control against ants, tobacco beetle, or cockroaches, and for agricultural pest control against the Colorado potato beetle in Europe and against the banana weevil in the tropical latitudes of the Americas and Africa.⁵ The use of CLD from 1972 to 1993 in the banana plantations of the French Antilles resulted in the contamination of agricultural lands for a period of time ranging from sixty years to several centuries.⁶ One-sixth of the global production of a cancer-causing compound – also an endocrine disruptor – was spread over 20,000 hectares of agricultural land on two small, densely populated islands.⁷ This contamination affects all the ecosystems of Martinique and Guadeloupe. CLD is found in soils, aquifers, mangroves, and coastal waters, in certain agricultural and animal foodstuffs, and in fishery products. This contamination also constitutes a health problem. Chronic exposure to CLD decreases the gestation period, increases the risk of a premature birth,⁸ negatively affects cognitive and motor development in early childhood,⁹ and promotes the onset *and* recurrence of prostate cancer.¹⁰

Much more than mere environmental contamination, CLD in the French Antilles is a trace of violence and domination. Violence and social inequalities appear first with regard to the agricultural workers who were forced by the supporters of production to use these pesticides, often without protection, in order to keep their jobs. In 1974, one of the largest strikes by agricultural workers in Martinique demanded an end to the use of chlordecone and other products and that protective gloves and suits be provided. However, these demands were rejected in the agreements that ended the strike, and the workers continued to be the first people exposed to this carcinogenic compound.¹¹ Violence against workers is the other side of violence against non-humans and biodiversity on the plantations. The result is a violence that is “slow” and multidimensional against

humans and non-humans, slowly percolating through the pores of the Caribbean ecosystems, destroying the quality of the landscape and reducing the quality of life for its inhabitants.¹²

Against the backdrop of a colonial past that exists between these former colonies and the French state, still marked today by profound social and structural inequalities between *hexagonale* France and its overseas territories, CLD in the French Antilles tells the story of environmental domination as written on countless landscapes of the Earth: the story of the ability of a few to impose toxic living conditions on all inhabitants for several decades or even centuries. This is more than just the market exerting pressure, because ecological domination means a pure and simple imposition of a toxic life.¹³ Life in a contaminated country is imposed on the inhabitants of these islands by the agricultural industry, the governments, and state services that have supported these choices. In the French Antilles, the majority of this agricultural industry is controlled by a small number of people belonging to the Béké community, who themselves claim to be descended from the first slave-making colonists of the Antilles.¹⁴ The reenactment in post-slavery societies of ecological conflicts between people who recognize themselves as descendants of slave-making colonists and people who recognize themselves as descendants of the enslaved only makes the violence more bitter.¹⁵ CLD contamination is not an environmental accident that might be the unfortunate combination of a particular compound and a particular land, as implied in a 2009 parliamentary report.¹⁶ It stems mainly from the colonial inhabitation of the Earth that transforms the world into a Plantation. By transforming these islands into plantations, this colonial inhabitation has tied the Antilleans and their futures to the plantations.¹⁷

A toxic power grab that strengthens colonial inhabitation

The masters' chemistry also manifests itself in the way contamination is managed to the advantage of those who caused the contamination, which is the case with CLD, which means that this *chemistry reinforces the strength of the masters*. Although the banana farmers were the ones who caused this contamination, the first economic and social consequences were borne by the other agricultural and piscicultural industries. The spread of CLD to every watershed where the banana

plantations were located negatively impacted the potential for other farmers to produce other healthy crops that would offer a subsistence agriculture based on root vegetables and livestock breeding, as well as negatively impacting fish farmers. A series of measures taken by state agencies to protect the population resulted in the prohibition of certain crops or products according to the risks of contamination. Since CLD is deeply rooted in contaminated soils, root vegetable crops are more likely to contain traces of CLD. Therefore, as early as 2003, state agencies required that all farmers that wished to grow root vegetables carry out a soil analysis beforehand in order to check for the presence of CLD. Growing root vegetables was prohibited above a certain threshold. Likewise, river fishing was banned in 2008, as was fishing on certain parts of the coastline of the two islands in 2009. Farmers, stockbreeders, and fishermen, who themselves had never used CLD, had to stop their work, change careers, or take early retirement. In the domestic sphere, the Creole gardens cherished by the population also became contaminated in some localities.

However, due to its strong affinity for soils and its low migration in plant stems, CLD is not found in bananas. The commodity that caused the contamination of these islands, the banana, is itself not contaminated by CLD. The presence of CLD in the soil therefore does not impact banana production. This means that on contaminated land where it is no longer possible to grow a healthy crop of root vegetables, a food source for the Antilleans, it is possible to produce bananas for export. It therefore becomes more profitable to continue on contaminated land the same banana monoculture that caused the contamination than it is to put in place any method of decontamination and move towards a subsistence agriculture. The chemical properties of CLD would favor, if not the development, at least the maintenance of the same agricultural industry that lies at the root of the contamination of the French Antilles: the Cavendish banana. Planters, as Simone Schwartz-Bart recounts in her novel *Ti Jean L'horizon*, seem to be able "to find some new assurance in the midst of disaster."¹⁸

The masters' chemistry and the lie of an astronaut-humanity

Whether it is a matter of other dangerous pesticides, waste from the production of fossil fuel energy, nuclear waste, or inorganic particles,

the violence of this toxic condition has covered the world. Although plantations seem far removed from the centers of power, from cities and large metropolises, the Earth's human and non-human inhabitants, of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, remain enslaved to this violence. The chlordecone affair in the French Antilles reveals how difficult it is for societies, states, and governments to change course even after the disaster. The environmentalist understanding of "pollution," reducing such contaminations to simple technical problems, gives credence to the notion that the solutions will be of an equally technical nature. Maintained in the image of the so-called protective equipment that is used by those who apply pesticides is the lie of an astronaut-humanity that will be protected from various kinds of deaths, from the pesti-*cides* that are poured onto the plantations.¹⁹ Consequently, continuing an economic model passed down by the colonial constitution of these societies that enslaved these islands and their inhabitants to the Plantation is declared to be healthy, simply by changing production techniques. It is true that banana farmers have halved the use of pesticides, herbicides, and nematicides since the 2000s. However, forty years after the first pollution alarms regarding CLD were raised by researchers from INRA (the French national institute for agronomic research), research into methods of cleaning up organochlorine pollution has still not provided a "solution."²⁰ In 2018, it was estimated that more than 90 percent of the inhabitants are contaminated.²¹ Moreover, CLD is only one of the many chemical compounds used in the French Antilles. Until at least 2015, other potentially carcinogenic compounds have been used on banana and sugar-cane plantations.²² Today, Martinique and Guadeloupe are among the French departments where the use of pesticides – including glyphosate – is the most intense, where the lie of an astronaut-humanity is most zealously instilled.²³

A group of wealthy masters have an interest in maintaining colonial inhabitation through this chemistry, even if this leads the world to shipwreck. Each time a health hazard of a pesticide is advertised, the sails are sewn up and the hatches repaired. Sometimes crews are replaced and other Negroes are taken on board. The environmentalist approach to depollution is then used to maintain the course set for a Plantation-like world, as with the slave ship *Cavendish*. Yet, one can hear erupting from inside the hold the anger of the enslaved and the demands for justice by the inhabitants who have been impacted in their bodies. In Martinique and

Guadeloupe, complaints have been lodged against the French state in the chlordecone case since 2000 and are still awaiting judgment. NGOs and collectives such as EnVie-Santé, L'Association pour la Sauvegarde et la réhabilitation de la Faune des Antilles (ASFA) in Guadeloupe, the "Zéro chlordécone" collective, and the associations Assaupamar, Écologie urbaine, and Mun in Martinique are determined to bring about a political change in course.²⁴

This story should not only be the concern of overseas French citizens who have been treated with contempt. Imbued with the imaginary of the colonial culture of the Third Republic, the markets of France, for more than a century, have carried this fruit away from the colonial and postcolonial plantations of the former French Empire (the French Antilles, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, and Guinea).²⁵ More than 90 percent of the bananas produced with CLD were happily consumed by French people living in the *Hexagone*. Transatlantic alliances remain to be created that will open up another way of living together, of inhabiting these islands as well as the Earth.

9

A Colonial Ecology: At the Heart of the Double Fracture

Wildfire (1859–60)

Since 1492, an unbridled fire has roamed the Earth, ravaging bodies and landscapes along the way. Brave souls, on one side or the other, try to restrain it without speaking to each other. Some protect virgin forests, but pay little attention to the ebony forests in flames. Others carry Black bodies to safety, without worrying about the furnace of the plantations. In this fracture, the fire persists. Here it reappears on December 16th, 1859, in New York City, the day that the ship *Wildfire* began a trade that had been forbidden for fifty-one years. Along the banks of the Congo River, this raging fire engulfed 650 tree-bodies, scattering the ashes of people within the somber Negro hold. 143 incandescences were consumed in this way on the gray embers of the Atlantic. Seized off the coast of Cuba for its illicit trade, the *Wildfire* was taken to Key West in Florida, finally freeing the 507 survivors on April 26th, 1860. In August, at the instigation of the American Colonization Society, the remaining 258 pieces of burnt wood that reached African soil intensified the burning plantations of Liberia.¹ In the absence of an alliance, this fire continues to feed the colonial hearth of the world.

The modern double fracture is maintained by the environmentalist responses to the ecological tempest. Not only does this approach engender a pattern of violence and refusal of the world, but it is also counterproductive because it obscures the socio-economic inequalities and forms of political domination that have caused the environmental destruction being condemned. By separating environmental critiques on the one hand from antislavery and anticolonial critiques on the other, environmentalism embodies a *colonial ecology*: an ecology whose function it is to preserve colonial inhabitation and the forms of human and non-human domination that come with it. The environmentalist approach to the Anthropocene therefore reproduces both a *colonial oikos* and the holds of the world. The lack of dialogue and alliances between these two movements is precisely what fuels the modern fire that is devouring the world, this *wildfire*.

Slave-making ecology: environmentalism under the condition of slavery

On one side, a way of thinking about the preservation of nature took shape in the eighteenth century as a reaction to the environmental destruction in the colonies, but without concerning itself with the injustices constitutive of the colonial world. Soil impoverishment and soil erosion reduced crop yields, while deforestation reduced the supply of wood that was necessary for the workshops to produce sugar and rum. In order to preserve the soil, the planters extended the growing season, developed farms for the production of manure, and adopted soil-saving cultivation techniques.² In response to deforestation, efforts were made from the 1670s to improve the efficiency of the process for sugar-cane transformation, notably making use of the fibrous remnants of the sugar cane that had been milled in Guadeloupe and Martinique as fuel (bagasse) in order to reduce the demand for wood.³ Similarly, the first state forest-conservation policies were implemented in the Dutch, French, and British colonies. For the historian Richard Grove, the origins of modern environmentalism are to be found in these colonial experiments far from metropolitan centers of thought, and particularly in the actions of the French missionary, botanist, and spice grower Pierre Poivre.

As the intendant of the Isle of France (present-day Mauritius) from 1767 to 1772, Poivre deplored the actions of men guided by

the lure of gain, who deforested the island leaving only "arid lands, abandoned by the rains, and exposed without shelter to storms and scorching sunshine."⁴ Inspired by the physiocrats and helped by his companions Bernardin de Saint-Pierre and Philibert Commerson, Poivre put in place conservation policies for the island's forests that aimed at conserving the region's rainfall. Because of the explicit link between deforestation and local climate change, Poivre is presented as one of the precursors of modern environmentalism, echoing the contemporary fight against climate change.⁵ However, in celebrating the pioneering actions of this botanist, what is overlooked is the fact that this conservation of the forest was fully part of a slave-making colony.

This truncated understanding of ecology has allowed a myth about Pierre Poivre's concern for enslaved people to persist. Certainly, Poivre devotes a few sentences in his writings and speeches to the critique of slavery. "The Isle of France ... should be cultivated by free hands," he declared to the White inhabitants of the island in 1767.⁶ He even championed the idea that slavery was contrary to good cultivation practices regarding nature and less profitable than free labor.⁷ Under the yoke of their executioners, the enslaved would, in fact, be bad farmers. Yet, Poivre also declared the enslaved to be "workers who have become necessary" to the colony.⁸ By introducing measures promoting instruction in the Catholic religion, he hoped that the enslaved would "believe that they themselves are French" and would "serve their Masters faithfully, as their benefactors; and [that] in spite of the horrors of slavery, they would be able to be happy, by preserving that precious freedom of the soul"⁹

Pierre Poivre was far from being an advocate for the emancipation of enslaved people and the equality of Black people, as he was resolutely in favor of slavery. As an agent of the *Compagnie française des Indes orientales*, Poivre bought nineteen captives from Timor in 1754, opening trade relations with this Portuguese colony, and was proud that he had found a cheaper labor force and one less prone to *marronage*.¹⁰ As intendant for the Isle of France, he was responsible for the conduct of the slave trade, negotiating the lowest prices for human beings in Madagascar, the East African coast, and the Indies in order to increase their numbers in Mauritius. Personally, Poivre owned eighty-eight people who labored to grow spices in the garden of his house, which was called "*Monplaisir*."¹¹ When he left in 1772, Poivre sold his *habitation* to the king,

including his tools, furniture, and the “*Camp des Noirs*,” giving the king his eighty-eight slaves and fifty horned beasts.¹²

Complementing the tree conservation ordinances in Mauritius, Poivre’s “slave police” ordinance, which reiterated that it was necessary to instruct the enslaved in the Catholic religion and reduced the number of lashes allowed to thirty,¹³ was a *conservation policy for keeping the enslaved in slavery*, contributing to (in his own words) their “multiplication.”¹⁴ Poivre’s insistence on the cultivation of food grains such as rice, rather than growing export crops such as coffee or cotton, was intended to feed colonial troops on their way to expand the kingdom eastward with the goal of establishing other plantations there. The abundance of trees, enslaved persons, and food was to be used to preserve the kingdom’s colonies and plantations. As a colonist, master, and intendant of a slave-making island colony, Pierre Poivre’s environmentalism and other soil preservation measures were fully in keeping with a *Christian slave-making ecology*, the horizon of which was the preservation of the colonial inhabitation of the Earth and its slaveries.

Plantationary emancipation: an abolition of slavery on the condition of the plantation

On the other side, one of the consequences of the modern double fracture is the idea that slavery concerned only the bodies of those who were enslaved. This truncated understanding of slavery resulted in thinking about *antislavery* and *abolition* in a way that dissociated them from colonial inhabitation and its consequences for ecosystems. Certainly, in a colonial world where the empires, monarchies, and republics of Europe and the Americas agreed to treat Black people as Negro material, the abolition of the slave trade and slavery were major political and moral advances. From the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, with Haiti in 1793, England in 1833, France in 1848, and Brazil in 1888, the battles and struggles to win these abolitions were necessary. Yet these abolitionist movements paid little attention to the ecological fate of the colonies. On the contrary, these movements made abolition subordinate to the continued colonial exploitation of the land through the Plantation, giving rise to the paradox of a *plantationary emancipation*.

Of course, abolitionists such as Granville Sharp and Victor Schœlcher were well aware that the enslavement of Black people

was intimately linked to a plantation *economy*.¹⁵ They deconstructed the discourse of the slave-making planters who made the enslavement of Black people a doubly natural necessity for the survival of the plantation colonies. This discourse presented Black people as “uncivilized” sub-humans who were naturally servile and naturally suited to work the land located in tropical regions. In response, the theoretical work of antislavery advocates and abolitionists was twofold, corresponding to two major conceptual gestures.

The first, begun in the eighteenth century, consisted in *defending*, and even *establishing*, a place for enslaved Black people within the human family. These actions were either inspired by an evangelical egalitarianism that followed the example set by the Quakers among the English and the Americans or by an equality based upon natural law, like that found among the French in the works of Denis Diderot and Condorcet.¹⁶ This gesture gave rise to speeches and essays of “negrology” that aimed to *demonstrate* the humanity of Black people and to attest that they could be educated, civilized, instructed in religion, and contribute to the prosperity of colonial societies when they were freed from their enslaved condition.¹⁷ Despite the political acuity located in these efforts to defend enslaved Negroes, they still share an unjust philosophical postulate with slavers that claims the legal, political, and moral evaluation of slavery depends upon an inquiry into the assumed nature of the Negroes. Paradoxically, they perpetuate the imperialism of ontology, which subordinates ethics to questions such as “What are they?,” “Are they men and women?,” and “Can they become Christians?”¹⁸ From Josiah Wedgwood’s medallion, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Abbé Grégoire’s *De la littérature des Nègres*, or William Wilberforce’s speeches, all functioned to justify moral considerations concerning Black people and to prove that they belonged to the human race by demonstrating their goodness or their intelligence.¹⁹ This gesture made it possible to present the enslavement of Black people to White Europeans and White Catholic Americans as an injustice and an attack on the principle of the natural equality of human beings. To those who thought slavery to be indispensable to the colonies, Schœlcher replied: “Perish the colonies, rather than a principle.”²⁰

The second gesture was to *unbind* the enslavement of Black people from the plantation economy. This gesture was helped by a development in the economic thinking of the physiocrats and

liberals, who demonstrated that a servile labor force was inefficient compared to a free labor force.²¹ This was most visible in the international abolitionist movement, marked by the creation of abolition societies in the United States, England, and France at the end of the eighteenth century. Strategically and politically, this unbinding exercise made it possible for two interests to coexist that had previously been understood to be contradictory: on the one hand, Black people's humanity and their freedom in principle and, on the other, the pursuit of colonial inhabitation through the intensive production of the plantations.²² Condorcet and Sismondi proposed that the plantations be divided up and the formerly enslaved be given access to land, but their dissonant voices had little effect.²³ At the end of his book *Des colonies françaises: abolition immédiate de l'esclavage*, Schœlcher reconciles the abolition of slavery and the Plantation by promoting free labor: "The colonies must not perish, they will not perish. ... It is not true that free labor is impossible in the tropics, it is only a question of knowing how to obtain it ... For us, the whole question boils down to this: ORGANIZING FREE LABOR."²⁴

This unbinding exercise gave rise to unusual alliances that saw some pro-slavery planters become abolitionists, finding that there was the possibility of a prosperous extension of their plantations in abolition.²⁵ Paradoxically, *the abolition of slavery became an ally of the plantations of the old masters*. The abolition decrees in France and England that "compensated" planters for their "losses" were intended to continue the plantation enterprise of exploiting nature, non-humans, and humans. The new freemen were kept under the economic control of their former masters because land was not redistributed and compensation was not provided. By penalizing vagrancy and restricting access to landownership, the decrees that followed the abolition of slavery instituted forms of "bridled wage-earning" [*salarial bridé*] that hindered the development of a peasantry and partially fastened the new "freemen" to their old plantations and workshops, so that they continued working for their old masters.²⁶ Once again France and England resorted to indentured servitude in order to make up for the reduction in the labor force that resulted from the new freemen's resistance. As early as 1853, this policy brought a labor force over from Africa, China, and India that was in part servile and that took over the work of the formerly enslaved on the plantations for a period of three to six years.²⁷ From indentured servitude to

the organization of discriminatory migrations of overseas citizens towards *hexagonale* France (BUMIDOM) to the annual aid given to large farmers and the hypertrophy of the civil service, *the political history of the French Antilles is the history of the pursuit of the Plantation*.²⁸

The same association between abolition and the Plantation was at work in Haiti. The Haitian Revolution (1791–1804), which combined antislavery action and anticolonialism by Cécile Fatiman, Dutty Boukman, Toussiant Louverture, and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, among others, did not produce a radical change in the relationship of the exploitation of the land by the plantation. Following the abolition of slavery, and against the wishes of the formerly enslaved, and in the face of numerous protests by women who already wanted to expand their subsistence farming, Polverel and Louverture imposed labor on the plantations again. Louverture did not hesitate in 1795 and 1796 to use his troops to suppress the rebellions of the formerly enslaved, who saw in this action a return to slavery. Louverture, the owner of several plantations, explicitly associated emancipation from slavery with the continuation of the Plantation, facilitating in certain places the return of some White colonists from areas formerly under British control.²⁹ Louverture was caught up in the paradox set by the European and American colonial powers, believing that restoring the productivity of the same plantations that had enslaved his people remained the guarantee of their freedom in the face of the international demand for sugar and coffee.³⁰ Haiti's first Constitution, of July 8th, 1801 – still a colony at the time – legally enshrined the continuation of the Plantation as a structuring principle for society, claiming it could not “suffer the slightest interruption,” and thereby legitimizing every measure the governor would take to ensure its cultivation by the farmers and workers.³¹

Finally, let us remember that, in principle, the abolition of slavery allowed for the political participation only of formerly enslaved men. Formerly enslaved women were not allowed to vote in spite of their important participation in the struggles against slavery, thereby maintaining unequal relations between formerly enslaved men and women.³² While the abolition of the slave trade and slavery were fundamental political, social, and moral advances for the world, both the new forms of post-slavery servitude inherent to the misogynistic plantation system and the destruction of ecosystems linked to the intensive exploitation of non-humans were left unresolved.

This *abolition without ecology* does not call colonial inhabitation into question at all, nor does it call into question the inherent forms of the Earth's exploitation or the exploitation of non-humans. Plantationary emancipation and abolition without ecology take place on the same horizon: the continuation of the slave-making and misogynistic plantation. In this way, *the preservation of colonial inhabitation and its plantations was the condition for the abolition of the slave trade and the enslavement of Black people in the Americas.*

Two critical discourses concerning the modern colonial world are present here, but they do not speak to each other. On the one side, a movement for the preservation of nature that readily accepts the preservation of the forests against the background of slavery and the slave trade: *a slave-making ecology*. On the other side, an abolitionist current that worked for the emancipation of the enslaved from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, ignoring the environmental degradation caused by colonization to the side: *an abolition of slavery on the condition that the colonial plantation continues*. A *plantationary emancipation* where the chains of slavery were broken while the formerly enslaved were kept within the enslaving universe of their old masters' plantations.³³ Some abolitionists even envisaged an imperial extension of plantations through the colonization of Africa.³⁴ This was the path taken by the French Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when, supported by a colonial science, it imposed on the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania colonial plantations of cotton, rubber, coffee, cocoa, oilseeds, and bananas, as well as the farming of livestock and the mining of minerals and fossil resources on colonized lands.³⁵ These plantations enslaved all the indigenous people through the republican organization of the forced labor of men, women, and children, the continuation of domestic slavery, and their share of heinous punishments.³⁶ Land, human, and non-human were merged into a single Negro material that was to be exploited for the profit of metropolitan business elites. Paradoxically, the abolition of slavery in the colonies, as well as forest conservation, contributed to the preservation of colonial inhabitation and the global pursuit of the Plantation under several forms. Abolitionism and environmentalism come together in the same patriarchal, Christian, and racist *colonial ecology* that protects the interests of the colonists and enslaving masters profiting from the plantations.

A fracture between anticolonialism and modern environmentalism

Decolonization in the Americas suffered from the same modern double fracture. Because colonization and the colonial situation was understood to refer exclusively to the control of a foreign administration over an indigenous (or local) people, the various anticolonial movements of the eighteenth to the twentieth century essentially worked towards the recovery of a sovereignty proper to these peoples.³⁷ By dissociating the fate of landscapes and ecosystems from how colonialism is understood, anticolonialism developed without altering the relationship of intensive exploitation of the land. This has often translated into the desire of becoming the master in place of the master, of being the one who profits from colonial inhabitation.

This was explicit in the anticolonialism of the White American colonists. The decolonization of the United States of America declared on July 4th, 1776, meant sovereignty was acquired without calling into question the colonial conquest of the Amerindian peoples or the enslavement of Black people. This was also the project of the "revolt of the Grands Blancs" in the French colony of Santo Domingo during the French Revolution, where, as Aimé Césaire notes, their anticolonialism was a hopeless failure because of their greed and desire to preserve color prejudice, the plantation, and slavery.³⁸ Independence movements at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the countries of Latin America were interested in the enslaved only as potential recruits for armed struggle. Although some slaves were freed after these wars, these independence movements did not fundamentally challenge the institution of slavery. In the cases of Brazil and Cuba, slavery will continue until the 1880s.³⁹ Anticolonialism did not call slavery or colonial inhabitation into question.

From this point of view, whether decolonization takes the form of independence, as it did in Jamaica, Guyana, Suriname, or Saint Lucia, or the form of statutory integration into the former colonial power, as it did in the French Antilles, the Dutch Antilles, the British and United States Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico, the Caribbean decolonizations of the post-World War II period did not call into question the foundations of colonial inhabitation, thereby reproducing plantation economies in modified forms.⁴⁰ The colonial

world has established a way of inhabiting the Earth that is based upon the destructive exploitation of the environment, where development is measured only in terms of GDP and economic gains, where emancipation from the colonial yoke is subordinated to the intensification of nature's exploitation. As if liberation has to come at the price of accelerating ecosystem destruction and the crimes and injustices carried out by dictatorships and authoritarian regimes that had been formed to ensure and profit from the colonial inhabitation of the Earth.

On the other side, at the end of the nineteenth century, a series of environmentalist movements began to emerge. From wilderness ideology to Greenpeace, from the Sierra Club to the WWF, from deep ecology to the Friends of the Earth and Sea Shepherd, several different environmental movements have paid as little attention to antiracist struggles as they have to anticolonial struggles.⁴¹ Despite all the literary and political merits of Rachel Carson's seminal book *Silent Spring*, the dangers of chemical pollution caused by the compulsive use of pesticides is totally disconnected from the civil rights struggles of Black Americans that took place at the same time as the book's publication.⁴² A group of people were mobilized against the exercise of violence against nature in the form of the exploitation of energy resources, the spreading of toxic compounds, and exposure to radioactive materials, but ignored the misery of an exploited working population, the exposure of Latin American migrants to these same pesticides in the fields of the United States that César Chávez made visible,⁴³ and the expulsion of peoples from their place on the Earth. Nuclear energy has had a major impact on colonized territories because of bomb tests like those that took place in the Marshall Islands under the control of the United States,⁴⁴ the islands of Polynesia and Algeria under French control, and the Maralinga lands in Australia,⁴⁵ and through the mining of uranium, as took place in the Navajo and Lakota territories in the United States, for which predominantly non-White peoples suffer the health consequences. Despite this nuclear colonialism, anticolonialism has not been a strong point for the antinuclear movement. But, today, the antinuclear movements of the Global North condemn the same colonization of their cities and countryside by nuclear power plants and their millennia-old waste.

Healing this fracture makes it possible to identify the two common aporias of abolitionism, anticolonialism, and environmentalism. The first aporia: prohibiting the domination and exploitation

of human beings by other human beings through slavery, the slave trade, and colonization is illusory while a social and economic organization is maintained whose function is the colonial exploitation of the Earth. Changing politics entails changing ecology. The second aporia: protecting the Earth's natural spaces and forests from the financial desires of certain human beings is illusory as long as we accept the servitude of other human beings through enslaving and colonial domination. Changing ecology entails changing society. These aporias constitute a colonial ecology, maintaining the artificial separation between the material becoming of the planet and non-humans and the social and political future of human beings.

The Anthropocene's colonial *oikos*

Environmentalism in turn produces an awareness of contemporary ecological catastrophes through this colonial ecology that is centered on the future of colonial inhabitation. As Machiavelli said about *fortuna* and floods, and Rousseau said about Providence and the 1755 Lisbon earthquake, the social and political constitution of natural disasters reflects above all the experiences and historicity of particular groups, their (in)actions and their ways of inhabiting the Earth.⁴⁶ Behind the global grand narrative of the Anthropocene, of a "Man" who disrupts ecosystem balance, and who, paradoxically, would also be its panacea, disasters are seen and narrated from the perspective of a geographical and temporal center, a singular home: a *colonial oikos*.

This *oikos* is revealed in many of the speeches of international institutions, in performances, in the media, in the arts, and in cultural productions. The representations of global and environmental catastrophes (caused or not by humans) that are found in the American blockbusters and seen by hundreds of millions of viewers are one possible point of entry. Symmetrical to the spectacular special effects, these scenes paint a fictitious picture of the worldship as it faces these storms, earthquakes, and tsunamis, with its operations, its (bio)diversity, its core family, and the "normal" ways of inhabiting the Earth. What is centered in films such as Roland Emmerich's *The Day After Tomorrow* and *2012* is a White family from the United States who own one or more cars and a large house in a quiet area of a big city. Heterosexual and often two-parent, this middle-class White family is presented as financially comfortable, with the parents holding positions in management, living in a

spacious house with a well-stocked refrigerator. The family is not overweight or disabled; they are in good health. Scenes from everyday life play out around the breakfast table, where everyday tenderness can be seen between the parents caring for their children, who are no longer babies, before they go off to their quality schools. In Christopher Nolan's film *Interstellar*, human beings can no longer grow food on the planet as it is plagued by dust storms, and this environmental crisis is experienced through the daily life of a middle-class White American family with two children.

In cosmopolitan cities such as Los Angeles and New York, the global environmental catastrophe is reduced to the experience of a singular *oikos* and its own time, the time of *its* possible collapse, with its way of life, and with its ways of inhabiting the Earth, but also its specific genealogy that points to the reproductive function of the home. This is the time when those who possess and master are at risk of losing their possessions and their mastery: *the time of the masters*. The story is told by the masters who are threatened. Consequently, what is deemed catastrophic at the global level is first and foremost the event that threatens *the reproduction of this home, its ethnic, social, and sexual composition, its income, and its way of inhabiting the Earth*. These Hollywood films use the whole plot to reveal how this home, along with its way of inhabiting the Earth, will survive the catastrophe and come out of it stronger. In *2012*, the mother's new husband dies and the parents who were divorced before the cataclysm get back together, returning the family to its "normal" composition. In *The Day After Tomorrow*, the father saves the son and the family is reunited. The problem is not that the Anthropocene and its multiple catastrophes are *also* experienced by healthy, middle-class, heterosexual, White families in affluent neighborhoods of large cosmopolitan cities in the United States. The problem arises when this *oikos* is presented to the *exclusion of others*. The *oikos* of other people, with other socio-economic and health realities, with other temporalities and genealogies that were threatened long before this catastrophe, are hidden in these narratives, just like they are in the Anthropocene.

The Negroes of the colonial *oikos*

Certainly, more and more of these disaster movies provide a place for minorities. Black, Latino, Indian, Asian, homosexual,

Aboriginal, or Arab characters are shown on screen. However, for the most part, these people are confined to the position of the house Negro that Malcolm X described and that I refer to here as the *Negro of the colonial oikos*. In a speech given at the University of Michigan on January 23rd, 1963, Malcolm X contrasted the actions of the *house Negro* and the *field Negro* facing a fire in the master's house.⁴⁷ The house Negro – who lives in the master's house – would rush to save the master and the house, giving up his own life if necessary, while the field Negro – who lives in a shack in the field – would pray that both the master and his house were lost. During the catastrophic event, the house Negro is the one who, possessing neither their own body nor their own house, functions to protect the masters' bodies and their houses, to preserve *the colonial oikos*. The minorities shown on screen in disaster movies which revolve around the central family are often presented in the same situation. Going beyond the assistance with which Black characters (who are referred to as magical Negroes) provide the White man, the Negroes of the colonial *oikos* protect a way of inhabiting the Earth. Their everyday family life, their shacks, and their temporalities are ignored, because their function is to preserve the central family's home at the cost of their “disposable” lives. *They are presented as off-ground, without a place on Earth, without an oikos of their own, serving the colonial oikos.*

In *The Day After Tomorrow*, the day-to-day life of the Black male student and that of the White female student with their respective parents is non-existent. The homeless Black man of New York, Luther, literally someone without an *oikos*, is the character who provides the rich White boy with advice about how to protect himself from the cold. In the end, Luther disappears along with the social catastrophe that he had endured alongside his dog since long before the environmental catastrophe arrived. The two Black people in the film *Interstellar*, the school principal and the physicist/astronaut, appear without any family relationships, without any homes of their own, without a reproductive function, with their roles consisting in helping Cooper take care of his children and grandchildren. In 2012, while minority characters hold important positions of power and knowledge in the image of a Black president of the United States and a Black scientist, they still are not shown in their earthliness, meaning in their inhabitation, in their own *oikos*. The *only* reproductive home that survives is the White family of the United States, the center of the catastrophe.

The Anthropocene's hold

The conflicting plurality of actors, times, and *oikos* trying to live together within one *polis*, one city, is subsumed within a homogeneous “we.” If this “we” can have many shades and skin colors, it is concentrated around a single *oikos*, a single way of inhabiting the Earth in the image of the colonial plantation preserved by the abolitions of the nineteenth century. The pursuit of minorities’ equality and social justice that took place before the catastrophe is confined to the Anthropocene’s inaudible hold. The plots of these films only break down the ways that this colonial *oikos* and its hold will be maintained, even when this *oikos* was the cause of the catastrophe. So the catastrophe is then framed only in technical and scientific terms, the only register proposed on screen. It is explained by calculations, diagrams, connections between the sky, the Earth, the oceans, and the Sun, and not by relationships between people, between countries, between rich and poor, between men and women, between Whites and non-Whites. Scientists then become the real “political” agents in the catastrophe, trying to force their way into the arenas where decisions are made so that they can dictate what policies should be followed. This gloomy alternative between equality and justice on the one hand and safeguarding the planet’s ecosystemic equilibrium on the other, between abolitionism and forest conservation, between anticolonialism and environmentalism, perpetuates modernity’s double fracture in turn, which suits well the masters of the colonial *oikos*. The disaster comes to save *the colonial oikos*.

This apolitical fantasy is shattered by Malcolm X. The opposition between the house Negro and the field Negro has often been understood as a difference only in terms of the psychological attitude regarding the colonial world where the first would be a “sellout” and the other would be a rebel. Yet, Malcolm X’s fundamental gesture is to make visible, during disasters, the plurality *and* the conflicts that are historically present in the world. There is no homogeneous and equal “we” when faced with disasters. The struggles for equality and justice and their memories do not miraculously disappear in the face of the storm. Grasping ecological catastrophe politically involves observing what happens in the Anthropocene’s hold, realizing that there are many disasters contained in these storms, and recognizing objects other than the unleashing of natural

elements as an integral part of what the Anthropocene threatens. Films such as Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever* and *Chi-Raq*, Ryan Coogler's *Fruitvale Station*, and Paul Haggis's *Crash* reveal the difficulty of living together, the climate of fear, crime, social misery, and political exclusion from the world that is currently taking place in the cities of New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles before catastrophic climatic events arrive.

Political thinking concerning catastrophe requires a form of literature and cinematic art that is capable of bridging this double fracture that presents films about the social and political realities on one side and films about global catastrophes that feature only the colonial *oikos* of a White, middle-class family on the other side. Either they address social injustice, the racial discrimination that stems from the colonial history of the world, or they deal with melting ice caps and global environmental threats. To face the modern tempest implies ways of writing about the world that preserves its constitutive plurality, a literature with narrative-forests where everyone will be able to find a tree to rest against. Overcoming these fractures means the continuities between humans and non-humans are taken seriously. What happens to the Earth, to the soil, the forests, is reflected in the bodies of human beings as well as in their social and political lives, and vice versa. The soils of the plantations and the bodies of the enslaved merge together into a single Negro-Earth enslaved to colonial inhabitation. To hold antislavery, anticolonialism, and environmentalism together, to get rid of the shadow of the Anthropocene's hold, that is the task of a *decolonial ecology*.

Part III

The Slave Ship:

**Rising Up from Modernity's Hold in
Search of a World**



Figure 8 Anse Cafard Memorial (Mémorial de l'anse Cafard) in Martinique, sculpture by Laurent Valère, 1998. Photo © Malcom Ferdinand.

Figure 9 Jason deCaires Taylor, *Vicissitudes*, 2007, © Jason deCaires Taylor. All rights reserved, DACS/Artimage 2021. Photo: Jason deCaires Taylor.



10

The Slave Ship: Debarking Off-World

Espérance (1749–50)

Embarked right from inland and torn away from everything familiar to them, suffering faces flow down into the Gulf of Guinea. In Ouidah, present-day Benin, eyes thrown about in barracks look out through the cracks for an unlikely happy horizon. At the end of 1749, 227 seekers of light were enchained in the belly of the *Espérance*, a ship from Le Havre. In the hold's Atlantic hell, behind all the fear, the growing despair, the suicidal desires, or the dreams of revenge, a muffled heartbeat holds on to the hope of running aground on welcoming land. On February 15th, 1750, the *Espérance* was wrecked off Le Vauclin in Martinique. Debarked onto these unknown sands, the *Espérance*'s 177 shipwrecked were already searching, through the cracks of the still green hillsides, for the possible openings of a world.

The slave ship: the imaginary ark of the Caribbean world

Thinking about the ecological crisis *from* the Caribbean implies thinking about the representations of the world and the imaginaries specific to the postcolonial and post-slavery societies. Now, straddling atavistic European grand narratives, thousand-year-old cosmogonies of the Amerindians, and the memories of African societies, one might imagine that the Caribbean would be left without its own mythical narrative. Caribbean cultural practices are said to be a heterogeneous mixture woven together from what has endured from Africa, the Americas, and Europe in their transatlantic crossings. The post-Columbus Caribbean would have no mythical genesis. According to the colonial archives, its birth would only be historical. This deceptive opposition between myth and history obscures what the Caribbean has generated as its own imaginary, one that cannot be reduced to the Guinea Basin, Europe, or the pre-colonial Americas.¹ Between modern and indigenous people, the Caribbean presents these third terms, who are symbolized by the enslaved colonial Negroes, with a genesis of their own that is based in the transatlantic slave trade and colonial slavery. European colonization and enslavement also form an imaginary from which one can speak of a world, its inhabitants, its lands, and its seas.

Within this imaginary world, the slave ship acts as a true *ark of the Creole world*. In addition to the many historical voyages of these ships over four centuries, the slave ship also represents a mythical scene in the Caribbean imaginary in that it deals with the origin and foundation of these societies. It embodies the founding scene that informs the relationship to the Earth, to nature, and to the world of the former captives, of those who recognize themselves as descendants of the enslaved, as well as for those who recognize themselves as descendants of enslaving masters. It is present in the speeches of Caribbean political and ecological activists as well as in the literary and theoretical works of authors from the Atlantic world, from Aimé Césaire to Maryse Condé, from Édouard Glissant to Herman Melville and Isabel Allende. The slave ship echoes both Paul Gilroy's chronotope that delineates the unity of the "Black Atlantic"² linking Africa, Europe, and America together and the Socratic metaphor for the world which compares the way citizens fight to be ruler of the city to sailors' disputes for the title of ship's captain.³

Debarkation politics

The slave ship is the *arche* of the Creole world in the double sense of *beginning* and *foundation*.⁴ As a beginning, the slave ship represents the beginnings, the first scene of the Creole world. It relies on the “middle passage” which represents a conceptual and imaginary break within a continuous historical reality. On the one side, a process of annihilation takes place where the familiar experiences of Africa that were known before do not come to an end, but to a loss. This rupture within the slave ship’s hold takes the form of Robert Nesta Marley’s “bottomless pit,”⁵ Édouard Glissant’s “abyss” where almost everything is lost,⁶ or Derek Walcott’s jailor sea that locks up the stories, memories, battles, and martyrs.⁷ On the other side, this abyss and this sea are giving birth. Something has risen from the abyss.⁸ In his *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal*, Aimé Césaire finds the origins of Black Caribbeans in the experience of the slave ship.⁹ “Vomit of slave ships,” they were pushed out and expelled from the slave ship’s hold, making this hold *the womb, the matrix of these Creole societies*.¹⁰ This is how Raphaël Confiant and Patrick Chamoiseau locate the first traces of a Creole literature within a captive’s *cry* inside the slave ship’s hold.¹¹ A cry of revolt and suffering, but above all the cry of a newborn. At once annihilation and birth, this beginning makes the slave ship a “womb-abyss,” according to Glissant.¹²

As a foundation, the slave ship contains the principles that structure this Creole world. Like the wooden chest in which the Tables of the Law were kept by the Hebrews, the slave ship contains within it, in its steerage and its hold, the political, social, and moral precepts that structure relationships with nature, with the Earth, and with the world. The principal feature of this foundation resides in *a debarkation politics*. Debarkation refers first to the four centuries during which European ships unloaded millions of captive Africans onto Caribbean and American shores and transformed them into the Negroes and enslaved people of the colonies. True slave-making factories, these ships “produce” the socio-political category of beings marked as enslaved Negroes through the transformation of the raw “material” of this ebony wood. With the term “debarkation politics,” I am pointing to the social and political *arrangements* and *engineering* that place people in an alien relationship to their bodies, to the Earth, and to the world. The slave ship’s debarkation

politics therefore generates “lost bodies” (decultured), those who are shipwrecked (off-Earth), and Negroes (off-world).

Lost bodies

As a womb-abyss, the slave ship gives birth to beings in particular situations that, following Césaire, can be called “strange sucklings of the seas.”¹³ Their strangeness is first revealed in the way that captives are stripped of their histories and their connections to a Mother-Earth. The slave ship strips the captive of their cultural affiliations, social practices, and spiritual beliefs. Their language, their name, their religion, their arts, and their culture are muzzled. Reduced just to being bodies that are detached from their cultural and historical ecosystems, the captive Negroes were renamed and instructed in practices of work, religion, and social relations made in the image of colonial Christian society. The fact that beliefs and practices survived does not take away from the principle of reception used for these captives, which was structural deculturation. This infant from the seas is reduced to a body, the control of which belongs to the enslaving masters: *a lost body*. This loss of body is also a loss of relationship to the Earth. As a principle, slavery took away the cultural practices from these beings through which they participated in the ecumene, thereby getting rid of a relationship to the Earth as inhabited by humans and non-humans. Arts, dances, songs, and meals weave together social relationships that consecrate collective belonging as well as an earthliness [*terrestrialité*]. What results from this removal are lost bodies, prisoners wandering afloat without a collective, historical, or earthly port of their own.

The shipwrecked: off-Earth

The slave ship also produces a particular relationship to the very ground of the Caribbean and the Americas, which I call *the shipwrecked condition*. The debarkation of those who manage to get out of the slave ship’s hold is not an arrival but a shipwreck, like what happened to the ship *Espérance*. Here, the shipwreck goes beyond those who perished at sea while crossing the Atlantic. Historians have shown that nearly 15 percent of the captives who were loaded onto ships (1.8 million out of 12.5 million) perished

during the crossing.¹⁴ Aside from the inevitable lacuna of archives, for instance those regarding ships that have gone missing without a trace, the main reason for this underestimation is conceptual. Indeed, the hell of the slave ship's hold begins long before those slave ports of West Africa such as Ouidah or Gorée. The start of being boarded into the slave ship's hold, meaning the start of a journey that led to their being held in this wooden space, is found in the violent capture of Africans on their lands, in wars between different groups that have the goal of fueling the triangular trade, and in the agreements between Europeans and African leaders who profited from these raids and sales. The capture of villages, the march to the ports, and the detention in the barracks were constitutive of boarding before entering the hold. With unprecedented violence, these processes caused the deaths of several million people in Africa long before the transatlantic crossing. In his moving testimony to Zora Neale Hurston, Oluale Kossola recounts how his journey overland was haunted by the death of his loved ones, from the raid on his village, Banté, to the barracks at Ouidah.¹⁵ The abolitionist Thomas Buxton estimated that for every person who entered a slave ship at least one other victim had to be counted.¹⁶ Similarly, the historian Joseph Miller estimates that, in the case of the Angolan slave trade, for every 100 people captured or sold inland in Africa, only fifty-seven boarded the ship.¹⁷ On the basis of these figures, the number of all those who were loaded on board in the transatlantic slave trade is closer to 25 million.

The African captives who were stranded in the Americas were those who endured the crossing from the African plains to American plantations and *survived* the hell of the slave ship's hold. They are the shipwrecked. Not all who were shipwrecked washed ashore. Some perished at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean or the Caribbean Sea, others in the barracks of West Africa, and still others on the plains of Guinea during the long forced march to the ports, assailed by flames, blades, or exhaustion. This shipwrecked condition holds together those who died in Africa or in the Atlantic Ocean and those who washed up on the shores of the Americas and their descendants. This is the condition of Black lives identified by Christina Sharpe in the historical, ontological, and political wake of the slave ship.¹⁸ This is the powerful solidarity expressed by Jason deCaires Taylor's underwater sculptures in Molinere Bay on the island of Grenada and the statues of Laurent Valère at the Memorial de l'Anse Cafard in Martinique. The latter were later erected as a tribute both to

the *shipwreck* of a slave ship *and* to all the victims of the slave trade. Like the 208 lives that were not thrown overboard from the *Zong*, who were kept in a state of reprieve in the hold before being transported to Jamaica, the experiences of the world for those who debarked are inhabited by the experiences of those who perished along the way.

Many who are shipwrecked are migrants and, as the Mediterranean forcefully reminds the world, many migrants, weighed down by iniquitous globalization, are shipwrecked.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the shipwrecked of the slave ship are not migrants. Therefore the shipwrecked condition needs to be distinguished from what Étienne Tassin calls the “migrant condition.”²⁰ The terms “migration” or “forced migration” are inadequate. This is first of all due to the fact that the dehumanization of those reduced to slavery is also accompanied by the impossibility of the constitution of a political subject, the impossibility of an “I,” and, consequently, the impossibility of a verb. *Negroes are the objects of other people’s verbs*. “They have been” transported, named, captured, reduced, stripped, killed, raped, hunted, paid for, saved, liberated, thrown, and loaded on board. Of course “something” has endured, but this “something” is no longer or not yet a subject. Moreover, the subject implied by the use of the term “migration” is quite simply not prior to it. Africans did not migrate for the simple reason that “Africans” did not exist before said migration. There were people from Guinea, from São Tomé, from Dahomey and other people from various villages and cultural groups. The migrant condition presupposes not only a verb and a subject but, above all, a certain continuity – at least in affiliations and culture – between before and after, the continuity of the subject. Even if they are forced to flee because of political pressure, or wars, or unbearable weather conditions, a migrant is a person *who* migrates. Migrants walk, leave, flee, shout, cry, cross seas, brave borders, climb over walls and fences. The slave ship does not produce migrants or forced migration for the simple reason that “merchandise” does not move by itself.

Although it portends terrible living conditions, this shipwreck also carries the hope that the hell of the hold will come to an end. Running aground represents both their sad fate, the fate of those whose life trajectories have been interrupted by the colonial hurricane or the slave-making sandbank, and their salvaging, which is to say their survival-*despite*, survival despite the terror of the waves in the slave ship’s hold. The coincidence of a slave ship’s shipwreck bearing

hope for a happy ending can be found in the case of the Black Caribs, now called “Garifuna.” The history of this people has its origin in a slave ship’s shipwreck on the island of Saint Vincent in the eighteenth century, which allowed the captives to escape and establish relations with the Amerindians who controlled the island.²¹ Defeated by the British colonial empire, some Garifuna were relocated to an island off the coast of Honduras and have since spread to Guatemala and Belize. A similar shipwreck on the Ecuadorian coast in 1533 is the origin of the Afro-Ecuadorian population in the province of Esmeraldas. These shipwrecked Africans allied with the Amerindians against the Spanish Crown and founded a territory of resistance known as the “Zambo Republic of Esmeraldas.”²²

Understanding the Americas as being, above all, those lands where one has run aground leads to a very particular way of conceiving and thinking about that land. A land that is perceived as a land of escape from the slave ship’s hold does not represent a promised land, much less a land of liberty. This island is not a place where the shipwrecked person wants to be but a place where they survive *while waiting* to be taken somewhere else. This feeling runs deep in the French Antilles when a lack of engagement in the country’s politics or the lack of a long-term collective project has to be explained. At least this is what Glissant gives voice to when he speaks of a land that the transshipped Africans did not even “take into their bellies.”²³ At a plenary session of the Caribbean Studies Association’s annual conference in Guadeloupe in 2012, a famous Guadeloupean writer, Ernest Pépin, responded to a question from the audience by stating that “the Antilleans think a ship will come for them and take them somewhere else.”²⁴ For this writer, young people are “disconnected” and live like “travelers in transit.”²⁵ The primary consequence of being a shipwrecked person is that men and women have left the ship, they have de-barked, literally got out of the boat without having landed. *They have de-barked without touching Earth.*

In his novel *The Other Side of the Sea*, the Haitian writer Louis-Philippe Dalembert illustrates this same relationship to the land with reference to Haiti.²⁶ Dalembert makes an explicit analogy between the universe of the slave ship, the hell of the hold, and life in Port-au-Prince, a city plagued by occupations, dictatorships, and a violence that has become ordinary. On one side, he traces a family history over three generations in twentieth-century Port-au-Prince, where every member of this family is driven at various times by this desire to flee, for this elsewhere, for the other side of the sea. On

the other side, this history is literally interspersed with an account of the universe from the slave ship's hold during the entire Atlantic crossing. From one page to the next, one finds oneself either in the midst of the dust and noise of Port-au-Prince or in the permanent night and recurrent groaning of the slave ship's steerage and hold. More than an analogy, Dalember poses a continuity between the desire to leave the universe of the slave ship's hold and the desire to leave the experience of violence in Port-au-Prince. The land where one is stranded, the land that makes it possible to survive the shipwreck, also becomes a land to flee, following the example of a central character by the name of Jonas:

Truth be told, except for his little jaunts in the vicinity, he [Jonas, the son of the narrator] has never given me reason to complain. He even seems to be bound to this patch of earth like *a shipwrecked man to a life buoy*. That doesn't prevent me from calling him "Powdered Feet," so that, even while joking, he doesn't forget where his moorings are.²⁷

Like the character Jonas in Dalember's novel, the paradoxical situation of these Caribbean shipwrecked people is that of turning a life buoy into an anchor point. This shipwrecked condition illustrates the movement from a land of escape, the land that saves the escapee from drowning, to a land to be escaped from, a land where one will put to work a whole set of measures to leave it. Far from being a ground for the captives, ground from which one could rise up and remain at home upon, the land is rendered strange and remains alien; the debarked remain off-ground. What lingers is a form of *exile from the island on the island*. While they know every nook and cranny of it, while mastering its rhythms and seasons, these shipwrecked people remain there as if they were strangers. Deterritorialization there is structural. This land remains foreign because the shipwrecked condition turns it into a place of passage while waiting either for the repetition of being shipwrecked somewhere else or for the impossible return to a pre-colonial Mother-Earth.

