



## The Politics of Poetics: Subversion and Power in Free Verse

Kumar Sajan

Poet, India

### Abstract

This paper explores the emergence and evolution of free verse as a radical poetic form that subverts traditional literary structures, serving as a tool of power, liberation, and resistance. Free verse, which rejects the constraints of fixed meter and rhyme, allows poets to experiment with form, rhythm, and language, creating a space for personal expression and political critique. The study traces its origins with “Walt Whitman, whose *Leaves of Grass* celebrated individuality and democratic ideals, marking the beginning of poetry as a medium for freedom and autonomy. Building on Whitman’s innovations, modernist poets like T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound used free verse to reflect societal disillusionment, fragmentation, and the chaos of a rapidly changing world. Later, poets such as Langston Hughes and Adrienne Rich employed free verse to address issues of racial inequality, gender oppression, and social justice, transforming poetry into a form of activism. Postmodern poets, including Allen Ginsberg and John Ashbery, expanded free verse further, challenging linguistic norms and linear narratives to reflect cultural pluralism and existential uncertainty. In contemporary times, poets like Claudia Rankine and Ocean Vuong have used free verse to amplify marginalized voices, exploring themes of identity, trauma, and migration while breaking literary boundaries. This study argues that free verse is inherently political, as its rejection of formal constraints mirrors its defiance of societal hierarchies. By embracing innovation, fragmentation, and rhythm, free verse democratizes poetic expression, offering a platform for resistance, self-discovery, and collective transformation. Through close readings and thematic analysis, the paper highlights free verse’s ability to convey power, subversion, and cultural critique, making it a dynamic and enduring form in modern literature.

**Keywords:** Free Verse, Subversion, Liberation, Walt Whitman, Modernism, Postmodernism, Power, Fragmentation, Social Justice, Identity.

### Introduction

Free verse represents a revolutionary shift in the history of poetry, breaking away from the rigid structures of traditional meter and rhyme to allow for artistic freedom, personal expression, and



cultural subversion. Emerging as a response to the formal constraints of classical poetry, free verse embodies a rejection of hierarchy, making it a powerful tool for poets to challenge literary norms, societal conventions, and systems of power. Its origins can be traced back to Walt Whitman, whose *Leaves of Grass* redefined poetry as a democratic and inclusive form that celebrated individuality, nature, and the human spirit. Whitman's rejection of meter and rhyme mirrored his belief in equality and freedom, setting the stage for modernist poets who sought to express the fragmentation and disillusionment of the 20th century. In works like T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, free verse becomes a reflection of the fractured modern world, where form and meaning are disrupted to mirror societal chaos and existential uncertainty. Similarly, Ezra Pound embraced imagism in free verse, prioritizing precision, brevity, and stark imagery to create unadorned, liberated expressions of meaning. The adaptability of free verse made it an ideal medium for poets like Langston Hughes, who used its fluidity to give voice to the African American experience, tackling themes of racial injustice, identity, and resilience in works like **The Negro Speaks of Rivers**.

As the 20th century progressed, free verse became a central tool for feminist poets such as Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde, who used its flexibility to dismantle patriarchal language and reclaim female agency. In Rich's *Diving into the Wreck*, free verse allows for a nonlinear exploration of suppressed histories and self-discovery, while Lorde's poetry highlights the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality. The form's lack of constraints empowers these poets to write with emotional rawness and political urgency, challenging societal expectations and redefining poetic traditions. Postmodern poets like Allen Ginsberg, in his iconic *Howl*, pushed the boundaries of free verse further, using its expansiveness to critique consumerism, cultural repression, and institutional power while amplifying the countercultural spirit of the 1950s and 1960s.

In contemporary poetry, free verse remains a dynamic and politically charged form, used to amplify marginalized voices and engage with global issues. Poets like Claudia Rankine and Ocean Vuong harness free verse to confront systemic injustice, trauma, and identity. Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric* blends poetry with visual art and prose to address racial inequities, while Vuong's *Night Sky with Exit Wounds* uses the flexibility of free verse to explore themes of migration, queerness, and familial loss. These contemporary works demonstrate how free verse, with its openness and rejection of literary formalism, allows poets to create innovative, inclusive spaces for personal and collective expression. Free verse remains inherently political,



as its formal freedom mirrors its capacity to challenge cultural and societal hierarchies. By rejecting rigidity and embracing experimentation, free verse poetry becomes a site of resistance, transformation, and empowerment, offering a vital platform for voices that seek to critique, redefine, and reclaim power through artistic liberation.