The Negro: off-world

In addition to lost bodies and shipwrecked people, the slave ship produces Negroes. Beings that are kept in an off-world situation, in

a relationship of radical strangeness to the world. To be off-world does not mean that the enslaved are not physically present in the Americas, in the cities' workshops, or on the plantations, nor does it mean that their positions and social functions are not recognized. It means that the enslaved are kept offside to a set of institutions, public and political arenas where the world is built and organized. The enslaved, just like non-enslaved children and women, cannot vote or hold positions of authority in sovereign councils, courts of law, or the post of governor. Reduced to a labor force for the desires of others, the enslaved remain strangers to the world. The radical strangeness of the colonial enslaved person needs to be differentiated from the foreignness of a *foreigner*²⁸ for the simple reason that they are not recognized as the subject of another kingdom or the citizen of another state, such as a Spaniard or an English person. The enslaved Negroes are confined to an interstitial space since they are neither foreigners nor citizens. This ambiguity is explicit in Colbert's *Code Noir* of 1685, which on the one hand, established enslaved Negroes as subjects of law in the *same* way as the king's subjects who could sometimes go to court and, on the other hand, enshrined their *otherness* by codifying the forms of torture that could be used against them and their sale and transfer as *movable property*.²⁹ The slave ship has "created" beings that are neither foreigners nor true citizens, assigned to the hold, the primary strangeness of which is to be inadmissible on the world's bridge. The slave ship debarks the Negroes off-world, without touching Earth.

Figures of the flight from the world: rising up from the hold

The slave ship as the Creole world's ark engenders people who combine the three conditions of lost bodies, the shipwrecked, and Negroes. The slave ship gives birth, but this matrilineal miracle is not swaddled by the benevolent concern for newborns. A birth that is at the same time a non-birth in the world is the hallmark of the Black political ontology that Norman Ajari has analyzed, which destines Black lives to a "form-of-death" from birth.³⁰ Glissant also rejects the term "genesis" in favor of "digenesis" [*digénèse*].³¹ Such people are detached from their cultural affiliations, placed in an off-ground relationship, and forced to be off-world through

this debarkation politics. The captives in the ship's hold were born but reduced to the existence of a bare life – what the Greeks called *zoe*.³² These are the starting conditions for a way of thinking ecology from the perspective of the Caribbean world. Faced with this debarkation politics that decultures, alienates, and enslaves, the shipwrecked go in search of a self, a land, and a world. So the gesture of emancipation from the slave ship is threefold. It is a matter of reestablishing a healthy esteem for oneself and one's body, an identity, a history, a culture in the face of the slave ship's deculturation, touching Earth beyond the alienation of colonial society, and taking part in the world denied to the enslaved. The birth narratives of several Caribbean peoples, where enslaved Negroes were in the majority, take their point of departure from *this metaphysical rising up from the slave ship's hold*, whether it was a victorious revolt (Martinique), a successful escape (the Maroon communities of Suriname and Jamaica), a radical revolution (Haiti/Santo Domingo), or the abolition of slavery.

As in the song "The Whale Has Swallowed Me" by the blues artist J. B. Lenoir,³³ parallels are drawn between the genesis of the Black peoples of the Americas, described as rising up from the slave ship's hold, and three famous geneeses taking the form of an emancipation-exit: the Greek gods' emancipation from the belly of Kronos, the Jewish people's emancipation from the yoke of the pharaoh, and Jonah's emancipation from the whale while out at sea. These parallels, however, are limited by the fact that, unlike Black people in the Americas, these three narratives present an emancipation-exit that is posterior to the group's existence. Zeus frees his brothers and sisters from Kronos's belly so that *their time* may begin. However, Demeter, Hestia, Hera, Hades, and Zeus were brothers and sisters before Kronos's belly was opened. The Hebrews' emancipation from the enslaving yoke of the pharaoh by leaving Egypt and crossing the Red Sea is posterior to the existence of the Jewish people. When Moses said to the pharaoh, "Let my people go," "my people" existed before that statement and that political act. Finally, when Jonah, locked up for three days and three nights in a sea monster for disobeying God, is finally thrown out, his deliverance is posterior to his existence, posterior to his name. Unlike the Greek gods, the Jewish people, and Jonah, the existence of Black people in the Americas who recognize themselves as the descendants of the enslaved does not

precede the emancipation-exit from the womb, the matrix. The Negroes in the holds of slave ships are not a people that exist before their insurrection, of which one of the captives could say to the captain, "Let my people go." They have several names and belong to several villages, several regions, each with their own languages, practices, customs, and cultures. The fraternities and sororities that are *born* from the experience of leaving the belly of the slave ship are what endows that ship with the quality of a womb. If Creole genesis includes a movement *out of* [*hors-de*], it is not an exodus.

One of the most important forms of rising up from the slave ship's hold and of resistance was the flight from the colonial world. Fleeing the hold continues in the Caribbean islands and the Americas as a flight from the plantation, so that, whether on the ship or on the island, the same flight from the world is at work, as with the character Longoué in Glissant's novel *The Fourth Century*. This first runaway slave, the one who preserves the ancestral African memory in the island's hillsides, did not flee the plantation. Immediately upon debarking from the slave ship, he flees into the hills. Before he has even really experienced life on the plantation, he takes flight: "So he ran away the very first hour."³⁴ To flee the colonial world is not a way of putting some geographical distance between the fleeing person and the slave ship in the first instance. Beyond its multiple contours and dimensions, the slave ship that is being fled must be understood above all as a colonial political arrangement that symbolizes a particular encounter between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Therefore the flight from the world is translated into *a flight from the colonial encounter*, an action that aims for the end of this encounter. This flight takes several forms represented by at least five figures.

First, it takes the psychic form of *self-abandonment*. Abandonment does not refer to those who, either as resigned or overcome, did not try to take action against the colonial world. This self-abandonment refers to the one who, having let go of everything, has lost their own self. They are represented by the figure of the *Nègre épave* (Negro wreck).³⁵ The expression *Nègre épave* was used in the French slave colonies to refer to enslaved Black people found wandering by the authorities or captured by the police but whose masters could not be determined, meaning that their identity had been lost. This absence of self makes confrontation with the other impossible. This flight may then take the form of self-elimination through the figure

of the *suicidal person*. These are the women and men whose desire to return to their homeland was so profound that their revolt took the form of a leap into the sea with a liberating smile on their lips, or a rope tied around their necks as they hanged from a branch of the Kapok tree, or a refusal to eat with the conviction that they would return to their native Guinea in death.³⁶ It was also those women who, in resistance to colonial control of their wombs, made the difficult choice to have an abortion and sometimes to commit infanticide, as recounted by Toni Morrison in her novel *Beloved*. This flight also takes the individual or collective form of a *leaving-for-oneself* as a marine flight that leaves no traces on the water, a frantic dash towards somewhere other than this abyss, out of the unmarked immensity of the ocean towards a land to hide in and that offers shelter. This is the figure of the *Maroon* who marooned from the *habitation* and sought refuge, food, and shelter in the hills, mountains, or mangroves. It is the panicked debarkation that they run from, looking behind themselves with no other goal than to escape the slavers. This figure is stuck between the specter of an impossible return and the impossibility of making a world with those they encounter because of the inhuman conditions demanded by this encounter.

This flight from the encounter also takes the form of *chasing away the other*. It is embodied by the figure of the *avenger*, who, in revolt, leads a struggle up to the other's death, to the radical negation of the oppressor. One example is the gesture of Joseph Cinque, when he freed himself from his chains in 1839 on the ship *Amistad* off the coast of Cuba, as he burst out of the slave ship's hold with other captives and killed almost the entire Spanish crew in the confrontation that followed.³⁷ If this revolt of birth takes the form of an armed confrontation with those immediately responsible for their oppression, this confrontation still remains a means and not the aim of the action. This figure is also haunted by the possibility of a return to a land of life and equality, as if they could escape this encounter and the consequences that follow by putting it to an end with the other's death. Finally, the goal of fleeing the encounter also takes the form of *chasing away the world*. It is embodied in the figure of the *kamikaze*, whose collective project of revolt consisted in setting fire to the slave ship's powder kegs so that everything was destroyed, as happened on the ships *La Galatée* in 1738 and *Le Coureur* in 1791. No self, no us, no them, no world, the encounter is no more.

Fleeing the encounter with the slave ship	
The <i>Nègre épave</i>	Self-abandonment
The suicidal person	Self-elimination
The Maroon	Leaving for oneself
The avenger	Chasing away the other
The kamikaze	Chasing away the world

Figures of the slave ship

Faced with the slave ship's dehumanizing politics of debar-kation, the lost bodies, shipwrecked persons, and Negroes seek to emancipate themselves, in search of dignity, in search of justice. With their multiple figures, they give shape to a decolonial ecology, an ecology driven by the search for a self, for an Earth, and for a world to live in with dignity.

11

Maroon Ecology: Fleeing the Plantationocene

Escape (1706–7)

On September 3rd, 1706, the *Escape* left Barbados for African coasts and their Black fortunes. In a port unknown to the archives, 151 lives were chained up in the hold, destined to crawl on the colonial plantations. The weight of the chains marked the start of fierce races towards some marine elsewhere, of rebellious quests of metamorphosed bodies, and of fantasized returns to remembered countries. Like other slave ships, the *Escape* already carried in its belly the Maroon genesis of escapes in the making. Back in Barbados on May 15th, 1701, 121 flying desires were debarked with the powerful conviction that behind the arrogance of the plantations lingered the possibility of another way, the traces of a Mother-Earth and the horizon of a world.



Figure 10 Albert Mangonès, *Statue of the Unknown Maroon (Statue du Marron inconnu)* in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 1968. Photo © Marie Bodin.

Marooning the Anthropocene

The double fracture seems to suggest that Black enslavement and the colonization of the Americas were merely subplots to the true technical epic of “Man” in the Anthropocene.¹ However, in its colonial inhabitation, the Anthropocene engendered a group of Negroes, beings who are placed in the hold, made strangers to the Earth and the world, and made visible by the terms “Plantationocene” and “Negrocene.” Recognizing that colonization and slavery were at the heart of modernity brings to light a collection of experiences of antislavery resistance that expand and enrich the conceptual toolbox for thinking about the ecological crisis. In search of a world, the Negroes and the enslaved of yesterday and today have resisted enslavement, but they have also resisted the colonial inhabitation of the Anthropocene. One of the most powerful instances of this resistance is *marronage*.

As early as the sixteenth century, in a world that was covered by plantations from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, *marronage* was a common practice of ecological and political resistance. In the barracks throughout the West African coasts into which captives were crammed, on slave ships, and throughout the Americas, enslaved men, women, and children fled colonial inhabitation. *Marronage* refers to the practice of escape from rural plantations or urban workshops by enslaved people, in order to try and live (or simply survive) in the forests of the surrounding mountains or further inland, within an offside to the colonial world. Those who manage to escape are called “Nègres Marrons,” “Cimarrónes,” “Maroons,” or “Quilombolas,” in the French, Spanish, English, and Portuguese colonies respectively. Maroons are found throughout the Americas, from François Mackandal in Haiti to Frederick Douglass in the United States, from Queen Nanny in Jamaica and Zumbi dos Palmares in Brazil. They led land and sea escapes that would take them into the interior of Brazil, the mangroves of New Orleans, the mountains of Haiti, or the hillsides of the Lesser Antilles and Réunion Island. Some were even able to set in motion the return to African shores in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Marronage took many forms. A distinction is made between *petit marronnage*, which refers to single individuals running away for a period lasting from a few weeks to a few months, and *grand marronnage*, which refers to the flight of enslaved persons who

formed Maroon communities lasting several years, some of which still exist today in French Guiana, Suriname, Colombia, and Jamaica.² Marronage was practiced in varying degrees depending on the colonies, but also depending on the geography. Within this diversity, marronage has the common feature of escape, a strong symbol of the refusal of slavery. Some will be surprised to hear marronage still being spoken about today when colonial slavery has been abolished since the nineteenth century. However, marronage goes beyond the historical and national barriers of colonial slavery by signifying a clear refusal of the enslavement of people as a way of inhabiting the Earth. Maroon escape was often conditioned by the encounter with land and nature. Faced with a colonial inhabitation that is devouring the world, the Maroons put into practice another way of living together and relating to the Earth.

At the heart of modernity's double fracture

The association of antislavery action with the first fruits of environmental preservation has been largely neglected, as much by classical ecological thinkers as by those celebrating the Maroons as symbols of resistance. As far as human affairs are concerned, the figure of the Maroon was trapped for a long time in a dispute over the political meaning of their gesture. Were the Maroons antislavery heroes or, on the contrary, were they just lawless looters who abandoned their sisters and brothers in servitude without hesitation? In the 1960s, the historians and sociologists known as the French school, such as Gabriel Debien, Yvan Debbasch, and André-Marcel d'Ans, even claimed that marronage did not stem from a desire for freedom but instead reflected abnormal or even pathological behavior.³ On the other hand, under the name of the Haitian school, a group of historians including, among others, Jean Fouchard, Edner Brutus, Leslie Manigat, and C. L. R. James, insisted on the desire for freedom at work among the Maroons, even turning them into the founders of the Haitian nation.⁴ A third, more recent position, represented by Leslie Péan and Adler Camilus, among others, clearly recognizes in marronage a desire for freedom and a rising up from the oppression of slavery and colonialism, while acknowledging that there are limits to this form of resistance from within the perspective of liberation *and* an experience of freedom.⁵ The Maroons, in Neil Roberts's analysis,

reveal a new form of freedom that was concealed within the canon of classical political theories.⁶

Today, outside the academy, the Maroon is presented as a symbol of political resistance against colonial regimes through the presence of their image in Caribbean literature and through many monuments, and through the names of rivers and roads dedicated to them in the Americas. Statues of Gaspar Yanga in Mexico, the Unknown Maroon in Haiti, the Mulâtresse Solitude in Guadeloupe, Benkos Biohó in Colombia, the Maroni River, and a number of novels attest to the heroic presence of the Maroon.⁷ However, by approaching this figure solely through the prism of their warring forms of resistance and their political symbols, the nature and land practices that were carried out as a condition for their escape were relegated to the background – despite the many works by anthropologists and historians about these practices.⁸ The ecological impact of their actions was minimized amidst the necessary work of defending the Maroons' humanity and courage. *The vitality present in the breaking of chains and in mad dashes took precedence over the patience of planted yams and paced-out forests.* On the ecological side, the Maroon is conspicuous for their absence. The lack of interest in the histories, anthropologies, and sociologies of slavery within the classical genealogy of environmentalism has resulted in little attention being paid to this figure and their political ecology. Thoreau's encounter with Maroons in the Walden Woods or John Muir's encounter with Black people in slave-making Cuba are given little attention. Environmentalism's solitary walking man has painted in virginal white the same woods that were occupied by Red Amerindians and Maroon communities, concealing the worldly pursuits traced in the landscapes of the so-called wilderness.⁹

What I am proposing here is to heal the double fracture by holding together the double insight of the Maroons' pursuit of a world. Faced with the solitary walking man, the Maroon demonstrates another relationship to nature imbued with a desire for the world. Faced with praise for their combative resistance, this figure points to ecological practice as a condition for emancipation. In order to rise up from the world's hold and dismantle its politics of debarkation, the Maroons carry out an escape with three important qualities: the matrigenesis of an encountered land, the Creole metamorphosis of a recovered self and body, and the political ecology of a human and non-human community that should be preserved.

Touching Earth: Maroon *matrigenesis*

Many Maroon escapes were conditioned by the *encounter* with a nature and a land that was sheltered from the plains of the plantations and the colonial order. They were carried along not by the carefree enthusiasm of a solitary walking man but by the anguish of fugitives that might be captured by the colonial authorities and their huge, ferocious dogs [*molosses*]. This encounter is at first a trying experience in the face of an inhospitable nature. The inhospitality, remoteness, and inaccessibility of the spaces that the Maroons encountered were paradoxically the keys to their escapes, each made up of its own geography.¹⁰ The mountains of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Cuba, the great forests of Suriname and French Guiana, and the swampy environments of Mato Grosso in Brazil or those of Louisiana acted as “natural allies,” facilitating the dissimulation of fugitives and the survival of Maroon communities.¹¹ This is more than just taking flight, as the Maroons practice “a skillful fugue [*fugue*]” that disrupts colonial borders and opens up spaces of creation that are camouflaged by forests and swamps.¹² With its unmarked paths, its uninhabitable beauty, and its position offside to the activities of the colonial world and its plantations, the nature of the hillsides presents itself not as a place where one lives but as a place where one hides. With the escape’s first steps, *the Maroon must inhabit the uninhabitable*. When the emergency and the first inhospitable moments are past, the encounter of the Maroons with a strange land and nature engenders other relationships than those that are defined by the plantation. Hillside-hideouts, hostile spaces become inhabited lands. A *matrigenesis* emerges from this process of acclimatization by which the land and nature come to constitute the material womb and matrix of the Maroons’ existence. In contrast to the matricide of colonial inhabitation and its underside (wilderness), the Maroons forged anew a caring and matrilineal bond with the nature and the lands they encountered.¹³ Suddenly, the land-without-*manman* becomes a Mother-Earth.

On the one hand, this *matrigenesis* is a metaphysical process that is played out through the ordeal of death. From their first night, the Maroon runs into the triple problem of needing to escape the jaws of the colonial power that is trying to catch up with them, of needing to protect themselves from bad weather and the cold, and

finally of needing to survive in the isolation of this nature offside from the world [*hors-du-monde*] by avoiding its shifting swamps, slippery slopes, precipices, and dangerous animals, as much as they also have to support themselves by finding food and drink here and there. The Maroon, overwhelmed by all these perils, gives themselves over to this land that is encountered within a likely death. This death is not just the end of breath, a biological death, it becomes above all the end of a form of existence that preceded this encounter with nature. Suddenly, as a result of this flight, the exile dies, the man or woman without Mother-Earth dies, the man or woman uprooted from their land dies, the enslaved alien to these lands dies. Death becomes a way out, a path that despite everything even offers relief from this devastating experience, not embodying the escape's achievement but, paradoxically, still being its success. In the novel *Nègre Marron* by Raphaël Confiant, this ordeal of death takes place when the Maroon gives up:

As it was impossible for you to go down to the coast – you would never agree to cut sugar cane like those battalions of Negroes whose ballet you watched when the dry weather came, nor would you work in the mills and distilleries [*guildiveries*] of the Whites – you had decided to *give up living*. You had been lying face down on the ground for days and nights, without moving, despite the clouds of mosquitoes that were unrelenting in attacking your skin or the nocturnal beasts that came to sniff your body and quickly turned away from it because your breathing had become heavy.¹⁴

In Patrick Chamoiseau's novel *Slave Old Man*, this death is found at the bottom of a spring into which the Maroon has fallen during his flight.

The old man who had been a slave told himself he would die there, at the *fondoc* [bottom] of that fountainhead like many another *nègre marron* no doubt, swallowed by the woods and never glimpsed again, gaunt, near a chicken coop. He smiled: dying in the living entrails of a spring older than he was. ... He felt imbued with purity. He drank of this splendor that was already flooding his lungs: he desired it so much. ... He was dying. Finir-battre. Battle over. White earth. Warm mud. The tormenting light was now in alliance with the shadows that had possessed him, and he experienced the last feeling of falling. ... The old man who had been a slave was leaving swept away by the ultimate mystery. Vanquished.¹⁵

The Maroon is “vanquished” by this nature and this land. They stop fighting the “mosquitoes that were attacking [their] skin unrelentingly,” they stop fighting the spring water, they are “finished battling” in such a way that this death is also *a submission to this nature*. Giving up in this way is the humble acceptance of the Maroon’s vulnerability, having put their fate in the hands of nature. It is the realization that this land holds the keys to their existence. It is a metaphysical demand made on this land to take care of their body, that they be adopted by it. Wrapped in a cloud of mosquitoes, covered by spring water, this land will be their tomb or their cradle. The salvation granted by the land and by nature to the Maroon produces a double birth. This land becomes Mother-Earth, and the Maroon, metamorphosed, becomes a child of this Mother-Earth.

At the material level, an umbilical cord is woven by hand through the Maroon escapes of the Americas. This reconnection at work within marronage inaugurates a way of inhabiting the Earth that takes up the mother’s gestures towards her child. Mother-Earth shelters, collects, and protects like a mother gives shelter to her child. Mother-Earth relieves pain. The Maroons roam her paths, discovering useful things there, such as sources of water that quench thirst and plants that heal or poison. Mother-Earth provides nourishment. As peasant farmers, the Maroons live off of the land using collective subsistence agriculture. They follow the steps left by the Amerindians while preserving the delicious combinations of the Creole gardens.

Creole metamorphosis: recovering a self, discovering a body

This matrigenesis brings about a change in these escaped beings, *a Creole metamorphosis*. By escaping into the woods, into the mountains, wrapped by the branches of the mangroves, transhipped enslaved African fugitives become children of the Americas. The Maroon becomes native [*devient natal*]. Through these created space-times, they discover a place and an existence of their own, a “hillside of one’s own.”¹⁶ This Creole metamorphosis allows the Maroons to recover a self and a we through a new relationship with their bodies, a cultural affiliation through a new freedom of worship, and an affiliation to the world by participating in the organization of a collective life. Escaping from slavery opens to the discovery

of a new body. This body no longer follows the mechanics of the physical and social mutilations of a life in slavery. Like a dancer coming out of a cage, one discovers what this body is capable of through movement, through stretching, and as a vessel that can travel the Earth. Crawling in the hold of the slave ship cocoon in times past, the metamorphosed Maroon discovers a body that is able to fly.¹⁷ As Sylvia Wynter shows in *Black Metamorphosis*, it is the same metamorphic emancipation that animates the protean struggles of the Black peoples of the Atlantic, from slavery to contemporary dominations and racisms.¹⁸

Escaping slavery makes it possible to recover freedom in worship and culture. Far from the plantation and its singularly imposed Christianity, the Maroons explore and practice a spirituality that is recomposed from Africa and enriched by the experiences of the Americas. Guardians of the paths and memories that existed before the middle passage, the Maroons give substance to another existential narrative. Against the atavistic narrative that casts Black people within a Negro existence required by God, the Maroons discover another story, with their songs, their beliefs, their characters, their heroes, and myths about their own origins, like those recounted by Tooy Alexander, the captain of the Saramaka of Cayenne, to the anthropologist Richard Price.¹⁹ The arts that were silenced in the hold are rediscovered in front of the calabash trees, in the vibrations of the djembes, the dance steps, the engravings, the seams, or the sculptures of the Maroons of French Guiana and Suriname.²⁰ The formerly enslaved Negro is connected to a historical community with which they now inhabit the Earth. The Maroons can then develop agricultural practices and invent the culinary arts that will nourish their physical and metaphysical bodies. Far from the monocultures of the plantations, the Maroons reclaim that responsibility for their body. They put into practice *the first modern anticolonial and antislavery utopias* by demonstrating this striking fact: it is through care and love for Mother-Earth that it is possible to rediscover one's body, explore one's humanity, and emancipate oneself from the Plantationocene and its slaveries.

The Maroon's ecology: protectors of the forests

Through this matrigenesis, a common destiny is established between the Maroons, the land, and nature. The Maroons then develop

an inverse relationship to their first moment of desertion where they asked for the protection of Mother-Earth. For their survival, the Maroons became those who preserve this land and who take care of this nature, becoming *the first modern ecologists of Creole societies*. This ecological attitude is first noticeable in the internal management of the human and non-human communities formed by the care and concern brought to this land of life and in the way these Maroons will turn these spaces into a home, an *oikos*, by learning their language, their *logos*. Unlike the plantation company, Maroon communities knew how to live with what was around them, within a limited ecological footprint.

The ecology of the Maroons stands out especially in the defensive attitudes taken by these communities against the colonial and enslaving authorities, but also against the concessionaires who wanted to clear the land, cut down the forests, and subject these lands to colonial exploitation. Far from signifying groupings of human beings, as is commonly understood, the words “camps,” “quilombos,” “mocambos,” or “palenques” here represent principally human *and* non-human communities that escape slavery’s colonial inhabitation. Camp Keller in Guadeloupe, the *quilombo* of San Palmarès in Brazil, or San Basilio de Palenque in Columbia represent these human and non-human alliances forged through marronage against a Plantationocene world-destroyer.²¹

In the French Antilles, the forests and Maroons had a common destiny, making it possible to follow the development of marronage according to the evolution of the islands’ forest cover. Compared to Jamaica, Suriname, and Haiti, Guadeloupe and Martinique have fewer examples of the historical development of large Maroon communities. This is due mainly to the rapid deforestation these islands suffered at the beginning of French colonization. One of the first communities of Maroons in Martinique was led by Francisque Fabulé. In 1665, this community was made up of between 400 and 500 people.²² Following the massive deforestation begun by the colonists at that time, there is no sign of any large community of Maroons in Martinique after 1720. Because the land was cleared more slowly in Guadeloupe, we still find important groups after the 1720s. For example, on March 6th, 1726, the minister reported a band of 600 Maroons.²³ Similar records continue until 1735. As Yvan Debbasch shows, the fate of these Maroon communities was intimately linked to the state of deforestation:

The Maroons knew very well that the clearing of land sounded the death knell for these communities of fugitives and so they opposed it with all their might: at Grande-Terre – the twin island of Guadeloupe – the Grands-Fonds, “although reputed to be the best land,” remained uninhabited “for fear of the Maroons who are believed to make the forests of this section their retreat and their fort.” The bravest of the concessionaires had to retreat before these bands.²⁴

One of the first popular ecological actions is found here, in the defense of the places they lived and that provided refuge. Following deforestation, no large communities have been created.

This protective position was in place in the forests of Saint Lucia (a Caribbean island formerly colonized by the French and the British). During the Maroon wars against the British colonial empire, the Maroons formed themselves into armed groups, as *freedom fighters* to fight for their liberty. Alliances were formed between these Maroons and some officers of the French army. The relationship established between these Maroons, these lands, and the forests of the island is reflected in the name adopted by those groups: *l'Armée française dans les Bois* [literally: the French Army in the Woods].²⁵ Composed mainly of Maroons, this army was feared because of the fervor with which its members defended their lives. Similarly, in Dominica (also a Caribbean island formerly colonized by the French and British), Maroons organized themselves into an army in the woods. Known as the “eldest chief” and “the supreme leader,” Jacko was a Maroon for forty-six years, taking part in the two Maroon wars waged between the Maroons and the British colonial authorities. This Maroon chief called himself “the governor of the woods,” symbolically marking the forest emplacement as a source of resistance against slavery.²⁶

Finally, this figure of the Maroon ecologist is most impressively expressed in the history of some of the Maroons of Suriname, called the Saramaka. The Maroon community of the Saramaka was founded in the eighteenth century and still exists today, straddling French Guiana and Suriname. Isolated in the forest of Suriname, fighting for their rights, these Maroons have been confronted by the plundering of their forest resources carried out by the “outside world” that had “caught up” with them. Having respected the peace agreements of 1762 until recently, the Surinamese government built the Afobaka dam in the mid-1960s and buried under water a whole section of the Saramaka’s forest life environment. Since then,

in tandem with human rights abuses, the forests of the Saramaka people have been coveted by international companies as well as nature conservation organizations, and all of them intended to evict the Saramaka from these areas. After years of legal battles at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the representatives of the Saramaka people won their case.²⁷ For their victorious struggle to preserve these forests as an integral part of their community against the Suriname state, two representatives of the Saramaka, Head Captain Wanze Eduards and law student Hugo Jabini, were awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2009. In the image of the figure of the Maroon, they have been recognized internationally as remarkable ecologists.

The Maroonesses

Specifically feminine experiences of marronage are found within these Creole metamorphoses and matrigenesis. Historically, there has been a lower percentage of women involved in the *leaving* aspect of marronage. Because of their position as women and mothers, they encountered even more obstacles to their freedom of movement than enslaved men did.²⁸ Enslaved women were abducted by Maroons during the looting of plantations, and experiences in the Maroon camps reproduced inequalities between men and women in places. Maryse Condé points this out through the character of Tituba in her novel *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, a character whom the chief of the camp excludes from affairs of politics and war on the pretext that she is a woman.²⁹ Marronage remains largely thought of as mainly masculine in representations of it as well. The reverse of this masculine perspective on marronage has produced in turn a female Maroon figure that is identical to the male Maroon while denying the kinds of domination specific to the condition of enslaved women: the *she*-Maroon [*la Marron*]. Such a representation is at work in André Schwartz-Bart's novel about La Mulâtresse Solitude of Guadeloupe.³⁰

However, the position of women in the slave-making system leads to a different understanding of marronage and to the recognition that there are other acts of marronage than just the escape, a set of other figures that I call *the Maroonesses*.³¹ Among these figures are, first, those with whom alliances were formed that made the first

escapes by the men and the pursuit of marronage possible. There we find the *libératrices*, the women who literally free the enslaved, such as the figure who helped the Maroon Longué in Glissant's novel *The Fourth Century*.³² We find the *Maroonesse-mothers* who agree to stay on the slave-making plantation and take on the responsibility of lovingly raising the children, not knowing if the promise will be kept, if the Maroon man will return to find his wife and children. The protagonist of Frances Ellen Harper's poem "The Fugitive's Wife" takes on this responsibility.³³ Similarly, the women cultivated the fields of the Maroon camps and raised animals with which to feed the communities. Finally there were also the *passeur* women who continued to feed Maroon men, hiding them in their huts like the enslaved woman Comba did in New Orleans in 1764.³⁴ In Dominica, in 1813, Caliste and Angelle were convicted of feeding fugitives and of having sexual relations with them.³⁵ Living in Maroon camps, they also manage to return to the cities to sell their produce, moving from one world to another, like Aunt Rose did in Isabel Allende's novel *Island beneath the Sea*.³⁶ They forge solidarities between the world of the plantation and that of the Maroons. Contrary to the masculine fantasy of a lone Maroon man, these first Maroonesses are the ones who made possible the marronage of men and the survival of Maroon camps, meaning Creole metamorphosis and matrigenesis.

Alongside the ones who helped, there are also the women who maroon for themselves and their loved ones, who challenge both slavery and their domination by free men and enslaved men. One of the most famous examples is that of Queen Nanny, who was head of a Maroon camp in eighteenth-century Jamaica. In the United States, after her escape, Harriet Tubman herself undertook thirteen missions to the South to free other enslaved people, while campaigning for women's suffrage. Similarly, Sojourner Truth, who escaped from a plantation with her daughter and won a lawsuit to take her son back, maintained that the affirmation of human dignity in opposition to slavery *also* requires the affirmation of her dignity as a woman ("Ain't I a woman?").³⁷ These Maroonesses demonstrate therefore a double resistance to slavery and male domination. They reveal that the Creole metamorphosis also involves defending that they have a responsibility for their own body. Despite these differences, since White men and women agreed to discredit enslaved Black people, Maroons and Maroonesses formed alliances to reverse this colonial fracture.

Limits and virtues

The utopia of Maroon political ecology nevertheless is limited by the illusion of a life completely outside of the colonial world. Paradoxically, the flight from the colonial world does not allow one to escape it. If Maroon escape puts into practice possibilities for another world and another way of inhabiting the Earth, it does not set up the Maroons in some off-world place, outside of the Earth. This illusion is broken first by the material necessities that are required for the Maroon's experience of autonomy. If the Maroons create and build some of their tools for themselves, the rest necessarily come from the plantation, the workshop, or the colonial city. They must take everything with them in the moment they flee or they have to come back regularly to get supplies (especially weapons and ammunition), risking capture when they do. In addition to the low viability of Maroon communities due to the imbalance between the large number of men and the small number of women, this dependence was always a limitation that had to be taken into account in their experiences.³⁸

This illusion is also lost in the numerous attempts to return to a country that was known prior to the colonial encounter and the slave ship. This return – and not the geographical return – is impossible because the escape into the hills does not equate to going back in time. The *Amistad* returnees go back to Sierra Leone, remaining the prey of a colonial world. They may be taken on board again, or see members of their families succumb to these slave-making predations. If, through geographical remoteness, it is possible to escape the oppression of slavery, the colonial world remains present and its effects extend into the Maroon camp. The fear of being discovered or exposed can lead to a very unequal and unjust collective organization of the camp. Similarly, on Earth, it is impossible to escape the effects of persistent chemical pollutants, intense climatic phenomena, and disruptions of physico-chemical cycles. There are no more Maroon forests untouched by the enslavements of the Plantationocene. Of course, here and there, their effects can be mitigated. The assumption of responsibility for Maroon lands and forests is never safe from a violent encounter with the “external” world.

Maroon political ecology comes up against a second limit in the fact that the flight from the world does not change the world.

Maroon ecologies remain confined to specific spaces. Neither the Maroon, nor the enslaved of the Creole gardens, nor the peasant farmer of the hillsides succeeds in challenging as a whole the plantations' colonial inhabitation and their enslavements. In some places, the colonial world was able to accommodate very well these Maroon communities by entering into agreements with them, as was the case in Jamaica, where the recognition of such communities was subordinated to their commitment – respected or not – that they would bring back to the authorities everyone who wished to maroon with them. Marronage did not bring about the end of slavery in the colonial world by itself or the overthrow of colonial inhabitation.

The fact that marronage does not allow for the slave-making order to be overthrown, or for the colonial inhabitation at the heart of the Anthropocene to be changed, does not mean that marronage is futile. The experiences of the Maroons of the Americas create and reveal paths of resistance against the Plantationocene and the Negrocene. Maroon matrigenesis reconstructs the relationships through which we live on the Earth, where the world discovers itself to be populated by human and non-human communities living together. It is a question of politically recognizing this matrilineal quality of an Earth that exceeds all economic calculation and which, in turn, brings to light the obligations to the human and non-human communities that make it up. As metamorphosed, humans are less links in a plantation and capitalist chain strangling the breath of life and more those twirling butterflies that brighten up the woods with the colorful creativity of their paths. These openings were all contained in the first refusals, the refusals of inequality, of humiliation, and destruction. Refusals borne by the deep conviction that another world is possible.

12

Rousseau, Thoreau, and Civil Marronage

Wanderer (1858–9)

On July 3rd, 1858, the ship *Wanderer* discreetly left the port of Charleston, South Carolina, en route to West Africa. On board, the *Wanderer* carried Captain Nicholas Brown and his colleagues Corrie and Farnum, all of whom were determined to reopen the transatlantic slave trade that had been banned for fifty years. Of the 487 captives loaded on board in the Congo estuary, only 409 reached the US coast on November 28th, 1858. Shortly after selling most of the bodies-in-chains, the penultimate American slave ship was seized. Captain Brown and his companions were arrested for this illegal trade, tried, and acquitted on November 23rd, 1859, in Savannah, Georgia. The *Wanderer* even attempted a new slave-making expedition. At the same time, a few hundred miles away, a symmetrically inverse scene took place. On October 30th, 1859, another American *wanderer*, the walker Henry David Thoreau, carried a different Captain Brown in mind. Inspired by his mother Cynthia, his sisters Sophia and Helen, and his aunts Jane and Maria, Thoreau defended the abolitionist John Brown who, at Harpers Ferry, took the path of armed resistance to free the enslaved in the southern United States. Captain Brown was arrested, tried, and hanged on December 2nd, 1859, in Charles Town, Virginia.

John Muir in Cuba: breaking the wall of environmentalism

Modernity's double fracture establishes a wall between environmental and colonial issues. Not only does this wall hide the continuities between environmentalism and colonization but, even more perniciously, it suggests that the anticolonial and antislavery struggles matter only to the colonized and the enslaved themselves, that the pursuit of a world is a concern only for the Negroes consigned to modernity's hold. The thickness of this wall is doubtlessly most evident in the writings of John Muir, the "founding father of the American National Parks."¹ In September 1867, John Muir began a trek through the southern United States, from Kentucky to Florida, which he recounted in his book *A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf*. Particularly striking is his lack of concern for Black people, two years after the abolition of slavery was wrested through a civil war. Muir met and received the hospitality of White slave-making planters who continued their plantation work with "slaves" despite emancipation.² The Black people whom he encountered are presented as dangerous, trying to steal his possessions, as savages in the image of Maroons who do not provide a "nest" for their children, or as "surprisingly" civil towards the White man when they are "well educated," but without doing much work.³ This condescension reached its climax when Muir in January 1868 traveled to Cuba, where he stayed for a month in Havana. He takes real pleasure in discovering the beauty of Cuban nature, collecting shells and plants on Morro Hill. Yet, what Muir describes as "one of my happy dreamlands, the fairest of West Indian islands," remains one of the most important sites of the illegal transatlantic slave trade, where slavery was still legal.⁴ The second unsuccessful voyage of the American slave ship *Wanderer* in 1859 was bound for Cuba.⁵ If he describes "Cubans" (Whites) as "superfinely polished, polite, and agreeable in society," except for one driver of a car, Muir insists on the *ugliness* of Cuba's Negroes.⁶ Havana's Black warehousemen are "the strongest and the ugliest negroes" of his entire trip around the gulf, and the Black saleswomen have "a devout good-natured ugliness."⁷ While critical of Cubans' cruelty towards animals, Muir remains silent about the fate of enslaved Black people in the country. Far different were the attitudes of Alexander von Humboldt and Élisée Reclus, who, as scientists and attentive observers of nature,

also visited Cuba in the nineteenth century and denounced the slave trade and slavery without any hesitation.⁸

Muir also made racist remarks about the Amerindians he encountered while hiking in the Sierra Nevada mountains of the United States.⁹ While he notes their light environmental impact when compared to that of the White man, he nevertheless describes them as “half-happy savages” leading a “strangely dirty and irregular life” in a “clean wilderness” – in short, as foreign elements.¹⁰ Unlike his White companions and their dogs, who are referred to by their proper names, the others are always referred to by such homogenizing names as “the Indians,” “the Chinaman,” “the African,” or “the Negro.” For Muir, the celebration of these “heavenly” landscapes and the discursive production of wilderness are linked to Black and Amerindian peoples’ exclusion from a common humanity, which is to say, to the construction of a wall that separates concerns for so-called nature from concerns for the colonized and the enslaved. In his last great journey, from 1911 to 1912, Muir recounts his amazement at the flowers of the Amazon and the baobabs of Africa without mentioning the ongoing colonial conflicts there. Among other places, he travels through Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique, and Tanzania without devoting a line in his diary to the European nations’ imperial domination of Africa, the colonial oppression of the indigenous, the recent Boer Wars, the Italian invasion of Libya, or the recent genocide of the Herero people by the German Empire.¹¹ *Fracture*.

Today, Muir’s wall is maintained within environmentalist readings of Rousseau and Thoreau. Rousseau’s exaltations of nature in the Alps and Thoreau’s meticulous observations of Walden Pond would above all indicate a particular sensibility regarding nature that is singularly European and American and without any connection to slavery and colonization. Despite the respective rich social and political significance of Rousseau and Thoreau, their thinking on nature is commonly separated from their political ideas. Decolonial ecology knocks down this wall. Rising up from the hold of the slave ship is also a concern for those who are *said* to be free. The links between naturalism, colonization, and slavery can be reestablished by smashing through this partition made out of the bricks of prejudice. In doing this, I am suggesting here a different genealogy of their ecological thinking, a *Maroon genealogy*. Looking back in turn at their writings and their lives, I show that Rousseau was committed to a true Maroon *praxis* in his interest in nature and

that Thoreau's sensibility towards nature was supported by a *civil marronage*, influenced by the longstanding commitment against slavery made by White women in the United States and England, exemplified in his own family and in the actions of Elizabeth Heyrick.

Rousseau or the Maroon walker

Rousseau's encounter with nature through his practice of herbalism and his fascination with Linnaeus' *Systema naturae*, described in his *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* and *The Confessions*, is frequently put forward to illustrate one of the first examples amongst the *philosophes* of a sensibility regarding nature and its preservation.¹² What is hidden in this narrative is the fact that, for Rousseau, this encounter unfolds in a relationship to the world analogous to that of the Maroons, meaning in a moment of *flight from the world*. This is the analogy narrated by André Schwartz-Bart in his novel *A Woman Named Solitude*, where he describes the universe of a Maroon camp in Guadeloupe led by a chief named Sanga who owed his "prestige" to Rousseau's book *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*.¹³ This flight appears both in the characters of his novels (such as Julie, her lover Saint-Preux, and her cousin, who flee into the woods in *Julie, or the New Heloise*) and in his personal life.¹⁴ In early June 1762, his *Emile, or On Education* is condemned both by the Sorbonne theology faculty and the Paris Parliament. The Small Council of Geneva condemned *The Social Contract*, published in the same year. The Paris Parliament as well as the Little Council of Geneva ordered that Rousseau be *appréhendé au corps*, meaning arrested. The year 1762 marks the beginning of the period of his life when he is persecuted, witnesses sermons pronounced against him, is written about slanderously, and is called all sorts of names. He left Montmorency for Switzerland after being warned at night by the duchess of Luxembourg.¹⁵ Unable to stay in Geneva, where he was a citizen facing the threat of arrest, he first took refuge in Neuchâtel. He wants to flee further persecution after stones are thrown at him several times in his home, so he goes to St Peter's Island in the middle of Lake Biel in Switzerland.¹⁶ Expelled again, he will continue his flight to Berlin, then to Derbyshire in England, and then to France through various cities, under several false names. From 1762 to his death in 1778, Rousseau lived in permanent flight,

and it was during these sixteen years of flight that his passion for botany and herbalism and his writings on nature took on their full magnitude.

More than a matter of circumstance, the *escape from the world* was the condition for his encounter with nature and the development of his passion for botany. So nature became a refuge for him, functioning primarily to *hide* him and to save him from the likely attacks of those who persecuted him: "It seems to me that in the shade of a forest I am as forgotten, free, and peaceful as though I had no more enemies or that the foliage of the woods must keep me from their attacks just as it removes them from my memory."¹⁷

Rousseau and the Maroon find another analogy in the experience of solitude and the search for a self in the midst of an escape into nature. It is not a matter of being lonely in love, of solitude in the face of a loved one's absence. Even sitting at a table with company he remains isolated from the world and from other people, whether they are kind or mean-spirited. It is a matter of solitude in the face of the world in which Rousseau thought he had found *himself*. A solitude that, in an analogous way to the Maroon, through which he thought he would recover his self. Rousseau's recovery of a self takes the form of a *Maroon writing*. Already, between 1756 and 1762, it was "deep in the woods of Montmorency," as Alain Grosrichard notes, that Rousseau wrote *The Social Contract*, *Emile*, *The New Heloise*, and *Letter to d'Alembert*.¹⁸ Rousseau's Maroon writing after 1762 is characterized by accounts of his escapes and an autobiographical approach that includes *The Confessions*, *Rousseau, Judge of Jean-Jacques*, and *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, alongside others. Starting from his flight from the world, through botany and nature, Rousseau takes up a writing of the self [*une écriture de soi*] and seeks to restore his true "I". Of course, his concrete *experiences* of nature remain significantly different to that of the Maroons. His experience of a solitary flight into nature was cut short whenever hunger, cold, or rain brought him back quickly to a nearby house, where he found food, shelter, warmth, and companionship. Moreover, it was possible for him to devote himself to this intensely close and disinterested relationship to nature only on the condition that his material needs and necessities – or his obligations towards his own children – were somehow met, even if by other people. This is the limit of the Maroon *praxis* of Rousseau's naturalism.

Recognizing Rousseau's Maroon *praxis* is a way to bring the history of the enslavement of Black people and of colonization back into naturalism as well as into political theory, a way of "Creolizing Rousseau."¹⁹ Rousseau's metaphor of slavery, which runs throughout *The Social Contract*, also rests upon the political understanding of a "fugitive freedom" that is taken from the (rhetorical) figure of the enslaved, the savage, or the Jew who escapes, resonating with the colonial experiences of the Americas:²⁰ "I take twenty paces into the forest," Rousseau writes, "my chains are broken, and [my oppressor] never sees me again."²¹ It is important to avoid the opposite excess which sees the Creolized reading of Rousseau's general will concealing in turn the material importance of the forest and its nature for freedom. Re-reading Rousseau's naturalism *and* political theory in the light of marronage then makes it possible to break this wall of the double fracture.

Thoreau cut in two

Unlike Rousseau, Thoreau lived in a country where slavery and the transatlantic slave trade were not distant things beyond the sea. They took place upon the very ground where he lived. From 1845 to 1847, Thoreau stayed in a cabin in the woods of Walden Pond, 2 miles from the town of Concord, Massachusetts, and he tells the story of this experience in his famous book *Walden*.²² His stay continues to be wrongly understood as merely a Robinsonade, the strolls of a man in love with nature, a pioneer of environmental writing and environmental imagination. There is very little mention made of Thoreau's multiple encounters with Maroons in Walden.²³ These encounters seem to be all the more insignificant in the development of *Walden* since Thoreau, otherwise known for his fervent criticism of slavery, grants only a few lines in this book to the enslavement of Black people in the United States. His writing might then be a single oeuvre made up of two, well-separated parts. On one side there would be Thoreau's ecological writing with his studies of nature, which made him the "most famous of America's naturalists," and on the other side his manifest political commitments in *Civil Disobedience* and his antislavery writings.²⁴

Thoreau's thought would then present a schism. Either, because of his civil disobedience, he is presented primarily as a political thinker who was also interested in a naturalist hobby. Or he is

presented as the founder of American environmentalism, whose political commitment against slavery is just one more reason to celebrate him, though not an indispensable one. Numerous studies in the literary field of ecocriticism maintain this fictitious separation, seeing in *Walden* only the experience of nature and writing about it, where his position on slavery remains circumstantial at best.²⁵ Like the Maroons, Thoreau finds himself at the heart of modernity's double fracture. Against the current of such an analysis, I maintain that those few lines recounting Thoreau's encounters with American Maroons bear witness to a much stronger entanglement between his naturalist practice and his antislavery commitments. Thoreau didn't go to live in the woods of Walden just because he loved nature. His stay in Walden testifies above all *to a radical rejection of the enslavement of Black people and to a profoundly anticolonial experience.*

Thoreau, defender of the Maroons

Let us remember that Thoreau's most well-known political commitments and writings, far removed from John Muir's lack of concern, focused on the question of slavery. They are presented to us in *Slavery in Massachusetts*, *A Plea for Captain John Brown*, and *Civil Disobedience*. More precisely, his political commitment against slavery is notable for the acute sympathy he develops for the fugitives from slavery, that is for the Maroons. *Slavery in Massachusetts* is a revised version of a speech he gave on July 4th, 1854, in which he denounced the application of the "Fugitive Slave Act" of 1850 by the state of Massachusetts. This law held that a runaway "slave" found in a state where slavery was abolished had to be returned to his master. It was applied during the trial of Anthony Burns, a fugitive from slavery, and drew fierce criticism from Thoreau.²⁶

This sympathy for marronage was also present in his active participation, alongside his mother Cynthia and his sister Sophia (members of the Concord Women's Anti-Slavery Society), in helping Maroons as they continued their escapes through the Underground Railroad.²⁷ He paid for train tickets, hid some in the family home, and sometimes took them to the train himself. Looking for the fastest way to end slavery, including through violent means, he expanded his commitment with his support of the armed actions of Captain John Brown.²⁸ Thoreau was even for a time favorable to the

mass emigration of Black people out of the United States, a project of return that animated many Maroons.²⁹

If Thoreau's sensibilities regarding slavery and marronage turn out to be obvious in his writings and his participation in the flight of some fugitives, then the articulation of his political and naturalistic practice is found not in his speeches but instead in his Maroon *praxis*. The first moment of this practice appears in his initial flight. His plan to live in the woods of Walden near the pond of the same name from 1847 to 1849 was first inspired by a desire to *escape* the government. By going into the woods and refusing to pay taxes, Thoreau was trying to escape the authority of a state that "buys and sells men, women, and children, like cattle, at the door of its senate-house."³⁰ He was marooning. Surprising as it may seem, Thoreau, like many Maroons of America, went into the woods to try to escape slavery. Thoreau marooned in the literal sense of the word: *he fled slavery*. His marronage does not make him a Maroon. Indeed, Thoreau is not a Negro or even a "White Maroon," like those first indentured White Europeans who worked in the fields in conditions close to slavery could have been, some of whom also fled.³¹ However, with his gesture of leaving the town of Concord in order to settle in the woods a few miles away, he demonstrated an unexpected form of the same marronage: a *civil marronage*. Clarifying this marronage requires a reconsideration of the Thoreauvian understanding of the enslavement of Black people.

The enslaved to Black enslavement: the other people enslaved by the Plantationocene

Thoreau begins a poem entitled "True Freedom" with the following verses:

Wait not till the slaves pronounce the word
To set the captive free, –
Be free yourselves, be not deferred,
And farewell, Slavery.
Ye all are slaves, ye have your price.³²

If slavery is usually thought of as concerning only the enslaved, Thoreau expands this concept so that masters, authorities, and civil society remain just as carried away by this economy as the enslaved.

The slaves are not the only ones enslaved to slavery. Without calling into question the abject situation that the enslaved Black person typically finds themselves in, Thoreau's whole theoretical work, including *Walden*, consists in showing that those who directly or indirectly support this state apparatus organized around the slave-making system remain not only debased but *enslaved to slavery*, even if they go about their business far from the cotton fields and workshops. In addition to the moral condemnation of slavery and the association of a citizen to this slave-making government, there is also the condemnation of the political relationship that joins civil society to the slave-making government. If the same relationship of recognition is established between the enslaved and the government and between the person said to be "free" and the government, and if this government is indeed one and the same, then one cannot recognize this government without also being enslaved. There is only one government, the government of the enslaved.³³

Similarly, slavery remains an inseparable part of an economic organization aimed at the enrichment of some through the large-scale cultivation of commodities such as sugar cane, cotton, and indigo. Although the enslaved embody the productive force of slavery, the masters, the authorities, and civil society, being subject to this economy, also remain enslaved to slavery. Both the enslaved and the master, the citizens and the state, are subjected to this "frivolous" agriculture and to this economy making "slaves of them all." The enslavement of Black people in the United States therefore appears to be a symptom of a more general affliction: the creation of societies that were not only enslaving but mostly *enslaved*. Thoreau makes this enslavement explicit in *Walden* by describing how the cultivation of coffee and tea, and the production of meat, milk, and butter, as undertaken by his Irish neighbor, lock that neighbor into an infernal cycle of debt and misery and, above all, lead "directly or indirectly" to "slavery and war."³⁴ Against this colonial inhabitation, Thoreau's alternative practice, not relying on any of these products, using beans among other items, was an attempt at another way of inhabiting the Earth that did not involve the enslavement of some humans and a majority of non-human animals.

With the recognition of an enslavement to slavery, Thoreau made a radical break with the negroology of the slavers and the abolitionists. Opposition to slavery is not the result of an interrogation of the nature of the enslaved person but follows from the elucidation of civil society's relationship to this crime. A society

cannot be “civil” within a slave-making state, even if its members are not masters themselves. *We are all enslaved to slavery as soon as slavery is allowed within a society.* Solidarity between those who are called slaves and those who are called free no longer rests upon the sympathy-without-connection of a center that holds the criteria for measuring humanity and recognizes it in those who are called into question. It lies in the recognition of a common enslavement – though not an identical one – to a single slave-making world. Thoreau opposes slavery against the measure of the world. Therefore emancipation not only plays out between the master and the enslaved, but it also plays out between civil society on the one side and the merchant elites, the planters, and the state on the other side, those who legitimize, legalize, and organize this world of slavery. The free have to emancipate themselves from slavery as much as the enslaved, as Thoreau said:

Think not the tyrant sits afar
 In your own breasts ye have
 The District of Columbia
 And power to free the Slave.³⁵

Civil marronage

Thoreau’s recognition of the enslavement to slavery brought to light an unbearable situation that arouses contempt for a society that goes about its daily life unconcerned with this crime. So how does one emancipate oneself from that kind of slavery? He recommends, “Let each inhabitant of the State dissolve his union with her, as long as she delays to do her duty!”³⁶ If Thoreau is indeed the founder of civil disobedience, it was not the only response he had to slavery. His disobedience was preceded by a flight into the woods near Walden Pond. Enslaved to slavery, Thoreau flees, Thoreau maroons. The same utopia that was entertained by so many fugitive slaves, that through these mountains, forests, and rivers there is an escape for good from the colonial and slave-making world of the Americas, is found again carried by Thoreau. His escape to the pond, Michael Meyer notes, takes on the appearance of “a white version of a *slave narrative*,” those accounts of escape by enslaved Black people.³⁷ *Walden* is the history of an attempt to escape from this slavery, the tale of a *civil marronage*.

The expression “civil marronage” would seem at first sight to be an oxymoron. In the strongest forms of marronage, there is nothing “civil” about the enslaved person’s resistance and flight into the woods. But every part of Thoreau’s radical nature is here, in demonstrating an alternative course of action. Holding together the two parts of Thoreau’s work that were unjustly separated, civil marronage refers to resistance against slavery and the attempts to flee it, and civil society’s colonial inhabitation, by those who, not being legally enslaved, remain nevertheless enslaved to slavery. So, during his stay in Walden, Thoreau set out to open up an alternative: another way of inhabiting the Earth.

Undoubtedly, Thoreau’s Maroon utopia was influenced by the Transcendental Club he frequented, a club that founded two utopian communities during the same period as his stay at Walden: Brook Farm (1841–7) and Fruitlands (1843–4).³⁸ His flight therefore required that he try to live, inhabit, feed himself, and provide for his needs without having his hands tied to the government, indicating the first fruits of an ecological attitude. Of course, the two years spent in Walden were not an experience in total isolation, or a complete break with the town of Concord, located 3 kilometers from his cabin. Some goods and tools necessarily came from the city where he regularly returned. It was not necessary for him to be in total isolation to achieve his goal. For Thoreau, it was a question of showing and experimenting with another order, *a non-plantationary economy*. It was a matter of opening up a possibility, that of no longer being enslaved to slavery.

Many of the American philosophers and environmental historians who have rushed into Thoreau’s naturalistic writings such as *Walden*, *The Maine Woods*, or *Walking*, so that they could make him one of the pioneers of American naturalism, completely obscure the political commitment that underlies his practice. However, *Thoreau’s naturalism is first a political resistance to slavery*. Before he admires its beauty, before he listens to its season and daily rhythms, Walden’s nature and its pond serve as his refuge and resource. The pond becomes the place where “the State is nowhere to be seen.”³⁹ The Maroon discovery of nature comes *in response* to the slavery and enslavement that follows from the relationship to a slave-making government. This is the legacy of Thoreau hidden by the wall of the double fracture. This Maroon legacy reinscribes Thoreau’s sensibility, science, and genius for writing about nature within a concern for the world, a very different concern than that

present in the attitudes of wilderness thinkers. Thoreau's daily walks are motivated by the conviction that a treasure exists within this nature, the conviction that utopian antislavery paths and projects are there. The world has never stopped being present. Civil marronage was the condition for Thoreau's naturalism.

Thoreau knew that Walden was not a place of untouched nature.⁴⁰ He recognized that Maroons and the formerly enslaved had sought refuge in these same woods. Like an archaeologist, Thoreau unearths the traces of those who lived in the woods before him in the chapter of *Walden* entitled "Former Inhabitants." In particular, he relates that the woods were occupied before him by Black people, some of whom were enslaved: Cato, Zilpha, and Brister Freeman. Indeed, as the historian Elise Lemire attests in her book *Black Walden*, Concord, a city hailed as the birthplace of the American nation and literature, was also a slave-making city.⁴¹ Locating Cato to "the east of his bean field," Zilpha "in the very corner of his field," and Brister Freeman "a little further away, on the right," Thoreau himself, through his writing, tells, writes, and also places himself in the midst of these Black freedom seekers. Through his writing and his singular archaeology, he places his cabin and his experience of Walden within a Maroon topography of the area, within a political history where these woods are associated with resistance to slavery and with the search for freedom. *Thoreau writes about himself as a Maroon.*

Civil Maroonesses and the White women against slavery

The commitments against slavery and the Plantationocene made by White and other free people were also the result of *women*. In the same way that the marronage of formerly enslaved women took on different forms than the marronage of formerly enslaved men, White women produced antislavery practices from their subordinate [*subalterne*] positions among free White people. They participated in changing the world without being recognized as having a voice equal to those of White men. Thoreau's civil marronage was made possible by the material support and political consciousness-raising that his mother Cynthia and his sisters Sophia and Helen provided, alongside all the members of the Concord Female Anti-Slavery Society (founded in 1838 by Mary Merrick Brooks).⁴² It was these

women, who had no right to vote or to sit in Congress, who hid a number of fugitives from slavery. They agreed on a set of strategies to convince the men of Concord, including Emerson, to engage in the antislavery struggle, inviting several well-known abolitionists such as Wendell Phillips, William Garrison, and others to intervene. Cynthia, Helen, and Sophia Thoreau were in favor of disunion with the United States Constitution because of slavery ten years before Henry was.⁴³

Associations of White women against slavery also formed in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In comparison to the leading male abolitionist figures, who preferred gradual emancipation, Elizabeth Heyrick stands out for her commitment to immediate abolition as presented in an 1824 pamphlet. Her political opposition to the Plantationocene was demonstrated in her call for a boycott of sugar that had been produced by slavery, urging the British to *bring the issue of slavery home*:

But let us, *individually*, bring this great question closely home to our own bosoms ... we are all implicated; we are all guilty ... of supporting and perpetuating slavery. ... The planter refuses to set his wretched captive at liberty, treats him as a beast of burden ... because *we* furnish the stimulant to all this injustice, rapacity, and cruelty, by *purchasing its produce*. ... Yes, there is [something to be done ...] it is *abstinence from the use of West Indian productions, sugar*, especially in the cultivation of which slave labor is chiefly occupied. When there was no longer a market for the productions of *slave labor*, then, and *not till then*, will the slaves be emancipated.⁴⁴

Heyrick inspired more than seventy women's antislavery societies, going door to door in Leicester and Birmingham in favor of an immediate emancipation and sugar boycott.⁴⁵

The political commitments of free White women were also relayed in the writings of famous White female abolitionists, such as the play *L'Esclavage des Noirs ou l'Heureux Naufrage* by Olympe de Gouges and Harriet Beecher Stowe's classic *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which sold several million copies.⁴⁶ Admittedly, these efforts are not without their clumsy moments or without remnants of prejudice. However, those moments should not erase these White women's powerful resistance to slavery given their political domination by White men. They demonstrate that rising up from the slave ship's hold is also a task for those on the bridge. Following John Brown's

example, the hatch of the hold can also be broken open from the outside.

A civil marronage from the Plantationocene

Thoreau, Mary Merrick Brooks, Elizabeth Heyrick, or Harriet Beecher Stowe present a fundamental capacity for action against the Plantationocene in their nineteenth-century civil marronage and antislavery commitments. They demonstrate that people far away from the plantations and the factories, and who do not directly experience the violence inherent in this way of inhabiting the Earth today, are also affected, debased, and subjugated. Through consumption patterns and modes of transportation, a segment of the populations of rich countries tacitly supports the violence and oppression directed at those who are relegated to the world's hold. In addition to the slavery of enslaved Negroes, the hold represents enslavement to slavery, the subjugation of the free people on the Plantationocene's bridge. From the moment the ship chains human and non-human beings in its hold, it is the whole ship that becomes enslaved to slavery, turning the world and the Earth into slavers. Against this violence, the free, the rich, non-racialized men and women can also break free from these degrading and enslaving bonds, inventing pockets of resistance and creativity in their relationships with other humans and non-humans and manifesting radical solidarity with the Negroes of the world. Marronage, as much as civil marronage, has its limits. Because of the ubiquity of ecological problems, complete escape from the Plantationocene is an illusion. Thoreau knew this when he was arrested during a short stint in Concord, spending a night in jail before being freed by his aunts Jane and Maria. This arrest opened up direct resistance through civil disobedience. One cannot maroon infinitely or avoid direct confrontation with the advocates of a capitalist economy that starves the world in order to provide for the opulence of a minority. But this civil marronage makes it possible to trace this horizon, the utopian cape of a livable world that guides this confrontation.

13

A Decolonial Ecology: Rising Up from the Hold

Gaïa (1848)

In 1848, Captain Vincente Madalena and his crew intently watched the African coast from the bridge of the ship *Gaïa*. The recognition of this Mother-Earth, however, is not the recognition of equality between her children. Some would even be naturally inferior. The shipowners then agree on the sea and land routes that will drive the diminished ones into the hold and steerage. In the name of some nature, *Gaïa* has abandoned Black people to the Negro off-world. But a song of freedom and pride was sung by the enslaved and their allies. The abolitionist echoes reverberate through the Earth and through time, as on August 23rd, 1791, in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, or on August 23rd, 1848, on the open sea. On that day, the British navy captures *Gaïa* even before it had completed its slave-making work. The ship was condemned for its illegal trade. In the name of equality, *Gaïa* was destroyed, opening the world to another Mother-Earth. I propose we call it *Ayiti*.

The real solution to the environmental crisis is the decolonization of the black race.

Nathan Hare, “Black Ecology”¹



Figure 11 Hector Charpentier, *Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery* (*Mémorial de l'abolition de l'esclavage*), Prêcheur, Martinique. Photo © David Almandin.

Decolonial ecology is an ecology of struggle. Far from the environmentalism of Noah's ark, which refuses the world and prolongs the dominations of the enslaved, decolonial ecology is a matter of challenging the colonial ways of inhabiting the Earth and living together. Confronting ecosystem destruction is then intimately linked to a demand for equality and emancipation. From the perspective of the imaginary of the slave ship, decolonial ecology is a *rising up from the modern world's hold*. At the theoretical level, it involves thinking/healing [*penser/panser*] the colonial and environmental double fracture.² It is a double healing that is expressed both by *another way of thinking about decolonization* and by *another way of thinking about the struggles against the environmental degradation of the Earth*. At the cultural, historical, and linguistic level, this requires unsettling the Anthropocene in order to show other ways of problematizing the ecological crisis. At the political level, it makes itself manifest through a set of social movements and struggles around the world.

From the colonial fracture to the environmental fracture

Decolonial ecology is a renewed critique of historical and contemporary colonizations and their legacies, a critique that takes the world's ecological challenges seriously. In the first place, it is a matter of recognizing that the colonial relationship cannot be reduced to a relationship between groups of human beings. It also includes specific relationships to non-humans, to landscapes, and to lands through *the colonial inhabitation of the Earth*. This means that emancipation from colonial domination cannot be thought of only as a change in the relationship of humans to humans. It also implies a transformation of the colonial relationship to landscapes and to non-humans, including in its slave-making forms. Decolonial ecology is therefore an ecological extension of existing critiques of the colonial fracture. These can be schematically grouped around four poles.

The first pole is the *anticolonialism* that emerged after World War II, proposing an approach to decolonization that is focused upon sovereignty and statutes. The wind of decolonization that blew across the world was first expressed in the struggles and wars waged by a group of colonized countries for access, if not to independence,

then at least to a different legal status that guarantees the equal rights of former colonial subjects and a form of autonomy, as is the case for the overseas territories of England, Denmark, the United States, France, and the Netherlands.³ Highlighting the continuities that colonization and imperialism pass down, *postcolonial thought* is the second pole that critiques the ways cultures are understood and how the representations of those who were colonized are always given as their being others in relation to a center, a European center in particular.⁴ Heavily influenced by thinkers such as Edward Said and Frantz Fanon, but by subaltern studies as well, it is an invitation to a decentering, to letting go of Eurocentrism.⁵ It is a matter of being open to the possibility that there is a capacity for representation and speech for the formerly colonized as well for those beyond the West.⁶

Initiated by the Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano and a group of Latin American researchers at the start of the 1990s, *decolonial thought* constitutes a third pole that proposes an epistemic critique of the colonial fracture – that is, a critique of the categories of those worldviews that were imposed upon the Americas by colonization. In particular, the imposition of a concept of power based upon race as a central category expresses a “coloniality of power.”⁷ So the decolonial effort constitutes an “epistemological deconstruction”⁸ that overturns colonial ways of thinking about the world, the forms of existence within it and its kinds of knowledge, an attempt to get rid of “the coloniality of Being”⁹ and “the coloniality of knowledge,” among other actions.¹⁰

Finally, a fourth heterogeneous pole proposes a critique of the colonial fracture of the world from the perspectives of women in the Global South and of racialized women in the Global North, or what Françoise Vergès names a “decolonial political feminism.”¹¹ From women’s antislavery struggles to the movements, collectives, and writings of Black feminism, as in the work of bell hooks, and to the struggles of indigenous women around the world, this heterogeneous pole draws attention to the intersectionality of colonial, racial, and gender relations that characterize women in (post) colonial situations and their modes of emancipation.

These four poles address environmental issues here and there. Traces persist, as in the critique of the colonial economy present in Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism*,¹² in the political program of Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso which made the struggle against the desert an anti-imperialist struggle while working for women’s

liberation,¹³ in the central place that certain ecosystems such as mangroves hold for Caribbean writers,¹⁴ or in the attention Edward Said paid to the cultural and geographical dimensions of imperialism.¹⁵ Despite their progress, these first four poles did not make ecological issues an essential dimension of their political problematization of the world.

Decolonial ecology forms a fifth pole that makes challenging colonial inhabitation its center of action. Beyond the anticolonial reappropriation of collective responsibility for resources, it is concerned with overthrowing the economic ideology that turns human and non-human living environments into resources serving an unequal capitalist enrichment. The decentering of postcolonial thought is translated into challenging the representations of those places where life happens as off-world lands, as resources to be monopolized, or as lands of paradise. Likewise, the epistemic critique of decolonial thought is extended into a critique of the capitalist economy that, regardless of the categories of knowledge and power, governs and destroys the Earth's ecosystems. Arturo Escobar's work, straddling this pole and the pole of decolonial thought, is embedded in this approach as a political ecology of South America.¹⁶ One of the milestones of this decolonial ecology was the declaration of the principles of environmental justice in 1991 at the first People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in Washington, DC:

We, the people of color ... to begin to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities, do hereby re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother-Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles in healing ourselves; to ensure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and, to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our people.¹⁷

This declaration intimately joins together the call to reconnect with Mother-Earth and ecological development with the demand for "political, economic, and cultural liberation" in the face of five hundred years of colonization, which is *the decolonial demand*.

From the environmental fracture to the colonial fracture

In the other direction, decolonial ecology makes the colonial fracture the central issue of the ecological crisis. It follows from the observation that pollution, loss of biodiversity, and global warming are the material traces of this colonial inhabitation of the Earth, comprising global social inequalities and gender and racial discriminations. This is the inversion proposed by the African-American sociologist Nathan Hare when he writes that the “the real solution to the environmental crisis is the decolonization of the black race.”¹⁸ Hare not only reminds us that the discriminations suffered by Black people in the world are intimately linked to the destructive economy of the planet’s ecosystems, but, even more so, they also constitute environmental colonizations of bodies and skins which, linking negative prejudices to a color and a phenotype, aim to exclude those bodies and skins from the world. More than an ideology, *racism is a way of inhabiting the Earth* that includes an engineering of its environmental, social, and political landscapes. It translates into a geographical organization,¹⁹ even an “apartheid ecology,”²⁰ that places on one side the non-racialized, the colorless, White people, clean air, and pristine nature and on the other side the racialized, the Negroes, polluted air, craters caused by mining, and factories. This is the striking continuity between South African apartheid and the safaris from which the natives were expelled, between the constant discrimination in the housing of the racialized in the Global North and the exploitation of resources in the Global South.²¹ Racialized people living in ghettos, suburbs, shanty towns, and favelas learn that the ecological struggles that are shown on television are not concerned with the places where they live. What is discovered is a Black ecology, a poor people’s ecology, and a slum ecology, which are excluded from the global grand narrative of the “real” ecological crisis.²² This is the origin of the perfidious invention that the absence of racialized people in the arenas of environmental decisions and reflection could only be the fruit of their lack of concern for these questions.

By recognizing that colonization, racism, and gender discrimination are also ways of inhabiting the Earth, landscape relations, and geological forces at the heart of the ecological crisis, challenging the colonial divide becomes the fundamental issue of the ecological

struggle. In bridging [*panser*] this double divide, decolonial ecology turns the degradation of social life, the extractivism of Negro skins, and environmental racism into the primary targets of ecological action.²³ *Yes, antiracism and decolonial critique are the keys to the ecological struggle.*

Unsettling the Anthropocene: the Ayiti hypothesis

The environmentalism of Noah's ark carries a constellation of concepts and words, such as "nature," "man," or "Anthropocene," that perpetuate the double colonial and environmental rupture while downplaying inequalities and the pursuit of justice. The double bridging of decolonial ecology makes visible another grammar of the ecological crisis, another genealogy, other concepts, other words that are based upon the social and political struggles of humans and non-humans on Earth. With its language, decolonial ecology urges an *unsettling* [*décaler*] of the Anthropocene. In the primary meaning of the verb *décaler*, decolonial ecology *unsettles* the abstract gaze adopted by the Anthropocene, recognizing that the "we" in the ecological crisis is neither given in advance nor self-evident. It makes visible the plurality hastily concealed by this "we," its fault lines, its violence, its dominations, and its time. The experiences and imaginaries of the Caribbean put forward a political genealogy in opposition to the classical, apolitical, asocial, and ahistorical genealogy of modern environmentalism. This can be expressed through a series of oppositions between terms and concepts illustrated in the table on p. 180.

The tempest is no longer observed from an omniscient and comfortable position outside of the ship but is from within the world, from the plurality of places, stories, homes, and times, by those who were abandoned, excluded, or thrown overboard by that same "us." Far from being the colonial utopia of a harmonious world that existed before the catastrophe, the violence and domination that generates the storms and those that follow them are at the heart of the political understanding of the ecological crisis. Unsettling the Anthropocene makes it possible to articulate the multiple catastrophes on the ashes of which this end of the world is feared and to preserve the plurality of experiences of the ecological crisis.

This other genealogy also manifests itself through giving names to oneself as well as to one's environment. Certainly Malcolm X is

Genealogy of environmentalism	Caribbean genealogy of decolonial ecology
Anthropocene Rural landscapes, production techniques, inhabitants-astronauts, masters-citizens, men, patriarchs, plagues, nuisances, pollutions	Plantationocene, Negrocene Plantations and shacks, slave trade and slavery, shipwrecked people, Earthlings, the enslaved, Negroes, Negresses, nurturing women, cooks, interspecies alliances, environmental racism
Noah's ark The bridge, boarding, selective safeguarding, wilderness, paradise here, nature, tempest, natural catastrophes, saved masters, fear of climate refugees	Slave ship The hold and the steerage, debarkation, discriminatory abandonment, the genocide of the indigenous peoples, the hell of the laboratory, exclusion, colonial hurricane, lost Negroes, the pursuit of dignity for postcolonial migrants
The solitary walker Gaia, botanical gardens, virgin forests/hostile mangroves, naturalism, Walden, mountains, deculturation, uprootedness	The Maroons and Maroonesses Ayiti, Creole gardens, human/non-human refuges, marronage, civil marronage, hillsides of freedom, Creole metamorphosis, matrigenesis

Caribbean genealogy of decolonial ecology

one of those who understood best the importance of being able to say “I” for those human beings in the world’s hold, to be able to establish a relationship with the body that was no longer tied to the mercantile perspective of some master over his ancestors. What might seem like family squabbles become politically significant when they concern public roads, neighborhoods, cities, regions, and even countries. The colonization of the Americas can today still be seen in a series of names that evoke the victories of the European conquerors, from Santo Domingo to the Avenida Juan Ponce de León in San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico. In reaction to these names that celebrate the colonial conquest, streets, cities, and countries have taken on different names. In Martinique, streets

were renamed in homage to the struggle against slavery and colonization, as with the “rue du Marronnage” in Rivière-Pilote. Unlike the colonial naming of lands, which attach the names of colonists such as Christopher Columbus to just about any place, the giving of names that evoke Maroon resistance and emancipatory struggles is intimately linked to specific landscapes and lands. The “Fond Gens libres” neighborhood in Martinique, the Bayano River in Panama, and the “Piton Flore” hills in St Lucia do not just celebrate one man or one woman.²⁴ Historical human and non-human alliances that defied the colonial and slave-making order are made visible by these names.

In the case of Haiti, there is an even deeper significance. At the time of its declaration of independence at the end of its revolution that drove out the French, the Spanish, and the English, this former colony (Saint Domingue/Hispaniola) was renamed “Haiti” by the revolutionaries, this being the name that the Tainos gave to the island before the arrival of Christopher Columbus. This name bears witness to the memory of those who were decimated by the colonists. Far from being simply the new attribution of a name by the victors of this anticolonial war, it attests to *the part names play in the wider process of decolonization*, the same one noted by Val Plumwood in the context of the Aborigines of Australia.²⁵ It is not just about another name being given but about finding ways to bring out the features of the Earth, of landscapes, and of non-humans, as if they were also participating in the naming process. It is precisely this relationship that emerges in some of the names used by the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean to refer to the different islands. “Madinina” for Martinique means “the island of flowers.” “Karukera” for Guadeloupe means “the island of beautiful waters.” “Ayiti” for Haiti means “land of high mountains,” the same mountains from which antislavery insurgents launched their assault on the Plantationocene.²⁶ With the name Ayiti, these revolutionaries testify to the memory of lost peoples and reveal the matrilineal bond that linked them to this Mother-land. After colonial destruction, this naming was one of the possible paths towards matrigenesis.

Names for thinking about the Earth are loaded with meaning and specific cosmological references, just as the act of giving a name, even to the whole Earth, is not politically neutral. In the Caribbean, giving a name was an essential part of the colonial act, aimed at usurping the land from the people who depended upon it. So, Christopher Columbus, from his ship, amused himself by covering

the islands with a veil of names that referenced apostolic Roman Catholic cosmology. Ayiti became *Isla española* (Spanish Island) or *hispaniola*. In 1970, James Lovelock, from the perspective of the space shuttle, proposed that the name Gaia be used to designate the Earth within the framework of a scientific and environmentalist hypothesis, likening the planet (and singularly the biosphere) to a self-regulating organism.²⁷ This reference to the Greek goddess was taken up again in other works about the life and earth sciences, as in the writings of the philosophers Bruno Latour and Isabelle Stengers, so as to designate the presence of these non-human groupings that escape the control of human beings and that should command consideration in return. Recognizing Gaia's intrusion (Stengers), we have to face her (Latour).²⁸

In response to the scientific Gaia hypothesis, I propose the cosmopolitical Ayiti hypothesis. As beautiful as it is, the reference to ancient Greece secretly preserves the fantasy of some pre-globalization that disavows the colonial knot of 1492, the very act that made concrete the totalization of the Earth into a globe, photographed five hundred years later from space. On the one hand, Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis remains locked in an environmentalism that erases, like an astronaut, the socio-economic, political, and imaginary continuities between humans and non-humans constitutive of the Earth, and which refuses to recognize modernity's colonial fracture. On the other hand, the Ayiti hypothesis is primarily the proposition that the Earth is the basis for a world where its physico-chemical systems, its geological strata, its oceans, its ecosystems, and its atmosphere are in intrinsic relationships with the colonial, racial, and misogynistic dominations of humans and non-humans, as well as the struggles against them. To recognize the intrusion of Ayiti is to recognize the ecologico-political imbrication of modernity's colonial constitution within the ways of inhabiting the Earth, which is the cause of today's ecological crisis. The gesture of the revolutionaries of Saint Domingue literally and literarily indicates that it is through confrontation with modernity's colonial fracture and its slavery that clear paths towards a Mother-Earth are possible. Representing the anticolonial and antislavery struggles of indigenous peoples, the pursuits for the equality of the enslaved, and the struggles to preserve the matrilineal bond with the Earth, *Ayiti is the name of the Mother-Earth of the modern world*. In this sense, we are all children of Ayiti. Ayiti's intrusion is both a witness to these colonial expansions across the globe and an appeal. She is not

an entity that stands by herself; she is to be found through struggles, through acting together, through *coumbites*; she is the joint call of a matrigenesis (recognition of Mother-Earth) and a Creole metamorphosis (recognition of the children of this Mother-Earth). Facing Ayiti means confronting the world's environmental changes as well as confronting the inequalities that have been passed down by the colonial constitution of modernity between North and South, fervently evoked by Haiti.

Decolonial ecology's struggles: rising up from the modern hold

In the second meaning of the verb *décaler*, unsettling the Anthropocene literally means to *empty the Anthropocene's hold*.²⁹ In terms of the ideal of equality, it is a question of abolishing the politics that places some humans and non-humans in the ship's hold, a question of freeing the enslaved from the ecological crisis. This rising up from the hold is expressed in decolonial ecology through a multitude of social and political struggles where the preservation of ecosystem balance and the pursuit of emancipation from a colonial situation form one and the same problem. Militants rise up against the violence of the colonial inhabitation and the capitalism that is devouring the world, while, at the same time, it oppresses humans and non-humans in the Caribbean, as it does elsewhere on Earth.³⁰ With regard to decolonial ecology, there are four types of struggle that can be identified today.

The first is found in the actions of pre-Columbian and indigenous peoples who struggle to preserve both their living environments and their place in the world faced with the predations of multinational corporations and liberal states. They are manifest today in the actions of the first peoples and their allies who work to preserve their forests and the places where they live, in the resistance of the indigenous peoples of French Guiana against the "Montagne d'or" project, in the resistance of Native Americans against gas pipeline projects as at Standing Rock in the United States, and in the resistance of the Inuit against the oil industry in the tar sands.³¹ The Puerto Rican environmental movement centered around the Casa Pueblo association also acts against the destruction of the places where people live by defending the house (*casa*) of the Boricuas, referring to the Taino peoples.³² This first type of struggle is also

found in the battles of the Warlpiri, Yawuru, Ngarinyin, and other Australian Aborigines to preserve their lands.³³ In addition to their political fervor, indigenous peoples have a premodern mythological and cosmological foundation, such as the Pachamama, that they can contrast with the destructive globalization of the world. The struggles of decolonial ecology that are specific to indigenous peoples are a reminder that the violence inflicted on them on a global scale is the flip side of the violence and contempt directed at the Earth's ecosystems, landscapes, and natures.³⁴

The second type concerns the forms of political ecological resistance by those who were physically brought to the Americas in the holds of slave ships and cannot claim an ancient indigeneity. They are historically based on the resistance of formerly enslaved Negroes, such as the struggles of the Maroons throughout the Americas, from the *quilombos* of Brazil to the Great Dismal Swamp of Virginia, passing through the Saramaka people of Suriname, the Maroon communities of Jamaica, and San Basilio de Palenque in Colombia. These struggles show themselves today in the Caribbean through the actions of environmentalist associations, such as Assaupamar in Martinique (Association for the Safeguarding of Martinique's Heritage), which combines defending ecosystems and preserving the cultural heritage that has been passed on by formerly enslaved Negroes with the struggle for a postcolonial political equality. Here, decolonial ecology is found also in the struggles of an urban ecology that comes from the working-class neighborhoods, ghettos, slums, and favelas where ethnic minorities live, where the improvement of the living environment goes hand in hand with the pursuit of social justice. It is seen in the struggles for Black people's emancipation in the United States, in "those freedom farmers" who, from the Negro gardens to the urban gardens of Detroit and the Maroon communities, have turned their alliances with the land into the heart of antiracist political resistance.³⁵ The environmental justice movement in the United States was born in the early 1980s out of the recognition of the link between social inequality, political domination, and environmental pollution.³⁶ These struggles demonstrate that racism is the other side of contempt for the Earth's ecosystems.

The third type overlaps with the first two while constituting a markedly different extension of them as it concerns the struggles of a political ecology led by women, which at the same time aims at the preservation of the living environment, the preservation of the Earth's ecosystems, and the social and political equality of women.

While this is represented in particular by Rachel Carson's work and the advances of a White ecofeminist movement in the Global North, it is particularly relevant to the experiences of racialized women in (post)colonial situations, recognizing that ecological damage affects them disproportionately.³⁷ Historically, it is based on the struggles of women of color, such as the Chipko movement in eighteenth-century India that sought to defend their forests as places where they lived, as Vandana Shiva shows.³⁸ It can also be found in the Green Belt movement set up by Wangari Maathai, which combined reforestation efforts to combat desertification with the improvement of the social conditions of Kenyan women. Inspired by the African-American writers Alice Walker and bell hooks, this is the kind of struggle to which the *ecowomanist* current is dedicated, recalling the material and spiritual importance of the relationship with non-humans and the environment for the reclamation of Black women's dignity in the face of patriarchy and colonial racism.³⁹ Contributing to this decolonial ecology are the courageous struggles of Francia Márquez, winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2018, and those of the Afro-Colombian women of La Toma against gold mines and their disastrous ecological consequences. It is also this form of decolonial ecology that Marielle Franco put into action in favor of social justice for LGBTQ+ minorities and for the improvement of living conditions in the favelas. This third type of decolonial ecology exposes the perfidious continuities between colonialism, racism, the domination of women, and the degradation of the planet.

The fourth type of struggle for decolonial ecology does not come from a particular group (indigenous, racialized, or women) but takes the same forms. While certain ecologico-political dominations are specific to such groups as indigenous people, enslaved Negroes, their descendants, and women, the situations of domination that are exposed can also be found in other places and involve other groups. Just as the Negro is not reducible to a Black person, anyone can find that they are in the modern world's hold. This fourth type of struggle for decolonial ecology denounces these *contemporary colonial situations* in the Global North as well as in the Global South. This is what Mathieu Gervais marks as the decolonial character of the peasants' struggles in *hexagonale* France to defend their relationship to the Earth,⁴⁰ while Jean-Baptiste Vidalou reminds us that the struggles for Notre-Dame-des-Landes, the forests of Sivens, Chambarans, Bures, and the Cévennes in France, the Hambach

forest in Germany, and the Skouries forest in Greece are also opposed to a “colonization that wants to open up access to these mountains and plateaus and bring them into the order of the market economy.”⁴¹ These European struggles are similar to the gestures and metamorphoses of the Maroons, bringing into view ways of *being a forest* that escape the othercidal planning of cybernetics and capitalist land management that reduces ecosystems, humans, and non-humans to a measurable, marketable, and profitable quantity. Protests against global warming in the streets of the world’s capitals are the continuation of protests for environmental justice that were begun by women and people of color in the United States. Climatic disobedience takes up the antislavery gestures of Thoreau and Elizabeth Heyrick when it is articulated with the struggles of the colonized, the indigenous, and the shipwrecked of the world.

Through these four forms of struggle, decolonial ecology condemns situations of *environmental colonialism* where a state or a group manages to *impose* a way of using the Earth that usurps common goods for a profit on the one side and results in the degradation of the living environment for the local inhabitants on the other. It also challenges the *heterotopic legacy* of colonization, the collective imaginary through which certain spaces are thought of as other spaces, spaces on the margins where what would not be allowed in the center is permitted within them. This heterotopic legacy is one of the central characteristics of the Plantationocene, the line that discriminates between moral considerations, norms, and practices that take place inside the plantations and those that take place outside of them. So the violence of the plantations is tacitly accepted by consumers and states, whether it is cotton, banana, and coffee plantations that are picked by Negro hands, palm oil and soybean plantations that destroy forests and human and non-human communities, industrial farms with caged animals, toxic chemical manufacturing plants, military training grounds where weapons of war are developed, or fields of oil wells that in one spark turn into an inferno or with one crack become an oil slick. It is this heterotopic relationship that is revealed in the practice of nuclear tests that the United States carried out on the lands of Native Americans, that France did in Algeria and Polynesia, the compulsive use of pesticides in the French Antilles, and in the toxic extraction of uranium in African countries.⁴² Similarly, the outsourcing of these environmental “impacts” follows this heterotopic legacy both through NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard) policies and through *toxic*

colonialism, the practice of dumping toxic waste from the Global North on the outskirts of indigenous and racialized communities and in the poorest countries, such as Haiti, Somalia, and the Ivory Coast.⁴³ Finally, decolonial ecology challenges the violence inflicted on humans and non-humans by *colonial inhabitation*. It is opposed to a way of inhabiting the Caribbean islands, as well as any other place in the world, which turns the Earth's ecosystems into resources for the enrichment of a few, all while entire populations are kept in conditions of food insecurity. Hidden by Noah's ark, this violence causes humans and non-humans to get sick from polluted living environments, increases social inequality, and, each year, *murders environmental activists*!⁴⁴ Rising up from the hold is a necessary confrontation with the violence devouring the world.

Unsettling the Anthropocene includes a third meaning taken from the Creole word "*dékalé*," meaning "destruction." More than emptying out the hold, the liberation of the enslaved, unsettling the Anthropocene also refers to the deconstruction of the political arrangement of the beams and planks that form a *hold* under the bridge, where new Negroes are regularly dumped. To *dékalé* the Anthropocene opens up the possibility of another world, of a different construction for living together, of a ship without a hold. To unsettle the Anthropocene announces the search for new sea and land arrangements through which, faced with the storm, it is possible to inhabit the bridge *together* and to build a world-ship.

Part IV
A World-Ship:
World-Making beyond the Double
Fracture

14

A World-Ship: Politics of Encounter

Rencontre (1765)

On January 31st, 1765, departing from Nantes, the ship *Rencontre* set sail towards the other across the salt water. Armed with cordage and chains, tackle and a dehumanizing economy, Captain Ray de Labaussère and his crew fully intend to touch these Black fantasies. In a West African slave port, fifty men, twenty-three women, twenty-two boys, and twenty-five girls are rushed into the ship's hold. On September 22nd, 1765, 120 missed encounters [*rencontres*] debark in Martinique. Having failed to live up to its name, the *Rencontre* is disarmed on the spot, opening the door to another fantasy: a rig that carries the sails of a world.

Superiority? Inferiority? Why not simply try to touch the other, feel the other, discover each other? Was my freedom not given for me to build the world of You?¹

Frantz Fanon,
Black Skin, White Masks

Noah's ark and the slave ship: two wanderings of the same modernity

As imaginary references, Noah's ark or the slave ship give rise to different insights about the world's ecological challenges in the face of the tempest. These differences are already present in their very semantics. If Noah's ark is the ship that can hold two of each animal, its name is not given in relation to what it contains or what takes place within it. Life on board does not matter. Noah's ark is named in relation to its exterior, to *the world's offside*, to its ability to resist the rising waters, the so-called catastrophe. Noah's ark would be an attempt to point to some *beyond of politics*. The ecological stakes are so important that they should not be subordinated to the usual games of election campaigns, wars, and human conflicts. It is well intentioned but naive to hope that, out of the plurality of existence on Earth, it would stay very quiet on board the ark, without any clashes, struggle, fear, or shouting, under the single yoke of a Leviathan rechristened "Nature."² The historical case of the slave ship *Noé* shows that such an ark can literally explode from maintaining untenable inequalities and oppressions.³ The real catastrophe is on board. This "beyond of politics" is nothing but the end of a concern for living together, the end of a concern for the world. And, yet, the best bulwark against the Flood is a concern for the world, for the preservation of livable conditions on board, for equality and justice.

The slave ship offers another semantic access point to the world by illuminating what takes place inside the ship. From the shore, it is not possible to know with certainty whether this ship is a slave ship or not. Only by entering it, only by being on board and opening the hold, is it possible to qualify it. Of course, the slave ship is named a second time for what it contains: enslaved Negroes. Following this semantic path of the slave ship came recurrent atrocities after the international prohibition of the transatlantic slave trade led by England in 1810. Since the ships that practiced this trade illegally were hunted down by the English Navy, all they had to do to no longer be a slave ship strictly speaking was get rid of "their cargo" by throwing those men and women, who were still chained or locked inside wooden barrels, into the sea, as the French ship *La Jeune Estelle* did in 1820.⁴ In spite of his vivid painting of the scene of the *Zong* slave ship, William Turner maintains an external

perspective in relation to the ship, one suspended above the water, unlike the representations made by the Caribbean poets David Dabydeen and M. NourbeSe Philip, who recount this scene from within the hold, from the life stories and names of these human beings.⁵ Ecology thought from the figure of the slave ship highlights the *immediate and inescapable character of the social and political experience of the world*. The slave ship tackles the ecological crises from *inside* the world.

Despite their differences, these two vessels both lead, by opposing paths, to the same deculturation, the same off-ground and off-world position. Yes, it is possible for a ship to be both a slave ship and Noah's ark. Noah's ark as an imaginary scene testifies to the refusal of the world. Noah's ark results in the abandonment of affiliations, names, and identities (loss-bodies), the alienation of the relationship to the Earth (astronauts), and beings caught offside to their social and political relationships (Noahs). The politics of boarding does not lead to a living together, or even an inhabiting of the Earth. It becomes synonymous with the end of public space, the end of a world as the key to surviving the catastrophe. The wandering that results from the boarding politics of Noah's ark testifies to a *determined action*, the movement away from a home and towards the globalized Earth. This is a kind of wandering carried out in order to survive the consequences of the planet's ecological disturbances, *wandering to survive in the face of nature and the Earth*.

The slave ship as an imaginary scene bears witness to the harsh experiences of an absence of world. The dehumanization of the captives, chaining them up in the darkness of the hold and the steerage, means that a world cannot be established on this ship. The politics of debarkation driven by the slave ship creates a representation of the world and its inhabitants as lost bodies, as shipwrecked people held in an off-ground relation, and as Negroes held off-world. The result is alienation from the self, from the relationship to the Earth, and to the world. Escape, however necessary it may be from a pragmatic point of view, establishes the impossibility of making a world and inhabiting the Earth together. So the slave ship paints the awful picture of a world of desolation and deracinated human beings. The wandering that follows the slave ship was *imposed*. A group of people were forced to wander, to be homeless in the homes of others. This is what the Reverend Father Du Tertre could write in 1667: "One can also say of them [the Negroes] that the whole Earth is their homeland, for as long as they find food and drink,

all countries are indifferent to them, & far removed from the sentiments of the children of Israel ...”⁶

This statelessness is cynically formulated in a way that would characterize “Negroes” as an anthropological kind of human being, one whose lack of concern for human homelands would constitute the key to a carefree happiness. Contrary to Father Du Tertre’s assertion, this wandering is not the result of particular anthropological kinds of men and women, and this apparent lack of concern is not a philosophical life choice like the one Diogenes of Sinope advocated. These “Negroes” were forced into the experience of a cynical life, forced into an existence without a homeland. Enslaved Negroes did not have the whole Earth as their homeland, but they were those who had *only the Earth as their homeland*. The wandering that follows the slave ship and the alienation of the relationship to the Earth are the consequences of these captives’ expulsion from the world. This is wandering to survive in the face of the abuse they endured, *wandering to survive in the face of the world*.

If the slave ship and Noah’s ark represent two different scenes and two different kinds of politics (debarkation/boarding), the wanderings they engender correspond to each other like two sides of the same coin. With two opposing paths, the slave ship and Noah’s ark stage a scene of deculturation, of being alienated from the relationship to the Earth, and a loss of the world.

Noah’s ark and boarding politics	Forms of alienation	Slave ship and debarkation politics
Loss-bodies	Deculturation: alienation from cultural affiliations	Lost bodies
Astronauts	Uprootedness: alienation from the relationship to the Earth	Shipwrecked
Noahs	Acosmism: alienation from the relationship to the world	Negroes

The wanderings of the slave ship and Noah’s ark

How can we preserve a ground, a home, a self, while being part of a whole where this self merges into an abstract we? How can the Earth no longer be the wandering ship of human beings or the alien star of an astronaut-humanity, but be made into a *world-ship*?

The environmentalist return: continuing the colonial refusal of the world

These two wanderings of modernity have been contrasted with the movement of *return*. In the case of Noah's ark it is the return to Earth and to nature, and in the case of the slave ship it is a return to the African Mother-Earth. These two returns differ in terms of how they are exemplified historically, in terms of their socio-political dimensions, and in their theoretical scope. However, far from being an opposition to wandering, both attest to a loss of the world either by prolonging its refusal (Noah's ark) or by prolonging the flight from it (the slave ship).

"Return," as a theoretical movement for understanding environmental problems, has occupied an important place. It is found in the neo-rural movements⁷ of urban dwellers who decided to "return" to the countryside in order to renew their relationship of proximity to the Earth and in the countless calls to return to nature,⁸ from consumed products to sought-after vacations. This return is omnipresent in ecological science-fiction. This is the case with Marion Zimmer Bradley's short story "The Climbing Wave."⁹ It is also the case with Morgan Kass's series of novels *The 100*, adapted for the screen by Jason Rothenberg, where a nuclear accident has forced humans into exile in space for decades in a space shuttle that is called *Ark*.¹⁰ The story is about returning to Earth. This is all the more complicated when those who return realize that not everyone had left. This astronaut-humanity returns to Earth to discover grounders or Earthlings. Gil Scott-Heron's song "Whitey on the Moon," which condemns the poverty of Black people that is concomitant with White astronauts' footsteps on the moon,¹¹ as well as Thomas Sankara's proposition to devote 1 percent of the budgets for space conquest to the preservation of trees and life,¹² both recall the existence of those who were abandoned by this ark/space shuttle.

The return is also found in ecological theories such as Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis, where Earth is designated as home only from the perspective of astronauts who have left the planet and turn their gaze back to it, or in *The Natural Contract*, where Serres proposes a return to nature.¹³ If William Cronon, in his article "Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," takes the misleading idea of an American wilderness, which would be some sort of original nature, and

rightly criticizes it for covering up the historical processes behind the colonial construction of the landscapes of the United States, the action of returning (of *getting back*) is still validated.¹⁴ The same goes for Virginie Maris, who defends the need for a *return* to a nature, to natures, or to natural processes.¹⁵ The problem would then lie in how this nature is conceived, but not in the process of return in itself.

This return also appears in the writing of Bruno Latour, in his book *Down to Earth*, where the “terrestrials” are those moderns who, having lifted off, find themselves off-ground and must return to discover once again their condition as inhabitants of the Earth. The analogy Latour makes between modern people who fear they will be deprived of land and colonized peoples who have truly lost their land remains nevertheless a sympathy-without-connection, without any consequence. The contrite recognition of colonial crimes – omitting slavery, the slave trade, its racism, and its misogyny – and of the exploitation of colonial lands in order to preserve European lands from further plunder is not accompanied by any legal or political proposals directed *towards* the descendants of the enslaved, the formerly colonized themselves, or their lost lands. An inconsistency lingers in promoting the acceptance of contemporary migrants without addressing the state racism that denies *hospitality* to those migrants, as it does for those who came before via the paths of colonial and postcolonial immigration that existed previously. The negative universality by which, today, moderns and the colonized would be off-ground in the face of global capitalist elites and the United States is presented as sufficient to wipe away the colonial chalk from the West’s blackboard. This thoughtlessness generates untenable subterfuges that serve to preserve the paradoxical illusion of a non-colonial colonial grammar, of an “ethnocentric” representation of the world without racism or ethnocide, and of a new movement from “we Moderns” towards a “New World” through the “great discoveries” that will take place without, this time, any crime.¹⁶ This return maintains the fantasy of a single speaking, acting, and discovering subject, like a European Robinson who, despite his centuries of colonial “contact” with others, will get out of his predicament just by talking to himself. Such a stance omits that Robinson Crusoe was an enslaving planter at the head of a slave ship’s voyage when he was shipwrecked, and that, to this day, the Negroes and the Fridays of the Earth demand justice.¹⁷

In reality, the environmentalist perspective on the return to nature has often been expressed in a *colonial grammar* that aims to violently appropriate space and forcefully project one group's fantasies and ways of living [*modes d'occupation*] onto another. This was the case with the ideology of wilderness, where the creation of parks was synonymous with the expulsion not only of Amerindians in the United States but also of local communities in India, Tanzania, or South Africa.¹⁸ The colonial imposition of a vision of a virgin nature, the missionary zeal of conservatives in search of lost paradise, or the tourist craze for an Africa in the image of the film *The Lion King* have produced nature reserves and parks that are designed *against* the peoples who have been historically present.¹⁹ One can then peacefully climb Mount Kilimanjaro or go on a safari in the Serengeti without worrying about the use of pesticides in the surrounding area which violate these other humans and non-humans, the others considered to be off-nature. There are many examples of the complicity of the return to nature and colonial ideology. Here, a former member of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) located in Mururoa, one of the atolls on which France carried out its nuclear tests until 1996, published a book of terrestrial and submarine photos of the atoll in 2006 entitled *Mururoa: retour à la nature*. From the author's point of view, these images are intended to convince those who see them that "France has nothing to be ashamed of regarding what it did in Mururoa."²⁰ Return to this "beautiful" nature after the colonial power has dropped its radioactive bombs there.

To whom is this return addressed? This return concerns those who have previously embarked on Noah's ark, those who have been able to leave, those who have been selected to leave. The arrogance of the return to nature is precisely in erasing those who have not left. One would have to imagine a Noah's ark that, after a few nautical miles, decides to return to its port of departure. The sailors would be surprised to see that there are people already there and somehow getting by amidst the destruction caused by the construction of the ark. Is it to be expected that those who boarded the ark are voluntarily going to change the relationships of power, and that the previous violence is going to be followed by cordial relations with those who were abandoned ashore? Would this return take place under a sign of a passionate reunion? Or would the returnees hold on to the colonial arrogance present in declaring anew that the Earth or some other land has been "discovered"? Historically,

whether it is the indigenous people and rural peasants in the national parks of the United States, of South Africa or of India, or it is the Grounders in the series *The 100*, those who are most natural to the nature of the return to nature, the most earthly of the Earth in the return to the Earth, were presented as troublemakers to be expelled – in short, like those Caribbean “savages” who welcomed Columbus at the coast.