### **Defining Free Verse**

Free verse is a form of poetry that breaks away from the traditional constraints of meter, rhyme, and formal structure, giving poets the freedom to express their thoughts and emotions with greater fluidity and individuality. Unlike classical poetry, where rhythm and rhyme schemes govern the poem's form, free verse allows language to flow organically, following the natural cadence of speech, thought, or emotion. The essence of free verse lies in its emphasis on flexibility, where the arrangement of words, line breaks, pauses, and silences play a significant role in shaping meaning. The absence of fixed rules liberates the poet to experiment with form, tone, and structure, creating a work where content and form coexist harmoniously. This approach does not imply an absence of rhythm or artistic intent; rather, it encourages innovation, as rhythm emerges naturally through repetition, alliteration, imagery, and lineation. Free verse often aligns itself with themes of liberation, resistance, and individuality, reflecting the poet's refusal to adhere to imposed constraints, whether artistic, social, or political. Its unpredictability and openness allow poets to mirror the complexity and fluidity of life itself. The visual aspect of free verse, with its variable line lengths and stanza arrangements, adds an additional layer of meaning, emphasizing certain words or ideas while creating tension through pauses or silence". By rejecting the rigidity of formal structures, free verse embraces a new poetic aesthetic, democratizing the art of poetry and inviting diverse voices to express themselves authentically. As poets use language in its most unfiltered form, free verse becomes a reflection of personal freedom, enabling exploration of themes such as identity, love, social injustice, and existential questions. Its power lies in its capacity to disrupt literary traditions, giving poets the autonomy to break boundaries and forge a path for modern and contemporary poetic innovation.

### **Historical Development**

Free verse emerged as a radical response to the rigid structures of traditional poetry, taking shape during the 19th century and gaining prominence in the modernist era. Before its rise,

poetry was largely governed by fixed meter, rhyme schemes, and formalized structures like the sonnet, villanelle, and epic. “These forms were seen as markers of poetic discipline and artistry. However, as societal, cultural, and intellectual changes unfolded during the 19th century, poets began to question these literary norms. Free verse, or *vers libre*, found its roots in the works of Walt Whitman, particularly his groundbreaking collection *Leaves of Grass* (1855), where he abandoned rhyme and meter in favor of expansive, flowing lines that mirrored the rhythms of natural speech and thought. Whitman’s poetry celebrated the individual, the collective human experience, and democratic ideals, and his rejection of form reflected his belief in artistic and social freedom.

The modernist period, spanning the early 20th century, marked a significant turning point for free verse. Poets like T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and William Carlos Williams pushed the boundaries of poetic form, using free verse to capture the fragmentation, disillusionment, and chaos of modern life. T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922) epitomized this shift, using fragmented lines, disjointed rhythms, and multiple voices to reflect the cultural and existential crises of the postwar world. Simultaneously, Ezra Pound’s imagist movement prioritized clarity, precision, and economy of language, often expressed through free verse. Imagist poets believed that form should serve the poem’s subject, rejecting artificiality and embracing minimalism. Free verse provided an ideal medium for these modernist innovations, allowing poets to experiment with new techniques, forms, and perspectives.

Free verse also became a powerful tool for marginalized voices, enabling poets like Langston Hughes to capture the rhythms of Black speech and music while addressing issues of race, injustice, and identity. As free verse continued to evolve, it reflected the changing cultural and intellectual landscapes of the time. The mid-20th century saw feminist poets like Adrienne Rich and countercultural figures like Allen Ginsberg using free verse to challenge societal norms, reclaim suppressed identities, and critique systems of oppression. By rejecting literary conventions, free verse emerged as a dynamic and flexible form that embraced individuality, experimentation, and cultural transformation, redefining the possibilities of poetry.

### **Free Verse as Subversion**

Free verse is inherently subversive, as it rejects the formal constraints of traditional poetry, embodying an act of artistic, cultural, and political rebellion. By liberating poetry from rigid meter and rhyme, free verse dismantles hierarchical literary traditions that have historically



prioritized form over content, offering poets the freedom to express themselves authentically. Its emergence during the 19th century, particularly through the works of Walt Whitman, reflected a deliberate rejection of classical poetic norms in favor of a new, democratic aesthetic. Whitman's expansive, unstructured lines in *Leaves of Grass* celebrated individuality, equality, and the rhythms of ordinary speech, subverting the elitist notion that poetry must conform to strict rules to possess artistic merit. His work marked the beginning of a movement where form became secondary to meaning, empowering poets to prioritize emotional and intellectual freedom.

The subversive nature of free verse gained momentum during the modernist period, when poets like T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Langston Hughes used the form to challenge both literary conventions and societal norms. Eliot's *The Waste Land* disrupted traditional poetic structures to reflect the fragmentation and chaos of the modern world, mirroring the cultural and existential crises brought about by war and industrialization. In contrast, Hughes employed free verse to subvert racial hierarchies, using the rhythms of jazz and Black vernacular to celebrate African American culture while confronting racial injustice. Similarly, feminist poets like Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde used free verse as a means of resistance, rejecting patriarchal language and reclaiming their voices. Rich's *Diving into the Wreck* explores themes of self-discovery and systemic oppression through fragmented lines and non-linear forms, challenging the dominance of male narratives in literature.