This return is not then the action of turning round and going back, and it is not a deconstruction of the ark in which an exclusive “we” might get on board. This return is just another stage, another stop in the epic itinerary of the *anthropos* or Noah. The Earth is then truly seen as a star like any other, just as Frédéric Neyrat explains in his critique of geoconstructivism.²¹ A discovered planet that “humans” will have navigated towards. It happens to carry the name “Earth.” Humans land on Earth always aboard the same ark. The return to Earth or to nature therefore reproduces the ecology of Noah’s ark to the extent that the whole world – in the double sense of the term – cannot take part in it. This return literally becomes a refusal of the world and renews colonial ecology’s propensity to expel others. This return does not know what to do when – oh, surprise – those who were already there are “discovered,” on this Earth or in this nature, whatever the object of the return. This altercide return rejects encounter, *refuses the world upon departure as well as upon arrival*.

Maroon returns: pursuit of the infinite flight from the world

Compared with this environmentalist literature, there are other human beings who have also been driven for a long time by the theme of return, and yet they remain overlooked. I am talking about the third terms, the enslaved colonial Negroes and their descendants. The search undertaken by enslaved Black people and their descendants for a self, a land, and a world has also taken the form of a hoped-for return, symbolized by the figure of the Maroon. A group of Black people who had been reduced to slavery and their descendants were driven by the desire for a return, from the first revolts on the slave ships to the current Rastafarian movements of return to Ethiopia, through the Maroon communities and Marcus Garvey’s Back to Africa movement.²² A return to a pre-colonial

world, a return to a Mother-Earth, to Guinea, to São Tomé, or to Africa. Some attempts were lost at sea or in the crevices of a nocturnal path, some found refuge in the mountains of Jamaica or in the forests of Suriname and French Guiana, and others actually made it to Africa. These attempts resulted, amongst other things, in the creation of two African countries: Sierra Leone and Liberia.²³

In their flights, the Maroons cannot encounter anyone but themselves. The fear that they will be exposed, by another enslaved person or by a White colonist, conditions the hidden approach of the Maroon. Maroons have to stay out of the world precisely in order to survive. Then, reflecting the condescension of Marcus Garvey, who was ready to make himself the leader of Africa without consulting the Africans already living there, some Black American returnees behaved like real colonists, wrongfully taking the land from local inhabitants and causing terrible conflicts.²⁴ Paradoxically, searching for a world by returning to a fantasized Africa reproduced the same refusal of the world for the inhabitants of the African coasts which pushed the soon to be Black Americans to leave, the same refusal of encounter, the same impossibility of an encounter with the other.

Astronauts as well as Maroons propose a return. But not all returns are alike. There is a return that is a refusal of the world and a return that is a flight from the world. Thus, in opposing ways, the Maroon return and the astronaut return extend the colonial world's acosmism. There is a return of the Maroon that is not the end of marronage, but its extension. The opportunity to recover some goods and leave again. In the same way, there is a return of the astronaut that is not the end of a space odyssey, but its continuation. The Maroon then comes back to the Plantation *as a Maroon*, in the way that the astronaut returns to Earth *as an astronaut*. Yet, in order to touch the Earth and inhabit the world, it is not enough to return to Earth, to Africa, or to some colonial society. If the return repeats this refusal-flight of encounter and sanctions the absence of a world, then it is also damaging.

Politics of encounter and the world-ship

Instead of the movement of return, I propose another movement, a movement towards the other, the movement of *encounter*. This movement is no longer determined by moving towards a fantasized

object that is to be reached or grasped, "Nature," Earth," or even "Mother-Earth," but by a horizon. One sets out towards the horizon of otherness without ever being able to reach it, a going towards the other, a going towards the world. What is assumed in moving from the Maroon's flight and the astronaut's refusal of encounter is not a return but *a reversal*. It is a reversal when the astronaut takes off their spacesuit and agrees to share these lands and seas with the others. It is a reversal when Noah tears the planks off his ark and dismantles the jagged borders of the forecastle that separates him and his family from other humans and non-humans. It is a reversal when the Maroon halts their swift or motionless flight and confronts the world. As soon as they meet the other, the Maroon is no longer a Maroon, the astronaut is no longer an astronaut.

This movement assumes being in relationship with others, a *politics of encounter*. This being in relation is what is hidden within the theme of return. Within the slogan "return to," berthing, landing, and docking may seem to be self-evident maneuvers. However, the relationship is never a given; it is established by that movement which aims to bring together [*mettre en présence*] different others and to recognize something that is common but does not belong to anyone. The so-called return is really played out in these encounters. And so the most important thing is no longer the path traveled to return to Earth but the answer to the following question: *how do those who left and returned open themselves to a relationship with those who stayed and are already there?* Many ecological science-fiction writers have asked this question. Conversely, *for those to whom the world was refused, those who were expelled from Noah's ark, those who were confined in the slave ship's hold, how do they ground a self that is capable of opening up an encounter and maintaining the relationship with those who once abandoned and abused them?* This is the question raised by Aimé Césaire in his *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, by Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks*, and by Édouard Glissant in *Poetics of Relation*. The answers to these two questions constitute the politics of encounter which is illustrated by the figure of the *shipmate*.

The slave ship and Noah's ark embody two kinds of flight from encounter with their respective political figures. Noah's ark reveals five political figures (the unconcerned, the xeno-warrior, the sacrificer, the master-patriarch, and the world devourer) and its forms of refusing encounter (the other's abandonment, the other's elimination, the other's sacrifice, the other's enslavement, my world

at the expense of the others' world). The slave ship contains five political figures (the *Nègre épave*, the suicidal one, the Maroon, the avenger, and the kamikaze) and its forms of flight from encounter (self-abandonment, self-elimination, leaving for oneself, chasing away the other, chasing away the world). In contrast to these ten figures of flight from encounter is a figure that has encounter as their aim, that of the *shipmate*. This political figure carries within it the realization and the horizon of a common world.

On the one hand, the shipmate refuses the alternative that is presented by Noah's ark and its boarding politics, which forces a choice between the perils of the Flood (the aforementioned catastrophe) or the end of a world between the humans on board the ship. The figure of the shipmate takes the hospitable form of an *invitation*. Opening Noah's ark does not mean an increase in terms of its volume, which, by maintaining its walls, would only be a boarding politics on a wider scale. The shipmate breaks down the walls and sides of the ark, turning it into a base as large as the world: a *world-ship*. The other is desired as much more than a body to be saved from imposed misery or from certain drowning in the Mediterranean; they are desired as a companion that speaks and cohabits the Earth. The movements of those who recover bodies at sea from the waves and those who demand that local institutions provide dignified political treatment to newcomers in society are turned into one and the same action by the shipmate: *the realization of a bridge of justice*. They hold to the certainty that through this hospitable justice a world can be preserved in the face of the tempest.

On the other hand, the shipmate rejects the alternative that is presented by the slave ship and its debarkation politics, which forces a choice between the hold of the enslaved world or the Maroon's off-world flight, the hell of chains and irons, or the off-world debarkation of enslaved Negroes. The figure of the shipmate takes the form of *a demand for equality* within this forced encounter. It is the *cry for justice* that provokes the insurrection of these human beings moving from the hold to the bridge. It is the movement of Rosa Parks from the back of the hold to the front deck of the bus. It is the struggle for equal citizenship championed by Toussaint Louverture, Aimé Césaire, Martin Luther King, and Malcolm X. It is the rising up [*surrection*] of the *négraille* that Césaire speaks of, who go from sitting in the hold to standing in the open air of the bridge:

unexpectedly on their feet
 on their feet in the hold
 on their feet in the cabins
 on their feet on deck
 on their feet in the wind
 on their feet beneath the sun
 on their feet in blood

...

on their feet in the rigging
 on their feet at the helm
 on their feet at the compass
 on their feet before the map
 on their feet beneath the stars.²⁵

Césaire did not debark, but he did not stay on the slave ship either, as some infer.²⁶ More radically, Césaire's political action and poetry aimed to transform the slave ship. With his *verb*, breaking the dehumanizing chains of the hold and shattering the hatch of the steerage, he raises up a speaking *subject*, standing on the bridge. But this lustral emergence from the hold is not followed by a gesture of off-world debarkation via flight, suicide, avenging cry and deadly blade, or kamikaze explosion. Reversing the imperial enterprise that made the slave ship the only way of bringing a plurality together, Césaire dared to imagine that this ship could be something other than a slave ship; he imagined a world *even there: a world-ship* capable of facing the storm. From the hold, this gesture is unheard of because of the conflicting sentiments implied. This shipmate is someone whose ankles and wrists still bear the traces of lacerations from the other's chains and who, despite everything, extends a bloodied hand to the other, stating with conviction these words: "We will live together." A powerful humanity resides here in this effort at making a world with this other whose presence nevertheless reminds the shipmate of their ancestors' oppression. This gesture does not abandon justice; on the contrary, it remains the condition for it. The demand for justice, which under its contemporary forms includes a movement for reparations for slavery, indicates already, in itself, the intention for a common world (see table on p. 203).

The unconcerned come to their senses. More than just seeing and hearing, they observe and listen. The xeno-warrior drops their spear and shield. They lay down their arms and reach out their hand. The master-patriarch unfastens the chains, throws down the whip, and dismantles their plantations. The sacrificer who had agreed to throw

Politics of debarkation  Flight from the world		Politics of encounter The world as horizon	Politics of boarding  Refusal of the world	
Self-abandonment	The <i>Nègre épave</i>	The shipmate	The unconcerned	The other's abandonment
Self-elimination	The suicidal person		The xeno-warrior	The other's elimination
Leaving for oneself	The Maroon		The sacrificer	The other's sacrifice
Chasing away the other	The avenger		The master-patriarch	The other's enslavement
Chasing away the world	The kamikaze		The world devourer	My world at the expense of the world of others
A decolonial ecology  Search for the world		A worldly-ecology	A decolonial ecology  Search for the world	

Summary of figures

the other away takes off their heavy robes and begins the hospitable work of a common bridge. The world devourer brings their appetite back in proportion to a planet with limited resources. The *Nègre épave* and the suicidal one rediscover their body as the home for a self who is worthy of love. The Maroon stops running and confronts colonial society by renewing solidarity with those who remained. The avenger transforms their blade into a feather quill pen, opening up the space of words that is indispensable for justice. The kamikaze catches sight of a happy ending beyond the desperation of enslaving fences and murderous rancor. And all of them, upon encountering the other, discover a new body, a Mother-Earth populated by human and non-human alliances, true shipmates of the same world-ship, standing upon the bridge of justice.

15

Forming a Body in the World: Reconnecting with a Mother-Earth

Corpo Santo e Almas (1725)

Modernity promised a healthy body, made out of discoveries and riches. Carried by that promise, the ship *Corpo Santo e Almas* left the port of Bahia in 1725 on its way to Portuguese Angola. Part of the *Corpo* breathes the fresh air of progress upon the luminous bridge and, with a full belly, sings about the love of a divinity in their image. Another part is thrown into the darkness of the hold, like those 230 shadows of Luanda. It carries the aches and pains of the plantations, breathes in the toxic air of the mills, and, in its empty belly, suffers disdain for the wrong gender and opprobrium for a demeaned color. So the *Corpo Santo* continues on its way, broken in two, sowing thirty wrecks into the Atlantic and dumping 230 lost souls onto the shores of Brazil. At the same time, in the therapeutic practices of the *quilombos*, the plans for a world-ship are conceived: a ship where lost bodies are recovered from the sea, where humility wins over chosen bodies, where colonial fractures are healed, where one can form a body in the world, and a Mother-Earth is found again.

The fracture of the two bodies

The first task of the world-ship is to find the loss-bodies of Noah's ark and the lost bodies of the slave ship. Very often melting glaciers, oil spills, and deforestation, as well as war and racial and gender discrimination, are lamented without calling into question the places, practices, and uses of our bodies that are anchored in these destructions. The ecology of the world-ship extends Fanon's incantation directed at making the body the starting point for an interrogation of the world¹ and Giovanna Di Chiro's proposition to "bring ecology home"² by committing to *forming a body in the world* [*prendre corps au monde*]. Forming a body in the world consists in revealing the material and imaginary relations through which our bodies are the *trace-bearers* and *the tracers* of a world beyond the modern double fracture, and in making the body the starting point for an engagement with the world.

On the one side, there are those who discover that their access to the world is conditioned from birth by their phenotype, their skin, their sex, or their physical abilities. The enslaved and Negroes of yesterday, the racialized of today, disabled people, and women are constantly sent back to their bodies as the reason for their subordinate position. Antiracist movements as well as academic studies have shown how racialized bodies are subjected to discriminatory representations that condition their places at the world's table and the opportunities they have to sit there.³ Feminist movements have forcefully called out the sexism that excludes women from the world and places them in unequal social conditions precisely because they are "women." Black feminism reminds us that race, class, gender, and coloniality combine together to intensify exclusion from the world because of the body.⁴ In the same way, people with disabilities experience the denial of any dignified participation in the city and the negation of their desires because of their bodies.⁵

On the other side, the environmentalist movement reveals the biological links that connect human beings to the entire planet. In particular, the use of toxic chemicals, but also the global warming that affects all ecosystems, including humans and non-humans.⁶ This leads to the discovery of "ecological bodies," or of "biological citizenship," or even of "starving" bodies, as the objects of humanitarian politics.⁷ The development of environmental health, antinuclear struggles, and alternative dietary practices is a reminder

that environmental destruction is reflected in the physiological integrity of the body. Hence the proposals for ecological philosophies and politics that start with the plate, with the body that eats, with “living-from.”⁸

These two sets of relationships that connect bodies in the world are still understood as completely distinct, as if our bodies were cut in two, as if we had two bodies: a social, racialized, gendered, and sexualized body and an ecological, biologized, and medicalized body. While their biological bodies are shown, middle-class, educated, White male environmentalists have the luxury of obscuring their racialized and gendered bodies and ignoring their whiteness.⁹ In the opposite direction, in their responses to the daily immediacy of social inequality, racism, and gender discrimination, feminist and social justice movements relegate the slow violence inflicted on their ecological bodies to the background. *Fracture*.

However, it is the same body that experiences the degradation of the planet's ecosystems *and* global social inequalities and political discrimination. Far from being opposites, these forms of violence pile up on themselves. The people who are exposed to toxic substances, whose lungs are burned by progress, are often among those who suffer the aching pain of social misery, whose bones pierce the skin, and whose voices are subservient to housework or silenced when their immigration or work papers are denied. If these forms of violence are piling up on top of each other, why not combine the forms of resistance? Why not meet our bodies? Forming a body in the world is a response to the twofold task of identifying the ways in which bodies are both embedded in material, biological, and environmental relationships with economies that are destructive to the Earth's ecosystems and part of the socio-economic and political relationships that generate social inequalities and gender and racial discrimination. It is a matter of recomposing our fractured bodies by restoring them in their relations to the world.

The bellies of the world and the wombs of the Earth

Through their bodies, humans are the trace-bearers and tracers of the world. This concerns primarily the bellies of the world in terms of the types of food, types of production, and types of consumption. The consumption of products from far away, coming from industrial

agriculture and plantations located in countries with dictatorships, is tacit support for the violent transformation of the world into a Plantation. Ecology starts on the plate, with the choice of clothes, with modes of transport, and with ways of inhabiting the world. However, these actions cannot just be reduced to the individual household's private and everyday ethics in terms of food choices, recycling, choice of light bulb, car, or electricity supplier. Forming a body in the world means acting in light of how our vulnerabilities are interdependent and transforming the global institutions and economics that *collectively* impose, in a sense, a way of consuming the Earth and not living together. From school canteens to supermarkets, from public energy politics to public transportation, from international agreements on the import and export of agricultural products to national contracts of arms sales to import policies for uranium and other minerals, *acting in the world is the path to finding our bodies again*. This collective action allows us to *form a body*, to recover our bodies in the misogynistic and racist nets of the world, and to protect them from the environmental injuries of a plantation economy guided by a globalized capitalist market.

This action also concerns the nourishing matrices of the world. My first contact with the Earth was inside my mother's womb. Her belly formed my first step onto Mother-Earth. I was born in Martinique in 1985. For thirteen years, chlordecone and other toxic chemical compounds had been spread throughout the island's banana plantations, which, no doubt, had already found their way into our umbilical cord, into the matrical relationship with the Earth. Ecofeminists Carolyn Merchant and Françoise d'Eaubonne have shown that the ecological crisis is also a reproductive issue, the result of common forms of violence carried out by a masculinist world against the Earth and women's wombs.¹⁰ However, here too, it is important to avoid the trap of the modern double fracture that cuts the body in two. The worry expressed by parents about the health of their developing infants when they hold their breath during ultrasounds should also be understood in relation to the colonial inhabitation that turns the Earth into a set of racist and misogynistic plantations, causing specific forms of violence against the life-giving matrices of the world, as with these pesticides. The banana given to their child in Paris is the same one that passed contaminants into the umbilical cords of racialized mothers in Martinique and Guadeloupe, Costa Rica, or Ivory Coast. This is not about following the racist and deadly arguments of Malthusians,

which place the weight of the ecological crisis on these empty bellies (because there are too many of them) or on the wombs of “African women” (because they have too many children). On the contrary, it is a matter of recognizing that antiracist struggles, political struggles for postcolonial equality and women’s equality, and struggles against the Plantationocene are the ways to recover our loss-bodies and the matrices, the wombs of the Earth.

The colonial experiences of the Americas, Oceania, and Africa show that control over women and the Earth’s life-giving grounds were an integral part of colonial inhabitation.¹¹ The bodies of enslaved women were the subject of discussion by other people, whether they were abolitionists or in favor of slavery, who dispossessed those women of a responsibility for their own bodies.¹² Under the regime of slavery in the Americas, the child gestating in the womb of a woman in a state of enslavement became the property of the master of plantation. The wombs of women and the fertile lands remained enslaved by colonial inhabitation. Similarly, colonial authorities have tried to change the wombs on purpose, be it through infertility policies, as on Réunion Island,¹³ or through colonial whitening policies, as in Australia, where Aboriginal children were abducted and forced to reproduce with White people over several generations.¹⁴ Controlling and exploiting the wombs of racialized mothers and exploiting the Earth’s womb are part of the same act of destruction.

Women resisted in the face of these colonial controls over wombs. During slavery, abortion practices were not only a way for women to reclaim their bodies but also an opposition to the continuation of the Plantationocene. In Latin America, the abolition of slavery translated first into the Free Womb laws (*libertad de vientres*) that enshrined infants’ status as free persons, therefore recognizing that emancipation from slavery requires an emancipation of women’s wombs.¹⁵ To recognize that colonial inhabitation is an attack on the Earth’s womb and matrix is to recognize the necessity of women’s emancipation for facing the storm. This struggle also involves men, and racialized men in particular. This is the problem hidden in environmental novels, speeches, and documentaries that continue to adopt the off-ground and off-body perspective of the lone walker or astronaut. Maryse Condé reverses this perspective in her novel *Waiting for the Waters to Rise*.¹⁶ The central figure, Babakar, is a doctor and midwife who spends his time between coups, experiences of discrimination, and civil wars on both sides

of the Atlantic, helping women as best he can in the renewal of the world. In contrast to the figure of the solitary adventurous environmentalist who, within a distant colonial exoticism, sets himself up as a defender of the “planet,” there are those who, like Dr Denis Mukwege, 2018 Nobel Prize winner, help *heal* women who were victims of the violence of war and work to give them the means to reappropriate their bodies, their wombs, and their sexuality. There are especially those who defend themselves from predatory men in the Global North as well as in the Global South, in public spaces as well as at home. This preservation and defense of women’s bodies, regardless of their reproductive possibilities, are ways to reconnect to *Mother-Earth*. Forming a body in the world means recognizing the ways in which our consumption and production patterns impact the Earth, the necessity of global food justice as well as a “gyn-ecology” that emancipates women from the predators that are destroying the world.¹⁷

Healing Negro bodies and ecological bodies

The recomposition of our bodies broken by this modern double fracture takes two distinct paths: moving from social bodies towards biological bodies and vice versa. Against the structural dispossession of enslavement in the Americas, one of many goals behind the struggles of the enslaved Negroes of the Americas was the recovery of their own bodies. This global regime placed a majority of Black people, and singularly Black and other women of color, into the same category as bodies possessed by other people, resources for colonial inhabitation that resulted in bodies broken at the physical and biological level, at the social and political level, and at the metaphysical level. Antislavery, antiracist, and feminist struggles have the twofold goal of recovering and healing these bodies. It is a matter of defending them, as Elsa Dorlin argues in her genealogy of the use of violence to defend gendered bodies, and caring for them, as Achille Mbembe explicitly argues, accentuating Frantz Fanon’s “relation of care” towards those afflicted by colonization.¹⁸ These struggles emerge on at least three levels.

First of all, a rediscovery of movements of the body that escape the enslaving mechanics of the patriarchal plantation was part of resisting slavery and liberation struggles. The dances that were practiced by the enslaved on their days of rest made maintaining

relations with an ancestral culture and with Africa possible, but they also made it possible to remember that bodies can literally form different figures than those required by plantation monoculture or factory work. These dances of resistance show that sweat was not the exclusive property of cane and cotton plantations, but it could also water the arts and rhythms, spells and love affairs.

This recovery of the body's movements also extends into the rediscovered freedom of the Earth's circulation. So, these bodies were healed through the informal economies of Creole gardens, Maroon camps, and post-slavery peasant agriculture. Since the same contempt is inflicted both on the bodies of the enslaved Negroes and on the Earth, the cultivation practices for the gardens and the care given to plants, roots, and fruit trees also become practices of caring for one's own body. By assuming political responsibility for their food, the enslaved and formerly enslaved find their own bodies again.

Finally, this recovery of the formerly enslaved person's body takes place at the metaphysical level. Born into a world that for four centuries carried out a discourse which devalued Black people and other non-Whites, where "tons of chains," Fanon writes, "squalls of lashes, and rivers of spit stream over [their] shoulders,"¹⁹ this third recovery of the body consists in being able to establish a relationship of love and dignity with one's body and one's appearance. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon clearly demonstrated the difficulty involved in perceiving one's body with dignity in the wake of colonial slavery. The Black person's body and skin become a prison of social devaluing and political exclusion, a body and skin that then has to be hidden, fled, torn off, or even transformed. Modernity's colorist heritage gave way to socio-racial strategies and technologies of the body such as skin bleaching or straightening frizzy hair, the function of which was to move as far as possible away from the so-called Black phenotype and the supposed socio-political position associated with it.²⁰ In the French-speaking Caribbean, Creole languages and arts were devalued, excluding from the arenas of the world and official documents the very language that was used by a majority to make sense of their daily life, express their relationship to the world, and inhabit these lands. In the French Antilles, the mother tongue of the Earth was deemed unworthy of affiliation with the Republic after it was given status of *département* in 1946, a way of saying "the language of your Mother-Earth cannot be a part of the world."

The first impetus that gave rise to multiple movements with the goal of revaluing Black people's bodies, skin, hair, and beauty came in response to this centuries-old history of slavery and biological anthropology that cast opprobrium on the Black bodies of men and women. It came to the Antilles through the revaluation of Creole languages and arts. It also came through the love that the still enslaved Negro mothers carried for their newborns, making it clear to their children that they deserved to be treated with dignity. Faced with cultural, media, and political representations that denigrate and marginalize Black people, there are literary, artistic, and cinematographic movements precisely aimed to heal Black people's bodies. From Negritude to the cinema of Black auteurs, through works of visual artists, dancers, playwrights, and poets, the properly modern challenge is to regain some dignity for those who were confined to the world's hold. In addition to the condemnation of discriminatory police violence, this is also what the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States means.

These struggles to defend and care for bodies are *also* followed by a concern for ecological bodies. Amongst the many aims of the panoply of the environmentalist movement is the protection of biological bodies and an extension of antiracism, social justice struggles, and feminist struggles. The social and political exclusions of the formerly enslaved, the poor, the racialized, and women are also manifest through the contamination of their biological bodies by the toxic products of the plantations and factories, by the inequalities of exposure and in terms of medical treatment and research on the consequences of that exposure. The environmental justice movement in the United States, composed largely of women of color, carries out in reality this recovery of bodies in relation to issues of environmental preservation.²¹ The struggles that are waged by Antilleans to stop their bodies being contaminated by the many pesticides used on cane and banana plantations are an extension as well of their antislavery pursuit to provide some dignity for their own bodies.

In the opposite direction, ecological struggles against chemical or radioactive pollution of the Earth are also efforts to defend and care for the biological bodies of humans and non-humans. However, the social bodies of activists in multicultural countries with less minority presence should not be overlooked, and neither should the colonial, racial, and gendered forms of domination that are inherent to the polluting plantations and industries. Linked to struggles against

nuclear power plants and the burying of radioactive waste are those struggles against the enslaving extraction of uranium in the Global South and, historically, those struggles against the colonial relations at work in nuclear testing in former European colonies. The collective consumption of food and energy is not just a fight for the environment; it also reflects the fight against social inequalities and against racist violence, for access to the world for people with disabilities, for women, and for ethnic minorities. At the beginning of the deep ecology movement the Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss called for an identification of one's individual "self" with a greater "Self," recognizing one's relationships with ecosystems and various elements of the living environment.²² Forming a body in the world requires complementing Næss's call with a symmetrical commitment to recognize the relationship to the world's (post) colonial economic, social, and political arrangements. Going beyond the modern double fracture makes it possible, as Césaire invites us to do, to recover "the whitened wreckage" of "our lost bodies."²³

Blowing the conch and playing the drum

Forming a body in the world is the key to reconnecting with a Mother-Earth. Conversely, it is through a matrilineal relationship with Mother-Earth that one's body can be found. This way of thinking/healing the body leads to conceptions of human forms of existence on Earth that pass beyond the barriers of the skin, extending to ecosystems as well as to the world of human affairs. Overcoming the modern dualism that separates body and environment, we cannot recover a loving and dignified relationship to our bodies without doing the same for the ecosystems of our living environments and the Earth, and without carefully attending to the social and political relationships in which they participate.

Two outstanding examples of this post-1492 matrigenesis can be found in the relationship of the formerly enslaved and Maroons to the drum and to the shell of the queen conch (*Lobatus gigas*), or *lambi* in Creole. The drum is the instrument that accompanies the dances and music that recover Caribbean bodies; the gwoka in Guadeloupe, the bomba in Puerto Rico, and the bèlè in Martinique. The vibrations that are caused by hands meeting the stretched animal skin awakens bodily energies capable of multiplying the forces tenfold, giving back to the Maroons and to the enslaved

the power to jump, to laugh, and *to feel*. This sound accompanied revolts as the chains of human slavery were broken and transcendental bridges towards the beyond of the ocean were opened. It still accompanies the Black Americas today. These vibrations remind us of the sensitive powers of the body and the earthliness of existence in the world.

In the same way, in their flight, the Maroons find their bodies through the matrilineal bond with the Earth that was begun by the Amerindian peoples who were already present. The formerly enslaved, off-ground and off-world, find then a cove to berth at, a land where the body can be welcomed, fed, and protected. Here, the queen conch became an ally to the Maroons. By blowing into this seashell, they communicated with each other from hillside to hillside. Sometimes the sound of the conch announced the plantation's attack. Sometimes the cracked conch broke open the faces of the masters. Still today, the fishers of the coves of Guadeloupe and Martinique announce their return from the outside sea to the world with this conch. More than a musical instrument, the Maroon's conch song is the melody of an encounter. That of Negroes confined in the world's hold who, at last, are touching a Mother-Earth. By blowing through this umbilical conch, the Maroons in turn found a home, an *ecumene*, a Mother-Earth freed from the human and non-human exploitation of slavery: they are forging *Ayiti*. With these gestures, conches and lungs vibrate with the same song of Mother-Earth.

Symbol of a rediscovered Mother-Earth, the conch communities are still threatened by intensive fishing in the Caribbean. These mollusks have been eaten for hundreds of years. But overfishing in recent decades has devastated the conch populations in the Caribbean.²⁴ It is incumbent upon us today to re-establish these interspecies alliances, to defend the place of the *lambi* in the world, as well as the goats that made possible these breaths, these sounds, and these dances of freedom.

16

Interspecies Alliances: The Animal Cause and the Negro Cause

Baleine (1731–3)

On December 6th, 1731, a large 390-ton ship named *Baleine* [whale] began its slave-making migration from the port of Lorient in France. Perfidiously, the slavers turned a marvelous ocean beauty into letters spelling out the name for a predator of plankton-Negroes. From December 28th, 1731, to May 25th, 1732, the *Baleine* tracks and swallows 523 skinned bodies, locking them in a belly with no sun and no horizon. On June 27th, 1732, Caribbean whales observed this heap of wood dump 491 bodies on Haiti's northern shore, repudiating this bloody masquerade through their blowholes. The deception is shattered. Whales and Negroes find themselves marine prey in the bellies of the same ships, in the middle of oceans covered by the same hunting economy. Alliances hidden by modern sails are created. Hands are extended to non-humans and salty skins comfort less-than-humans. By the same movement, fists destroy harpoons, fins smash open the holds and steerage. By the same emancipation, the companions bring a cheerful world to these waters [*eaux céans*].

The wall of the modern double fracture, which turns ecological causes, animal causes, and Negro and feminist causes into fundamentally different issues, is proving to be quite porous when it comes to some nineteenth-century ships. From 1806 to 1807, the *Frederick* loaded on board 546 captives in the Gulf of Benin, of which 491 were debarked in Guyana and Jamaica. Then, from 1810 to 1817, it made three trips to the South Seas, bringing back 450 barrels of whale oil. *The Frederick went from being a slave ship to being a whaling ship.* From 1791 to 1802, the *Speedy* transported 53 female prisoners from England to Australia, a colony of the British Empire, and collected more than 355 tons of sperm whale oil and 6,703 seal skins in the South and Pacific Seas.¹ Then, from 1804 to 1806, the *Speedy* loaded on board 626 captives from Ghana, 563 of which arrived in Antigua and Guyana.² *The Speedy went from being a whaling ship to being a slave ship.* The same modern ship had loaded female prisoners, Negroes, and whales on board in order to further the colonial inhabitation of the Earth. Beyond the double fracture, it is important to form alliances that are instrumental in turning animal causes and antiracist, anticolonial, and feminist struggles into a common problem.

The enslavement of non-human animals

The colonial inhabitation of the Earth is based upon the slavery and the consumption of a number of non-human animals. Meat is dissociated from the animal, from the “sentient” being that is capable of desire and suffering. Today, the meat industry is a major source of health problems, human cruelty, and non-human animal suffering, and is enormously destructive to the Earth. In 2006, this industry occupied 70 percent of the agricultural land on the planet, leading to significant deforestation and the pollution of aquifers and coastal waterways due to runoff, fertilizers, antibiotics, and pesticides, as seen with the pork industry in Brittany and the green algae present there.³ In 2013, the meat industry was responsible for 14.5 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions in the world.⁴ Despite the ecological devastation and the patriarchal culture that accompanies it, it remains common for the ecological crisis to be approached without any concern for the consumption of non-human animals. Modernity’s double fracture is forcefully evident in the apparent

disconnect between animal causes and decolonial and feminist causes.⁵

This disconnect remains paradoxically preserved in the heuristic recourse to a grammar of slavery found in ecological thinking and particularly within animal ethics.⁶ The enslavement of Black people is used to condemn the mistreatment of animals in factory farming, in cosmetics research, and in medical research.⁷ Marjorie Spiegel is perhaps the thinker who has examined this comparison the most, as evidenced in her 1988 book *The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery*, prefaced by Alice Walker.⁸ The transatlantic slave trade, the branding of slaves, and the punishments carried out with the whip and the bit are put in parallel with caged animals who are also mistreated and branded with a hot iron. Animals are presented as contemporary versions of Black slaves. And so the animal cause is formulated in terms of “animal liberation” or the “abolition” of animal slavery.⁹ Similarly, “speciesism,” the ideology that posits the moral superiority of one animal species over another, such as humans over cows, cats over pigs, polar bears over chickens, is constructed in direct analogy with racism. Anti-speciesism then echoes antiracism.

However, this analogy is usually read in one direction only, that of *the enslavement of animals*, where the lot of enslaved Black people makes it possible to formulate the lot of animals in terms of justice. Few ask about the other direction, *the animalization* of Black men and women in slavery, of their descendants, and of other racialized people. Now, if, discursively, the enslavement of Black people and racism are at the heart of how animal ethics is formulated, couldn't they also be a focus of attention for this kind of ethics? In the same way, couldn't antislavery, antiracist, and feminist activists *also* be interested in these beings who are treated like slaves? Here are a few ways of moving forward in that direction.

The social and political animalization of Black and other racialized people

The animalization of Black people is not a homogeneous process. This is not a matter of identification with animals as symbolic cultural practices. The animalization of Black people is all of the processes aimed at excluding these beings from a community endowed with moral concerns. Whether it is the representations of

the former French justice minister Christiane Taubira as a monkey (in 2015) or those of the former Italian immigration minister Cécile Kyenge as an orangutan (in 2013), whether it is the many examples of bananas being thrown at Black footballers in several European countries (against Paul Pogba, Bafétimbi Gomis, and Samuel Eto'o) or the comparisons of Venus and Serena Williams to gorillas, Black people of all social classes have been presented as being similar to the great apes.¹⁰ The presence of Black children and adults in the 2018 products and advertisements of H&M ("The coolest monkey in the jungle") and Manix ("*Osez vous rapprocher*" [Dare to get closer]), where they were shown as wild beasts, reminds us of the resonance of these animalistic representations of Black people. A remnant of nineteenth-century biological racism, these ape-like representations tend to reduce Black people to beings who are inferior in intelligence, depraved, and mindless. As revolting as it may be, this kind of racism is only a smoke screen for the more consequential forms of social and political animalization that have structured and still structure arrangements for living together and the ways of inhabiting the Earth.

The animalization of Black people finds its strongest expressions in their representations and treatment as animals to be *arraigned*, either because they are deemed to be dangerous or because they are desired as objects to be possessed. On the one hand, Black people are said to be frightening because of their physique, their appearance, or their assumed character. Then they embody villainous figures such as *Zwarte Piet* (Black Pete) who terrorizes children in the Netherlands.¹¹ Through fantasies regarding their physicality, Black men are presented as a threat to the masculinity of White men who, in full King Kong style as muscular, powerful, and oversized gorillas, are going to "steal" "their" White women. This was the accusation made against the American boxer Jack Johnson, the first Black world champion in the heavyweight category, who was convicted in 1913 for simply crossing a state line with his girlfriend, who was soon to be his wife. In his international exile in Australia, France, and Latin America, he was vilified for his relationships with White women.¹² From Jim Crow laws and the policies of the apartheid regime in South Africa to a great number of lynchings, a range of racist actions were motivated by the fear of sexual relations between Black and White people, and in particular between Black men and White women.¹³ But, on the other hand, Black people are the objects of desire and fantasy. This ebony wood was desired for their labor

power, for the satisfaction of multiple fantasies, or even as objects of amusement. Fear or desire, these representations of Black people gave rise to the same policies of arraignment, of capturing bodies, that translates into three processes: hunting, trophy hunting, and caging, which sometimes lead to killing.

Hunting refers to the process of animalization where Black people are set up by racist societies as objects to be hunted. This hunt was the very principle of the transatlantic slave trade. It found its way to the Americas through the practice of tracking those fugitives from slavery called “Maroons.” The name “Maroon” is not a reference to skin color but is an explicit reference to the *domesticated animal* that returns to its wild state.¹⁴ Measures for tracking, tracing, and finally capturing Black people were established during the whole of the period of slavery, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. Contemporary police forces in the Americas and in Europe clearly engage in racial profiling and continue this hunt today, explicitly targeting Black people, Arabs, and other racialized people under the cover of immigration policies, the war against drug trafficking, or the inspection of travel documents. Representations of these people as dangerous elements – either as “super-predators,” in the words Hillary Clinton used to refer to young Black Americans abandoned to poverty in 1996,¹⁵ or as “wolves” when it comes to Muslims, as Ghassan Hage has brought to light – aim to legitimate this hunt.¹⁶ The goal being the arrest, the capture, and the establishment of control over Black people’s bodies.

Trophy hunting refers to the process of animalization that appropriates Black people’s bodies and sets them up as objects of prestige, as tokens of pride for a successful hunt, or even as symbols for a national or scientific victory over these bodies. These trophy-bodies then became amusing objects like the private and public “ethnic” spectacles in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, where the famous Saartjie Baartman appeared, known as the “Black Venus.”¹⁷ This trophy hunting took place when the head of Dutty Boukman, one of the leaders of the antislavery revolt in northern Haiti, was put on display in the public square in November of 1791. This was also the case for Ataï, leader of the Kanak uprising against French colonists in 1878, whose head was kept in several museums in Paris from 1879 to 2014.¹⁸ Far from being an exception, the head of Ataï was taken from the practice of collecting millions of human remains from former European colonies and putting them on display in the museums of France and Europe, which included the remains of

Saartjie Baartman.¹⁹ Black people were exhibited as museum pieces, both as colonial trophies and scientific trophies – and some of them are still there.

This trophy hunting was still at work in the photographic element of lynchings in the United States. Lynching consisted not only of torturing and killing people who were reduced to bodies; it also had the goal of *displaying* “the animal” to the general population, now stripped of its power and often dismembered. Sometimes, the perpetrators of these crimes proudly posed in front of the camera alongside the bodies hanging in front of the lens, like a hunter-colonist posing next to his slaughtered prey or a sport fisherman with his catch hanging on the line. Photos of lynchings, like photos of lions that have been killed or fish that have been caught, were exhibited and distributed as postcards like souvenirs, like trophies.²⁰ The case of the Black African warrior who was a member of the Khoe-Sân, designated as “Object 1004” and deliberately nicknamed “El Negro” (The Negro), symbolizes the animalization of the Black person through trophy hunting. The tomb of this warrior was looted by the French taxidermist Jules Verreaux in 1830. Like other animals, he was stuffed and exhibited free of charge at the salon of Baron Delessert at 3 rue Saint-Fiacre in Paris in 1831, then at the Universal Exhibition in Barcelona in 1888, and at the Natural History Museum of Banyoles in Catalonia (Darder Museum) from 1916 until 1997.²¹ When the Olympic Games were announced to be in Barcelona in 1992, calls by Kofi Annan and Magic Johnson, alongside the efforts of Dr Arcelin, a Catalan of Haitian origin, to remove this “trophy” were not answered. It was only after the Spanish government offered a buyout that the municipality of Banyoles agreed to repatriate *a part* of the warrior back to his home in Botswana, continuing his body’s mutilation.²²

The pipelining of Black people as entertaining athletic bodies that feed the pride of the nation is a form of this trophy hunting where the trophy itself is in motion. Each week viewers delight in Black and racialized bodies colliding on American football fields, European football pitches, basketball courts, or boxing rings, all the while tacitly accepting the structural racial discrimination of their societies. This industry takes the form of an industrial breeding of super-powerful “beasts” whose job it is to satisfy the palates of consumers, meaning their hunger for entertainment. As soon as these Black athletes, such as Muhammad Ali, Craig Hodges,

LeBron James, and Colin Kaepernick, deviate from their role as farm animals and condemn the oppression of Black people, they are quickly sent back to their role as beasts.²³ “Shut up and dribble,” society says, as if to say, “Animals don’t talk, they don’t leave the circus, they entertain the capitalist economy.”

Caging refers to the process of animalization where Black people and other minorities are literally caged, meaning that they are warehoused in enclosed spaces with the goal of both excluding them from society and reducing their capacity for movement. Caging is first revealed in the arrangement of chained Africans in the holds and steerage decks of slave ships. It is also apparent in the relegation of Amerindians to reservations, from Brazil to Canada through to the Caribbean island of Dominica and the United States. Similarly, confining Black people and other minorities to areas neglected by social services, plagued by extreme poverty and increased criminality, from South African townships to American ghettos, from Nigerian slums to French *banlieues*, constitutes a social cage aimed at keeping some humans out of society and restricting their movements. This caging was literally at work throughout the numerous exhibitions and universal expositions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the very name of which attests to animalization: *human zoos*.²⁴ Caging still continues, as demonstrated by Angela Y. Davis and Bryan Stevenson in the United States and Didier Fassin in France, through the intended unequal placement of racialized bodies inside prisons and detention or holding centers.²⁵ In Britain in 2010 there were proportionally 4.7 times more Afro-Caribbean people and 3.9 times more mixed-race people in prison than their proportion in the general population. In the United States in 2009, a country that holds 25 percent of the world’s prisoners (though it only has 5 percent of the world’s population), there were proportionally 6.7 times more African Americans in prison than are represented in the general population.²⁶ Just as in aquariums, zoos, and cages for parrots or chickens, a life in cages for Black people is created by these social apparatuses, these political measures, and these judicial systems.

Besides the moral disregard that follows, the animalization of Black people results in the impossibility of recognizing them as persons who are endowed with speech and capable of suffering. In the intoxicating pleasure of arraignment that grips some White police officers when they try to capture a Black man, his words and suffering are often not heard as such but taken as underhanded

strategies to escape capture. How many Black people held by police officers have died even though they told them that they were in pain, or, as in the infamous cases of Eric Garner in the United States and Adama Traoré in France, that they could not breathe?²⁷ The officers heard these words, but they were unable to hear them as meaningful. In that moment, Black people are not regarded as *sentient beings*. Animal activists often find they are given the same objections with regard to the continuation of the intensive breeding of animals in cages: Black people do not speak, do not suffer, do not feel pain. Caging, hunting, and trophy hunting come together and give rise to fast or slow forms of *killing*.

Being prey in the concrete jungle

The philosopher and environmental activist Val Plumwood recounts an event from her life when she was attacked by a crocodile while walking alone in northern Australia's Kakadu National Park.²⁸ Three times, the crocodile tried to drag her to the bottom of the water and drown her, but fortunately Plumwood successfully escaped. Despite her injuries, she managed to walk to a place where she was found by a colleague. Plumwood draws a philosophical conclusion from her experience of "being prey": human beings are also animals in the food chain. Famous in environmental studies, Plumwood's experience remains far removed from the daily experiences of predation encountered by racialized people in the Americas and Europe. Her experience of predation took place far away from the city, in a space outside the socio-political relationships between human beings, in a jungle that was known for the large presence of crocodiles. Conversely, the multiple historical and contemporary forms of Black people's animalization brought about through political measures, through social arrangements, highlights another form of predation which, in turn, is foundational to Black people's experiences of the world in the Americas and in Europe. Hunting, trophy hunting, and caging result in Black people's long animal-like experience of being the prey of colonial, patriarchal, and racist societies. Those whose ancestors were shackled in colonial slavery and those born from colonial immigration know that their society was founded upon the predation of Negro flesh. *This animalization also turns Black and other racialized people into prey-beings*. This means

that Black people grow up in the world knowing full well that they may become the prey of racist states, racist small groups, or racist police.

A true *prey pedagogy*, which aims at surviving as potential prey, is developed by parents for their children, who are taught how not to respond to racial and gender-based violence with the instinctive urge of self-defense, so that they might save their life.²⁹ I had a similar experience one day in June of 2015 in Paris with my seventeen-year-old little brother. Returning from a class that I had presented on slavery in a secondary school in Évry with the Institut du Tout-Monde, where my brother had joined me, we decided to eat some falafel in front of the sunny esplanade of the Georges Pompidou Centre in Paris. Among the hundreds of people present, two White male police officers spot us more than 100 meters away from them and head straight towards us. Maybe it was the size of my brother's afro, the length of my locks, maybe, quite simply, it was our skin color. A 2016 survey by Défenseur des droits [Defender of Rights] reveals that young Black and Arab men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five are twenty times more likely to be stopped [*contrôlés*] than the rest of the population in France,³⁰ thereby reinforcing the symbolic exclusion from national belonging.³¹ The two policemen approach us and demand our papers. I ask them about their act of racial profiling, their choice to stop the two Black people in a multicolored crowd. They insinuate that we are the likely "pot smokers" in the crowd and that certainly narcotics are going to be found in my backpack. We had become prey in front of this national site of culture named after a former president of the Republic. When I told them that they would instead find a copy of the *Code Noir* and other books on racism and slavery, one of them got angry and lost control. He quickly put his hand on his *taser*, threatening to pull it out: "Turn around! Spread your legs!," he shouted at me. My words and my protests did nothing to stop him. I had to comply with this man's order-desires and remain motionless to the feeling of his wandering hands, accept the humiliation of a man taking possession of my body whenever and however he wants to, and hold back all the rage and sorrow generated by this hunt. I had to stay calm in front of my little brother. I wanted to show him, too, through this prey pedagogy, that in these moments of racial discrimination, restraining the human instinct for self-defense is, unjustly, the condition for our survival in this concrete jungle.

Racism and the animalization of women

Women, especially racialized women, have a much more intense and dangerous experience as they become the prey of postcolonial, racist, and patriarchal societies. They are subject to verbal and sexual abuse in the streets of cities such as Paris, in public and private institutions, as well as at home. In times of war, as in times of peace, conflicts between men have played out against the backdrop of an understanding of women as merely booty, objects used to satisfy the other's desire for domination. Hunting stands out in the structural sexual violence against women in societies. Trophy hunting can be seen in the multitude of images of naked women exhibited as objects *for men* in the streets, on billboards, and in the media. Caging is the social and political processes that aim to confine women to private spaces, far away from the ballot box, far away from the business world and how it is managed, and far away from parliaments, senates, and political arenas, all by *limiting* their movement. They navigate through the jungles of men, who are tacitly given the right by societies to insult women and openly exhibit their predatory attitudes and desire to control their bodies. For their survival, they have learned to rise above the daily violence and insults, all while, at times, having to contain their indignation for fear of reprisals from the other against their body, against their family, and against their academic or professional life. Finally, women are also killed, in femicides that take place within the home, through conjugal violence, and outside the home as well.³² The crocodile of Kakadu National Park, who grabbed Plumwood by the crotch, lives a long way away from these crocodile-men who roam the cities, in spaces that are public as much as in private ones.³³

For Black women and other women of color, "hunted" by both White men and men of color, the experience of being-prey takes on an additional dimension. Their experiences of being-prey are exacerbated by the symbolic exclusion from national belonging or a common citizenship, as in the example of Black women in France.³⁴ What is more, they can be victims of both racist and antiracist actions. In his opposition to White people's racism, Eldridge Cleaver engaged in sexual violence against women of color and White women.³⁵ Wangari Maathai recalls how, during the Mau Mau's anticolonial uprising against the British Empire

in Kenya, soldiers on the side of colonial power, White British colonists (*jhonnies*), militias, and local Black policemen (home guards) used to rape young girls, while the Mau Mau did not think twice about kidnapping them “to serve as cooks, porters, or spies.”³⁶ Racialized women suffer under the combined weight of different racial and patriarchal forms of animalization, both in terms of physical violence and in terms of daily and structural violence.

One slave-making inhabitation of the Earth

More than a relationship to another being, this hunting, trophy hunting, caging, and killing manifest a way of inhabiting the Earth: *a slave-making inhabitation*. The enslaving relationship is not only a way of relating to the other, a human animal or a non-human animal, but a way of inhabiting the Earth, a way of shaping landscapes and of governing the relationships of the various elements of the ecosystems between them. The fight against both non-human animal slavery and human slavery, and their discrimination, is also a struggle against the Plantationocene and its violence. At least this is what Frederick Douglass observed when he noted that the enslavement of Black people exacerbates cruelty against animals.³⁷ This is the meaning of Elizabeth Heyrick’s commitment to the liberation of the enslaved and to the protection of animals. William Wilberforce was one of the first to recognize this connection, being both a leader of the abolitionist movement in Britain in the nineteenth century and one of the founders, in 1824, of the world’s first animal welfare society, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.³⁸ Perhaps one day the relationships of caging, hunting, trophy hunting, and slaughter will no longer be associated with animals, rendering the word “animalization” obsolete. This is, for the time being, the point of articulation between feminist, antiracist, and animal activists for building *a decolonial animal ethics* and *a feminist and pro-animal antiracism*. Even before individual choices are made between the vegan ideal of anti-speciesism or peasant, organic, and anti-productivist animal husbandry, the collective and urgent issue at stake here is the overthrow of the slave-making inhabitation of the Earth, which enslaves human and non-human animals.

This assumes that both pro-animal and antiracist activists are able to step outside of their comfort zones and recognize that they face a common problem. A few associations have already taken the first step – for example, “269 Animal Liberation,” which intervened in France in 2017 with slogans such as “*Ni racism, ni spécisme*” [“Neither racism, nor speciesism”]. This assumes that antiracist activists are able to recognize the objectives of pro-animal activists. No matter the spice mix of a colombo sauce or mafé sauce with the family in Paris or Dakar, of a Creole sauce or a “*sauce chien*” on the beach at Cap Macré in Martinique, of a barbecue sauce near a summer basketball court in Gonesse in the Île-de-France or in a KFC, of a cranberry sauce for the Thanksgiving meal or a garden sheep roast, these chickens, pigs, lambs, and calves still retain the bitter taste of caged animals. The flavors of fish court-bouillon, grilled lobster, conch fricassee, or raw tuna seem quite insipid when they try to enhance the pillaging of the seabed destroyed by trawling, the sadness of the oceans depopulated by overfishing, and the violence of *chattel-breeding* in captivity.³⁹

No one can any longer fervently denounce historical colonization and enslavement, structural racial discrimination, and everyday sexism while maintaining the ongoing colonization of the Earth’s forests and their human/non-human communities through our own modes of consumption, thereby maintaining our own enslavement to this slave-making inhabitation. Antislavery and decolonial emancipation also involves decolonizing our modes of consumption and our relations to non-human animals. The Black American sociologist and activist Breeze Harper offers just such an invitation with her “Sistah Vegan Project,” emphasizing that the alliance of antiracism, feminism, social justice, and animal rights is indispensable for the freedom and well-being of racialized communities, and particularly for Black women.⁴⁰ A singular empathy is possible with non-human animals because Black people and other people of color, men and women, have experienced centuries of modernity’s discriminatory humanism, because they have navigated the tumultuous rivers that separate humans, inhumans, and non-humans, and because they are still subject to the experiences of being hunted, being hunted for trophies, being caged, and being killed, as expressed by the Black American poets Paul Laurence Dunbar and Maya Angelou:

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
 ... I know why the caged bird beats his wing
 ... I know why the caged bird sings

Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Sympathy"⁴¹

for the caged bird
 sings of freedom.

Maya Angelou, "Caged Bird"⁴²

It is time for this empathy regarding freedom to move past analogy and find a truly political expression. It is time once more to forge alliances against the Plantationocene.

Interspecies alliances against the Plantationocene

If human beings make their declarations, fight wars, conquer, and are conquered, they are not alone when it all happens. Through their existence, through their activities, non-humans are also agents in the world who reveal themselves "as obstacles," says Latour, "scandals, as what suspends mastery, as what *gets in the way of domination*."⁴³ There are situations where humans and non-humans form associations. Through a *sympoeisis*, a making with, humans and non-humans are discovered, following Donna Haraway, as "companion species."⁴⁴ However, these companionships still have to leave the double fracture that tends to homogenize both humans and non-humans. Developing their political theory of a common *city* between humans and animals, a *zoopolis*, Will Kymlicka and Sue Donaldson differentiate between domestic, wild, and liminal animals while homogenizing humans into an abstract "we."⁴⁵ The necessary recognition of the "wild part of the world" defended by Virginie Maris produces the same homogenization.⁴⁶ *The colonial fracture also runs through these non-human animals and this wild part of the world!*⁴⁷ Conversely, emancipation from colonial domination cannot conceal the pluralities of non-humans and their environments. With the term "decolonial interspecies alliances" I am referring to situations where humans and non-humans, in spite of their differences, form politically strong alliances which, through a *symp Praxis*, an acting with, can oppose the Plantationocene and its slaveries.⁴⁸

These interspecies alliances were already at work historically during the colonization of the Americas. Certainly, on the one

hand, some of these alliances facilitated the colonial project, as in that image of Christopher Columbus arriving on his second voyage with cattle, horses, pigs, sheep, and goats.⁴⁹ In Alfred Crosby's account, the arrival of Columbus in 1492 led to a "Columbian exchange," the opening of a system of exchange between the Old World and the New World.⁵⁰ Germs originating from the Old World were transmitted to the New World, leading to multiple epidemics of smallpox, measles, and typhus that, against the backdrop of conquest and enslavement, wiped out the populations of the New World as early as 1518. In this case, these germs were "invisible biological allies" of colonial inhabitation.⁵¹ However, on the other hand, there was a panoply of interspecies alliances that opposed colonial inhabitation, which can be represented by three groups.

First, there were the *alliances of nuisance makers*. These are the pests, organisms, insects, animals, or other non-humans whose stubborn existence works against the monocultures of colonial plantations. The trees of the primary forests offer an example of this alliance through the robust resistance they gave to the axes of the first planters, opposing the establishment of colonial inhabitation.⁵² Similarly, rats and black ants caused the planters' ruin in the seventeenth century.⁵³ Even today, this is the political significance of the weevils' actions throughout the Antilles' banana plantations.

The group of *colonial army killers* demonstrate a more radical action. John R. McNeill shows that the mosquito, as a vector of yellow fever (*Aedes aegypti*) and malaria (*Anopheles quadrimaculatus*), played an important role in the failure of colonial projects in the Americas. This political alliance was spectacular during the Haitian Revolution. Thriving across the plantation landscapes of the colony, mosquitoes bit the entire population. However, different groups were affected according to their different immunities to yellow fever. Toussaint Louverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, and the formerly enslaved were able to use this difference in immunity to their advantage. Having been born in Saint-Domingue/Haiti or coming from regions of Africa where yellow fever exists, they had developed a "natural" immunity. Recently arrived White Europeans, such as General Leclerc's troops in 1802, did not enjoy the same immunity as Haiti's Black population. Faced with the French troops sent by Bonaparte to quell the revolt, Louverture and Dessalines decided to stay in the mountains – places less infested with mosquitoes – and practiced guerilla warfare in anticipation of the rainy season, which, because of the proliferation of mosquitoes

on the plains, was catastrophic for Leclerc's men. Of the 60,000 to 65,000 soldiers brought to Saint-Domingue, 35,000 to 45,000 died because of yellow fever.⁵⁴ Antislavery insurgents and mosquitoes allied themselves for a time in their military strategies to repel the forces of colonialism and slavery. This alliance endures through the popular legend that Mackandal, the Maroon who terrorized the planters of the colony fifty years earlier with his poisonings, escaped death at the stake by turning into a mosquito.⁵⁵

Finally, the third group is the *anticolonial diplomats*.⁵⁶ Here, a singular place must be attributed to the venomous trigonoccephalus snake of Martinique, the *Bothrops lanceolatus*. Called "*fer de lance*" [spearhead], "*bête longue*" [long beast], or even "*l'innommable*" [the unspeakable], its presence in the collective imagination of the past and present cannot be overestimated because of its deadly bite. In the seventeenth century, it discouraged many settlers from even *coming* to live on this island.⁵⁷ Moreover, while Martinique was colonized in 1635 by d'Esnambuc, it was not until the end of 1678 that the first settlers dared to open communication routes into the interior of the island. Fugitives from slavery also found themselves in the interior lands of Martinique, meaning those spaces that were feared because of the presence of snakes.⁵⁸ A political alliance formed between the anticolonial diplomats where the *fer-de-lance* became the protector of the Maroons. Maroons and snakes cohabited in the hillsides of Martinique in a common opposition to colonial inhabitation.

Today, these interspecies alliances are largely hidden. Inquiries are made about the impact of the plantations' pesticides on human health, while the damage done to biodiversity is neglected. The enslaving treatment of animals persists. Since 2014, about 2 million migrants have crossed the Mediterranean, causing more than 18,000 deaths at sea.⁵⁹ Similarly, every year, live cattle and sheep are shipped by the millions from France or Spain to the Middle East as maritime livestock, veritable "arks of nausea," throwing thousands of carcasses to the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea.⁶⁰ Far from there being some opposition between the animal cause, the Negro cause, and the feminist cause, these various interspecies alliances against colonial inhabitation remain today the keys to a world-ship. A world-ship guided by the winds of justice where humans and non-humans can live together.

A Worldly-Ecology: On the Bridge of Justice

Justice (1670)

Leaving Le Havre on November 1st, 1669, the ship *Justice* rushed into waters that were new to it. On the illuminated bridge, loudly proclaiming the name of his 365-ton frigate, Captain d'Elbée is getting ready here below, in the shadow of the hold, to do the work of the unjust. In the port of Adra, on the African coast, as the 434 denied were placed on board, justice was silenced. Those taken on board then began to dream of a ship worthy of its name. They would break their chains and rise up again on the bridge. The crew would set hospitality as their true course. Some would set up tables and chairs open to all skins and all forms of sentience, to discuss the world and the routes that are possible together, the dances, the love, the cuisine, and the landscapes. Suspended by a rope over the sea, others will paint anew the letters spelling out “Justice” onto the bow. With a sudden jolt and acute pain down their spines, they were reminded of the sharp walls of the hold and those dreams were interrupted. A hundred did not wake up. On June 7th, 1670, 334 others were pushed off *Justice* onto the Caribbean shore of Martinique. What remains is this dream, a dream that has grown into a desire carried by millions of hands and paws, wings and fins, branches and mountains, lands and waterways.

World-making, composing with pluralities

Faced with modernity's colonial and environmental fracture, *worldly-ecology* takes the world as its horizon. This horizon makes it possible to go beyond the ruptures caused by a focus on "nature," "the environment," or "the planet." Approaching ecology using these terms carries with it a *discriminatory vagueness*, an interrogation that contributes violently to the creation of a rupture between what comes from nature and is therefore natural and what does not and is therefore unnatural, between those who are chosen and those who are denied the world. Worldly-ecology is therefore not a "decolonization of nature," the invention of another concept of "nature" that would, for example, be more favorable to minorities and First Peoples but would still maintain the double fracture.¹ "Nature" is not a battlefield, *the world is!*² The horizon of the "world" contains *the welcoming polysemy* of an open whole, comprising human affairs and the planet Earth with its landscapes, its fauna, and its flora. What is at stake for ecological action is *world-making*, the *composition* of a world between human beings with non-human beings.

Contrary to conceptualizations of the ecological crisis that speak in categories of *anthropos*, of "Man," *making* a world implies recognizing the plurality of human beings *and* non-human beings as a condition for thought. Very often the presentation of the world's ecological challenges hides the plurality of existence on Earth in a fantasy about a "One" that faces the planet or a "we." However, this "we" is far from obvious. Who speaks and acts for this "we"? This "we" hides what is at stake in the ecological crisis: composing a plural, diverse, and transgenerational world based upon human and non-human pluralities on Earth. This task develops at least on the ontological, aesthetic, and political planes.

Beyond gestalt ontology and creolization

Environmentalist movements, like anticolonial, antiracist, and feminist movements, have pointed out the domination at work in modernity which establishes some humans and non-humans as *aliens* of a world. Faced with their respective fractures, these two currents have both proposed other ways of being in the world, *relational ontologies*, without talking to each other. On the one

side, besides indigenous peoples' ontologies that emphasize "figures of continuity,"³ Arne Næss invites his readers to recognize the ontological links with our living environments, developing the ways in which *gestalt* ontology allows for a world where "all things are interconnected."⁴ However, the identification of the self with the ecological environment comes at the price of a homogenization of human beings and their stories. In particular, Næss obscures the fact that the enslaved Black people of the Americas already had an understanding of their personhood as extensive with their environment, even as dispersed, in response to colonial oppression, which Monique Allewaert calls "Ariel's ecology."⁵ *Fracture*.

On the other side, queer theory,⁶ Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridization,⁷ and Édouard Glissant's creolization contribute to deconstructing the essentialisms of male/female identity, heterosexuality/homosexuality, and colonizer/colonized. In contrast to a Western imaginary based upon an obsession with Being, territory, and root-identity, and which reduces the other to a resource for itself or a threat to its identity, Glissant proposes a relational thinking where it is possible to "change through an exchange with the Other, without losing or denaturing oneself."⁸ However, despite his interest in the environment,⁹ shared with Chamoiseau,¹⁰ and his aesthetic sensitivity to the importance of Caribbean landscapes, Glissant's creolization remains first and foremost a process of encounter between human beings and between different cultures that takes place against the backdrop of silent non-humans, thereby preserving the nature/culture border.¹¹ Leaving the territory of Being, Glissant's creolization maintains the modern territory of the human. *Fracture*.

Worldly-ecology assumes a relational ontology that recognizes that our existence and our bodies are made up of encounters with a plurality of human beings *and* a plurality of non-human beings. A creolized *gestalt* ontology or *a gestalt creolization of the human species*. The ontology of the Chthulucene proposed by Donna Haraway is possibly a step in this direction, as it blurs the boundaries between human and non-human animals and technology while accounting for gender and racial discrimination.¹²

For doubly relational aesthetics and writing

Compositions with plurality also unfold at the aesthetic level and call for a doubly relational writing of the world. On the one side,

bringing readers to rediscover the unnoticed diversity of forests, ponds, and woods, Rousseau, Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, and Arne Næss write about a nature without other human beings, held as a place apart from socialization. If there are eco-socialities with non-humans to be found, human asociality is posited as *the condition for an encounter with nature*, meaning as the condition on the basis of which nature can be seen and read. This genre of writing is known as *nature writing* in the United States. *There is always just one person who writes, who speaks, and who acts*. We can imagine walking around *in the place* of Thoreau, of Rousseau, of Aldo Leopold, but we are not invited *to be with an other* in these spaces, unless this being-with dissolves into a homogenous *we*. What persists there is an inability to think about nature from a collective experience, even if it is a conflicting one. *Fracture*.

Composing with plurality in the face of the ecological tempest involves accounting within worldly writing for the presence on Earth of people other than myself. Recognizing the links between the Earth's colonial exploitation and human slavery, some postcolonial literature has already moved in this direction. One of the most beautiful expressions of this literature can be found in Jacques Roumain's novel *Masters of the Dew*. Haitian nature is portrayed in its vulnerability by looking at the oppositions between different families, between friends, between lovers, between rural and urban dwellers, between peasant farmers and political authorities. Against the backdrop of the living environment's degradation, the novel is strewn with dialogues, with different characters, with men and women. The peasants' union, the *coubite* in favor of preserving Haiti's hillsides and sources of water, becomes the lever of emancipation against the oppression carried out by the urban authorities. Not only does nature appear within this conflicting human plurality, but, even more so, the ensuing action demonstrates a necessary political composition with others. Nevertheless, in this narrative, the consideration given to non-human pluralities – to their forms of existence and interests independent from those of human beings – remains relegated to the background. *Fracture*.

One of the tasks facing worldly-ecology is to hold together, within the same narrative, the arts, literature, and the sciences, the pursuit of human dignity and equality as well as rights for non-humans to persevere in their being. Alice Walker and Maya Angelou present in their writing trees, snakes, lands, rocks, dogs, plants, and other non-humans endowed with agency, sentience,

and speech, alongside a plurality of human beings who together confront the world's colonial constitution, and so their writing points to horizons that are possible for this decolonial ecopoetics, for the arts of worldly-ecology.¹³

For a cosmopolitics of relation

The fact that everything is connected to the whole doesn't necessarily make it possible to think about *how* the whole becomes a world or to think about the issues of equality and justice. Creolization is neither emancipation nor a politics of decolonization.¹⁴ Having the same "Creole" identity, recognizing oneself as queer or as a human-animal, is not enough *to make* a world.¹⁵ In the same way, recognizing oneself as a part of the mountain is not enough to prevent the exploitation of nature and non-humans. As necessary as these relational ontologies and aesthetics are, the world is the fruit of an acting together. Worldly-ecology requires *a cosmopolitics of relation*. How, at the end of colonization and slavery, can a *polis* (a city) be established between humans and non-humans, even though not everyone will adopt the same aesthetics and ontologies?

This cosmopolitics of relation has two poles. It unfolds, firstly, in the political space that singularly connects human beings to each other. If the different constitutions of gender, social class, political allegiance, or ethnic origin impact what actions are possible, then acting together reveals something more than the mere reproduction of identities and community affiliations. In such a way that it becomes possible to recognize each other as companions of a single world held in common, not because it belongs to each other, but because it holds each other together. This means a world that does not discriminate according to religion, gender, skin color, national origin, or difference. This primary focus follows from the theoretical and pragmatic awareness that the politically organized world remains *the condition for thinking and acting ecologically* among human beings. It is because there is a space, a city between human beings, that the destruction of ecosystems and the industrialization of animal flesh can become a political problem that requires humans to grant rights to and accept obligations towards non-humans.

At the second pole, a political composition shapes the ways that non-humans participate in the world. The differentiated participation of non-humans in the world does not develop in the same

way that human political participation does, such as the institution of a political community *between* humans and non-humans. At issue here is the impossibility that these non-humans might contradict their representatives and spokespersons, demand rights, make a demand for equality, and initiate legal proceedings. I propose that we think of these forms of community as a world of humans *with* non-humans. The distinction being made by the terms “between” and “with” indicates the different natures of the spaces established, on the one side, between humans and among themselves and, on the other side, between humans among themselves and non-humans. *In this sense, by a worldly-ecology I mean the preservation of a world between humans and with non-humans.* Animal diplomacy, collective human/non-human compositions, the recognition of the legal status of ecosystems, animals, and of this wild part of the world are ways to account for the existence and interests of the non-humans within a common world.

The ambition of this cosmopolitics of relation is to hold these two poles together. Fantasies about dictatorial regimes that might be more ecological are as damaging as the neoliberal capitalist regimes that confuse freedom with an uninhibited license to destroy the Earth’s ecosystems. The recognition that there are other cosmogonies, ontologies, or even a plurality of worlds¹⁶ that, for example, may not take up this human/non-human distinction does not evade the task of this cosmopolitics, which always remains guided by the following question: how can a world be composed from the Earth, from its constitutive plurality of others and their multiple ontologies? Its starting point assumes the joint recognition of the historical violence and destruction caused by the colonial and environmental fractures of the last five centuries. Fulfilling this ambition means constructing *the bridge of a worldwide justice* that goes beyond the modern double fracture.

On the bridge of justice: climate justice, reparations, and decolonial restitutions

Beyond the modern double fracture, constructing a world-ship requires building *a bridge of justice* that brings together humans and non-humans, past and future. From the slave ship to the spaceships of *Star Trek*, the bridge is both that space where different beings and species meet and that in-between space that connects the shores of

the past to the shores of the future. Beyond the legal technicalities, justice makes it possible to create this common scene that, in being accountable, offers the means for becoming aware of the plurality of humans and non-humans on this worldly bridge, their histories and their futures. This construction begins with our bodies and pushes us to recognize *the world's umbilical paths*. In contrast to egocentric navel-gazing, the world's umbilical paths commit us to recognize our existence within networks of organic, material, political, and imaginary relationships with those who came before us and with those who will come after us. Bodies are the bearers of yesterday's world and guarantors of the world of tomorrow. The world-ship's bridge of justice extends temporally in the face of what Stephen Gardiner calls the "intergenerational storm,"¹⁷ confronting the past actions of our forefathers as well as those of our countries, preparing the future lives of our children to be able to recognize the moral task and assuming a political responsibility for them.¹⁸

The construction of this bridge to the world participates in the fight against global warming, against the use of nuclear energy, against lasting pollution of the planet, and for the recognition of non-human rights. Climate justice involves confronting past emissions – the gases that are warming the planet today were emitted decades or even hundreds of years ago – and the future consequences of that warming. The Dutch NGO Urgenda (victorious in 2015) and four French NGOs brought together in 2019 during "the trial of the century" to carry out legal actions aimed at forcing their respective governments to act accordingly in the face of global warming, the historic struggles against nuclear weapons and energy, and the poisoning of the world by pesticides and polluting industries all play a part in erecting this world-ship's bridge. The legal category of ecocide, describing crimes against ecosystems, does the same.¹⁹ Yesterday's environmental degradations, such as the chlordecone contamination of the Antilles, are today's injustices, passed on through our umbilical cords to tomorrow's generations. This bridge commits to the necessary political composition of human beings *with* different non-humans and the various ecosystems of the Earth within a continuum that stretches between past and future.

However, it is important that this transgenerational justice is pulled out of the impasse of modernity's colonial and environmental double fracture. Following the umbilical paths of the world will reveal that we also carry the weight of racism, the inequalities of capital from birth, and modernity's colonial and slave-making past.

This world-ship's bridge is environmental, but also social, political, and imaginary. It should not be forgotten that climate justice was inspired by the movement for environmental justice in the early 1980s, when Black and other racial minorities in the United States demanded justice in their fight against "environmental racism" as they faced unequal exposure to toxic pollutants.²⁰ This fact is overlooked in several French approaches to environmental justice.²¹ Born out of antiracist and decolonial struggles in the United States, the concept is appropriated while stripping these subjects from it, *as if* questions about the legacy of colonialism and racism did not exist in France, including in its overseas departments and territories.²² The result is a fantasy that racism is confined to the United States and that environmental justice, theoretically, is not concerned with racial and colonial questions. *Fracture*. But, *environmental justice is intimately linked to decolonial struggles around the world*. Climate justice *also* points to the historical responsibility that colonial empires have for global warming due to their industrial revolutions in the nineteenth century, just as it points to the environmental colonialism inherent in the monopolization of the planet's resources by the Global North and the "ecological debt" they owe to the Global South.²³ Contrary to the liberal approach which reduces this debt to a simple proportional right to pollute that can be managed by a global emissions market, as allowed by the Kyoto Protocol since 1997, its original meaning is to remedy this *colonial and global environmental wrong*.²⁴

If it is possible to think about a transgenerational justice regarding climate change (in environmental terms), then it is all the more necessary to do so for modernity's colonial legacy. The various social, community, political, and legal attempts to confront today's modern world with its colonial legacy *also* contribute to the construction of the world-ship's bridge. At work are at least three types of construction efforts.

First and foremost, there are the *struggles of the world's indigenous peoples* for their dignity, their right to maintain their human and non-human communities and to preserve their way of life. From the opposition to the Keystone oil pipeline in the United States and Canada, to the demands for justice from the people of Polynesia following French nuclear tests, to the struggle of the Lenca community led by Berta Cáceres in Honduras against the Gualcarque River dams, these communities have been the victims of several different episodes of colonization and land dispossession.

The Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted at the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2007 not only affirms that indigenous peoples have the right to be treated with dignity but equally condemns the colonial forms of predation to which they have been subjected since the fifteenth century. One can no longer maintain the naive attitude of celebrating native lifestyles, the Pachamama, Inuit myths, and Native American cosmogonies, without at the same time acknowledging the modern colonial history that has relegated these peoples to the margins of the world.

A second type of construction effort, *the demands for reparations for slavery and the transatlantic slave trade*, also raises this world-ship's bridge of justice. These demands have been present since the period of slavery in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and have echoed strongly in the last twenty years.²⁵ In France, the law that recognizes slavery as a crime against humanity, introduced in 2001 by Christiane Taubira, proposed an article on reparations in its first reading, which was removed for political reasons.²⁶ These demands were also made at the Durban World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Intolerance in 2011. In Martinique, the Mouvement International pour Réparations (MIR Martinique) [International Movement for Reparations] and the Pan-African Council filed a lawsuit against the French state in 2005, which is still ongoing. In 2013, a majority of the countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) requested collective reparations from France, Britain, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, creating a "CARICOM Reparations Commission,"²⁷ followed by a similar commission in the United States in 2015.²⁸ These demands are a reminder that the economic and political developments of slave-making states on both sides of the Atlantic were based upon the centuries-long oppression of trans-shipped and enslaved Black people.

Historically, not only were the claims of the enslaved denied, but quite the opposite, in France, Great Britain, Sweden, and the Netherlands, former masters were compensated, being given compensation for their "losses." As well as the reflex to suppress the history of slavery in Europe and the Americas on the deceitful grounds that this history would constitute an injunction to repent, these contemporary demands are received and rejected principally from a technocratic perspective: the crime is ancient and therefore past the statute of limitations; the damage is incalculable. Césaire indeed noted that the word "reparation" is confusing because it

suggests a crime that is reparable or even solvable.²⁹ However, these two technocratic refutations do not hold up. Crimes against humanity are imprescriptible according to international law, unless we *once again* deny the humanity of those who suffered the crime and reproduce the same gesture that dehumanized the slave-making colonists.³⁰ Further, historians and economists have managed to retrace the fate of the capital acquired by the transatlantic slave trade and slavery, as well as the “compensation” given to former masters, which, passed on from generation to generation, has gone on to benefit agricultural businesses, banks, and universities.³¹ This technocratic approach nevertheless misses the cosmopolitan scope of these demands. As Louis-Georges Tin reminds us, reparations are an integral part of any recognition of a crime and, therefore, of any *justice*.³²

The search for justice that lies beneath this movement is also the search for that common bridge, where it can be both a matter of the slave-making constitution of modernity and the opening of a scene between groups that have different links to the transatlantic slave trade and to slavery, while acknowledging that there is a common history. The French law of May 21st, 2001, “offering recognition of the slave trade and slavery as crimes against humanity,” the apology of the Anglican Church in 2007, or the International Day for the Commemoration of the Abolition of Slavery by UNESCO are strong symbolic gestures. However, a cosmopolitical response to this history still remains to be created, *a way to account for and be held accountable politically to the existence of those who were imprisoned in modernity’s hold, those who were thrown overboard, and to their descendants*. To refuse these demands is to refuse them a dignified existence on this world-ship’s transgenerational bridge of justice.

The construction of this bridge takes part in the struggles calling for the rights of Afro-descendants to be recognized, like the Maroon communities of Colombia and Brazil.³³ A step in this direction is the declaration by the United Nations of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–24), which advocates fighting discrimination against the approximately 200 million people of African descent living in the Americas and the millions more in the rest of the world.³⁴ The European Parliament resolution of March 26th, 2019, on the fundamental rights of people of African descent does the same, encouraging “meaningful and effective redress for past injustices and crimes against humanity ... against people

of African descent.”³⁵ What is at stake is not only the effective enforcement of human rights extended to the entire population of the Americas, Europe, and the Caribbean. The task is also and above all the opening of a space of speech that restores the dignity of these peoples and communities by recognizing their history on the bridge of the world-ship. The Maroon community of Saramaka in Suriname understood this cosmopolitical task, as did the activists of the Martinican ecological movement MIR – particularly Garcin Malsa – who have struggled for more than forty years to protect the island’s ecosystems from financial predators while demanding this bridge of justice.³⁶

Finally, the third type of construction effort, this bridge of justice is also sought in the *demands for the restitution of those art objects and human body parts* that were stolen by the European colonial powers in Africa and that are today exhibited in galleries or stored in the holds of Europe’s museums and libraries. The French state has just opened a door exclusively for the restitution of objects. The report written by Felwine Sarr and Bénédicte Savoy was commissioned by the French president and provides an initial inventory of the 88,000 or so objects from sub-Saharan Africa that are held in French public collections, 87 percent of which are held at the Musée de quai Branly.³⁷ Here, again, this gesture of restitution cannot be reduced to the material transaction from one place in France to another place in Africa. Just as important, Sarr and Savoy point out, are the stories that shed light on where and how each of these objects was acquired. These different narratives supplement those of the European colonization of Africa from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, such as that of the Berlin Conference in 1885, where European states divided African lands and bodies amongst themselves. The restitution of art objects and bodies that accompanies the work of these discursive scenes is a way of constructing this bridge where different actors recognize a common history, that of a colonial constitution of Europe based upon the exploitation of the bodies, ecosystems, cultures, and heritage of Africa. The deforestation and extractivist industries that hit Africa from the fifteenth century to the present day are just the other side of this colonial constitution. Restoring these objects is part of creating the world-ship’s bridge.

Building this bridge of justice in the face of the ecological storm requires that a political place for ecosystems and non-humans is recognized, but it also requires political recognition of the

genocides, enslavement, and colonization that made this destruction of the world and the Earth possible. To keep only the environmental side of this transgenerational justice amounts to building this bridge with gaping holes left in it, holes where some will be thrown, thus reproducing slave-making holds. This bridge requires a decolonization of the institutions of the Global North. From universities to museums to states and through religious institutions, confronting the ecological tempest also means confronting modernity's colonial and slave-making constitution. It is no longer possible to maintain this double fracture, where agreements to fight global warming are signed, where commitments are made to limit pollution and preserve biodiversity, while only a few gentle words slip out about the consequences of colonial history, when it isn't a deafening silence that is kept instead. This effort to build a bridge of justice must also make room to recognize the history of the collective domination of women, ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities, and people with disabilities. A worldly horizon can be projected into the future from the bridge of justice. Stopping the transmission of pollutants and toxic chemical compounds to children through our umbilical cords must go hand in hand with stopping the transmission of misogyny, racism, and social injustice through those same cords. The world-ship is to be constructed here and over there. Carried by yesterday's struggles, the rigging of today's world-ship allows us to draw the horizon of a world of tomorrow.

Epilogue: World-Making in the Face of the Tempest

Soleil d'Afrique (1678–9)

On October 22nd, 1678, a modern French ship of 300 nautical tons left the port of La Rochelle en route to the African Gold Coast. The sea and slave-trade routes are known; the pillaging agreements and bloodthirsty markets are well established. Added to the abduction of 380 humanities is the theft of the protective star of the terrestrial, spiritual, and imaginary dignities of the African communities. To make its name, this slave ship locked the sun of Africa in its hold. In April of 1679, 366 sunless existences were debarked in French Guiana, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. On its return to La Rochelle, this slave ship, like all the others, repeated this theft, navigating according to the lie that a humanity and a civilization had never been born on this continent. Concealed in the colonial archives, this sun, however, left glimmers in the holds, guiding into the Black night each gwoka song of revolt, each liberating step of bèlè dance, and each Maroon leap. In addition to the pursuit of justice, of this Black Astraea, comes the need to reclaim stolen dignities: raising the sun of Africa out of the slave-making hold and hanging it once again at the top of the world's canvas.

World-making

The modern tempest is still raging. The ships reproduce the same gestures as the *Zong*, abandoning, enslaving, or throwing overboard a part of the Earth and humanity. The sea is still blood red; the misogynistic and racist rigging maintains the course of injustice. In the face of the storm, heavy with past resentments and the anxieties of the future, I suggest a world-*making* with the firm conviction that another painting is possible, that there is another course to set beyond the grey horizon. I insist that the storm be observed from beyond the blinders of the modern double fracture. The sixth mass extinction of species, global warming, and the enduring pollution of the Earth are not only linked to the colonial, slave-making, and patriarchal constitution of the modern world, they are, above all else, its consequences. Some still cherish the environmentalist fantasy of a Noah's ark ecology, the illusion of astronaut-humanity that cares only about what can be seen on the bridge, or from much higher up. It would just take forgetting the world to find paradise again. Those who do not have the luxury of the illusion of a colorless Noah's ark or the naivety of some obvious "we" know very well that the edges of the slave ship can emerge again in this storm. In the face of this tempest, I want to build together not some Noah's ark or slave ship but a world-ship. A ship that welcomes a world between humans with non-humans on the bridge of justice.

To the environmental urgency that we limit global warming and halt the destruction of the Earth's ecosystems, I add these *equally* urgent actions: a global redistribution of wealth and social justice; the decolonial task of recognizing a dignified place in the world for First Peoples, those who were formerly colonized, and racialized people; and equal social and political consideration for women, especially women of color from former European colonies. Yes, ecology is above all an issue of justice. *The ecological crisis is a crisis of justice*. Facing the urgency of this ecological storm demands a return to the origins of this crisis as to the origins of environmental justice and climate justice. From Pierre Poivre to the partisans of the Anthropocene to John Muir, environmentalism has patiently carved up bodies, nature, the Earth, and the world by inventing a depopulated virgin Earth, a paradise without a world, a garden, a pond, and a forest encountered only by the thinking of Western White men. Similarly, environmentalism

has separated environmental justice from its initial antiracist and feminist impulses. Environmentalist partisans of the Anthropocene brandish the prospect of a collapse, for which they demand justice, without acknowledging past collapse, slavery, and genocide, under the pretext that it would be relevant for a global subject. Such apolitical thinking about ecology carried out by those who stand on the bridge and breathe in fresh air is nothing but the maintenance of the hell of the hold and the injustices of the Plantationocene. This is where the lie comes from that the racialized, the colonized, and the dominated are not concerned with ecology, along with the absurdity of Western countries continuing to see themselves as missionaries charged with spreading the good news to people of color and the non-believers.

Yet, it is from within struggles against environmental racism and against colonial forms of domination that Black women, activists, and academics, descendants of the enslaved, Latinos, and Amerindians in the United States confronted the ecological question in terms of *justice* in the 1980s. Antiracism, decolonial struggles, and feminism, along with the conservation of a Mother-Earth, were integral parts of confronting the ecological crisis. Do not be fooled by the environmentalist veil. The confrontation of the Earth's environmental degradation by antiracist, decolonial, and feminist movements is truly *an extension of their struggles*. People of color have to reclaim the ecological crisis as well as ecology's conceptualizations. From the Kalinago's anticolonial resistance against European settlers to contemporary struggles for environmental justice to the Maroon's political ecology in the Americas, a long experience of struggle traces those paths of searching for a world in the face of the modern tempest. To those environmentalists who might put forward geological figures to undermine the meaning of this search for a world, I would reply that there are words capable of moving mountains. That a tremor of resistance rumbles from the depths, sometimes erupting into volcanoes of revolt, laying the foundation of an archipelago of the world. I will remind them of the geology of rising up [*surrection*] from the modern hold and the climatology of courage-hopes and healing-loves, where the traces found in the Earth's strata will be those of equality and justice.

The ecological storm is just a different name for the modern hurricane that has been blowing in since at least 1492. It is not simply a question of resisting the coming barbarism;¹ it is already here, as indigenous peoples have known for a long time.²

Confronting this storm requires healing modernity's colonial and environmental double fracture. Yes, ecology must be brought home, onto our plates, along with misogynistic subjugation and enslavement, as Elizabeth Heyrick suggested in 1824. The very likely prospect of millions of "climate refugees" should not cover up the fact that hospitality is needed for the migrants of yesterday and today, those who have fled and are fleeing social violence, colonial situations, and wars for which the Global North has for a long time provided the weapons. Appeals made by the formerly colonized in favor of hospitality in France and Europe for today's migrants can already be heard in the voices of Christiane Taubira and Patrick Chamoiseau, alongside others.³ Will environmentalists make this crisis one of their objects of struggle, or will they remain in thrall to an environmentalism that enshrines a dignified concern for the "climate refugees" of tomorrow, paralleling the lack of concern for the migrants of yesterday and today? Faced with the migrant crisis, the same issues crop up again. Either the refusal of the world will be maintained by the figures of a European Noah's ark, or a world will be opened.⁴ Constructing this world-ship requires a decolonial ecology that gets rid of the Anthropocene's colonial constitution so that the horizon of the world can be opened. It is not a question of putting an end to humanism, but of putting an end to this "sordidly racist" humanism Césaire condemned and the profoundly misogynous humanism disparaged by Olympe de Gouges and Sylvia Wynter, the same tradition that has come to homogenize and disown the animal.⁵ It is not a matter of being done with the universal, but of being done with this vertical universalism that makes the West the measure of all culture and history, the one that looms over, establishes, and dominates, in favor of a "truly universal universal," as Souleymane Bachir Diagne imagines it, a universal that gathers, that listens, and that celebrates encounter.⁶

The intrusion of Ayiti

In place of Gaia, the name of Lovelock's environmentalist hypothesis, I propose recognizing the intrusion of the modern world's Mother-Earth: Ayiti. Taken as an example of environmental crisis and collapse, Haiti is still portrayed as a monstrous figure of modernity and confined somewhere offside to the world. However, it also reveals the hidden face of the modern world that has been abusively

covered up by environmentalism. To recognize Ayiti's intrusion is to recognize that Mother-Earth, ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources bear the traces of the world's colonization, slavery, and misogynistic domination. Ayiti embodies the entanglement of environmental processes and social and political configurations that undermine the capitalism and the totalitarian grip of global financial markets. By evacuating Haiti, the rich forms of political resistance and interspecies alliances offered by the denied were also evacuated. Ayiti is, in addition, the name of an ongoing struggle to open a world and renew a matrical bond with Mother-Earth. Ayiti, the Creole version of Haiti, corresponds to the name given by the Taino to the island they considered Mother-Earth and means "land of high mountains." It is precisely through the struggle for humanity by formerly enslaved Black people – from the high Maroon mountains, from the revolution of souls searching for a world – that a Mother-Earth is renamed, recomposed, and rebuilt. The refusal to give Haiti a place in the world since 1804, by demanding it pay up for having dared to proclaim its dignity, reflects the modern denial of the world to Black people, as well as an expression of contempt for a Mother-Earth. Ayiti's intrusion is a reminder that it is not going to be possible to face the ecological crisis and collectively renew a mutually caring relationship with Mother-Earth without breaking up modernity's colonial constitution, without confronting its racisms, its inequalities, and its patriarchy.

Recovering the sun of Africa

Crossing the Atlantic and Indian Ocean, the slave ship invented and manufactured the Negro, a category of exploited beings who are confined to the night of the hold and refused the world. Through these same routes, the slave ship created the illusions that the First Peoples were absent from the Americas, produced Africa's ignorance, and established Europe's solipsism. From colonization, trafficking, and slavery to contemporary forms of racism, passing through exhibitions of human zoos and imperial expansions, modernity has developed itself in the streets, in the political arenas, as well as in the universities and the museums, on the basis of relentless contempt for racialized men and women, in particular for Black people presented as Negroes, *and* on the basis of plundering the African continent

economically, culturally, and environmentally. The slave ship also participated in what Valentin Mudimbé calls “the invention of Africa,” the lie of a homogeneous Africa assumed to be populated by “people-without,” those without culture, without names, without history, without civilization, without thinking, without philosophy, whose nature, like their bodies, would be at the disposal of the first colonists who came.⁷ Walter Rodney and René Dumont have each condemned the role of colonial and neocolonial Europe in Africa’s “underdevelopment.”⁸ The slave ship has stolen the sun *from* Africa, namely the possibility that the warm welcome of the world could be felt *from* African lands, cultures, cosmogonies, and histories. The transformation of human beings into Negroes was possible under the condition of a matricide of the first Mother-Earth, the sacking of the cradle of humanity.

Facing the ecological storm, recovering a matrilineal bond with the Earth, requires restoring dignity to the enslaved of the slave ship as well as to those on the African continent. In addition to the necessary rehabilitation of economic and political relations based upon equality with African countries, and within these countries themselves, it is also necessary that knowledge about African history and culture is developed and disseminated beyond the Saharan divide, a divide which places Egypt outside the continent, as Cheikh Anta Diop has criticized.⁹ Restoring a place of dignity for the Orishas, for the worship of Ogun and Shango, and for voodoo animisms, as well as for the Muntu and Ubuntu philosophies.¹⁰ This knowledge, without identitarianism, is one of the keys to dismantling the slave ship and to touching the Earth. In the Caribbean, new museums are dedicated to the histories of the Amerindians, to the history of slavery and the slave trade, such as the ACTE memorial in Guadeloupe which participates in this work. However, populated largely by people of African descent, the Caribbean has to date no museum dedicated specifically to histories, cultures, and philosophies from Africa.¹¹ Added to the centuries of dehumanization is the lie that they come from nothing, from a land without history, without speech, without philosophy. Recovering a dignified relationship with oneself also involves the creation of museums and school programs in the Caribbean focused on African history. Opening up other understandings of the world, other epistemes, other philosophies, other possibilities for understanding the first Mother-Earth and those who were torn away from her plays a part in recovering the sun *of* Africa. Worldly-ecology calls for a return

to the sun of Africa that was long ago carried away by slave ships, the shining star that guided so many fugitives away from the plantations, the glimmer of hope that penetrates the swaying hold and illuminates the horizon of a world.

Notes

Prologue

- 1 Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1992), p. 2.
- 2 Romain Cruse, *Une géographie populaire de la Caraïbe* (Montreal: Mémoire d'encier, 2014), pp. 50–62.
- 3 Henry Paget, *Caliban's Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2002); Consuelo López Springfield (ed.), *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); Maryse Condé (ed.), *L'Héritage de Caliban* (Pointe-à-Pitre: Éditions Jasor, 1992).
- 4 Pap Ndiaye, *La Condition noire: essai sur une minorité française* (Paris: Gallimard, 2009); Maxime Cervulle, *Dans le blanc des yeux, diversité, racisme et médias* (Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2013); Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).
- 5 Norman Ajari, *La Dignité ou la mort: éthique et politique de la race* (Paris: La Découverte, 2019).
- 6 Anténor Firmin, *De l'égalité des races humaines: anthropologie positive* (Paris: Librairie Cotillon, 1885); Magali Bessone, *Sans distinction de race? Une analyse critique du concept de race et de ses effets pratiques* (Paris: Vrin, 2013).
- 7 Dorceta Taylor, *The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations: Mainstream NGOs, Foundations, Government*

Agencies, University of Michigan, 2014. In order to distinguish graphically the colors “black” (or Spanish *negro*), “red,” “white,” and “brown” from the thickness of the historical, legal, socio-political, and ontological processes at work in racialization, I use the capital letter for names *and* adjectives – “Black,” “Negro,” “Red,” “White,” and “Brown.”

- 8 Aimé Césaire, *Return to my Native Land*, trans. John Berger and Anna Bostock (Brooklyn, NY: Archipelago Books, 2013), p. 57.
- 9 Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 114–68; Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Pierre Charbonnier, *La Fin d'un grand partage: nature et société, de Durkheim à Descola* (Paris: CRNS Éditions, 2015).
- 10 Zygmunt Bauman, *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004).
- 11 Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, *The Shock of the Anthropocene: The Earth, History, and Us*, trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 2016).
- 12 Hicham-Stéphane Afeissa, “Comme chiens et chats: le conflit fratricide entre éthique environnementale et éthique animale,” in *Nouveaux Fronts écologiques: essais d'éthique environnementale et de philosophie animale* (Paris: Vrin, 2012), pp. 99–144.
- 13 J. Baird Callicott, *Éthique de la Terre* (Marseille: Wildproject, 2011). [Translator's note: This volume includes French translations of Callicott's work from the 1980s through the 2000s, many of which appear in Callicott, *In Defense of the Land Ethic: Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) and *Beyond the Land Ethic: More Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).]
- 14 William Cronon, *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996).
- 15 Lewis Gordon, *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 3–7.
- 16 Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
- 17 Will Steffen, Paul Crutzen, and John R. McNeill, “The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature?” *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment* 36/8 (2007): 614–21.
- 18 Translator's note: *France hexagonale*, or *l'Hexagone*, is a term for “mainland” or “metropolitan France” that playfully undercuts the assumed supremacy of the European territory of France, which

- is shaped somewhat like a hexagon, in distinction to its overseas departments and regions. Future uses of the term are untranslated.
- 19 Gabrielle Hecht, *Being Nuclear: Africans and the Global Uranium Trade* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014), p. 20.
 - 20 Ibid.
 - 21 Jean Allman, “Nuclear Imperialism and the Pan-African Struggle for Peace and Freedom: Ghana, 1959–1962,” in *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society* 10/2 (2008): 83–102; Esther Davis was the only French citizen to join the Sahara Protest Team; Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 41.
 - 22 René Dumont, *False Start in Africa*, trans. Phyllis Nauts Ott (New York: Praeger, 1966); Robert Jaulin, *La Paix blanche: introduction à l'éthnocide* (Paris: Seuil, 1970); Serge Moscovici, *De la nature, pour penser l'écologie* (Paris, Métailié, 2002), p. 223; Céline Pessis (ed.), *Survivre et vivre: critique de la science, naissance de l'écologie* (Montreal: L'Échappée, 2014), pp. 41–5 (and see the essay “Nous sommes tous des Martiniquaises de quinze ans,” pp. 266–7).
 - 23 Serge Latouche, *The Westernization of the World: The Significance, Scope, and Limits of the Drive towards Global Uniformity*, trans. Rosemary Morris (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), and *Décoloniser l'imaginaire: la pensée créative contre l'économie de l'absurde* (Lyons: Paragon-VS, 2011).
 - 24 See Alexis Vrignon, *La Naissance de l'écologie politique en France: une nébuleuse au cœur des années 1968* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2017).
 - 25 Serge Audier, *La Société écologique et ses ennemis: pour une histoire alternative de l'émancipation* (Paris: La Découverte, 2017); Dominique Bourg and Augustin Fragnière (eds), *La Pensée écologique: une anthologie* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2014); Ariane Debourdeau (ed.), *Les Grands Textes fondateurs de l'écologie* (Paris: Flammarion, 2013); Fabrice Flipo, *Nature et politique: contribution à une anthropologie de la modernité* (Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2013); Alexander Federau, *Pour une philosophie de l'Anthropocène* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2017).
 - 26 Dominique Bourg and Alain Papaux (eds), *Dictionnaire de la pensée écologique* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2015).
 - 27 Malcom Ferdinand, “Subnational Climate Justice for the French Outre-mer: Postcolonial Politics and Geography of an Epistemic Shift,” in *Island Studies Journal* 13 (2018): 119–34; Olivier Gargominy and Aurélie Bocquet, *Biodiversité d'Outre-mer* (Paris: Comité français pour L'UICN, 2013).

- 28 Silyane Larcher, *L'Autre Citoyen: l'idéal républicain et les Antilles après l'esclavage* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2014); Audrey Célestine, *La Fabrique des identités: l'encadrement politique des minorités caribéennes à Paris et New York* (Paris: Karthala, 2018).
- 29 Kathryn Yusoff, *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), p. 105; Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), p. 26.
- 30 Pablo Servigne and Raphaël Stevens, *How Everything Can Collapse: A Manual for Our Times*, trans. Andrew Brown (Cambridge: Polity, 2020); Pablo Servigne, Raphaël Stevens, and Gauthier Chapelle, *Another End of the World Is Possible: Living the Collapse (and Not Merely Surviving It)*, trans. Geoffrey Samuel (Cambridge: Polity, 2020).
- 31 Translator's note: "Off-world" translates *hors-monde*, which could also be translated as "outside-world." However, *hors-monde* expresses a separation from the world without assuming it is possible to be *outside* of the world, making the seemingly more straightforward translation choice entirely misleading. The English "off-world" is borrowed from science fiction and plays with the vocabulary of ship journeys used throughout this book, but other iterations such as "off-ground" for *hors-sol* also draw on the English sense of "off" found in words such as "offside" to describe an activity that is "out of play." Other iterations of "off-" will be found throughout the book to translate *hors-* and all express an experience of being separate but not outside or apart.
- 32 Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive* (London: Penguin, 2005), p. 355.
- 33 Seloua Luste Boulbina and Jim Cohen (eds), "Décoloniser les savoirs," *Mouvements* no. 72 (2012): 7–10; Samir Boumediene, *La Colonisation du savoir: une histoire des plantes médicinales* (Vaulx-en-Velin: Éditions des Mondes à faire, 2016).
- 34 Dominique Bourg, *Une Nouvelle Terre* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2018), p. 21.
- 35 Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden," *McClure's Magazine* 12 (1899): 290–1.
- 36 W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Penguin, 1996); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Enrique Dussel, *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, Taylor, and the Philosophy of Liberation*, trans. Eduardo Mendieta (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996); Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008); Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White*

- Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).
- 37 Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).
 - 38 Amandine Gay, “La Crise d’une utopie blanche?” in Jade Lindgaard (ed.), *Éloge des mauvaises herbes: ce que nous devons à la ZAD* (Paris: Les Liens qui libèrent, 2018), pp. 157–68.
 - 39 Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Postcolonial Studies and the Challenge of Climate Change,” *New Literary History* 1/43 (2012): 1–18; Chakrabarty, “The Climate of History: Four Theses,” *Critical Inquiry* 35/2 (2009): 197–22; Souleymane Bachir Diagne, “Faire humanité ensemble et ensemble habiter la Terre,” *Présence Africaine* 193/1 (2016): 11–19; Bachir Diagne, “Faire la ‘Terre totale’,” in Jérôme Bindé (ed.), *Signons la paix avec la Terre: quel avenir pour la planète et pour l’espèce humaine? Entretiens du XXIe siècle* (Paris: Unesco/Albin Michel, 2007).
 - 40 Ann Laura Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016); Dorceta Taylor, *Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility* (New York: New York University Press, 2014).
 - 41 See, for example, John R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Michelle Scobie, *Global Governance and Small States: Architectures and Agency in the Caribbean* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019).
 - 42 Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
 - 43 Megan Raby, *American Tropics: The Caribbean Roots of Biodiversity Science* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).
 - 44 Pablo Gomez, *The Experiential Caribbean: Creating Knowledge and Healing in the Early Modern Atlantic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).
 - 45 Sherrie L. Baver and Barbara D. Lynch (eds), *Beyond Sand and Sun: Caribbean Environmentalisms* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006); Malcom Ferdinand, “Ecology, Identity, and Colonialism in Martinique: The Discourse of an Ecological NGO (1980–2011),” in Chris Campbell and Michael Niblett (eds), *The Caribbean: Aesthetics, World-Ecology, Politics* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016); Rivke Jaffe, *Concrete Jungles: Urban Pollution and the Politics of Difference in the Caribbean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Eloise C. Stancioff, *Landscape, Land-Change and Well-Being in the Lesser Antilles:*

Case Studies from the Coastal Villages of St. Kitts and the Kalinago Territory, Dominica (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2018); Karen Baptiste and Kevon Rhiney, “Climate Justice and the Caribbean,” *Geoforum* 73 (2016): 17–80.

- 46 Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*.
- 47 Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), pp. 151–2; André Saint-Lu, “Bartolomé de Las Casas et la traite des Nègres,” *Bulletin Hispanique* 94/1 (1992): 39–40.
- 48 Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *Black in Latin America* (New York: New York University Press, 2011). [Translator’s note: *Hors-sol* is translated as “off-ground,” though *sol* may also be translated as “land” or “soil.” Land would suggest a focus on sovereignty that is not intended, and soil loses the metaphorical valence of the term. Ground should be read as referring to the material ground of the soil and the abstract ground of existence.]
- 49 Roger Bastide, *African Civilizations in the New World*, trans. Geoffrey Parrinder (London: Hurst, 1971); Richard Price (ed.), *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Christine Chivallon, *Espace et identité à la Martinique: paysannerie des Mornes et reconquête collective, 1840–1960* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1998); Arturo Escobar, *Sentir-penser avec la Terre: l’écologie au-delà de l’Occident*, trans. Roberto Andrade Pérez et al. (Paris: Seuil, 2018); Catherine Benoît, *Corps, jardins, mémoires: anthropologie du corps et de l’espace à la Guadeloupe* (Paris: CNRS Éditions & Maisons des Sciences de l’homme, 2000).
- 50 Translator’s note: “Transshipped” normally translates the French *transbordés* in normal instances of commercial and nautical usages of the term. The meaning intended here is derived from Glissant’s usage of the term in his *Le Discours antillais*. There “transshipped” is used to describe the experience of Africans who were kidnapped, enslaved, and forcibly transported to the Americas and changed “into something different.” This is in distinction to the form of forced movement and experience of being “transplanted,” suffered by other oppressed peoples who nevertheless still maintain their original identity in the new environment. This term is not translated consistently in the English edition of Glissant, but readers can consult Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*, trans. J. Michael Dash (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), pp. 14–16.
- 51 Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar (eds), *Globalization and the Decolonial Option* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 2.
- 52 Regarding the forgetting of Haiti in decolonial thought, see Adler

- Camilus, "Conflictualités et politique comme oubli du citoyen," PhD thesis, University of Paris VIII, under the direction of Georges Navet, 2015.
- 53 Gordon, *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*; Nick Nesbit, *Caribbean Critique: Antillean Critical Theory from Toussaint to Glissant* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013); Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Souleymane Bachir Diagne, *Open to Reason: Muslim Philosophers in Dialogue with the Western Tradition*, trans. Jonathan Adjemian (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), pp. 46–54; Ajari, *La Dignité ou la mort*; Katherine McKittrick (ed.), *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).
 - 54 Elsa Dorlin, *La Matrice de la race: généalogie sexuelle et coloniale de la nation* (Paris: La Découverte, 2009); Anne Berger and Eleni Varikas (eds), *Genre et postcolonialismes: dialogues transcontinentaux* (Paris: Éditions Archives contemporaines, 2011); bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism* (London: Routledge, 2015); Angela Y. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983); Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review* 43 (1991): 1241–99.
 - 55 Deane Curtin, *Environmental Ethics for a Postcolonial World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005); William Adams and Martin Mulligan (eds), *Decolonizing Nature: Strategies for Conservation in a Post-Colonial Era* (London: Earthscan, 2003).
 - 56 Robert Bullard (ed.), *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994); Ryan Holifield, Jayajit Chakraborty, and Gordon Walker, *The Routledge Handbook of Environmental Justice* (London: Routledge, 2018); David V. Carruthers (ed.), *Environmental Justice in Latin America: Problems, Promise, and Practice* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008); David McDonald, *Environmental Justice in South Africa* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2002); David Schlosberg, *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
 - 57 Elizabeth DeLoughrey and George Handley (eds), *Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Elizabeth DeLoughrey, Jill Didur, and Anthony Carrigan, *Global Ecologies and the Environmental Humanities: Postcolonial Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 2015); Helen Tiffin and Graham Huggan, *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* (London: Routledge, 2009); Bonnie Roos

- and Alex Hunt, *Postcolonial Green: Environmental Politics and World Narratives* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010); Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee, *Postcolonial Environment: Nature, Culture, and the Contemporary Indian Novel in English* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Campbell and Niblett, *The Caribbean*; Byron Caminero-Santangelo, *Different Shades of Green: African Literature, Environmental Justice, and Political Ecology* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014).
- 58 Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [1986] 2004); Benjamin Chavis, Jr., *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States: A National Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites* (New York: Commission for Racial Justice Public Data Access, 1987); Larry Lohman, “Green Orientalism,” *The Ecologist* 23/6 (1993): 202–4; Robert H. Nelson, “Environmental Colonialism: ‘Saving’ Africa from Africans,” *Independent Review* 8/1 (2003): 65–86.
 - 59 Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, trans. Langston Hughes and Mercer Cook (Oxford: Heinemann, [1944] 1978).
 - 60 Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), p. 43; translation slightly modified.
 - 61 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 56–7.
 - 62 Nathan Hare, “Black Ecology,” *The Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies and Research* 1/6 (1970): 2–8, at p. 8.
 - 63 Thomas Sankara, *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution*, ed. Michael Prairie (New York: Pathfinder, 2007), p. 258; translation modified.
 - 64 *Ibid.*, p. 259.
 - 65 “Principles of Environmental Justice,” www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html.
 - 66 Wangari Maathai, *Replenishing the Earth: Spiritual Values for Healing Ourselves and the World* (New York: Doubleday, 2010), pp. 20–1 and 50.
 - 67 Francia Márquez, acceptance speech for the Goldman Environmental Prize, San Francisco, 25 April 2018.
 - 68 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 137; André Gorz, *Ecologica*, trans. Chris Turner (London: Seagull Books, 2018), p. 50; Étienne Tassin, “Propositions philosophiques pour une compréhension cosmopolitique de l’écologie,” conference proceedings from “Penser l’écologie politique: sciences sociales et interdisciplinarité” at the University of Paris-Diderot, 13–14 January 2014, pp. 180–3; www.fondationecolo.org/blog/ActesEcologiePolitique1.

- 69 Arendt, *The Human Condition*, pp. 182–3.
- 70 Étienne Tassin, *Un monde commun: pour une cosmo-politique des conflits* (Paris: Seuil, 2003), pp. 215–35.
- 71 Gorz, *Ecologica*, p. 47.
- 72 Félix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*, trans. Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), p. 32.
- 73 Jason Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (London: Verso, 2015); Alf Hornborg, John R. McNeill, and Juan Martinez-Alier (eds), *Rethinking Environmental History: World-System History and Global Environmental Change* (New York: Alta Mira Press, 2007); Paul Robbins, *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2019).
- 74 Paul K. Gellert, Scott R. Frey, and Harry F. Dahms, “Introduction to Ecologically Unequal Exchange in Comparative Perspective,” *Journal of World-Systems Research* 23/2 (2017): 226–35.
- 75 Johan Rockström et al., “A Safe Operating Space for Humanity,” *Nature* 461 (2009): 472–5; Will Steffen et al., “Planetary Boundaries: Guiding Human Development on a Changing Planet,” *Science* 347/6223 (2015).
- 76 Philippe Descola, *La Composition des mondes: entretiens avec Pierre Charbonnier* (Paris: Flammarion, 2014); Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *The Relative Native: Essays on Indigenous Conceptual Worlds* (Chicago: HAU Books, 2015).
- 77 Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990).
- 78 Translator’s note: *Matrice* is the French word for both womb and matrix. While English has largely lost the connection between womb and matrix in everyday usage, the single French word is derived from the Latin *matrix*. The Latin word, which comes from the word for mother (*mater*), originally meant “pregnant animal” and “uterus” in Late Latin. The sense with which it is used here is not intended to be exclusively gendered or to refer only to the human womb, and so I have translated the term as “womb, matrix” following Betsy Wing’s translation of the same term in Glissant.
- 79 Hannah Arendt, “Public Rights and Private Interests: In Response to Charles Frankel,” in Michael Mooney and Florian Stuber (eds), *Small Comforts for Hard Times: Humanists on Public Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 103–8.
- 80 Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, after Man, its Overrepresentation – an Argument,” *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3/3 (2003): 257–337.
- 81 Hannah Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, trans. John E. Woods (New York: Schocken Books, 2005), p. 93.
- 82 Paget, *Caliban’s Reason*.

- 83 Translator's note: "Matricial" is the adjectival form of the French *matrice*. While not a neologism in English, the term is uncommon and not normally used in the sense intended here. The reader should understand it in the double sense of "womb, matrix," mentioned above.

Chapter 1 Colonial Inhabitation

- 1 Dominique Rogers and Boris Lesueur (eds), *Sortir de l'esclavage: Europe du Sud et Amériques, XIVE–XIXe siècle* (Paris: Karthala, 2018); Myriam Cottias, Elisabeth Cunin, and Antonio Almeida Mendes, *Les Traites et les esclavages: perspectives historiques et contemporaines* (Paris: Karthala, 2010).
- 2 Carolyn Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), pp. 26–146.
- 3 Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François* (Paris: Éditions Thomas Lolly, 1667), vol. 1, pp. 8–9. I have modified the language here.
- 4 Jean-Baptiste Thibault de Chanvalon, "Moments perdus ou sottisier," in *Voyage à la Martinique, 1751–1756: contenant diverses observations sur la physique, l'histoire naturelle, l'agriculture, les mœurs et les usages de cette isle faites en 1751 et dans les années suivantes*, ed. Monique Pouliquen (Paris: Karthala, 2004), p. 261.
- 5 Martin Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: HarperPerennial, 2001), pp. 145–7.
- 6 Cardinal Armand Richelieu, "Commission aux Sieurs d'Esnambuc et du Roissey, capitaines du Roi dans les mers du Ponant, pour établir une colonie française aux Antilles d'Amérique," 31 octobre 1626, in Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles*, p. 12.
- 7 Bernard Grunberg and Julian Montemayor, *L'Amérique espagnole (1492–1700): textes et documents* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2014), p. 16. [Translator's note: An English translation of this papal bull, *Inter caetera*, is available at <https://papalencyclicals.net/Alex06/alex06inter.htm>.]
- 8 Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europeaeum*, trans. G. L. Ulmen (New York: Telos Press, 2006), pp. 86–100.
- 9 Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne Press, 1969), p. 37. [Translator's note: Translation slightly modified; Lingis translates this as "way of the I."]

- 10 Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. Michael D. Barber (New York: Continuum, 1995), pp. 12–13.
- 11 David Watts, *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Culture and Environmental Change since 1492* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 77.
- 12 Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles*, p. 76.
- 13 Watts, *The West Indies*, p. 154.
- 14 Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles*, p. 81. [Translator's note: *Coup de barre* literally means "hit of rod" and is used to describe a feeling of sudden fatigue. A similar English idiom would be "hit by a ton of bricks."]
- 15 Myriam Cottias, "L'Engagement des Blancs aux Antilles," *Revue de la Bibliothèque nationale de France: Outre-mer* no. 39 (1991): 32–6, at p. 35.
- 16 Bartolomé de Las Casas, *A Very Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, trans. Nigel Griffin (New York: Penguin, [1552] 2004).
- 17 Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles*, p. 6.
- 18 Jean-Baptiste Delawarde, *Les Défricheurs et les petits colons à la Martinique au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Imprimerie René Buffault, 1935), pp. 54–5.
- 19 Louis-Philippe May, *Histoire économique de la Martinique (1635–1763)* (Fort-de-France: Société de distribution et de culture, [1930] 1972), pp. 70–1.
- 20 William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill & Wang, [1983] 2003), pp. 127–56.
- 21 André-Marcel d'Ans, *Haïti: paysage et société* (Paris: Karthala, 1987), p. 171.
- 22 "Ordonnance de MM. Les Général et Intendant qui défend aux maîtres de faire vendre du café par leur nègre, du 7 janvier 1734," in Durand-Molard, *Code de la Martinique*, vol. I (Saint-Pierre [Martinique]: Imprimerie de Jean-Baptiste Thounes, 1807), pp. 378–9.
- 23 May, *Histoire économique de la Martinique*, p. 32.
- 24 Ibid., p. 42.
- 25 Translator's note: *Défricheurs* literally means "land-clearers" or "fellers" and should be read in relationship to that colonial act of inhabitation. The term is more often translated by the English "pioneer."
- 26 Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles*, vol. II, p. 454.
- 27 Translator's note: The French word usually translated into English as labor force is *main-d'œuvre*, literally meaning "work hand." This

- has a relationship to the English vocabulary around slavery worth noting, since it is lost in the more abstract “labor force,” as enslaved Black people were often referred to as “hands” in the accounting paperwork and financial discourse of slavers. See Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Penguin, 2014).
- 28 Delawarde, *Les Défricheurs et les petits colons à la Martinique*, p. 39.
- 29 See Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, *Qu’est-ce que l’esclavage? Une histoire globale* (Paris: Gallimard, 2014); Pétré-Grenouilleau, *Les Traités négrières: essai d’histoire globale* (Paris: Gallimard, 2004).
- 30 See chapters 3 and 9.
- 31 Gil Scott-Heron, “Who’ll Pay Reparations on My Soul?” recorded 1970, track 13 on *A New Black Poet: Small Talk at 125th and Lennox*, Flying Dutchman/RCA.

Chapter 2 The Matricides of the Plantationocene

- 1 Jason W. Moore, “Madeira, Sugar, and the Conquest of Nature in the ‘First’ Sixteenth Century, Part I: From ‘Island of Timber’ to Sugar Revolution, 1420–1506”, *Review* [Fernand Braudel Center], 32/4 (2009): 345–90.
- 2 John R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 30 and 23.
- 3 Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [1986] 2004).
- 4 Carolyn Merchant, “Mining the Earth’s Womb,” in *Feminist Perspectives on Technology*, ed. Joan Rothschild (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), pp. 99–117.
- 5 Charles de Rochefort, *Histoire naturelle et morale des îles Antilles de l’Amérique*, vol. II (Lyon: C. Fourmy, 1667), p. 424.
- 6 David Watts, *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Culture and Environmental Change since 1492* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 41, 44, 51, 56, 70, and 77.
- 7 Corinne L. Hofman et al., “Indigenous Caribbean Perspectives: Archaeologies and Legacies of the First Colonised Region in the New World,” *Antiquity* 92/361 (2018): 200–16.
- 8 Augustin Berque, *Écoumène: introduction à l’étude des milieux humains* (Paris: Belin, 1987), p. 17.
- 9 Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), p. 146.

- 10 *Manman* is the Creole word for *maman* or “mama.”
- 11 Jean-Baptiste Labat, *Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de L’Amérique*, vol. I (La Haye: Husson, 1724), pp. 255–6.
- 12 André-Marcel d’Ans, *Haïti: paysage et société* (Paris: Karthala, 1987), pp. 317–18.
- 13 Watts, *The West Indies*, p. 179; Reinaldo Funes Monzote, *From Rainforest to Cane Field in Cuba: An Environmental History since 1492* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).
- 14 Jean-Baptiste Thibault de Chanvalon, “Moments perdus ou sottisier,” in *Voyage à la Martinique, 1751–1756: contenant diverses observations sur la physique, l’histoire naturelle, l’agriculture, les moeurs et les usages de cette isle faites en 1751 et dans les années suivantes*, ed. Monique Pouliquen (Paris: Karthala, 2004), p. 261.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 262.
- 16 John Bellamy Foster, *Marx’s Ecology: Materialism and Nature* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000).
- 17 Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. III, trans. David Fernbach (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 949.
- 18 John Bellamy Foster and Hannah Holleman, “The Theory of Unequal Ecological Exchange: A Marx–Odum Dialectic,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 41/2 (2014): 199–233.
- 19 Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*, pp. 1–7.
- 20 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 1. [Translator’s note: Translations of Fanon usually render *l’indigène* as “the native.”]
- 21 Merchant, “Mining the Earth’s Womb,” p. 101.
- 22 Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, *The Shock of the Anthropocene: The Earth, History, and Us*, trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 2016).
- 23 Jason Moore (ed.), *Anthropocene or Capitalocene: Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2016); Armel Campagne, *Le Capitalocène: aux racines historiques du dérèglement climatique* (Paris: Éditions Divergences, 2017); Andreas Malm, *L’Anthropocène contre l’histoire: le réchauffement climatique à l’ère du capital*, trans. Étienne Dobenesque (Paris: La Fabrique, 2017). [Translator’s note: The volume by Malm collects texts published in English as Andreas Malm and Alf Hornborg, “The Geology of Mankind? A Critique of the Anthropocene Narrative,” *Anthropocene Review* 1/1 (2014): 62–9 and Andreas Malm, *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming* (London: Verso, 2016).]
- 24 Donna Haraway, “Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin,” *Environmental Humanities* 6/1 (2015):

- 159–65; Haraway et al., “Anthropologist Are Talking – about the Anthropocene,” *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 81/3 (2015): 535–64.
- 25 Simon L. Lewis and Mark A. Maslin, *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), pp. 147–87. Of the estimated 61 million people in the Americas before Columbus, Lewis and Maslin project that nearly 55 million died during the first decade of European colonialism. This sudden change produced a general regeneration of American forests since the Amerindians were no longer cultivating them, thereby reducing the presence of carbon in the atmosphere. So 1610 constitutes a lower limit in carbon concentration, a zero point of the Anthropocene.
 - 26 Heather Davis and Zoe Todd, “On the Importance of a Date, or, Decolonizing the Anthropocene,” *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies* 16/4 (2017): 761–80.
 - 27 Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985).
 - 28 Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), pp. 37–43; Serge Latouche, *La Planète uniforme* (Castelnau-le-Lez: Climats, 2000).

Chapter 3 The Hold and the Negrocene

- 1 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (New York: Penguin, [1789] 1995), pp. 55–6; emphasis added.
- 2 Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, *Qu’est-ce que l’esclavage? Une histoire globale* (Paris: Gallimard, 2014), pp. 163–94.
- 3 The concept of the face is central in the work of Emmanuel Levinas. See Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne Press, 1969), p. 194.
- 4 Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, p. 56.
- 5 Roger Bastide, *African Civilizations in the New World*, trans. Geoffrey Parrinder (London: Hurst, 1971); Sidney Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African-American Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992); Melville Herskovits, *The New World Negro* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966).
- 6 Judith A. Carney and Richard N. Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa’s Botanical Legacy in the New World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), p. 76.

- 7 Article 44 of the *Code Noir*, in Louis-Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises de l'Amérique sous le vent*, vol. I (Paris: Quillaux & Mequignon jeune, 1784), p. 421. [Translator's note: All English translations of the *Code Noir* here are based upon that made by John Garrigus, at the Louverture Project: https://thelouvertureproject.org/index.php?title=Le_Code_Noir. The French *meuble* also means "furniture" or "movable property," though in legal terms is often translated into English as "charge," as in Garrigus's translation of the *Code*.]
- 8 Article 28 of the *Code Noir*, p. 419.
- 9 Catherine Benoît, *Corps, jardins, mémoires: anthropologie du corps et de l'espace à la Guadeloupe* (Paris: CNRS Éditions & Maisons des Sciences de l'homme, 2000), p. 97.
- 10 Article 30 of the *Code Noir*, p. 419.
- 11 Article 16 of the *Code Noir*, p. 417.
- 12 Claude Meillassoux, *The Anthropology of Slavery: The Womb of Iron and Gold*, trans. Alide Dasnois (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 9.
- 13 Frédéric Régent, Bruno Maillard, and Gilda Gonfier (eds), *Libres et sans fers: paroles d'esclaves français: Guadeloupe, île Bourbon (Réunion), Martinique* (Paris: Fayard, 2015).
- 14 James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), p. xvi.
- 15 Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. Julie Rose (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), pp. 11–12.
- 16 Arlette Gautier, "Biopolitiques esclavagistes: genre et supplices dans l'Empire français aux Antilles (1776–1848)," in Martine Spensky (ed.), *Le Contrôle du corps des femmes dans les empires coloniaux: empires, genre et biopolitiques* (Paris: Karthala, 2016), pp. 109–30.
- 17 Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), p. 74.
- 18 Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635–1848* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001); Arlette Gautier, *Les Sœurs de solitude: femmes et esclavage aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010).
- 19 Sonia Maria Giacomini, *Femmes et esclaves: l'expérience brésilienne, 1850–1888* (Donnemarie-Dontilly: Éditions iXe, 2016).
- 20 Translator's note: Roumain's French is *Bois-d'ébène*, which is a pejorative term historically used to refer to slaves and is often translated as "black gold." The term captures the denigration of enslaved African people with dark skin being turned into a material resource.
- 21 Translator's note: "Negro" translates the French *Nègre* and variants.

Translation of this term carries with it certain ethical considerations as well as linguistic ones. *Nègre* historically has been translated by various English words and vice versa, including the archaic sounding “Negro” and the more injurious and offensive “n-word.” In everyday usage *nègre* is not considered to be as injurious as the English n-word, though the archaic nature of the term “negro” does not really capture its present-day sense either. In consultation with the author, I have decided to translate the term and variants as Negro, except when the cited source material in English uses the n-word. Readers should, however, keep the particular nature of the French term in mind, as also when there are discussions of slave ships [*negriér*], which combines *nègre* with the suffix *-ier*. This formulation is used to form the name of ships, such as *pétrolier* for “oil tanker,” but it suggests a more generative function as well, as it is also used to form the names of trees based upon the fruit they produce, such as *bananier* for “banana tree,” and to form the name of particular jobs, as in *gazier* for “gas worker” or even *negriér* for a “slaver” or so-called slave trader. One way of reading the etymology of *negriér* is that the slave ship bears or produces Negroes in the way that the *baleinier* (“whaler” or “whaling ship”) bears the products of whaling.

- 22 Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Birth of a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).
- 23 Andrew Nikiforuk, *The Energy of Slaves: Oil and the New Servitude* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2012).
- 24 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 54n9; translation slightly modified.
- 25 David McDermott Hughes, *Energy without Conscience: Oil, Climate Change and Complicity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Jena-François Mouhot, *Des esclaves énergétiques: réflexions sur le changement climatique* (Paris: Champ Vallon, 2011).
- 26 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 334–42.
- 27 Françoise Vergès, “Racial Capitalocene: Is the Anthropocene Racial?” in Theresa Gaye Johnson and Alex Lubin (eds), *Futures of Black Radicalism* (London: Verso, 2017), pp. 72–82.
- 28 William A. Green, “Race and Slavery: Considerations on the Williams Thesis,” in Barbara Solow and Stanley Engerman (eds), *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 25–49.

- 29 Ken Saro-Wiwa, *A Month and a Day & Letters* (Banbury: Ayebia Clarke, 1995).
- 30 Alice Walker, *Living by the Word: Selected Writings (1973–1987)* (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1988), p. 147.
- 31 Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François* (Paris: Éditions Thomas Lolly, 1667), vol. II, p. 517.
- 32 Joseph Zobel, *Black Shack Alley*, trans. Keith Q. Warner (New York: Penguin, [1950] 2020); David Goldblatt, *Structures de domination et de démocratie* (Paris, Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2018) [exhibition catalogue]; Hugh Masekela, “Stimela,” recorded 1994, track 12 on *Hope*, Triloka Records.
- 33 Serge Restog, “Negg pa ka mo, in *La Gorge serrée, le ventre creux* (Paris: Les Paragraphes littéraires, 1981), pp. 24–6. I have modified the Creole orthography.
- 34 Patrice Courtaud, “Approche archéologique des populations serviles aux Antilles,” in Myriam Cottias, Elisabeth Cunin, and António de Almeida Mendes (eds), *Les Traités et les esclavages: perspectives historiques et contemporaines* (Paris: Karthala & CIRESC, 2010), p. 303.
- 35 Dominique Rogers (ed.), *Voix d’esclaves: Antilles, Guyane et Louisiane françaises XVIIIe–XIXe siècles* (Paris: Karthala, CIRESC, & SAA, 2015).

Chapter 4 The Colonial Hurricane

- 1 Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1992), p. 11.
- 2 Météo France, “Saison cyclonique 2017: l’OMM [World Meteorological Organization] fait le bilan pour l’Atlantique,” April 26, 2018; Pierre Barthélémy, “Harvey, Irma, Maria une saison cyclonique au bilan désastreux,” *Le Monde*, December 28, 2017, www.lemonde.fr/climat/article/2017/12/28/harvey-irma-maria-une-saison-cyclonique-au-bilan-desastreux_5235220_1652612.html.
- 3 William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act I, scene i.
- 4 Ibid., Act V, scene i.
- 5 Kevin J. E. Walsh et al., “Tropical Cyclones and Climate Change,” *WIREs Climate Change* 7/1 (2015): 65–89.
- 6 Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2016).
- 7 Joseph Conrad, *Typhoon* (New York: Doubleday, Page, 1918), pp. 57–9.
- 8 Ibid., p. 123.

- 9 Ibid., pp. 57–60, 68–9.
- 10 John Barnshaw and Joseph Trainor, “Race, Class, and Capitals amidst the Hurricane Katrina Diaspora,” in David L. Brunnsma, David Overfelt, and J. Steven Picou, *The Sociology of Katrina: Perspectives on a Modern Catastrophe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), p. 111.
- 11 Chester Hartman and Gregory D. Squires (eds), *There Is No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster: Race, Class, and Hurricane Katrina* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 3.
- 12 Sharon P. Robinson and Christopher M. Brown (eds), *The Children Hurricane Katrina Left Behind: Schooling Context, Professional Preparation, and Community Politics* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. xii–xiii.
- 13 Hartman and Squires, *There Is No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster*, p. 3.
- 14 Ibid., p. 5.
- 15 Avis A. Jones-DeWeever and Heidi Hartman, “Abandoned Before the Storms: The Glaring Disaster of Gender, Race, and Class Disparities in the Gulf,” *ibid.*, pp. 85–101.
- 16 Brunnsma, Overfelt, and Picou, *The Sociology of Katrina*, p. 2.
- 17 Kathleen Tierney and Christine Bevc, “Disaster as War: Militarism and the Social Construction of Disaster in New Orleans,” *ibid.*, p. 42; Razmig Keucheyan, *Nature Is a Battlefield: Towards a Political Ecology* (Cambridge: Polity, 2016), p. 15.
- 18 Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), p. 5.
- 19 Stephen J. May, *Voyage of The Slave Ship: J. M. W. Turner’s Masterpiece in Historical Context* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014), pp. 104–5.
- 20 Contrary to the analysis of John Ruskin in *Modern Painters* (London: Andre Deutsch, [1843] 1987), p. 159.
- 21 Translator’s note: “Throwing” is in English in the original.
- 22 See Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Penguin, 2007), pp. 38–40.
- 23 Jane Webster, “The Zong in the Context of the Eighteenth-Century Slave Trade,” *Journal of Legal History* 28/3 (2007): 285–98, at p. 289.
- 24 James Oldham, “Insurance Litigation Involving the Zong and Other British Slave Ships, 1780–1807,” *Journal of Legal History* 28/3 (2007): 299–318.
- 25 Andrew Lewis, “Martin Dockray and the Zong: A Tribute in the Form of a Chronology,” *Journal of Legal History* 28/3 (2007): 357–70.
- 26 See William J. Ripple et al., “15,364 Scientist Signatories from

184 Countries: World Scientists' Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice," *BioScience* 67/12 (2017): 1026–8; see the five-point platform of deep ecology at www.deepecology.org/platform.htm.

Chapter 5 Noah's Ark

- 1 Adlai Stevenson, "Strengthening the International Development Institutions," in *The Papers of Adlai E. Stevenson*, ed. Walter Johnson and Carl Evans, vol. VIII: *Ambassador to the United Nations, 1961–1965* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), p. 828.
- 2 Kenneth E. Boulding, "The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth," in Henry Jarrett (ed.), *Environmental Quality in a Growing Economy: Essays from the Sixth RFF Forum* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966), pp. 3–14; Barbara Ward, *Spaceship Earth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966); Barbara Ward and René Dubos, *Only One Earth: The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972); R. Buckminster Fuller, *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1968).
- 3 James Lovelock, "Gaia as Seen through the Atmosphere," *Atmospheric Environment* 6/8 (1972): 579–80.
- 4 James Lovelock, *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1979] 2009), p. 10.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. x.
- 6 Will Steffen, Paul Crutzen, and John R. McNeill, "The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature?" *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment* 36/8 (2007): 614–21.
- 7 Translator's note: The French *politique de l'embarquement* also refers to the "boarding policy" of a ship or other vessel.
- 8 Hicham-Stéphane Afeissa, *La Fin du monde et de l'humanité: essai de généalogie du discours écologique* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2014), p. 193.
- 9 Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract*, trans. Elizabeth MacArthur and William Paulson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); Michel Serres, *La Guerre mondiale* (Paris: Éditions Le Pommier, 2008).
- 10 Translator's note: "Loss-bodies" translates *corps-en-perte*, which can also call to mind a body or cargo that is "let loose" in order to lower the amount of weight on a ship and that is then counted as a "loss" for the journey in financial terms.
- 11 Serres, *The Natural Contract*, p. 17; translation slightly modified.
- 12 Andrew Baldwin, "Postcolonial Futures: Climate, Race, and the

- Yet-to-Come,” *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 24/21 (2017): 292–305.
- 13 Norman Myers, *The Sinking Ark: A New Look at the Problem of Disappearing Species* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979).
 - 14 Edmund Husserl, “Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature: The Originary Ark, the Earth, Does Not Move,” trans. Fred Kersten and Leonard Lawlor, in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology*, ed. Leonard Lawlor with Bettina Bergo (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2002), p. 118.
 - 15 Serres, *The Natural Contract*, p. 70.
 - 16 James Lovelock, *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth’s Climate Crisis and the Fate of Humanity* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), p. 14; emphasis added.
 - 17 Bruno Latour, *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Polity, 2017), p. 87.
 - 18 Serres, *La Guerre mondiale*, p. 165.
 - 19 Genesis 9:25 (NRSV).
 - 20 Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, *Les Traités négrières: essai d’histoire globale* (Paris: Gallimard, 2004), pp. 39 and 263.
 - 21 Max Guérout and Thomas Romon, *Tromelin, l’île aux esclaves oubliés* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2015).
 - 22 Serres, *The Natural Contract*, p. 40.
 - 23 Martin Luther King, Jr., *Dream: The Words and Inspiration of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Boulder, CO: Blue Mountain Press, 2007), p. 55.
 - 24 José Médina, *The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imaginations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 27–55.
 - 25 Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, *The Shock of the Anthropocene: The Earth, History, and Us*, trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 2016), pp. 87–96.
 - 26 Paul R. Ehrlich, “The Population Bomb,” in David Stradling (ed.), *The Environmental Moment (1968–1972)* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), pp. 38–41.
 - 27 Garrett Hardin, “Commentary: Living on a Lifeboat,” *BioScience* 24/10 (1974): 561–8. Every country mentioned by Hardin has a large non-white population.
 - 28 Holmes Rolston III, “Feeding the People versus Saving Nature?” in William Aiken and Hugh LaFollette (eds), *World Hunger and Morality* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1996), pp. 248–67.
 - 29 Derrick A. Bell, “The Space Traders,” in *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), pp. 159–94.

Chapter 6 Reforestation without the World

- 1 Translator's note: The French *pièces* is translated by "pieces" here in the sense of "cuts of meat" or "pieces of meat."
- 2 Gérard Barthélémy and Mimi Barthélémy, *Haïti, la perle nue* (Châteauneuf-le-Rouge: Vents d'ailleurs, 1999), p. 28.
- 3 André-Marcel d'Ans, *Haïti: paysage et société* (Paris: Karthala, 1987), p. 172.
- 4 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015: Desk Reference* (Rome: FAO, 2015), p. 5.
- 5 Christopher E. Churches et al., "Evaluation of Forest Cover Estimates for Haiti Using Supervised Classification of Landsat Data," *International Journal of Applied Earth Observation and Geoinformation* 30 (2014): 203–16.
- 6 Lucile Maertens and Adrienne Stork, "The Real Story of Haiti's Forests: Changing the Narrative around Deforestation and Charcoal in Haiti," *Books and Ideas*, 9 October 2017, <https://booksandideas.net/The-Real-Story-of-Haiti-s-Forests.html>.
- 7 LeGrace Benson, "Haiti's Elusive Paradise," in Elizabeth DeLoughrey and George Handley (eds), *Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 62–79.
- 8 Andrew Tarter et al., *Charcoal in Haiti: A National Assessment of Charcoal Production and Consumption Trends* (Washington, DC: World Bank Group, 2018).
- 9 See Gérard Barthélémy, *Le Pays en dehors: essai sur l'univers rural haïtien* (Port-au-Prince: Henry Deschamps, 1989).
- 10 Laënnec Hurbon, *Comprendre Haïti: essai sur la nation, l'État, la culture* (Paris: Karthala, 1987), p. 31.
- 11 Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier, *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South* (Abingdon: Earthscan, 1997), pp. xi–xx.
- 12 Interview with Mr Élie, director of the local ecological association DAME in Jacmel, Haiti, October 2012.
- 13 Georges Michel, "La Fabrication du charbon de bois par distillation du bois (pyrolyse), peut-être la clef du déboisement d'Haïti," *Journal of Haitian Studies* 17/1 (2011): 274–6; Alexandre Racicot, "Durabilité de combustibles de substitution au bois énergie en Haïti – filières renouvelables pour la cuisson des aliments," master's dissertation, University of Sherbrooke, under the direction of Pascal Dehoux, 2011.
- 14 Frito Dolisca et al., "Land Tenure, Population Pressure, and

Deforestation in Haiti: The Case of Forêt des Pins Reserve,” *Journal of Forest Economics* 13/4 (2017) 277–89.

15 Ibid.

16 Émilie Hache, *Ce à quoi nous tenons: propositions pour une écologie pragmatique* (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond/La Découverte, 2010).

17 Réseau national de défense des droits humains (RNDDH) [National Human Rights Defense Network], “Rapport d’enquête sur l’éviction des occupants du parc de la Visite,” 8 August 2012, p. 2, https://web.rnddh.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Rapport_Parc_la_visite.pdf.

18 Translator’s note: *Hommes de peine* literally means “men of pain” and can refer to a host of low-paying jobs, including that of men hired to intimidate others or use force against them.

19 A source in the human rights section of MINUSTAH (the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti) confirmed to me that the lawyer in charge of this case received threats of intimidation and did not file the complaint.

20 Alex Bellande, *Haïti déforestée, paysages remodelés* (Montréal: Éditions du CIDIHCA, 2015).

21 Frito Dolisca, “Population Pressure, Land Tenure, Deforestation, and Farming Systems in Haiti: The Case of Forêt Des Pins Reserve,” PhD thesis, Auburn University, under the direction of Joshua M. McDaniel and Lawrence D. Teeter, 2005.

22 Allan Ebert, “Porkbarreling Pigs in Haiti: North American ‘Swine Aid’ an Economic Disaster for Haitian peasants,” *Multinational Monitor* 6/18 (1985), www.multinationalmonitor.org/hyper/issues/1985/12/ebert-porkbarrel.html.

23 Laënnec Hurbon, “Dialectique de la vie et de la mort autour de l’arbre dans les contes haïtiens,” in Geneviève Calame-Griaul (ed.), *Le Thème de l’arbre dans les contes africains* (Paris: Société d’études linguistiques et anthropologiques de France, 1969), p. 73.

24 Alfred Métraux, *Voodoo in Haiti*, trans. Hugo Chartesis (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), pp. 352–3.

25 Cited by Ans, *Haïti*, p. 172.

26 Hurbon, *Comprendre Haïti*, p. 32.

27 Edmund Husserl, “Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature: The Originary Ark, the Earth, Does Not Move,” trans. Fred Kersten and Leonard Lawlor, in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology*, ed. Leonard Lawlor with Bettina Bergo (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2002).

28 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of

Chicago Press, 1998), p. 184. [Translator's note: The French translation has *reseau* or "network" in place of "web."]

- 29 Étienne Tassin, *Le Trésor perdu: Hannah Arendt, l'intelligence de l'action politique* (Paris: Payot & Rivages, 1999), pp. 352–64.

Chapter 7 Paradise or Hell in the Nature Reserves

- 1 Grégory Quenet, "Introduction," in Richard Grove, *Les îles du paradis: l'invention de l'écologie aux colonies, 1660–1854*, trans. Mathias Lefèvre (Paris: La Découverte, 2013), p. 8. [Translator's note: This is the French translation of Grove's *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). The English edition does not include Quenet's "Introduction."]
- 2 Naomi Klein, *The Battle for Paradise: Puerto Rico Takes on the Disaster Capitalists* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2018); Alain Hervé, *Le Paradis sur terre: le défi écologique, suivi de L'Homme sauvage* (Paris: Sang de la Terre, 2010); John McCormick, *Reclaiming Paradise: The Global Environmental Movement* (Chichester, Wiley [1989] 1995); Franz Weber, *Le Paradis sauvé* (Paris: P. M. Favre, 1986); Marc Latham, *Paradis en péril: quel avenir pour la Nouvelle-Calédonie et les îles du Pacifique? Réflexions sur la gestion du développement durable* (Antony: Éditions de l'Officine, 2018). Christopher Church, *Paradise Destroyed: Catastrophe and Citizenship in the French Caribbean* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017).
- 3 Carlos R. Alicea, "Vieques (Puerto Rico) contra la marina de guerra de EE UU: Lucha anticolonialista y lucha ambiental," *Ecología Política* 19 (2000) : 167–70, at p. 169.
- 4 Katherine T. McCaffrey, "The Battle for Vieques' Future," *Centro Journal* 18/1 (2006): 124–47, at p. 130.
- 5 Katherine McCaffrey and Sherrie L. Bayer, "'Ni una bomba mas': Reframing the Vieques Struggle," in Sherrie L. Bayer and Barbara D. Lynch (eds), *Beyond Sand and Sun: Caribbean Environmentalisms* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006), p. 120.
- 6 Katherine T. McCaffrey, *Military Power and Popular Protest: The US Navy in Vieques, Puerto Rico* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), p. 170.
- 7 US Fish & Wildlife Service, "Vieques National Refuge, Puerto Rico," 2018, www.fws.gov/refuge/vieques/.
- 8 Michel Foucault, "Different Spaces," trans. Robert Hurley, in

Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. II, ed. James B. Faubion (New York: New Press, 1998), pp. 178–9.

- 9 Marc Bloch, *Rois et serfs et autres écrits sur le servage: un chapitre de l'histoire capétienne* (Paris: Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1920), pp. 132–62; Frédéric Régent, *La France et ses esclaves: de la colonisation aux abolitions, 1620–1848* (Paris: Hachette Littératures, 2009).
- 10 David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- 11 Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, trans. Steven Corcoran (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019). [Translator's note: The French title of Mbembe's book is *Politiques de l'inimitié*, literally “the politics of enmity.”]
- 12 W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Penguin, 1996), p. 8.
- 13 Catherine Larrère and Raphaël Larrère, “Sauver le sauvage? L’Idée de wilderness,” in *Penser et agir avec la nature: une enquête philosophique* (Paris: La Découverte, 2018), pp. 27–57.
- 14 Diana K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007).
- 15 Public Law 106-398 of 30 October 2000, National Defense Authorization Fiscal Year 2001, 114 STAT. 1654A–354.
- 16 Department of the US Navy, *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Continued Use of the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility, Inner Range (Vieques)* (TAMS & Ecology and Environment Inc., 1980), p. ii.
- 17 Ibid., p. iii.
- 18 Carmen M. Concepción, “The Origins of Modern Environmental Activism in Puerto Rico in the 1960s,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 19/1 (1995): 112–28; José M. Atilés-Osaria, “Environmental Colonialism, Criminalization and Resistance: Puerto Rican Mobilizations for Environmental Justice in the 21st Century,” trans. Karen Bennett, *RCCS Annual Review* 6 (2014): 3–21.

Chapter 8 The Masters’ Chemistry

- 1 United Nations Environment Program, *Global Chemical Outlook: Towards Sound Management of Chemicals, Synthesis Report for Decision Makers* (Nairobi: UNEP, 2012), p. 9.
- 2 Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (London: Penguin, [1962] 1965).

- 3 Anette Prüss-Ustün et al., “Knowns and Unknowns about the Burden of Disease Due to Chemicals: A Systematic Review,” *Environmental Health* 10/9 (2011): 1–15.
- 4 Johan Rockström et al., “A Safe Operating Space for Humanity,” *Nature* 461 (2009): 472–5; Will Steffen et al., “Planetary Boundaries: Guiding Human Development on a Changing Planet,” *Science* 347/6223 (2015).
- 5 Samuel Epstein, “Kepone-Hazard Evaluation,” *Science of the Total Environment* 9/1 (1978): 4–5.
- 6 Pierre-Benoît Joly, *La Saga du chlordécone aux Antilles françaises: reconstruction chronologique, 1968–2008*, INRA/SenS & IFRIS, 2010, www.anses.fr/fr/system/files/SHS2010etInracol01Ra.pdf.
- 7 Jean-Yves Le Déaut and Catherine Procaccia, *Les Pesticides aux Antilles: bilan et perspectives d'évolution: synthèse*, Office parlementaire d'évaluation des choix scientifiques et technologiques, 2009, p. 2.
- 8 Philippe Kadhel et al., “Chlordecone Exposure, Length of Gestation, and Risk of Preterm Birth,” *American Journal of Epidemiology* 179 (2014): 536–44.
- 9 Renée Dallaire et al., “Cognitive, Visual, and Motor Development of 7-Month-Old Guadeloupean Infants Exposed to Chlordecone,” *Environmental Research* 118 (2012): 79–85.
- 10 Luc Multigner et al., “Chlordecone Exposure and Risk of Prostate Cancer,” *Journal of Clinical Oncology* 28/21 (2010): 3457–62; Laurent Bureau et al., “Endocrine Disrupting-Chemicals and Biochemical Recurrence of Prostate Cancer after Prostatectomy: A Cohort Study in Guadeloupe (French West Indies),” *International Journal of Cancer* 146/3 (2019): 657–63.
- 11 Édouard de Lépine, *Chalvet, février 1974; suivi de 102 documents pour servir à l'histoire des luttes ouvrières de janvier–février 1974 à la Martinique* (Fort-de-France: Le Teneur, 2014), pp. 333–4.
- 12 Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Grettel Navas, Sara Mingorria, and Bernardo Aguilar-González, “Violence in Environmental Conflicts: The Need for a Multidimensional Approach,” *Sustainability Science* 13/3 (2018): 649–60.
- 13 Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 943–4.
- 14 Guy Cabort-Masson, *Les Puissances d'argent en Martinique: le nouveau leadership béké, 1981–1991* (Saint-Joseph: Éditions de la V.d.P Césaire, 1984).
- 15 Malcom Ferdinand, “De l’usage du chlordécone aux Antilles: l’égalité en question,” *Revue française des affaires sociales: enjeux*

environnementaux, protection sociale et inégalités sociales nos. 1–2 (2015): 163–83.

- 16 Le Déaut, J., and Procaccia, C., *Rapport sur les impacts de l'utilisation de la chlordécone et des pesticides aux Antilles*, Paris: Office parlementaire d'évaluation des choix scientifiques et technologiques, 2009, p. 11.
- 17 Katherine McKittrick, "Plantation futures," *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 17/3 (2013): 1–15.
- 18 Simone Schwartz-Bart, *Ti Jean L'horizon* (Paris: Seuil, 1979), p. 103.
- 19 Alain Garrigou et al., "Ergonomics Contribution to Chemical Risks Prevention: An Ergotoxicological Investigation of the Effectiveness of Coverall against Plant Pest Risk in Viticulture," *Applied Ergonomics* 42/201 (2011): 321–30.
- 20 Jean Snégaroff, "Résidus d'insecticides organochlorés dans la région bananière de Guadeloupe," *Phytiatrie-phytopharmacie* 26/4 (1977): 251–68.
- 21 Santé publique France and ANSES, *Martinique/Guadeloupe. Évaluation des expositions à la chlordécone et aux autres pesticides. Surveillance du cancer de la prostate* (Saint-Maurice: Santé publique France, 2018).
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Malcom Ferdinand, "L'Interdiction de l'épandage aérien en France: des contestations locales aux Antilles à l'interdiction nationale (2009–2014)," in Anne-Claude Ambroisine-Rendu, Alexis Vrignon, and Anna Trespeuch-Berthelot (eds), *Contestations, résistances et négociations environnementales* (Limoges: Presses universitaires de Limoges, 2018), pp. 207–22; Générations futures, "Exclusivité: les cartes des pesticides et les Glyph'Awards, 20 November 2018," www.generations-futures.fr/actualites/exclusivite-cartes-pesticides-glyphawards/.
- 24 Louis Boutrin and Raphaël Confiant, *Chronique d'un empoisonnement annoncé: le scandale du chlordécone aux Antilles françaises, 1972–2002* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007); Philippe Verdol, *Du chlordécone comme arme chimique française en Guadeloupe et en Martinique et de ses effets en Europe et dans le monde, plainte et demande de réparations* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2014).
- 25 Pascal Blanchard, Sandrine Lemaire, Nicolas Bancel, and Dominic Thomas (eds), *Colonial Culture in France since the Revolution*, trans. Alexis Pernsteiner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).

Chapter 9 A Colonial Ecology

- 1 Ted Maris-Wolf, "'Of Blood and Treasure': Recaptive Africans and the Politics of Slave Trade Suppression," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4/1 (2014): 53–83.

- 2 David Watts, *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Culture and Environmental Change since 1492* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 402.
- 3 *Ibid.*, pp. 397–8.
- 4 Pierre Poivre, “Discours prononcé par Pierre Poivre aux Habitants de l’Isle de France le 26 juillet 1767,” in *Œuvres complètes de Pierre Poivre* (Paris: Fusch, 1797), pp. 194–232.
- 5 Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 168–263.
- 6 Poivre, “Discours prononcé par Poivre aux Habitants de l’Isle de France.”
- 7 Pierre Poivre, *Voyages d’un philosophe, ou Observations sur les mœurs et les arts des peuples de l’Afrique, de l’Asie et de l’Amérique* (Paris: Fusch, [1768] 1797), pp. 124 and 157.
- 8 Poivre, “Discours prononcé par Poivre aux Habitants de l’Isle de France.”
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 Pierre Poivre, *Relation abrégée des voyages faits par le sieur Poivre: pour le service de la Compagnie des Indes, depuis 1748 jusqu’en 1757*, Paris, Muséum national d’histoire naturelle, catalogue numbers 319 and 575.
- 11 Jean-Paul Morel, *Sur la vie de Monsieur Poivre: une légende revisitée* (Saint-Jean-de-Védas: Jean-Paul Morel, 2018), p. 186. [Translator’s note : “Monplaisir” means “my pleasure” in French.]
- 12 “Acte de vente de l’habitation de Monplaisir par M. Pierre Poivre au profit de Sa Majesté,” October 12, 1772, Archives Nationales de France (AN) Col C/4/32 f.281; Maillard-Dumesle, “Acquisition pour le Roi de Monplaisir, ses esclaves, son troupeau, le 10 octobre 1772: Maillart au ministre,” AN Col C/4/32 f.63.
- 13 Pierre Poivre and Jean-Daniel Dumas, “Ordonnance de Police no. 174, règlement concernant les Nègres esclaves aux isles de France et de Bourbon du 26 septembre 1767,” in Jean-Baptiste Delaleu, *Code des îles de France et de Bourbon* (Port-Louis (île Maurice): Tristan Mallac, 1826), pp. 212–14.
- 14 Poivre, “Discours prononcé par Poivre aux Habitants de l’Isle de France.”
- 15 Victor Schœlcher, *Esclavage et colonisation* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1948).
- 16 Marcel Dorigny, *Les Abolitions de l’esclavage, 1793–1888* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France-Humensis, 2018), pp. 20–30.
- 17 Schœlcher, *Esclavage et colonisation*, p. 36.
- 18 Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne Press, 1969), pp. 46–7.

- 19 William Wilberforce, *An Appeal to the Religion, Justice, and Humanity of the Inhabitants of the British Empire in Behalf of the Negro Slaves in the West Indies* (London: Hatchard, 1823); Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (London: H. G. Bohn, 1852); Henri Grégoire, *An Enquiry Concerning the Intellectual and Moral Faculties and Literature of Negroes*, trans. David Bailie Warden (London: Routledge, [1808] 2015).
- 20 Victor Schœlcher, *Des colonies françaises: abolition immédiate de l'esclavage* (Paris: Éditions du CTHS, [1842] 1998), p. 385.
- 21 Dorigny, *Les Abolitions de l'esclavage*.
- 22 Caroline Oudin-Bastide and Philippe Steiner, *Calculation and Morality: The Cost of Slavery and the Value of Emancipation in the French Antilles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 165–74.
- 23 *Ibid.*, pp. 175–92.
- 24 Schœlcher, *Des colonies françaises*, p. 387.
- 25 Nelly Schmidt, *Abolitionnistes de l'esclavage et réformateurs des colonies, 1820–1851: analyse et documents* (Paris: Karthala, 2001), pp. 191–207.
- 26 Christine Chivallon, *Espace et identité à la Martinique: paysannerie des Mornes et reconquête collective, 1840–1960* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1998), pp. 156–81; Myriam Cottias, “Droit, justice et dépendance dans les Antilles françaises (1848–1852),” *Annales: histoire, sciences sociales* no. 3 (2004): 547–67; Yann Moulier-Boutang, *De l'esclavage au salariat: économie historique du salariat bridé* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1998), pp. 443–59.
- 27 Céline Flory, *De l'esclavage à la liberté forcée: histoire des travailleurs africains engagés dans la Caraïbe française au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Karthala, 2015); Christian Schnakenbourg, “L'Immigration indienne en Guadeloupe (1848–1923): coolies, planteurs et administration coloniale,” PhD thesis, université de Provence, 2005; Walton Look Lai, *The Chinese in the West Indies, 1806–1995: A Documentary History* (Barbados, University of the West Indies, 1998).
- 28 Sylvain Pattieu, “Un traitement spécifique des migrations d'outre-mer: le BUMIDOM (1963–1982) et ses ambiguïtés,” *Politix: revue des sciences sociales du politique* 116/4 (2016): 81–113.
- 29 Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2004), pp. 187–8.
- 30 *Ibid.*, pp. 188–9.
- 31 Constitution du 8 juillet 1801 de Saint-Domingue/Haïti (Haitian Constitution of 1801): Articles 14 through 18 of Title VI of what is considered to be Cultures and Commerce. [Translator's note: An English translation is available online, though my translation of

- this line differs slightly. See www.marxists.org/history/haiti/1801/constitution.htm.]
- 32 Gilbert Pago, *Les Femmes et la liquidation du système esclavagiste à la Martinique, 1848–1852* (Kourou: Ibis Rouge Éditions, 1998).
 - 33 Dominique Rogers and Boris Lesueur, *Sortir de l'esclavage: Europe du Sud et Amériques (XIV–XIXe siècle)* (Paris: Karthala, 2018).
 - 34 Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, “De l’abolitionnisme à la colonisation?,” in *La Révolution abolitionniste* (Paris: Gallimard, 2017), pp. 401–59; Eric Burin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution: A History of the American Colonization Society* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005).
 - 35 Christophe Bonneuil, *Des savants pour l’empire: la structuration des recherches scientifiques coloniales au temps de “la mise en valeur des colonies françaises”, 1917–1945* (Paris: Éditions Orstom, 1991); Mina Kleiche and Christophe Bonneuil, *Du jardin d’essais colonial à la station expérimentale, 1880–1930: éléments pour une histoire du CIRAD* (Paris: CIRAD, 1993).
 - 36 Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, *L’Empire des hygiénistes: vivre aux colonies* (Paris: Fayard, 2014), pp. 268–322.
 - 37 Georges Balandier, “The Fact of Colonialism: A Theoretical Approach,” trans. Joseph E. Cunneen, *Cross Currents* 2/4 (1952): 10–31.
 - 38 Aimé Césaire, *Toussaint Louverture: la Révolution française et le problème colonial* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1981), pp. 29–87. [Translator’s note: The *Grands Blancs*, literally the “Big” or “Great Whites,” was the term used to describe the wealthy and powerful White colonists in Santo Domingo, in contrast to the *Petits Blancs* or “Little Whites,” who were poor and working-class White colonists.]
 - 39 Tulio Halperín Donghi, “Economy and Society in Post-Independence Spanish America,” in Leslie Bethell (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, vol. III: *From Independence to 1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 322.
 - 40 Lloyd Best and Kari Polanyi Levitt, *Essays on the Theory of Plantation Economy: A Historical and Institutional Approach to Caribbean Economic Development* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2009).
 - 41 Dorceta Taylor, *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016).
 - 42 Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (London: Penguin, [1962] 1965).
 - 43 Miriam Pawel, *The Crusades of Cesar Chavez: A Biography* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2014), p. 452.

- 44 Martha Smith-Norris, *Domination and Resistance: The United States and the Marshall Islands during the Cold War* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016).
- 45 Alain Parkinson, *Maralinga: Australia's Nuclear Waste Cover-Up* (Sydney: HarperCollins, 2016).
- 46 Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Peter Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 84–5; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Letter to Voltaire,” in *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, trans. Victor Gourevitch (2nd edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 250–1.
- 47 Malcolm X, “Twenty Million Black People in a Political, Economic, and Mental Prison,” in *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, ed. Bruce Perry (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1989), pp. 25–58.

Chapter 10 The Slave Ship

- 1 Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece*, trans. Janet Lloyd (New York: Zone Books, 1990), p. 208.
- 2 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).
- 3 Plato, *The Republic*, 487e–489d.
- 4 Translator's note: The French word for ark (*arche*) and the French transliteration of the Greek *arche* (*archè*) allows Ferdinand a pun that is not possible in English. See also the earlier discussion on Husserl.
- 5 Robert Nesta Marley, “Redemption Song,” on Bob Marley and the Wailers, *Uprising*, Island Records, 1980, track 10.
- 6 Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990).
- 7 Derek Walcott, “The Sea is History,” in *Derek Walcott, Selected Poems*, ed. Edward Baugh (London: Faber & Faber, 2007), pp. 123–5.
- 8 Patrick Chamoiseau and Édouard Glissant, *L'Intraversable Beauté du monde: adresse à Barack Obama* (Paris: Éditions Galaade, 2008), p. 1.
- 9 Translator's note: Of the many English translations of Césaire's classic *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, none captures in its translation of the title the connection between birth or natality and *pays natal*, which could be rendered “birth country” or “country of birth.”
- 10 Aimé Césaire, *Return to my Native Land*, trans. John Berger and Anna Bostock (Brooklyn, NY: Archipelago Books, 2013), p. 49.
- 11 Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant, *Lettres créoles: tracées antillaises et continentales de la littérature: Haïti, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyane (1635–1975)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999), p. 39.

- 12 Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, p. 6.
- 13 Césaire, *Return to My Native Land*, p. 75; translation slightly modified.
- 14 See www.slavevoyages.org/assessment/estimates.
- 15 Zora Neale Hurston, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* (New York: HarperCollins, 2018).
- 16 Thomas Buxton, *African Slave Trade and its Remedy* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, [1840] 2004), pp. 73–121.
- 17 Joseph Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730–1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).
- 18 Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016).
- 19 Serge Latouche, *In the Wake of the Affluent Society: An Exploration of Post-Development*, trans. Martin O'Connor and Rosemary Arnoux (London: Zed Books, 1993).
- 20 Étienne Tassin, *Le Maléfice de la vie à plusieurs: la politique est-elle vouée à l'échec?* (Montrouge: Bayard, 2012), pp. 265–96.
- 21 Bernard Marshall, "The Black Caribs – Native Resistance to British Penetration into the Windward Side of St Vincent, 1763–1773," *Caribbean Quarterly: A Journal of Caribbean Culture* 19/4 (1973): 4–19.
- 22 Pablo M. Minda, "La construcción del sujeto histórico afrodescendiente en Esmeraldas," *Nova et Vetera* 24 (2015): 5–17; Rocío Rueda Novoa, *Zambaje y autonomía: historia de la gente negra de la Provincia de Esmeraldas, siglos XVI–XVIII* (Quito: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, [2001] 2015).
- 23 Édouard Glissant, *The Fourth Century*, trans. Betty Wing (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), p. 214; translation slightly modified.
- 24 Recorded by the author as a participant at this conference.
- 25 Ernest Pépin, *Lettre ouverte à la jeunesse* (Pointe-à-Pitre: Éditions Jasor, 2001), pp. 17–18.
- 26 Louis-Philippe Dalembert, *The Other Side of the Sea*, trans. Robert H. McCormick, Jr. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014).
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 50; emphasis added.
- 28 Tassin, *Le Maléfice de la vie à plusieurs*, p. 289. [Translator's note: "Foreigner" is in English in the original. The term *étrangeté* can mean both strangeness and foreignness in French, just as *étranger* can mean both stranger and foreigner. Ferdinand's distinction in using English is instructive concerning the meaning of the concept at work here.]
- 29 Frédéric Régent, Bruno Maillard, and Gilda Gonfier (eds), *Libres*

- et sans fers: paroles d'esclaves français: Guadeloupe, île Bourbon (Réunion), Martinique* (Paris: Fayard, 2015); Caroline Oudin-Bastide, *Maîtres accusés, esclaves accusateurs: les procès Gosset et Vivié, Martinique* (Mont-Saint-Aignan: Presses universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, 2015).
- 30 Norman Ajari, *La Dignité ou la mort: éthique et politique de la race* (Paris: La Découverte, 2019), pp. 274–81.
- 31 Édouard Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole-World*, trans. Celia Britton (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020).
- 32 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).
- 33 J. B. Lenoir, “The Whale Has Swallowed Me,” *Alabama Blues: Rare and Intimate Recording*, Horst Lippmann, 1965, track 4.
- 34 Glissant, *The Fourth Century*, p. 40.
- 35 Translator’s note: *Nègre épave* was a French legal term that was not usually translated and so it is left untranslated here as well. It could be translated as “Negro wreck” both in the sense of a “wrecked ship” and in the psychological sense of “wrecked with anxiety” or “she is a wreck.”
- 36 Marcus Rediker, *The Slaveship: A Human History* (New York: Penguin, 2007), pp. 263–307; Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François* (Paris: Éditions Thomas Lolly, 1667), vol. II, p. 516.
- 37 Marcus Rediker, *The Amistad Rebellion: An Atlantic Odyssey of Slavery and Freedom* (New York: Penguin, 2012).

Chapter 11 Maroon Ecology

- 1 Pierre de Jouvancourt and Christophe Bonneuil, “En finir avec l’épopée: récit, géopouvoir et sujets de l’Anthropocène,” in Émilie Hache (ed.), *De l’univers clos au monde infini* (Paris: Éditions Dehors, 2014), pp. 57–105.
- 2 Richard Price (ed.), *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Jean Moomou (ed.), *Sociétés marronnes des Amériques: mémoires, patrimoines, identités et histoire du XVIIe au XXe siècles* (Matoury, French Guiana: Ibis Rouge Éditions, 2016); Flávio dos Santos Gomes, *Quilombos: comunidades d’esclaves insoumis au Brésil*, trans. Georges Da Costa (Paris: L’Échappée, 2018).
- 3 Yvan Debbasch, “Le marronnage: essai sur la désertion de l’esclave antillais,” *L’Année sociologique* 12 (1961): 1–112, at p. 4.
- 4 C. L. R. James, “Preface,” in Jean Fouchard, *The Haitian Maroons:*

- Liberty or Death*, trans. A. Faulkner Watts (New York: Edward W. Blyden Press, 1981), p. i.
- 5 For a more detailed presentation of this debate, see Malcom Ferdinand, “Portées politiques et écologistes de l’échappée du Nègre Marron dans les Amériques,” in Una Brogan, Jérémie Clément, Julien Jeusette, and Paraskevi Michailidou (eds), *Travaux en cours*, no. 12: *l’échappée* (2016): 21–32.
 - 6 Neil Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
 - 7 Marie-Christine Rochmann, *L’Esclave fugitif dans la littérature antillaise: sur la déclive du morne* (Paris: Karthala, 2000); Rachel Danon, *Les Voix du marronnage dans la littérature française du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2015).
 - 8 Robert Justin Connell, *The Political Ecology of Maroon Autonomy: Land, Resource Extraction, and Political Change in 21st Century Jamaica and Suriname*, PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, under the direction of Michael Watts, Stephen Small, and Ugo Nwokeji, 2017.
 - 9 Catherine Larrère and Raphaël Larrère, “Sauver le sauvage? L’idée de wilderness,” in *Penser et agir avec la nature: une enquête philosophique* (Paris: La Découverte, 2018), pp. 27–57.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, p. 19.
 - 11 Rafael Lucas, “Marronnage et marronnages,” *Cahiers d’histoire: revue d’histoire critique* 89 (2002): 13–28, at p. 22.
 - 12 Dénètem Touam Bona, *Fugitif, où cours-tu?* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2016), pp. 79–108.
 - 13 In his Marxist conceptualization of wilderness based upon marronage, Andreas Malm maintains the colonial dualism between forests and humans from which this concept stems. So the decolonial recompositions carried out by Maroons are completely concealed. Andreas Malm, “In Wildness is the Liberation of the World: On Maroon Ecology and Partisan Nature,” *Historical Materialism: Research in Critical Marxist Theory* 26/3 (2018), 3–37.
 - 14 Raphaël Confiant, *Nègre Marron* (Paris: Écriture, 2006), p. 35; emphasis added.
 - 15 Patrick Chamoiseau, *Slave Old Man*, trans. Linda Coverdale (New York: New Press, 2018), pp. 63–4.
 - 16 Elsa Dorlin, “Les Espaces-temps des résistances esclaves: des suicidés de Saint-Jean aux marrons de Nanny Town (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle),” *Tumultes* 27/2 (2006): 37–51, at p. 50.
 - 17 Translator’s note: The French word *voler* is a verb that means both “to fly” and “to steal.” The meaning of the verb is usually clear from context, though some play on the two terms can be intentional.

- 18 Greg Thomas, “Marronnons/Let’s Maroon: Sylvia Wynter’s ‘Black Metamorphosis’ as a Species of Maroonage,” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 20/1 (2016): 62–78.
- 19 Richard Price, *Travels with Tooy: History, Memory, and the African American Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
- 20 Sally Price and Richard Price, *Maroon Arts: Cultural Vitality in the African Diaspora* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999).
- 21 In Spanish, *palenque* also refers to an area set up for the purpose of defending it against external attacks. This is what the Maroons did.
- 22 Gabriel Debien, “Le Marronnage aux Antilles françaises au xviii^e siècle,” *Caribbean Studies* 6/3 (1966): 3–43, at p. 4.
- 23 Ibid., p. 5.
- 24 Debbasch, “Le marronnage,” p. 67.
- 25 Robert Devaux, Guy Ellis, and Jolien Harmsen, *A History of St Lucia* (Vieux Fort, St Lucia: Lighthouse Road, 2014), p. 65.
- 26 Polly Pattullo (ed.), *Your Time is Done Now: Slavery, Resistance and Defeat: The Maroon Trials of Dominica (1813–1814)* (London, and Trafalgar, Dominica: Papillote Press, 2015), pp. 152–3.
- 27 Richard Price, *Rainforest Warriors: Human Rights on Trial* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).
- 28 Arlette Gautier, *Les Sœurs de solitude: femmes et esclavage aux Antilles du XVII^e au XIX^e siècle* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), p. 212.
- 29 Maryse Condé, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, trans. Richard Philcox (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009), p. 151.
- 30 André Schwartz-Bart, *A Woman Named Solitude*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001).
- 31 Translator’s note: I have translated *les Marronnes*, or what might be translated as “Maroon women,” as Maroonesses in an attempt to capture the singular nature of the noun.
- 32 Édouard Glissant, *The Fourth Century*, trans. Betty Wing (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), pp. 44–5.
- 33 Frances E. W. Harper, “The Fugitive’s Wife (1854),” in *Complete Poems of Frances E. W. Harper*, ed. Graham Maryemma (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 19.
- 34 Cécile Vidal, “Comba, esclave noire de Louisiane: marronnage et sociabilité, 1764,” in Dominique Rogers (ed.), *Voix d’esclaves: Antilles, Guyane et Louisiane françaises XVIII^e–XIX^e siècles* (Paris: Karthala, CIRESC, & SAA, 2015), pp. 61–6. [Translator’s note: *Passeur* is a French loan word normally used specifically to name the people smugglers who helped Jewish people and others escape to Spain during World War II. It translates *passeeuses*, which is the plural feminine form of the word *passer*. The French term can be

translated as “smuggler” but also as “ferryman” and as “passer,” in the sense of an athlete who passes the ball. These *passeeur* women did some smuggling, but importantly they were able “to pass” in the sociological sense of being able to move between different racial and social worlds as they helped other Maroons in their flights.]

- 35 Pattullo, *Your Time is Done Now*, p. 22.
- 36 Isabel Allende, *Island beneath the Sea*, trans. Margaret Sayers Peden (New York: Harper Perennial, 2010).
- 37 Sojourner Truth, *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (New York: Penguin, 1998).
- 38 Price, *Maroon Societies*, pp. 18–19.

Chapter 12 Rousseau, Thoreau, and Civil Marronage

- 1 Roderick F. Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, [1967] 2014), pp. 122–40.
- 2 John Muir, “A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf,” in *John Muir: The Eight Wilderness Discovery Books* (London: Diadem, 2010), pp. 133 and 137.
- 3 *Ibid.*, pp. 134, 141, 144, 147, and 151.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 164. Cuba would abolish slavery only in 1886.
- 5 Jim Jordan, “Charles Augustus Lafayette Lamar and the Movement to Reopen the African Slave Trade,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 93/3 (2009): 247–90.
- 6 Muir, “A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf,” p. 166.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 169.
- 8 Alexander von Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba: Critical Edition*, trans. J. Bradford Anderson, Vera M. Kutzinski, and Anja Becker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1826] 2011), p. 144; Élisée Reclus, “L’Insurrection de Cuba,” *Revue politique et littéraire* 12 (19 December 1868): 269–71; Bertrand Guest, *Révolutions dans le cosmos: essais de libération géographique: Humboldt, Thoreau, Reclus* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2017).
- 9 Carolyn Merchant, “Shades of Darkness: Race and Environmental History,” *Environmental History* 8/3 (2003): 380–94.
- 10 John Muir, “My First Summer in the Sierra,” in *The Eight Wilderness Discovery Books*, p. 266.
- 11 John Muir, *John Muir’s Last Journey: South to the Amazon and East to Africa*, ed. Michael Branch (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2001), pp. 132–3.
- 12 Marcel Schneider, *Rousseau et l’espoir écologiste* (Paris: Pygmalion, 1978), p. 22.

- 13 André Schwartz-Bart, *A Woman Named Solitude*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001).
- 14 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, or the New Heloise*, trans. Philip Stewart and Jean Vaché (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 1997), pp. 51–2.
- 15 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions*, trans. Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1995), books VII to XIII and book XI, p. 484.
- 16 Ibid., book XII, pp. 531–5.
- 17 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, trans. Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000), p. 63.
- 18 Alain Grosrichard, “Présentation,” in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Confessions* (Paris: Flammarion, [1789] 2012), p. xi.
- 19 Jane Gordon and Neil Roberts (eds), “Creolizing Rousseau,” *CLR James Journal* 15/1 (2009) [special issue]; Jane Gordon, *Creolizing Political Theory: Reading Rousseau through Fanon* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014).
- 20 Jimmy Casas Klausen, *Fugitive Rousseau: Slavery, Primitivism and Political Freedom* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014).
- 21 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, trans. Franklin Philip (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 53.
- 22 Henry David Thoreau, “Walden,” in *Walden and Civil Disobedience* (New York: Penguin, [1854] 1983), pp. 44–382.
- 23 Ibid., pp. 197–8.
- 24 Donald Worster, *Nature’s Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (2nd edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 76.
- 25 Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1995).
- 26 Henry David Thoreau, “Slavery in Massachusetts,” in *Essays*, ed. Jeffrey S. Cramer (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 183.
- 27 William E. Cain, “Henry David Thoreau, 1817–1862: A Brief Biography,” in William E. Cain (ed.), *A Historical Guide to Henry David Thoreau* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 12.
- 28 David Reynolds, *John Brown: The Man Who Killed Slavery, Sparked the Civil War, and Seeded Civil Rights* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), pp. 221–2.
- 29 Michael Meyer, “Thoreau and Black Emigration,” *American Literature: A Journal of Literary, History, Criticism and Bibliography* 53/3 (1981): 380–96.
- 30 Thoreau, “Walden,” p. 217.
- 31 James Curtis Ballagh, *White Servitude in the Colony of Virginia: A*

- Study of the System of Indentured Labor in the American Colonies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1895).
- 32 Henry David Thoreau, *Collected Poems of Henry Thoreau*, ed. Carl Bode (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965), p. 198.
 - 33 Thoreau, "Walden," p. 389.
 - 34 *Ibid.*, pp. 252–3.
 - 35 Thoreau, *Collected Poems*, p. 198.
 - 36 Thoreau, "Slavery in Massachusetts," p. 185.
 - 37 Michael Meyer, "Introduction," in Thoreau, *Walden and Civil Disobedience*, p. 26.
 - 38 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
 - 39 Thoreau, "Walden," pp. 406–7.
 - 40 David R. Foster, *Thoreau's Country: Journey through a Transformed Landscape* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).
 - 41 Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).
 - 42 Sandra Harbert Petrulionis, *To Set This World Right: The Antislavery Movement in Thoreau's Concord* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), p. 7.
 - 43 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
 - 44 Elizabeth Heyrick, *Immediate not Gradual Emancipation, or, An Inquiry into the Shortest, Safest, and Most Effectual Means of Getting Rid of West Indian Slavery* (London: Hatchard, 1824), pp. 4–5.
 - 45 Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: The British Struggle to Abolish Slavery* (New York: Macmillan, 2005), pp. 324–8.
 - 46 Olympe de Gouges, *L'Esclavage des Noirs, ou l'Heureux Naufrage* (Paris: Veuve Duchesne, veuve Bailly et les marchands de nouveautés, 1792); Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (London: H. G. Bohn, 1852).

Chapter 13 A Decolonial Ecology

- 1 Nathan Hare, "Black Ecology," *The Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies and Research* 1/6 (1970): 2–8, at p. 8.
- 2 [Translator's note: The French words *penser* and *panser* are pronounced identically, creating a way of expressing with a single word a double action of thinking and healing or of healing as thinking and thinking as healing. The reader should note, however, that *panser* does not mean heal in the sense of complete recovery or repair. It is often translated as "bandaging" or "dressing" and refers more to a process of giving attention to a wound.]

- 3 Wouter Veenendaal, Gert Oostindie, and Malcom Ferdinand, “A Global Comparison of Non-Sovereign Island Territories: The Search for ‘True Equality,’” *Island Studies Journal* 14/2 (2019); Yarimar Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures: French Caribbean Politics in the Wake of Disenchantment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
- 4 Achille Mbembe, “Qu’est-ce que la pensée postcoloniale? Entretien avec Achille Mbembe,” *Esprit* 12 (2006): 117–33; Eng. trans. by John Fletcher at: www.cairn-int.info/article-E_ESPRI_0612_0117--what-is-postcolonial-thinking.htm.
- 5 Thomas Brisson, *Décentrer l’Occident: les intellectuels postcoloniaux chinois, arabes et indiens, et la critique de la modernité* (Paris: La Découverte, 2018).
- 6 Matthieu Renault, *Frantz Fanon: de l’anticolonialisme à la critique postcoloniale* (Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2011); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak,” *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).
- 7 Aníbal Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” in Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar (eds), *Globalization and the Decolonial Option* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 25.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- 9 Nelson Maldonado-Torres, “On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the Development of a Concept,” *ibid.*, pp. 94–124.
- 10 Edgardo Lander, “Eurocentrism, Modern Knowledges, and the ‘Natural’ Order of Global Capital,” *Nepantla: Views from South* 3/2 (2002): 245–68.
- 11 Françoise Vergès, *A Decolonial Feminism*, trans. Ashley J. Bohrer (London: Pluto Press, 2021), pp. 10–11.
- 12 Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), pp. 43–4; see “Prologue,” p. 15.
- 13 Thomas Sankara, *La Liberté contre le destin*, ed. Bruno Jaffré (Paris: Syllepse, 2017), pp. 179–94. [Translator’s note: This speech, “La lutte contre le désert ne peut se dissocier de la lutte anti-impérialiste,” has not been translated into English. It was delivered to foresters on 22nd April, 1985. The foresters had been tasked with combating the desertification that was encroaching on Burkina Faso. The title translates as “The Struggle against the Desert Cannot Be Separated from the Anti-Imperialist Struggle.”]
- 14 Malik Noël-Ferdinand, “La Mangrove de l’Achéron Caraïbe dans Omeros de Derek Walcott et *Moi, laminaire* ... d’Aimé Césaire,” *Comparatisme en Sorbonne* 6 (2015), www.crlc.paris-sorbonne.fr/pdf_revue/revue6/7-NoelFerdinand.pdf.

- 15 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), pp. 6–30.
- 16 Arturo Escobar, “Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise: The Latin American Modernity/Coloniality Research Program,” in Mignolo and Escobar, *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, pp. 33–64; Héctor Alimonda, Catalina Toro Perez, and Facundo Martín (eds), *Ecología política latinoamericana: pensamiento crítico, diferencia latinoamericana y rearticulación epistémica*, vol. 1 (Buenos Aires: Clasco, 2017).
- 17 “Principles of environmental justice,” Washington, DC, 1991, www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html.
- 18 Hare, “Black Ecology,” p. 8.
- 19 Laura Pulido, “Geographies of Race and Ethnicity II: Environmental Racism, Racial Capitalism and State-Sanctioned Violence,” *Progress in Human Geography* 41/4 (2016): 524–33.
- 20 Terry Jones, “Apartheid Ecology in America: On Building the Segregated Society,” *Black World*, 24/7 (1975): 4–17.
- 21 For France, see Haley McAvay, “How Durable Are Ethnoracial Segregation and Spatial Disadvantage? Intergenerational Contextual Mobility in France,” *Demography* 55/4 (2018): 1507–45.
- 22 Hare, “Black Ecology,” pp. 2–8; Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier, *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South* (Abingdon: Earthscan, 1997), pp. xi–xx; Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (New York: Verso, 2006).
- 23 Robert Bullard, *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class and Environmental Quality* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), p. 98; Luke Cole and Sheila Foster, *From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).
- 24 Robert J. Devaux, *They Called Us Brigands: The Saga of St Lucia's Freedom Fighters* (St Lucia: Optimum, 1997).
- 25 Val Plumwood, “Decolonizing Relationships with Nature,” in William Adams and Martin Mulligan (eds), *Decolonizing Nature: Strategies for Conservation in a Post-Colonial Era* (London: Earthscan, 2003), pp. 67–71.
- 26 According to the historian David Geggus, the term *Quisqueyai*, commonly presented as the other Taíno name for Haiti, was an unsupported invention of Peter Martyr in 1516. Today, the return of the common use of this term by the inhabitants of the Dominican Republic to refer specifically to this part of the island would be a political reactivation of this error following their invasion by Haiti in 1822. David Geggus, “The Naming of Haiti,” *New West Indian Guide* 71/1–2 (1997): 43–68.

- 27 James Lovelock, *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1979] 2009).
- 28 Bruno Latour, *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Polity, 2017); Isabelle Stengers, *In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism*, trans. Andrew Goffey (London: Open Humanities Press/meson press, 2015).
- 29 Translator's note: The French word for hold is *cale*, derived from the verb *caler*, which means, among other words, "to lock," "to wedge," and in its reflexive form "to settle." *Décaler* can be read in relation to *cale* in this sense as "undoing the hold."
- 30 For a cartography of these conflicts, see the Global Atlas of Environmental Justice: <https://ejatlas.org>. See also Leah Temper et al., "The Global Environmental Justice Atlas (EJAtlas): Ecological Distribution Conflicts as Forces for Sustainability," *Sustainability Science* 13/3 (2018): 513–84.
- 31 Nastassja Martin, *Les Âmes sauvages: face à l'Occident, la résistance d'un peuple d'Alaska* (Paris: La Découverte, 2016).
- 32 Alexis Massol González, Edgardo González, Arturo Massol Deyá, Tinti Deyá Díaz, and Tighe Geoghegan, *Bosque Del Pueblo, Puerto Rico: How a Fight to Stop a Mine Ended Up Changing Forest Policy from the Bottom Up* (London: International Institute for Environment and Development, 2006).
- 33 Barbara Glowczewski, *Rêves en colère: avec les Aborigènes australiens* (Paris: Pocket, 2016).
- 34 Manuel Castillo and Amy Strekker (eds), *Heritage and Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2017).
- 35 Monica White, *Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance and the Black Freedom Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019).
- 36 Christopher Wells (ed.), *Environmental Justice in Postwar America: A Documentary Reader* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018).
- 37 Émilie Hache (ed.), *Reclaim: recueil de textes écoféministes* (Paris: Cambourakis, 2016); Florence Margai, *Environmental Health Hazards and Social Justice: Geographical Perspective on Race and Class Disparities* (New York: Earthscan, 2010); Pascale Molinier, Sandra Laugier, and Jules Falquet (eds), *Genre et environnement: nouvelles menaces et nouvelles analyses au Nord et au Sud* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2015).
- 38 Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development* (London: Zed Books, 1988).
- 39 Melanie L. Harris, "Ecowomanism: Black Women, Religion, and the Environment," *Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies and*

- Research* 46/3 (2016): 27–49; Pamela A. Smith, “Green Lap, Brown Embrace, Blue Body: The Ecospirituality of Alice Walker,” *CrossCurrents* 48/4 (1998/9): 471–87; Shamara Shantu Riley, “Ecology Is a Sistah’s Issue Too: The Politics of Emergent Afrocentric Ecowomanism,” in Roger Gottlieb (ed.), *Liberating Faith: Religious Voices for Justice, Peace, and Ecological Wisdom* (Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield, 2003), pp. 412–27.
- 40 Mathieu Gervais, “Le Rural, espace d’émergence d’un paradigme militant décolonial,” *Mouvements* 84 (2014/15): 73–81.
- 41 Jean-Baptiste Vidalou, *Être forêts: habiter des territoires en lutte* (Paris: La Découverte, 2017), p. 14.
- 42 Gabrielle Hecht, *Being Nuclear: Africans and the Global Uranium Trade* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014).
- 43 The expression “toxic colonialism” comes from Jim Puckett of the Basel Action Network (www.ban.org); Laura A. Pratt, “Decreasing Dirty Dumping? A Reevaluation of Toxic Waste Colonialism and the Global Management of Transboundary Hazardous Waste,” *William & Mary Environmental Law and Policy Review* 35/2 (2011): 581–623; Dorceta Taylor, *Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility* (New York: New York University Press, 2014); Ikashato, *Frères de la côte: mémoire en défense des pirates somaliens, traqués par toutes les puissances du monde* (Montreal: L’Insomniaque, 2016).
- 44 Élisabeth Schneider, *Les Héros de l’environnement* (Paris: Seuil, 2018).

Chapter 14 A World-Ship

- 1 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008), p. 206; translation slightly modified.
- 2 Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract*, trans. Elizabeth MacArthur and William Paulson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995).
- 3 See chapter 5.
- 4 Serge Daget, *Répertoire des expéditions négrières françaises à la traite illégale (1814–1850)* (Nantes: Comité nantais d’études en sciences humaines, 1988), pp. 134–5.
- 5 David Dabydeen, *Turner: New and Selected Poems* (Leeds: Peepal Tree Press, 2010); M. NourbeSe Philip, *Zong!* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2008).
- 6 Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François* (Paris: Éditions Thomas Lolly, 1667), vol. II, p. 526; I have modified the language.

- 7 Danièle Hervieu-Léger and Bertrand Hervieu, *Le Retour à la nature, au fond de la forêt ... l'État* (La Tour-d'Aigues: Éditions de l'Aube, 2005).
- 8 See, for example, Masanobu Fukuoka, *The Natural Way of Farming: The Theory and Practice of Green Philosophy*, trans. Fredric P. Mettreaud (New York: Japan, 1985).
- 9 Marion Zimmer Bradley, "The Climbing Wave," *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* (Concord, NH: Fantasy House, 1955).
- 10 Morgan Kass, *The 100* (New York: Alloy Entertainment, 2013).
- 11 Gil Scott-Heron, "Whitey on the Moon," track 9 on *A New Black Poet: Small Talk at 125th and Lennox*, Flying Dutchman/RCA.
- 12 Thomas Sankara, "Sauver l'arbre, l'environnement et la vie tout court," speech given at the first SILVA conference, Paris, 5 February 1986, on the subject of the future of trees and forests in Europe and dry Africa.
- 13 Serres, *The Natural Contract*, p. 38.
- 14 William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in Cronon (ed.), *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), pp. 69–90.
- 15 Virginie Maris, "Back to the Holocene – a Conceptual, and Possibly Practical, Return to a Nature Not Intended for Humans," in Clive Hamilton, Christophe Bonneuil, and François Gemenne (eds), *The Anthropocene and the Global Environmental Crisis: Rethinking Modernity in a New Epoch* (New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 123–33.
- 16 Bruno Latour, *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Polity, 2018), pp. 101–2, 38–9, 42–3, and 82.
- 17 Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1719] 2007), pp. 31–6.
- 18 Mark David Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Ramachandra Guha, "Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique," *Environmental Ethics* 11/1 (1989): 71–83; Roderick Neumann, *Imposing Wilderness in Africa: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); David McDermott, *From Enslavement to Environmentalism: Politics on the South African Frontier* (Seattle: University of Washington Press & Weather Press, 2006); Bernhard Gissibl, *The Nature of German Imperialism: Conservation and the Politics of Wildlife in Colonial East Africa* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2016).

- 19 Robert H. Nelson, “Environmental Colonialism: ‘Saving’ Africa from Africans,” *Independent Review* 8/1 (2003): 65–86.
- 20 Pierre Lalance, *Mururoa: retour à la nature* (Paris: Orphys, 2005), p. 3.
- 21 Frédéric Neyrat, *The Unconstructable Earth: An Ecology of Separation*, trans. Drew S. Burk (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019).
- 22 Giulia Bonacci, *Exodus! Heirs and Pioneers, Rastafari Return to Ethiopia*, trans. Antoinette Tidjani Alou (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2015).
- 23 Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968); Amos J. Beyan, *The American Colonization Society and the Creation of the Liberian State: A Historical Perspective (1822–1900)* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991).
- 24 W. E. B. Du Bois, “Back to Africa,” *Century Magazine* 150/4 (1923).
- 25 Aimé Césaire, *Return to my Native Land*, trans. John Berger and Anna Bostock (Brooklyn, NY: Archipelago Books, 2013), pp. 76–7. [Translator’s note: *Négraille* is an uncommon collective noun that combines *nègre* and the suffix *-aille*, which may indicate either a collective or the means or results of an action, or have a pejorative or diminutive meaning. The word is translated by John Berger and Anna Bostock into English with the plural n-word. In their bilingual edition of *The Complete Poetry of Aimé Césaire* (which includes only the 1939 version of *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal*), A. James Arnold and Clayton Eshleman have elected to use an even more injurious compound phrase with the n-word, attempting to emphasize the collective and pejorative sense of the French word. I have left it untranslated.]
- 26 Here lies our disagreement with the Guadeloupean writer Ernest Pépin who, “daring a joke,” suggested that “Césaire cannot (or will not) leave the slave ship,” underestimating the radical nature of Césaire’s gesture which transforms the slave ship into the world-ship. See Ernest Pépin, “L’Espace dans la littérature antillaise,” *Potomitan*, 2 September 1999, www.potomitan.info/bibliographie/pepin/litterature2.php#top.

Chapter 15 Forming a Body in the World

- 1 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008), p. 206.
- 2 Giovanna Di Chiro, “Living Environmentalisms: Coalition Politics,

- Social Reproduction, and Environmental Justice,” *Environmental Politics* 17/2 (2008): 285–93.
- 3 Pap Ndiaye, *La Condition noire: essai sur une minorité française* (Paris: Gallimard, 2009).
 - 4 Hourya Bentouhami-Molino, *Race, cultures, identités: une approche féministe et postcoloniale* (Paris: PUF, 2015).
 - 5 Yves Bruchon, *Handicap et citoyenneté: quand le handicap interroge le politique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013); Charlotte Puisieux, “L’a-normalité: une prison ou une échappée?” in Una Brogan, Jérémie Clément, Julien Jeusette, and Paraskevi Michailidou (eds), *Travaux en cours*, no. 12: *l'échappée* (2016): 121–32.
 - 6 Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (London: Penguin, [1962] 1965).
 - 7 These are the communities investigated by Linda Nash in her history of the “ecological body” in California. See Linda Nash, *Inescapable Ecologies: A History of Environment, Disease, and Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Adriana Petryna, *Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).
 - 8 Corine Pelluchon, *Nourishment: A Philosophy of the Political Body*, trans. Justin E. H. Smith (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).
 - 9 Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).
 - 10 Carolyn Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), p. 23; Françoise d'Eaubonne, *Le Féminisme ou la mort* (Paris: Pierre Horay, 1974), p. 221.
 - 11 Martine Spensky (ed.), *Le Contrôle du corps des femmes dans les empires coloniaux: empires, genre et biopolitiques* (Paris: Karthala, 2016).
 - 12 Henrice Altink, *Representations of Slave Women in Discourses on Slavery and Abolition, 1780–1838* (New York: Routledge, 2007).
 - 13 Françoise Vergès, *The Wombs of Women: Race, Capital, Feminism*, trans. Kaiama L. Glover (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020); Myriam Paris, “Un féminisme anticolonial: l’union des femmes de La Réunion (1946–1981),” *Mouvements* 91/3 (2017): 141–9.
 - 14 Doris Pilkington and Nugi Garimara, *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2013).
 - 15 George Reid Andrews, *Afro-Latin America, 1800–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 56–7.
 - 16 Maryse Condé, *Waiting for the Waters to Rise*, trans. Richard Philcox (Amsterdam: World Editions, 2021).
 - 17 Mary Daly, *Gyn/ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*

- (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990). While I appreciate Daly's concept of gyn/ecology, I nonetheless recognize the limits and problems in her work with regard to gender and race.
- 18 Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, trans. Steven Corcoran (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), pp. 141–5; Elsa Dorlin, *Se défendre: une philosophie de la violence* (Paris: La Découverte, 2017).
 - 19 Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, p. 204.
 - 20 Juliette Sméralda, *Peau noire, cheveu crépu: l'histoire d'une aliénation* (Pointe-à-Pitre: Éditions Jasor, 2006); Shirley Anne Tate, *Skin Bleaching in Black Atlantic Zones: Shade Shifters* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
 - 21 Dorceta E. Taylor, "Women of Color, Environmental Justice, and Ecofeminism," in Karen J. Warren and Nisvan Erkal (eds), *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), pp. 38–81.
 - 22 Arne Næss, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle: Outline of an Ecosophy*, trans. David Rothenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 85–6.
 - 23 Aimé Césaire, "And the Dogs were Silent," in *The Complete Poetry of Aimé Césaire*, trans. A. James Arnold and Clayton Eshleman (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2017), p. 175.
 - 24 Allen Stoner et al., "Abundance and Population Structure of Queen Conch Inside and Outside a Marine Protected Area: Repeat Surveys Show Significant Declines," *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 460 (2012): 101–14.

Chapter 16 Interspecies Alliances

- 1 Charles Bateson, *The Convict Ships, 1787–1868* (Sydney: Library of Australian History, [1959] 1988), p. 171.
- 2 From the databases "Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database," Emory University (2019), www.slavevoyages.org; Judith Lund and Tim Smith, "Whaling History Database," New Bedford Whaling Museum and Mystic Seaport Museum (2019), <https://whalinghistory.org>.
- 3 Henning Steinfeld et al., *Livestock's Long Shadow: Environmental Issues and Options* (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 2006), pp. xxi–xxii.
- 4 Pierre J. Gerber et al., *Tackling Climate Change through Livestock: A Global Assessment of Emissions and Mitigation Opportunities* (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 2013), p. 15.

- 5 Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, [1990] 2015).
- 6 Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 41–68; Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract*, trans. Elizabeth MacArthur and William Paulson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), p. 39; for an example of the Holocaust as a metaphor, see Charles Patterson, *Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust* (New York: Lantern Books, 2002).
- 7 See Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer, *Éthique animale* (Paris: PUF, [2011] 2018), pp. 40–53; Corine Pelluchon, *Manifeste animaliste: politiser la cause animale* (Paris: Alma Édition, 2017).
- 8 Marjorie Spiegel, *The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery* (New York: Mirror Books, [1988] 1996).
- 9 Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (New York: Harper Perennial, [1975] 2009); Gary L. Francione, *Animals as Persons: Essays on the Abolition of Animal Exploitation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).
- 10 Serge Bilé and Ignace Audifac, *Singe: les dangers de la bananisation des esprits* (Paris: Dagan Éditions, 2013).
- 11 Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), pp. 139–67.
- 12 Theresa Runstedtler, *Jack Johnson, Rebel Sojourner: Boxing in the Shadow of the Global Color Line* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).
- 13 Trevor Noah, *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2016).
- 14 Lucien Peytraud, *L'Esclavage aux Antilles française savant 1789 d'après des documents inédits des archives coloniales: thèse présentée à la Faculté des lettres de Paris* (Paris: Hachette, 1897), pp. 342–3.
- 15 Franklin D. Gilliam, Jr., and Shanto Iyengar, “Super-Predators or Victims of Societal Neglect? Framing Effects in Juvenile Crime Coverage,” in Karen Callaghan and Frauke Schnell (eds), *Framing American Politics* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), pp. 148–67.
- 16 Ghassan Hage, *Is Racism an Environmental Threat?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2017).
- 17 Nicolas Bancel, Thomas David, and Dominic Thomas (eds), *The Invention of Race: Scientific and Popular Representations* (New York: Routledge, 2014), pp. 185–290; Claude Blanckaert (ed.), *La Vénus hottentote: entre Barnum et muséum* (Paris: Muséum d'histoire naturelle, 2013); Pascal Blanchard, Gilles Boëtsch, and Jacomijn Nanette Snoep, *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage* (Paris: Musée du Quai Branly, 2011).

- 18 Angela Bolis, “Après 136 ans, le crâne de l’insurgé kanak Ataï rendu aux siens,” *Le Monde*, 29 August 2014, www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2014/08/29/le-crane-de-l-insurge-atai-retourne-aux-mains-de-ses-descendants-kanaks_4478873_3224.html; Roselène Dousset-Leenhardt, *Terre natale, terre d’exil* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 1976).
- 19 Alice K. Conklin, *In the Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology, and Empire in France, 1850–1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013); Laure Cadot, *En chair et en os: le cadavre au musée: valeurs, statuts, et enjeux de la conservation des dépouilles humaines patrimonialisées* (Paris: École du Louvre, 2009); Lotte Arndt, “Corps sans repos, voix en errance: moulages raciaux et masques surmodélés dans des collections muséales et des interventions artistiques, en France et en Allemagne,” *Revue Asylon(s)* 15 (February 2018), www.reseau-terra.eu/article1405.html.
- 20 James Allen (ed.), *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America* (Santa Fe, NM: Twin Palms, 2000).
- 21 Miquel Molina, “More Notes on the Verreaux Brothers,” *Pula: Botswana Journal of African Studies* 16/1 (2002): 30–6; Frank Westerman, *El Negro et moi*, trans. Danielle Losmann (Paris: C. Bourgois, 2006).
- 22 Brian Michael Murphy, “‘Banyoles Loves You, El Negro Don’t Go!’: Affect, Commodities, and the Repatriation of El Negro,” master’s thesis, Ohio State University, p. 31; Caitlin Davis, *The Return of El Negro: The Compelling Story of Africa’s Unknown Soldier* (London: Viking, 2003).
- 23 Craig Hodges and Rory Fanning, *A Long Shot: The Triumph and Struggle of an NBA Freedom Fighter* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017).
- 24 Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard, Gilles Boëtsch, Éric Deroo, and Sandrine Lemaire (eds), *Human Zoos: Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008).
- 25 Bryan A. Stevenson, “Confronting Mass Imprisonment and Restoring Fairness to Collateral Review of Criminal Cases,” *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review* 41/2 (2006): 339–67; Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), pp. 22–39; Didier Fassin, *Prison Worlds: An Ethnography of the Carceral Condition*, trans. Rachel Gomme (Cambridge: Polity, 2017), pp. 58–83; Loïc Wacquant, “From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the ‘Race Question’ in the United States,” in Donaldo Macedo and Panayota Gounari (eds), *The Globalization of Racism* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 94–110.
- 26 Fassin, *Prison Worlds*, p. 61; Roy Walmsley, *World Prison*

- Population List* (12th edn, London: Institute for Criminal Policy Research, 2018), www.prisonstudies.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/wppl_12.pdf.
- 27 Assa Traoré and Geoffroy de Lasgannerie, *Le Combat Adama* (Paris: Stock, 2019).
 - 28 Val Plumwood, “Human Vulnerability and the Experience of Being Prey,” *Quadrant* 39/3 (1995): 29–34; Val Plumwood, *The Eye of the Crocodile*, ed. Lorraine Shannon (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2012).
 - 29 D. L. Hughley and Doug Moe, *How Not to Get Shot and Other Advice from White People* (New York: William Morrow, 2018).
 - 30 Défenseur des droits, *Enquête sur l'accès aux droits, vol. 1: Relations police/population: le cas de contrôles d'identité*, 2017, www.defenseurdesdroits.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/enquete-relations-police-population-final2-11012017.pdf.
 - 31 Léonora Miano (ed.), *Marianne et le garçon noir* (Paris: Pauvert, 2017).
 - 32 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Global Study on Homicide: Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls* (Vienna: United Nations, 2018); Jules Falquet, *Pax neoliberalia: perspectives féministes sur (la réorganisation de) la violence* (Donnemarie-Dontilly: Éditions iXe, 2017).
 - 33 See the “crocodiles project” by Juliette Boutant and Thomas Mathieu on harassment and everyday sexism, <https://projetcrocodiles.tumblr.com>.
 - 34 Félix Germain and Silyane Larcher (eds), *Black French Women and the Struggle for Equality (1848–2016)* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018).
 - 35 Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice* (New York: Delta, [1968] 1991), pp. 31–4.
 - 36 Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed: One Woman's Story* (London: Arrow Books, 2008), p. 65.
 - 37 Spiegel, *The Dreaded Comparison*, p. 107.
 - 38 Stephen Michael Tomkins, *William Wilberforce: A Biography* (Oxford: Lion, 2007), pp. 155, 207.
 - 39 See Daniel Pauly's commitment against overfishing in David Grémillet, *Daniel Pauly: un océan de combats* (Marseille: Wildproject, 2019). [Translator's note: Ferdinand makes a striking play on words here that is untranslatable. The term “chattel-breeding” stands in as a pale translation of his *escl-élevages*, which brings together the term for slavery and bondage (*esclavage*) with the term for animal farming (*élevages*). While the play on words works phonetically in French, the two terms are not etymologically related.]

- 40 A. Breeze Harper (ed.), *Sistah Vegan: Black Female Vegans Speak on Food, Identity, Health, and Society* (New York: Lantern Books, 2010). See her website at <http://sistahvegan.com>.
- 41 Paul Laurence Dunbar, *The Complete Poems of Laurence Dunbar* (New York: Dodd Mead, 1915), p. 102.
- 42 Maya Angelou, *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou* (New York: Random House, 1994), p. 194.
- 43 Bruno Latour, *Politics of Nature: How to Bring Sciences into Democracy*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), p. 81; emphasis added.
- 44 Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), pp. 9–29.
- 45 Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- 46 Virginie Maris, *La Part sauvage du monde: penser la nature dans l'Anthropocène* (Paris: Seuil, 2018).
- 47 Martha Few and Zeb Tortorici (eds), *Centering Animals in Latin American History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).
- 48 For other examples of interspecies alliances against the Plantationocene, see Katarzyna Olga Beilin and Sainath Suryanarayanan, "The War between Amaranth and Soy: Interspecies Resistance to Transgenic Soy Agriculture in Argentina," *Environmental Humanities* 9/2 (2017): 204–29; Léna Balaud and Antoine Chopot, "Suivre la forêt: une entente terrestre de l'action politique," *Terrestres* no. 2 (November 2018).
- 49 Few and Tortorici, *Centering Animals in Latin American History*, p. 6.
- 50 Alfred Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CT: Praeger [1972] 2003).
- 51 Latour, *Politics of Nature*, p. 47.
- 52 Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François* (Paris: Éditions Thomas Lolly, 1667), vol. I, p. 81.
- 53 Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles*, vol. II, p. 344.
- 54 John R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 123–35.
- 55 Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of this World*, trans. Harriet de Onís (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2006), pp. 45–6.
- 56 For an example of the notion of diplomacy with wolves, see Jean-Baptiste Morizot, *Les Diplomates: cohabiter avec les loups sur une autre carte du vivant* (Marseille: Wildproject, 2016).
- 57 Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles*, vol. I, p. 105.
- 58 Jean-Baptiste Delawarde, *Les Défricheurs et les petits colons à la*

Martinique au XVIIIe siècle (Paris: Imprimerie René Buffault, 1935), pp. 24–5.

- 59 United Nation Refugee Agency, “Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response – Mediterranean,” figures from 18 March 2019: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>.
- 60 Sarah Finger, “Bétaillères maritimes: à Sète, l’arche de nausée,” *Libération* (23 December 2018), www.liberation.fr/france/2018/12/23/betailleres-maritimes-a-sete-l-arche-de-nausee_1699490/.

Chapter 17 A Worldly-Ecology

- 1 William Adams and Martin Mulligan (eds), *Decolonizing Nature: Strategies for Conservation in a Post-Colonial Era* (London: Earthscan, 2003).
- 2 Razmig Keucheyan, *Nature Is a Battlefield: Towards a Political Ecology* (Cambridge: Polity, 2016).
- 3 Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 3–31.
- 4 Arne Næss, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle: Outline of an Ecosophy*, trans. David Rothenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 57.
- 5 Monique Allewaert, *Ariel’s Ecology: Plantation, Personhood, and Colonialism in the American Tropics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).
- 6 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990).
- 7 Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).
- 8 Patrick Chamoiseau and Édouard Glissant, *L’Intraitable Beauté du monde: adresse à Barack Obama* (Paris: Éditions Galaade, 2008), p. 33.
- 9 Édouard Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole-World*, trans. Celia Britton (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), pp. 141–5.
- 10 Patrick Chamoiseau, “Plaidoyer pour un projet global autour du biologique,” *La Tribune des Antilles* no. 23 (June 2000): 19–25.
- 11 Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole-World*, pp. 7–15.
- 12 Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016); Donna Haraway, “The Cyborg Manifesto,” in *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).
- 13 Alice Walker, “Everything Is a Human Being,” in *Living by the Word: Selected Writings (1973–1987)* (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace,

- Jovanovich, 1988), pp. 139–52; Maya Angelou, “On the Pulse of Morning,” in *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou* (New York: Random House, 1994), pp. 269–70.
- 14 Édelyn Dorismond, *L'Ère du métissage: variations sur la créolisation: politique, éthique et philosophie de la diversité* (Paris: Anibwe, 2013); Seloua Luste Boulbina, “La créolisation est-elle une décolonisation? Poétique et politique,” *Rue Descartes* no. 81 (2014): 6–23.
 - 15 Donna Haraway, “The Cyborg Manifesto,” in *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).
 - 16 Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *The Relative Native: Essays on Indigenous Conceptual Worlds* (Chicago: HAU Books, 2015); Jérôme Baschet, *La Rébellion zapatiste* (Paris: Flammarion, 2019), pp. 298–311.
 - 17 Stephen Gardiner, *A Perfect Storm: The Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 32–41.
 - 18 Corine Pelluchon, *Éthique de la considération* (Paris: Seuil, 2018), pp. 107–10.
 - 19 Valérie Cabanes, *Un nouveau droit pour la Terre: pour en finir avec l'écocide* (Paris: Seuil, 2016).
 - 20 Robert Bullard, *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class and Environmental Quality* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), p. 98.
 - 21 Lydie Laigle and Sophie Moreau, *Justice et environnement: les citoyens interpellent le politique* (Paris: Infolio, 2018), pp. 115–25; David Blanchon, Jean Gardin, and Sophie Moreau (eds), *Justice et injustices environnementales* (Nanterre: Presses universitaires de Paris-Ouest, 2012).
 - 22 Dominique Lapointe and Christiane Gagnon, “À l'ombre des parcs: la conservation comme enjeu de justice environnementale pour les communautés locales?” in Blanchon, Gardin, and Moreau, *Justice et injustices environnementales*, pp. 149–69.
 - 23 Anil Agarwal and Sunita Narain, “Global Warming in an Unequal World: A Case of Environmental Colonialism,” in Navroz K. Dubash (ed.), *Handbook of Climate Change and India: Development, Politics and Governance* (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 81–8; Juan Martinez-Alier, *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2002), p. 233; Catherine Larrère, “Qu'est-ce que la justice climatique?” in Agnès Michelot (ed.), *Justice climatique/Climate Justice: enjeux et perspectives/Challenges and Perspectives* (Brussels: Bruylant, 2016), pp. 5–18.
 - 24 Michel Bourban, *Penser la justice climatique: devoirs et politiques* (Paris: PUF, 2018); Olivier Godard, *La Justice climatique mondiale* (Paris: La Découverte, 2015).

- 25 Lang F. Dampha, *Afrique subsaharienne: mémoire, histoire et réparation* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013); Bouda Etemad, *Crimes et réparations: l'Occident face à son passé colonial* (Brussels: André Versaille Éditeur, 2008); Louis-Georges Tin (ed.), *De l'esclavage aux réparations, les textes clés d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Les Petits Matins, 2013).
- 26 Tin, *De l'esclavage aux réparations*, pp. 11–12.
- 27 See <https://caricomreparations.org>.
- 28 <https://reparationscomm.org/about-naarc/>.
- 29 Aimé Césaire, *Resolutely Black: Conversations with Françoise Vergès*, trans. Matthew B. Smith (Cambridge: Polity, 2020), pp. 16–20.
- 30 Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity, ratified 26 November 1968; Fernne Brennan and John Packer (eds), *Colonialism, Slavery, Reparations and Trade: Remediating the Past?* (New York: Routledge, 2012).
- 31 In France, see the research program of ANR, “Réparations, compensations et indemnités au titre de l'esclavage (Europe-Amériques-Afrique) (XIXe–XXIe siècles),” dated 2015 and coordinated by Myriam Cottias, <https://repairs.hypotheses.org>; in England, see the projects at the Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery at University College London from 2009 to 2015 on the legacy of British ownerships of human slaves, www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs.
- 32 Louis-Georges Tin, *Esclavage et réparations: comment faire face aux crimes de l'histoire ...* (Paris: Stock, 2013).
- 33 Jean Rahier (ed.), *Black Social Movements in Latin America: From Monocultural Mestizaje to Multiculturalism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
- 34 United Nations, “International Decade for People of African Descent, 2015–2024” (13 December 2014), www.un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent.
- 35 European Parliament resolution of 26 March 2019 on fundamental rights of people of African descent in Europe (2018/2899(RSP)).
- 36 Garcin Malsa, *L'Écologie ou la Passion du vivant, quarante ans d'écrits écologiques* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008).
- 37 Felwine Sarr and Bénédicte Savoy, *Restituer le patrimoine africain* (Paris: Philippe Rey-Seuil, 2019), p. 75.

Epilogue

- 1 Isabelle Stengers, *In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism*, trans. Andrew Goffey (London: Open Humanities Press/meson press, 2015).

- 2 Barbara Glowczewski, “Au cœur du soleil ardent: la catastrophe selon les Aborigènes,” *Communications* no. 96 (2015): 53–65.
- 3 Christiane Taubira, *Nous habitons la Terre* (Paris: Philippe Rey, 2017); Patrick Chamoiseau, *Migrant Brothers: A Poet’s Declaration of Human Dignity*, trans. Matthew Amos and Fredrik Rönnbäck (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018).
- 4 Étienne Tassin, “Philosophie /et/ politique de la migration,” *Raison publique* no. 21 (2017): 197–215.
- 5 Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), p. 37; Olympe de Gouges, *The Declaration of the Rights of Women and the Female Citizen*, www.olympedegouges.eu/rights_of_women.php; Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, after Man, its Overrepresentation – an Argument,” *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3/3 (2003): 257–337; Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008); Élisabeth de Fontenay, *Le Silence des bêtes: la philosophie à l’épreuve de l’animalité* (Paris: Fayard, 1998).
- 6 Souleymane Bachir Diagne, “Pour un universel, vraiment universel,” in Achille Mbembe and Felwine Sarr (eds), *Écrire l’Afrique-Monde* (Paris and Dakar: Philippe Rey/Jimsaan, 2017), pp. 71–8.
- 7 Valentin Mudimbé, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).
- 8 Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Verso 2018); René Dumont, *False Start in Africa*, trans. Phyllis Nauts Ott (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 44–5.
- 9 Cheikh Anta Diop, *Nations nègres et culture: de l’antiquité nègre égyptienne aux problèmes culturels de l’Afrique noire d’aujourd’hui* (Paris: Présence Africaine, [1954] 1992). For a partial English translation, see Cheikh Anta Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, trans. Mercer Cook (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1974).
- 10 Norman Ajari, *La Dignité ou la mort: éthique et politique de la race* (Paris: La Découverte, 2019), pp. 203–30.
- 11 Csilla Ariese-Vandemeulebroucke, *The Social Museum in the Caribbean: Grassroots Heritage Initiatives and Community Engagement* (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2018).

Index

Numbers in *italic* type refer to tables; those in **bold** to figures.

- abolitionism *see* antislavery and abolitionism
- abortion practices 142, 208
- Abu-Jamal, Mumia xv
- Afeissa, Hicham-Stéphane 79
- Africana philosophy 14
- agroforestry 91
- Ajari, Norman 14, 139
- Alexander VI, Pope 29
- Algeria 8, 123
- Ali, Muhammad 219
- alienation from the world *see* off-world placement
- alienation of the relationship to the Earth 134, 194, 194
- Allende, Isabel 132
 - Island beneath the Sea* 156
- Allewaert, Monique 231
- Americas, colonization of 26, 35, 50
- Amerindians 7, 9, 13, 39, 137, 161, 183
 - enslavement 33
 - ethnocide 9
 - eviction of 104, 197
 - genocide 26, 31, 40, 41, 46, 104
 - land as a common good 30, 32
 - otherness 52
 - reservations 220
 - sexual violence against 31
- Amistad* slave ship 142, 157
- amity lines 29
- Anders, Günther 8
- Angelou, Maya 232
 - “Caged Bird” 225–6
- animalization of racialized people 216–23
 - caging 220, 223
 - hunting 218, 223
 - non-sentience, assumption of 221
 - patriarchal form 224
 - policies of arraignment 217, 218–21
 - prey-beings 221–2, 223
 - social and political 216–21
 - trophy hunting 218–20, 223
 - women 223–4

- Annan, Kofi 219
 Ans, André-Marcel d' 42, 147
 Anthropocene 4, 8, 45, 46, 61, 78, 242, 244
 colonial *oikos* 115, 124–5, 127, 128
 dékalé 187
 discriminatory universalism 10
 environmentalist partisans 115, 243
 hold 127–8
 marronage resistance 146–7
 unsettling 175, 179–87
 White Anthropocene 9–10
 anticolonialism 7, 122, 175–6
 aporias 123–4
 Antigua 215
 antiracism 3, 7, 179, 211, 216, 224
 antislavery and abolitionism 7, 117
 aporias 123–4
 compensation schemes 119, 237, 238
 evangelical egalitarianism 118
 free labor proposal 119
 international abolitionist movement 119
 natural law egalitarianism 118
 plantationary emancipation 117–21
 post-slavery servitude 120
 and the preservation of colonial inhabitation 121
 pursuit of the plantation under other forms 119–20, 121
 unbinding enslavement from the plantation economy 118–19
 without ecology 120–1
 apartheid ecology 178
 Arawaks 39
 Arendt, Hannah 17, 19, 97
 art objects, restitution of 239
 Arthus-Bertrand, Yann, *Home* 81
 Assaupamar 16, 113, 184
 astronaut-humanity 81, 83, 105, 112, 193, 194, 195, 199, 242
 Ataï 218
 Australian Aborigines 181, 184, 208
 avenger 142, 201, 203
 Ayiti 45, 182–3, 213, 244–5
 Baartman, Saartjie 218, 219
 Back to Africa movement 198
Baleine slave ship 214
 banana cultivation 67, 107, 110–11, 112, 113, 227
 Bandung Conference (1955) 8
 Barbados 26, 39, 40, 42, 144
 Barceló, Romero 104
 Béké community 110
 bèlè 212
 Belize 137
 Bell, Derrick, “Space Traders” 85
 Bellande, Alex 95
 Benoît, Catherine 55
 Berlin Conference (1885) 239
 Berque, Augustin 40
 Bhabha, Homi 231
 Bigaud, Wilson, *Paradis terrestre* 89
 biodiversity 12, 16, 101
 hotspots 80, 93
 indigenous practices 16
 loss of 4, 26, 43, 78, 80, 89, 178
 ruptures in 43
 Biohó, Benkos 148
 biological anthropology 211
 biological citizenship 205
 biological racism 217
 birth narratives 140
 Black Americans 123, 184, 199
 Black Atlantic 132
 Black Caribs 137
 Black feminism 7, 14, 176, 205
 Black Lives Matter xviii, 211

- Black political ontology 139
 bodies
 ecological, biologized and medicalized 205–6
 forming a body in the world 21–2, 212–13
 healing ecological bodies 211–12
 racialized, gendered, and sexualized 205, 206
 recovery of the body 209–11
 socio-racial strategies 210
 trace-bearers and tracers of the world 205, 206
 body parts, restitution of 239
 bomba 212
 botanical gardens 103
 Boukman, Dutty 120, 218
 Boulding, Kenneth 78
 Bradley, Marion Zimmer, “The Climbing Wave” 195
 Braudel, Fernand 18, 95
 Brazil 122, 153, 238
 British Virgin Islands 122
 Brook Farm 169
 Brooks, Mary Merrick 170
 Brown, John 159, 165, 171–2
 Brown, Nicholas 159
 Brutus, Edner 147
 Burkina Faso 176
 Burns, Anthony 165
 Bush, George W. 70
 Buxton, Thomas 135

 Cáceres, Berta 236
 caging 220, 223
 Caliban 2, 66, 67
 Camilus, Adler 147
 Candomblé 54
 capitalism 7, 60
 disaster capitalism 71
 integrated world capitalism 18
 racial xiv, xv
 Capitalocene 45, 60

 Capoeira 54
 Caribbean
 Afro-Caribbean philosophy 20
 decolonizations 122–3
 historic understandings of 2
 mythical narrative 132
 paradise imagery 2, 100–1
 pre-1492 ecosystems 38, 39
 thinking ecology from the perspective of 12–13
 Caribs 31, 39, 40
 CARICOM Reparations Commission 237
 Carson, Rachel 185
 Silent Spring 123
 Casa Pueblo association 16, 183
Cavendish slave ship 106, 112
 Césaire, Aimé xv, 4, 14, 15, 20, 122, 132, 134, 201–2, 212, 237–8, 244
 A Tempest 1, 63, 66, 68, 74
 Cahier d'un retour au pays natal 27, 133, 200
 Discourse on Colonialism 176
 Chakrabarty, Dipesh 11
 Chamoiseau, Patrick 133, 231, 244
 Slave Old Man 150
 Chantrans, Girod de 95
 Chanvalon, Thibault de 42–3
 Charbonneau, Bernard 8
 charcoal 91–2
 Charpentier, Hector, *Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery* 174
Chasseur slave ship 87
 chattel-breeding 225
 Chávez, César 123
 Chavis, Dr Benjamin xvi
 Chipko movement 185
 chlordecone xiv–xv, 21, 109–13, 207, 235
 Christian slave-making ecology 117
 see also religious colonialism

- Christophe, Henri 96
 Chthulucene 231
 Ciboneys 39
 Cinque, Joseph 142
 Clark, William, "Cutting the Sugar Cane" 37
 Cleaver, Eldridge 223
 climate change 65, 67, 74, 80, 116
 climate justice 235, 236
 climate refugees 9, 80, 244
 Clinton, Hillary 218
 Club of Rome 78
Code Noir 54, 56, 139, 222
 Colbert, Jean-Baptiste 139
 "collapsologists" 10, 243
 Collingwood, Captain 72
 Colombia 16, 147, 148, 153, 238
 Colón, Willie 102
 colonial and environmental
 double fracture 3–12, 5, 7, 15, 20, 22, 26, 115, 122, 160, 175, 178–9, 179, 226, 235, 236
 see also Noah's ark
 colonial ecology 21, 115, 121
 aporias 123–4
 colonial grammar 78, 197
 colonial heterotopia 103
 colonial hurricane politics 66–74
 continued carelessness 69, 70
 discriminatory carelessness 68–9, 70, 74
 discriminatory redistribution 69, 71
 infernal chaos 69, 70
 ordeal 69, 70
 seen from the world's hold 68–71, 69
 colonial inhabitation 20–1, 26–35, 40–1, 95, 110, 175, 178, 183, 187
 characteristics 32–5, 35
 Christian 41–2
 continuance of 47
 control over women and violence against 31, 208
 ecological engineering 38
 exploitative relationship 28–9, 32, 33, 38, 39, 42–3, 44
 gendered 31
 genocide 20, 26, 31, 40, 41, 46, 104, 161
 geographical 28
 habitations and shacks 27, 61
 land clearing 30–1, 32, 42, 95
 land grabbing 28–9, 30, 41
 master's chemistry 108–12
 ontological violence 30
 othercide 29, 31, 186
 patriarchal dimension 41
 Plantationocene *see* Plantationocene
 post-abolition preservation of 121
 privatization of land 32, 33
 colonial *oikos* 115, 124–6, 127, 128
 exclusion of others 125
 minorities in 125–6
 colonial servitude
 indentured servants 33–4, 68, 119, 166
 slavery *see* slavery
 Columbus, Christopher 6, 22, 30, 89, 181–2, 227
 Commerson, Philibert 116
 Compagnie de Saint-Christophe 26, 28, 29, 30
 Compagnie française des Indes 82, 116
 Compagnie Royale de Guinée 63
 compensation schemes 119, 237, 238
 conch 213
 Concord Female Anti-Slavery Society 165, 170

- Condé, Maryse xv, 14, 132
I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem 155
Waiting for the Waters to Rise 208–9
- Condorcet, Marquis de 118, 119
- Confiant, Raphaël 133
Nègre Marron 150
- Conquérant* slave ship 25
- Conrad, Joseph, *Typhoon* 68–9
- consumption, types of 206–7
- conuco* agriculture 39
- Coogler, Ryan, *Fruitvale Station* 128
- Cook, James 78
Corpo Santo e Almas slave ship 204
- cosmopolitics of relation 233–4
- Cottias, Myriam 31
- Coulthard, Glen 10
- Courtaud, Patrice 61
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé 14
- Creole languages and arts, devaluation of 210
- creolization 19, 164, 231, 233
- Cronon, William, “Getting Back to the Wrong Nature” 195–6
- Crosby, Alfred 38, 44, 227
- Crusoe, Robinson 196
- Crutzen, Paul 4, 8, 78
- Cuba 39, 42, 122, 160–1
- Dabydeen, David 193
- Dalember, Louis-Philippe, *The Other Side of the Sea* 137–8
- dances of resistance 209–10
- Danmyé 54
- Davis, Angela Y. xiv–xviii, 14, 220
- Davis, Diana 104
- Debbasch, Yvan 147, 153–4
- Debien, Gabriel 147
- deCaires Taylor, Jason, *Vicissitudes* 130, 135
- Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 237
- decolonial ecology 3, 13–16, 174–87
- anticolonialism 175–6
- Ayiti hypothesis 182–3
- Caribbean genealogy of 180
- civil marronage 21, 162–4, 166, 168–71, 172
- colonial divide, challenging 178–9
- decolonial demand 177
- decolonial political feminism 176
- decolonial thought 176, 177
- double bridging 179
- double healing 175
- ecology of struggle 175
- epistemological deconstruction 176
- European struggles 185–6
- and the formerly enslaved 184
- indigenous struggles 176, 183–4, 236–7
- postcolonial thought 176
- rising up from the hold 14, 183–7, 243
- urban ecology 184
- women-led ecology 184–5
- decolonization 15, 122–3, 175–6, 178
- of institutions 240
- deep ecology 123, 212
- deforestation 30–1, 42, 43, 59, 67, 89, 90, 115, 153–4, 239
- blaming peasants for 90, 91, 94–5
- climate change and 116
- discourse of injustice 90, 92
- meat industry and 215
- socio-economic, religious, and political factors 95
- violence of 97
- see also* reforestation policies

- dehumanization 103, 136, 143, 193, 238, 246
- Dessalines, Jean-Jacques 57, 120, 227
- Di Chiro, Giovanna 205
- Diagne, Souleymane Bachir 11, 14, 244
- Diamond, Jared, *Collapse* 10, 89
- Diderot, Denis 118
- Diogenes of Sinope 194
- Diop, Cheikh Anta 14, 246
- disabilities, people with 205
- disaster capitalism 71
- diseases 31, 227–8
- Dominica 40, 154, 156
- Dominican Republic 39
- Donaldson, Sue 226
- Dorlin, Elsa 14, 209
- doubly relational aesthetics 231–3
- Douglass, Frederick 146, 224
- drums 212–13
- Du Bois, W. E. B. 10, 103
- Du Tertre, Jacques 31, 61, 193–4
- Dubos, René 78
- Dumont, René 9, 246
- Dunbar, Paul Laurence, “Sympathy” 225–6
- Dussel, Enrique 10, 30
- Dutch Antilles 122
- Dutch colonial empire 8
- Duvalier, Jean-Claude 90, 93
- Earth Day xvi, 78
- Eaubonne, Françoise d’ 207
- ecocide 62, 235
- ecofeminism 6, 185
- ecological bodies 205, 211–12
- ecological crisis *see* ecological tempest
- ecological debt to the Global South 236
- ecological imperialism 15, 38
- ecological tempest 2–3, 3, 4, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 20, 26, 65, 73, 79, 132, 146, 175, 178, 179, 182, 183, 207, 208, 215, 230, 242, 243
- confronting 13, 128, 240, 242, 243–4, 246
- economic and material dimensions 18
- reaching the eye of the tempest 20–2
- eco-Marxists 18
- ecosystems
- biological equilibrium 43
 - contaminated *see* pollution; toxic chemicals
 - homogenization of 43
 - ruptures 42–3
- Eduards, Wanze 155
- Egypt 246
- Ehrlich, Paul 84
- Ellul, Jacques 8
- emancipation *see* antislavery and abolitionism
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo 171
- Emmerich, Roland
- The Day After Tomorrow* 124–5, 126
 - 2012 124–5, 126
- encounter, politics of 199–203, 203
- demand for justice 201, 202
 - flight from encounter 200–1
- English colonialism 40
- Enlightenment 103
- enmity, politics of 103
- environmental colonialism 15, 186, 236
- environmental justice xv, xvi, 15, 177, 184, 186, 211, 236, 243
- environmental migrants 9
- environmental racism xvi–xvii, 15, 179, 236
- environmentalism 3, 5–6, 242–3
- aporias 123–4

- colonial origins of 115–17
- global environmentalist
 - discourse 78, 81
- green turn of the 1970s 6, 78
- inattentive to antiracism and anticolonialism 9, 11, 123
- legitimate distrust of 10–11
- solitary walker 5, 148, 149, 162, 163, 180, 208
- sympathy-without-connection 9, 91, 168, 196
- under-representation of racialized people in environmental discourse 3–4, 6, 178
- wall of 160–2
- see also* colonial and environmental double fracture
- Equiano, Olaudah 50, 51, 52, 53–4
- Escape* slave ship 144
- Escobar, Arturo 14, 177
- Esmeraldas 137
- Espérance* slave ship 131, 134
- essentialization, discriminatory 3
- ethnocide 9, 196
- Eto'o, Samuel 217
- Eurocentrism 6, 176
- evangelical egalitarianism 118
- evangelization of the Caribbean peoples *see* religious colonialism
- exoticism 10
- Fabul , Francisque 153
- Fanon, Frantz 8, 10, 14, 15, 44, 59, 176, 205, 209, 210
 - Black Skin, White Masks* 191, 200, 210
- Fassin, Didier 220
- Fatiman, C cile 120
- femicides 223
- fer-de-lance* 228
- Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain 29
- field slaves 54, 126
- First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit (1991) 16
- flight from the colonial encounter 141–3, 143, 157
 - chasing away the other 142
 - chasing away the world 142
 - leaving-for-oneself 142
 - self-abandonment 141–2
 - self-elimination 141
 - see also* Maroons
- flight from the world 141, 162, 163, 166, 199
- Flint River water pollution xvii–xviii
- forest conservation management 12, 115
- Foucault, Michel 103
- Fouchard, Jean 147
- France 239
 - colonial empire 8, 9, 26–34, 40, 103, 104
 - environmentalist movement 4, 9
 - Hexagone* 8, 9, 113, 185
 - nuclear tests 8, 186
 - struggles of the peasants 185
 - see also* French Antilles
- Franco, Marielle 185
- Frederick* slave ship 215
- free markets 7
- Free Womb laws 208
- French Antilles 29, 31, 34, 57, 67, 109–13, 120, 122, 137, 153, 186, 210, 211
 - see also* individual territories
- French Guiana 122, 147, 149, 154, 183, 199, 215, 241
- Friends of the Earth 123
- Fruitlands 169
- Fuller, Buckminster 78

- Gabon 8
 Gaia hypothesis 78, 182, 195
Gaia slave ship 173
 gardens
 botanical 103
 Creole gardens 55, 56, 111, 151, 210
 Gardiner, Stephen 235
 Garifuna 137
 Garner, Eric 221
 Garrison, William 171
 Garvey, Marcus 198, 199
 General Motors xvii
 Genesis 82
 genocide 20, 26, 31, 40, 41, 46, 104, 161
 see also ethnocide
 geoconstructivism 198
 Germany 186
 Gervais, Mathieu 185
 gestalt ontology 231
 Gilroy, Paul 10, 132
 Glissant, Édouard 19, 41, 132, 133, 137, 139, 231
 The Fourth Century 141, 156
 Poetics of Relation 200
 global warming 4, 14, 74, 178, 186, 205, 235, 236, 240, 242
 globalization 17, 46
 glyphosate 112
 Goldblatt, David 61
 Gomis, Bafétimbi 217
 Gordon, Lewis 14
 Gore, Al, *An Inconvenient Truth* 89
 Gorée 135
 Gorz, André 8, 17
 Gouges, Olympe de 244
 L'Esclavage des Noirs ou l'Heureux Naufrage 171
 Grands Blancs 122
 Greece 18–19, 186
 Green Belt movement 16, 185
 green orientalism 15
 greenhouse gas emissions 108, 215, 235
 Greenpeace xvi, 123
 Grégoire, Abbé, *De la littérature des Nègres* 118
 Gregson, William 73
 Grosrichard, Alain 163
 ground-Earth 80
 Grove, Richard 100, 115
 Guadeloupe 21, 44, 45, 106, 148, 153, 181, 212, 213, 241
 chlordecone contamination xiv–xv, 21, 109–13
 Maroons 153–4
 Guatemala 137
 Guattari, Félix 17–18
 Guyana 215
 gwoka 212
 gyn-ecology 209

 Hage, Ghassan 218
 Haggis, Paul, *Crash* 128
 Haiti 10, 21, 39, 45, 48, 67, 89–98, 137–8, 140, 148, 181, 183, 187, 214, 245
 Ayiti 45, 181, 182–3, 213, 244–5
 colonial inhabitation 95–6
 Constitution 120
 deforestation and reforestation 89–98
 environmentalist movements 16
 Haitian Revolution 10, 120, 227–8
 Maroons 90, 96
 neglect of the peasantry 90–1
 parc de la Visite massacre (2012) 93–4
 post-emancipation 120
 soil erosion 96, 97, 97
 Ham and his descendants 82

- Haraway, Donna 45, 226, 231
 Hardin, Garrett 85
 Hare, Nathan 15–16, 173, 178
 Harper, Breeze 225
 Harper, Frances Ellen, “The Fugitive’s Wife” 156
 Harpers Ferry 159
 Hebrew emancipation 140
 Heidegger, Martin 27
 Herero 161
 heterotopias 103, 186
 Heyrick, Elizabeth 162, 171, 186, 224, 244
 hierarchization of living environments 4–5, 7
 Hispaniola 39, 182
 see also Dominican Republic; Haiti
 Hodges, Craig 219
 Holocene 4
 Honduras 236
 hooks, bell 14, 176, 185
 house Negro and field Negro opposition 126, 127
 Hughes, Langston 15
 human zoos 220
 humanism, discriminatory 225, 244
 Humboldt, Alexander von 160–1
 Hurricane Katrina 69–71
 hurricanes 64, 65–6, 67, 73–4
 colonial hurricane politics 66–74
 Hurston, Zora Neale 135
 Husserl, Edmund 80, 96
 hybridization 231
 Illich, Ivan 8
 indentured servitude 33–4, 68, 119, 166
 independence movements 122
 see also decolonization
 India 185, 197
 Indigenous Lives Matter xviii
 indigenous struggles 176, 183–4, 236–7
 infanticide 142
 infertility policies 208
 inhabiting the Earth
 inhabiting-together 98
 slave-making inhabitation 224–6
 intergenerational storm 235
 International Decade for People of African Descent 238
 International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) 74
 interspecies alliances 22, 214–28
 anticolonial diplomats 228
 colonial army killers 227–8
 nuisance makers 227
 Inuit 183, 237
 Ivory Coast 187
 Jabini, Hugo 155
 Jackson, Jesse 102
 Jamaica 33, 36, 39, 122, 140, 147, 156, 158, 199, 215
 James, C. L. R. 147
 James, LeBron 220
 Jaulin, Robert 9
 Jim Crow laws 217
 Johnson, Jack 217
 Johnson, Magic 219
 Jonah and the whale 140
 justice
 climate 235, 236
 crisis of 242
 environmental xv, xvi, 15, 177, 184, 186, 211, 236, 243
 sacrifice of 92
 social 6, 8, 12, 92, 127, 184, 185, 206, 211, 225, 242
 transgenerational 235, 236, 240
Justice slave ship 229

- Kaepernick, Colin 220
 Kalinago 243
kamikaze 142
 Kanak 218
 Kass, Morgan, *The 100* 195
 Kennedy, Robert, Jr. 102
 Kenya 16, 185, 224
 Keystone oil pipeline 236
 Khoe-Sān 219
 Kikuyu 16
 King, Martin Luther, Jr. 83, 201
 Kisukidi, Nadia Yala 14
 Klein, Naomi 71
 Kossola, Oluale 135
 Kronos 140
 Kyenge, Cécile 217
 Kymlicka, Will 226
 Kyoto Protocol 236

La Galatée slave ship 142
La Jeune Estelle slave ship 192
La Tempête slave ship 63
 La Toma 185
 Labat, Father 42
 Labaussère, Ray de 191
 land
 exploitation of 28–9, 40, 44
 grabbing 28–9, 30, 41
 sacralization of 41–2
 land clearing 30–1, 32, 42, 95
 see also deforestation
 Las Casas, Bartolomé de 13, 31
 Latouche, Serge 9
 Latour, Bruno 81, 182, 226
 Down to Earth 196
Le Coureur slave ship 142
 Lee, Spike
 Chi-Raq 128
 Jungle Fever 128
 Lemire, Elise 170
 Lenoir, J. B., “The Whale has Swallowed Me” 140
 Leopold, Aldo 6, 232
 Levinas, Emmanuel 30

 Lewis, Simon 46
 Liberia 114, 199
 Liebig, Justus von 43
 lifeboat hypothesis 85
 life-world, colonization of 17
 L’Olive, Charles Liénard de 30, 41
 loss-bodies 79–80, 83, 193, 205, 208
 lost bodies 134, 139, 205
 Louverture, Toussaint 14, 57, 120, 201, 227
 Lovelock, James 78, 81, 182
 lynchings 219

 Maathai, Wangari 16, 185, 223–4
 Machiavelli, Niccolò 124
 Mackandal, François 146, 228
 McNeill, John R. 78, 227
 MacWhirr, Captain 68, 74
 Madagascar 8
 Madalena, Captain Vincente 173
 Maghreb 104
 Malcolm X 14, 126, 127, 179–80, 201
 Malsa, Garcin 239
 Mangonès, Albert, *Statue of the Unknown Maroon* 145
 Manigat, Leslie 147
Marie-Séraphique slave ship 49
 Maris, Virginie 196, 226
 Marley, Robert Nesta 133
 Maroonesses 155–6
 double resistance to slavery and male domination 156
 libératrices 156
 Maroonesse-mothers 156
 passeur women 156
 Maroons 21, 54, 57, 90, 91, 140, 142, 218, 228, 238, 243
 desire for return 157, 166, 198–9

- Maroon fracture of the world 96
 Maroon genealogy 161–2
 politics of encounter 200
 relationship to the drum and the conch 212–13
 symbol of political resistance 147–8, 154, 184
 “White Maroons” 166
see also marronage
 Márquez, Francia 16, 185
 marronage 146–58
 civil marronage 21, 162–4, 166, 168–71, 172
 Creole metamorphosis 148, 151–2, 156, 183
 ecological impact of 148
 escape from the world 162, 163, 166
 experience of solitude 163
 feminine experiences of 155–6
 grand marronage 146–7
 limitations 157–8, 172
 Maroon ecology 148, 152–5, 157–8
 matrigenesis 148, 149–51, 156, 158
 non-plantationary economy 169
 petit marronage 146
 recovery of self 151–2
 refusal of slavery 147, 169
 see also Maroonesses; Maroons
 Marshall Islands 123
 Martinique 19, 21, 30, 32, 33, 41, 44, 45, 63, 131, 140, 153, 180–1, 184, 191, 212, 213, 228, 229, 237, 241
 chlordecone contamination xiv–xv, 21, 109–13, 207
 environmentalist movements 16
 Maroons 153, 228
 Marx, Karl 43
 Masekela, Hugh 61
 Maslin, Mark 46
 mass extinctions 2, 242
 master-patriarch 85, 200, 202
 master’s chemistry 108–12
 matricide, colonial 21, 38–9, 40, 41, 42, 44, 81, 149, 246
 matrigenesis 148, 149–51, 156, 158, 181, 183, 212
 Mau Mau uprising 223–4
 Mauritius 103, 115–17
 Mbembe, Achille 103, 209
 meat industry 215
 Meillassoux, Claude 56
 Melville, Herman 132
 Merchant, Carolyn 38, 207
 metabolic rift 43–4
 Mexico 148
 Meyer, Michael 168
 Mignolo, Walter 14
 migrants 80, 136, 196, 228, 244
 migrant condition 136
 Miller, Joseph 135
 Mintz, Sidney 46
 modernity
 destructive accelerations 20
 double consciousness of 4, 10, 13, 212
 double fracture of *see* colonial and environmental double fracture
 founding moments and processes 26
 laboratories of 100, 103
 modernity’s hold 3, 12, 13, 20, 62, 160, 238
 wanderings of 193–4, 195
 Mona, Eugène 58, 59
 monocultures 33, 43, 44, 111
 Monsanto-Bayer 18
 Moore, Jason 18
 Moran, Thomas, *Slave Hunt, Dismal Swamp* 88, 91
 Morin, Edgar 8
 Morrison, Toni, *Beloved* 142

- Moscovici, Serge 9
- Mother-Earth 41, 42, 45, 47,
149, 151, 152, 153, 173,
177, 182, 183, 195, 203,
243, 244, 246
- Ayiti hypothesis 182–3, 213,
244–5
- ecumenal rupture 40–2, 53
- matrical relationship with 39,
149, 151, 212, 246
- matrigenesis 148, 149–51, 181,
183, 212
- reconnecting with 22, 177,
195, 209, 212, 213, 246
- see also* matricide, colonial
- motherless lands 41, 42, 47
- Mouvement paysan Papaye 92
- Mudimbé, Valentin 14, 246
- Muir, John 6, 13, 148, 160, 161,
242
- A Thousand-Mile Walk to the
Gulf* 160
- Mukwege, Dr Denis 209
- Muntu 246
- Mururoa 197
- museums 61, 219, 239, 246
- Myers, Norman 80
- Næss, Arne 6, 212, 231, 232
- names
 decolonization and 181
 part of the colonial act 181–2
 streets, renaming 180–1
- Napoleon Bonaparte 57
- National Alliance Against Racist
 and Political Repression xv,
 xvi
- national belonging, symbolic
 exclusion from 222, 223
- natural disasters
 beneficiaries 68, 74
 colonial hurricane politics
 66–74
 hurricanes 64, 65–6, 67, 73–4
 socially differentiated effects
 67–8, 70–1
- natural economies 15, 39
- natural law egalitarianism 118
- nature reserves and parks 93–4,
102, 197
- environmentalist understanding
 of 103–4, 105
- nature writing 232
- Nègre épave* 141, 201, 203
- Nègre* slave ship 48
- Negritude 211
- “Negro,” essentialism of 13, 60
- Negrocene 21, 50, 58–62, 146,
158
- negrology 118
- Neo-Europes 44
- neoliberalism 234
- neo-rural movements 195
- New Orleans 69–71
- Neyrat, Frédéric 198
- Niger 8
- Nigeria 60
- Nikiforuk, Andrew 59
- NIMBY policies 186
- Nkrumah, Kwame 8
- Noah’s ark 2, 11–12, 20, 21,
78–128, 187, 192
- astronaut-humanity 81, 83,
105, 112, 193, 194, 195,
199, 242
- “beyond of politics” 192
- ecology 8, 83–6, 89, 98, 105,
242
- environmentalism of 179, 180
- loss-bodies 79–80, 83, 193,
205, 208
- master-patriarch 85, 200, 202
- Noahs 82, 83, 193
- peace on board 83
- political figures 84–6, 86
- political metaphor 79
- politics of boarding 79, 80, 82,
84, 86, 193, 194, 201, 203

- refusal of the world 83–6, 175, 193, 195–8, 203
- return to Earth and to nature 195, 197–8
- sacrificer 84–5, 200, 202–3
- the unconcerned 84, 200, 202
- wandering 193
- world devourer 85–6, 200, 203
- xeno-warrior 84, 200, 202
- Noé slave ship 77, 83, 192
- Nolan, Christopher, *Interstellar* 125, 126
- non-human animals
 - decolonial animal ethics 224
 - enslavement of 215–16, 224, 228
 - exploitation of 47
 - interspecies alliances 22, 214–28
 - live shipments 228
 - recognition of 19, 22
- nuclear colonialism 123
- nuclear energy 8, 123, 212, 235
- nuclear imperialism 8
- nuclear tests 8, 85, 123, 186, 197, 212, 236
- off-ground relationship to the
 - Earth 13, 80–1, 126, 139, 193, 196, 213
- off-world placement 51–3, 56, 57, 60, 138–40, 173, 177, 193
- Ogoni 60
- Ogun 246
- oikos* 18, 19, 81
 - colonial 115, 124–6, 127, 128
- Ojibwe xvii, xviii
- ontological imperialism 38
- Orishas 246
- othercide 29, 31, 186
 - see also* ethnocide; genocide
- otherness 52, 139, 200
- Ouidah 131, 135
- Pachamama 184, 237
- Paget, Henry 20
- Palcy, Euzhan xv
- Palmares, Zumbi dos 146
- Palmier, Captain Thomas 77
- Papaya peasant movement 16
- paradise on Earth 100, 105
- Paraíso* slave ship 99
- Parks, Rosa 14, 201
- patriarchy xvii, 41
- Péan, Leslie 147
- Peltier, Leonard xv
- People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit (1991) 177
- Pépin, Ernest 137
- pesticides 112, 123
 - see also* chlordecone
- Pétion, Alexandre 96
- Pétre-Grenouilleau, Olivier 52
- petrochemical industries xvi
 - see also* toxic chemicals
- Philip, M. NourbeSe 193
- Phillips, Wendell 171
- plantationary emancipation 117–21
- Plantationocene 21, 32–3, 38–47, 59, 103, 146, 158
 - biological revolution 38
 - cosmopolitical level 46–7
 - ecosystem ruptures 42–5
 - exploitative logic 38, 39–40, 42–3
 - geographical level 46
 - heterotopic legacy 186
 - historical level 46
 - master's chemistry 108–12
 - material and economic level 45
 - matricides 21, 38, 38–9, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 81, 149, 246
 - political level 46
 - struggle against 8, 172, 208, 224, 226–8
 - toxic condition of 108, 109

- Planter* slave ship 36
 Plumwood, Val 181, 221, 223
 plurality of worlds 234
 Pogba, Paul 217
 Poivre, Pierre 6, 103, 115–17, 242
 political ecology 6, 18
 pollution xvi–xvii, 2, 4, 14, 15, 105, 112, 178, 211, 215, 235, 240, 242
 see also toxic chemicals
 Polynesia 8, 9, 123, 236
 poor people's ecology 178
 population bomb 84
 Port-au-Prince 137, 138
 postcolonial ecocriticism 15
 postcolonial thought 3, 176, 177
 power, coloniality of 176
 predation, experience of 221
 prey pedagogy 222
 prey-beings 221–2
 Price, Richard 152
 prison industrial complex xviii
 prison populations 220
 Puerto Rico 33, 39, 44, 67, 99–105, 122, 183, 212
 environmentalist movements 16, 102

 Quakers 118
 Queen Nanny 146, 156
 queer theory 231
 Quenet, Grégory 100
 Quijano, Aníbal 14, 176
quilombos 153, 184, 204

 racial capitalism xiv, xv
 racial profiling 218, 222
 racialized people 3, 4, 14, 178
 racism xvii, 60, 178, 184, 217, 236, 245
 biological 217
 environmental xvi–xvii, 15, 179, 236
 scientific 13
 structural xv
 radioactive waste 212
 Rancière, Jacques 57
 Rastafarianism 198
 REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals) 108
 Reclus, Élisée 160–1
 reforestation policies 89, 91–2, 185
 charcoal replacement strategies 91–2
 environmental police force 91
 forest conservation management 12, 115
 reforestation without the world 91, 98
 responsibility of the peasantry 92
 sacrifice of the body 92
 social engineering 92
 refusal of the world 10, 21, 51–3, 83–6, 175, 193, 195–8, 199, 203
 relational ontologies 230–1, 233
 religious colonialism 26, 28, 29, 41–2, 117
Rencontre slave ship 191
 reparations for slavery and the slave trade 237–8
 Restog, Serge 61
 return
 desire for 198–9
 environmentalist 195–8
 politics of encounter 199–203
 Réunion Island 208
 Richelieu, Cardinal 28, 29
 Roberts, Neil 147
 Robinson, Cedric 14
 Rochefort, Charles de 39
 Rodney, Walter 246
 Rolston, Holmes 85

- Rothenberg, Jason 195
 Roumain, Jacques 15, 58
 Masters of the Dew 232
 Rousseau, Jean-Jacques 6, 13,
 124, 161–4, 232
 Maroon writing 163
 Reveries of the Solitary Walker
 162
 The Social Contract 162, 164
 Royal Society for the Prevention
 of Cruelty to Animals 224
 ruptures, ecosystem
 ancestral and community
 affiliations 53, 54
 in biodiversity 43
 ecumenal rupture 40–2, 53
 in landscape 42–3
 metabolic rift 43–4
 in the relationship with the
 body 53
 in the relationship with the
 land 54
 Rustin, Bayard 8
 Rwanda 10

 sacralization of the land 41
 Christian 41–2
 sacrifice of Atlas 92
 sacrifice of justice 92
 sacrificer 84–5, 200, 202–3
 Said, Edward 176, 177
 Saint Barthélemy 67
 Saint-Christophe 31, 32, 39–40
 see also Saint Kitts and Nevis
 Saint-Domingue 173, 182
 see also Haiti
 Saint Kitts and Nevis 26, 39
 Saint Lucia 122, 154
 Saint Martin 67
 Saint-Pierre, Bernardin de 116
 Saint Vincent 40, 137
 San Salvador 30
 Sanes, David 102
 Sankara, Thomas 16, 176, 195

 Santería 54
 Santo Domingo 32, 33, 39, 45,
 87, 122, 140
 Saramaka 16, 152, 154–5, 239
 Saro-Wiwa, Ken 60
 Sarr, Felwine 239
 Savoy, Bénédicte 239
 Schœlcher, Victor 117–18, 119
 school history programs 246
 Schwartz-Bart, André 155
 A Woman Named Solitude
 162
 Schwartz-Bart, Simone 111
 science fiction, ecological 195,
 200
 scientific imperialism 9
 scientific racism 13
 Scott-Heron, Gil 35
 “Whitey on the Moon” 195
 Sea Shepherd 123
 Seguin Foundation 93
 self-abandonment 141–2
 Serres, Michel 79, 80, 81, 82,
 83
 The Natural Contract 195
 sexual domination of enslaved
 women 31, 57, 58
 sexual relations between Black
 and White people 217
 Shakespeare, William, *The*
 Tempest 2, 66–7, 74
 Shango 246
 Sharp, Granville 117–18
 Sharpe, Christina 58, 135
 Sharpton, Al 102
 shipwrecked condition 134–8,
 139
 Shiva, Vandana 185
 Sierra Club 123
 Sierra Leone 157, 199
 Sint Maarten 67
 Sismondi, Jean Charles Léonard
 de 119
 Sistah Vegan Project 225

- slave ship 13, 21, 22, 132–87, 172, 192–3, 245–6
 - avenger 142, 201, 203
 - debarkation politics 133–4, 140, 193, 194, 201, 203
 - emancipation-exit 140, 141
 - flight from encounter 141–3, 143, 201
 - hold politics 50–3, 54, 55, 57
 - imaginary ark of the Creole world 132, 133, 139
 - insurance contracts 72–3
 - kamikaze figure 142, 201, 203
 - lost bodies 134, 139, 205
 - Maroon 201, 203
 - modernity's hold 3, 12, 13, 20, 62, 160, 238
 - Nègre épave* 141, 201, 203
 - off-world 138–40, 193
 - on-board deaths 51, 134–5
 - political metaphor 22
 - return to Mother-Earth 195
 - rising up from the hold 139–43, 175, 183–7
 - semantic path 192
 - shipwrecked condition 134–8, 139
 - suicidal one 142, 201, 203
 - wandering, imposed 193, 194
 - womb-abyss 133, 134, 141
 - Zong* massacre 72–3, 136
- slave-making inhabitation of the Earth 224–6
- slavery 33–4, 50
 - African slaves 64–5
 - agency, permitted 56–7
 - archaeology of 61
 - “ebony wood” designation 59, 133
 - energy “resource” 59
 - enslaved person as movable property 54, 139
 - enslavement to slavery 167–8
 - Negrocene 21, 50, 58–62, 146, 158
 - non-political beings 56–7
 - non-racializing approach to 60
 - non-responsibility, condition of 54–5
 - off-world placement of the enslaved person 51–3, 55, 56–7, 60, 138–40, 173, 193
 - otherness 139
 - ruptures imposed by 53–4
 - slave-making ecology 51, 115–17, 121
 - socio-political dimensions 58
 - spaces of resistance 54, 55, 61, 209–10
 - transatlantic slave trade 13, 21, 26, 34, 50, 51, 53, 66
 - see also* antislavery and abolitionism; Plantationocene; women, enslaved
- slum ecology 178, 184
- Smith, Damu xv, xvi
- snakes 228
- social ecology 6
- social justice 6, 8, 12, 92, 127, 184, 185, 206, 211, 225, 242
- soil degradation 43, 44, 96, 97, 97, 104, 115
- Soleil d'Afrique* slave ship 241
- Somalia 187
- space shuttle 78
- spaces of resistance 54, 55, 61, 209–10
 - see also* marronage
- Spaceship Earth 78
- Spain
 - colonial inhabitation 30, 39
 - Reconquista 6
- speciesism xvii, 216, 225
- Speedy* slave ship 215

- Spiegel, Marjorie, *The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery* 216
 Standing Rock xviii, 183
Star Trek 78, 234
 statelessness 193–4
 see also off-world placement
 Steffen, Will 78
 Stengers, Isabelle 182
 Stevenson, Adlai 78
 Stevenson, Bryan 220
 stewardship 78
 Stockholm Resilience Center 108
 Stowe, Harriet Beecher, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* 118, 171
 streets, renaming 180–1
 structural deculturation 134
 structural racism xv
 subaltern studies 176
 subsistence agriculture 39, 111
 sugar boycotts 171
 sugar-cane cultivation 32, 34, 40, 42, 43, 44, 115
 suicidal person 142, 201, 203
 Suriname 16, 122, 140, 147, 239
 Maroons 140, 154–5, 199, 239
 “Survivre et vivre” 9
 Sutherland, Bill 8
 sympathy-without-connection 9, 91, 168, 196

 Taino 181, 183, 245
 Tassin, Étienne 17, 136
 Taubira, Christiane 14, 217, 237, 244
 tax havens 44, 100
 technocentric approach to
 ecological issues 21, 89, 91, 93
 Thoreau, Cynthia 165, 170–1
 Thoreau, Helen 170–1
 Thoreau, Henry David 6, 13, 21, 148, 159, 161, 162, 164–70, 172, 186, 232
 antislavery commitment 165–6, 169
 Civil Disobedience 164, 165
 Maroon *praxis* 166, 168, 169, 170
 Slavery in Massachusetts 165
 sympathy for marronage 165–6
 “True Freedom” 166
 Walden 164, 165, 167, 168, 170
 Thoreau, Sophia 165, 170–1
 Tin, Louis-Georges 238
 toxic chemicals xiv–xv, xvi, 21, 108, 109–13, 123, 186, 205, 206, 207, 211, 235
 toxic colonialism 186–7
 transatlantic slave trade 13, 21, 26, 34, 50, 51, 53, 66
 international prohibition of 192
 see also slave ship; slavery
 Transcendental Club 169
 transgenerational justice 235, 236, 240
 Traoré, Adama 221
 Trinidad 39, 59
 Tromelin Island 82
 trophy-bodies 218–20
 Truth, Sojourner 156
 Tsing, Anna 45
 Tubman, Harriet 14, 156
 Turner, J. M. W., *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On* xix, 2, 71–2, 192–3
 “269 Animal Liberation” 225

 Ubuntu 246
 umbilical paths, world's 235
 Underground Railroad 165

- United States 104, 196, 236
 - African American prison population 220
 - Caribbean military base 101–2
 - civil rights struggles 123, 184
 - decolonization of 122
 - environmental justice movement 184, 186, 211
 - lynchings 219
 - nuclear tests 123, 184
 - under-representation of minorities in environmental discourse 4
- United States Virgin Islands 122
- uranium mining 8, 123, 212
- urban ecology 184
- Urgenda 235
- Utile* slave ship 82, 83
- Valère, Laurent, Anse Cafard Memorial, Martinique 130, 135
- Valladolid controversy (1550) 13
- Varikas, Eleni 14
- Vergès, Françoise 60, 176
- Verreaux, Jules 219
- Vidalou, Jean-Baptiste 185
- Vieques 21, 101–2
 - reserve 103, 104–5
 - US military base 101–2
- violence
 - of the blank page 103–4
 - colonial inhabitation 26, 30
 - of deforestation 97
 - of the plantations 46, 57, 109, 186
 - police 211
 - against women 6, 20, 26, 31, 223, 224
- voodoo 54, 95, 246
- Walcott, Derek 133
- Walker, Alice 60–1, 185, 216, 232
- Walks, Catherine 14
- Wallerstein, Immanuel 18
- Wanderer* slave ship 159, 160
- Ward, Barbara 78
- Watts, David 39
- wealth, redistribution of 242
- Wedgwood, Josiah 118
- whaling ships 215
- white supremacy xiv, xv
- Wilberforce, William 118, 224
- wilderness ideology 104, 123, 148, 197
- Wildfire* slave ship 114
- Williams, Eric 60
- Williams, Venus and Serena 217
- Wilmington Ten xvi
- women
 - abortion practices 142, 208
 - animalization of 223–4
 - Black feminism 7, 14, 176, 205
 - decolonial ecology 184–5
 - decolonial political feminism 176
 - ecofeminism 6, 195
 - ecowomanism 185
 - enslaved and formerly enslaved 14, 31, 57–8, 120, 142, 170, 208
 - femicides 223
 - gendered domination of 14, 31, 58, 120
 - gyn-ecology 209
 - indigenous 185
 - Maroonesses 155–6
 - sexual domination of 31, 57, 58, 224
 - violence against 6, 20, 26, 31, 223, 224
 - White antislavery commitment 170–1
 - wombs, colonial exploitation of 58, 142, 208
- world devourer 85–6, 200, 203

- world-ecology 18
- World Health Organization (WHO) 108
- world horizon of ecology 17, 19, 20
- world-making 17, 18, 21, 230, 242–4
- world-ship 20, 21–2, 192–240, 242
 - bridge of justice 22, 201, 203, 234–40, 242
 - construction 20, 187, 244
 - loss-bodies and lost bodies, finding 205
 - politics of encounter 199–203
 - shipmates 201, 202, 203
- worldization 17
- worldly-ecology 20, 22, 230, 231, 232–3, 234, 246–7
- Wynter, Sylvia 14, 19, 244
 - Black Metamorphosis* 152
- xeno-warrior 84, 200, 202
- Yanga, Gaspar 148
- yellow fever 227, 228
- Yosemite Park 104
- Yusoff, Kathryn 9
- Zeus 140
- Zobel, Joseph 61
- Zong* slave ship 2, 72–3, 136, 192
- Zwarte Piet* 217

POLITY END USER LICENSE AGREEMENT

Go to www.politybooks.com/eula to access Polity's ebook EULA.