Free verse's ability to break linguistic, thematic, and structural boundaries makes it a potent form of cultural critique and political resistance. It reflects a rejection of authority, conformity, and homogeneity, empowering marginalized voices to express their lived realities without constraint. Postmodern poets like Allen Ginsberg and John Ashbery expanded free verse further, using it to disrupt notions of coherence, meaning, and authority. Ginsberg's *Howl* pushed the boundaries of poetic form, using sprawling, unrestrained lines to critique consumerism, repression, and institutional power while amplifying the countercultural spirit of his time. In contemporary poetry, writers like Claudia Rankine and Ocean Vuong continue to use free verse as a subversive tool, addressing themes of race, queerness, and identity through experimentation with form, narrative, and voice. Free verse's open structure allows for pauses, silences, and fragmentation, mirroring the complexity of personal and collective experiences while resisting oppressive systems. By breaking free from traditional constraints, free verse



becomes a dynamic and revolutionary medium for self-expression, challenging norms, reclaiming marginalized perspectives, and redefining the politics of poetics.

### **The Origins of Free Verse: Walt Whitman and Early Subversion**

The origins of free verse can be traced to the 19th century, with Walt Whitman often regarded as its founding figure and a pioneer of poetic subversion. Whitman's groundbreaking collection *Leaves of Grass* (1855) marked a dramatic departure from the rigid structures of traditional poetry, including fixed meter, rhyme schemes, and constrained stanzas. He broke free from poetic conventions, creating expansive lines that mirrored the rhythms of natural speech, thought, and breath. Whitman's poetry celebrated individuality, democracy, and the interconnectedness of humanity, aligning form with content to reflect a vision of inclusivity and freedom. His rejection of meter and rhyme was not an absence of discipline but an intentional act of artistic rebellion, symbolizing his belief in equality and the boundless potential of human experience. By allowing his verse to flow organically, Whitman embodied the principles of self-expression and spontaneity. Poems like *Song of Myself* and *I Sing the Body Electric* exemplify his approach, with long, flowing lines and cataloging techniques that capture the diversity of life, from the physical body to the spiritual self. Whitman's free verse also represented a subversion of literary elitism, democratizing poetry by embracing themes of ordinary life, the working class, and marginalized voices. This act of breaking formal constraints mirrored his ideological commitment to freedom, inclusion, and self-determination. His poetry rejected the exclusivity of the traditional literary canon, presenting a bold vision where all experiences—regardless of class, gender, or race—were worthy of poetic representation. The organic structure of his verse allowed for an unfiltered exploration of life's complexities, presenting the poet as both an observer and participant in the vastness of human experience. Whitman's work laid the foundation for free verse as an artistic and political act, inspiring generations of poets to reject constraint and embrace a liberated form of poetic expression.

### **Free Verse and Modernism: Breaking Tradition**

The modernist period of the early 20th century marked a significant turning point for free verse, as poets embraced it to reflect the fragmentation, disillusionment, and chaos of a rapidly changing world. Modernist poets rejected the ornate, rigid structures of Victorian poetry,



believing that traditional forms no longer captured the fractured realities of postwar society, industrialization, and existential uncertainty. Free verse became a tool for breaking poetic traditions and expressing the alienation and complexity of modern life. T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) stands as a prime example of this modernist innovation, using fragmented lines, disjointed imagery, and multiple voices to reflect the cultural and spiritual desolation of the post-World War I era. Eliot's lack of meter and rhyme mirrors the brokenness of the world he depicts, while his use of free verse allows for a dynamic and non-linear exploration of meaning. Similarly, Ezra Pound, a central figure in the Imagist movement, used free verse to emphasize clarity, precision, and economy of language. Pound's poems, like *In a Station of the Metro*, strip away unnecessary words, focusing on visual imagery and brevity to create immediate, powerful impressions. This technique reflected the modernist desire to make poetry relevant to the fast-paced, industrialized world.

The modernist embrace of free verse was also a rejection of literary elitism, as poets sought new ways to connect with readers on a deeper, more authentic level. Langston Hughes, a key figure of the Harlem Renaissance, used free verse to celebrate Black identity and culture while addressing racial injustice and inequality". In works like *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*, Hughes employed the rhythm of free verse to echo the cadence of jazz, spirituals, and Black vernacular speech, creating a form of poetry that was both innovative and culturally rooted. Modernist poets saw free verse as an opportunity to experiment with voice, perspective, and structure, breaking boundaries between high and low art, personal and collective experience, and order and chaos. This embrace of freedom in form reflected their critique of a world that felt increasingly fragmented and unstable. The flexibility of free verse allowed modernist poets to challenge the notion that poetry needed to conform to established rules to achieve beauty or meaning. By rejecting tradition, they redefined the relationship between form and content, setting the stage for further innovations in postmodern and contemporary poetry.

### **Feminist Poets and Free Verse: Reclaiming Voice and Power**

Feminist poets have used free verse as a powerful tool to reclaim voice, agency, and space in a literary tradition historically dominated by patriarchal norms. The rejection of formal constraints in free verse mirrors feminist poets' resistance to societal expectations that sought to silence or limit women's experiences. Poets like Adrienne Rich, Sylvia Plath, and Audre Lorde embraced free verse to articulate themes of female identity, the female body, domestic



oppression, and political resistance. Adrienne Rich is particularly celebrated for her deliberate use of free verse to challenge patriarchal language and narratives. In her seminal collection *Diving into the Wreck*, Rich subverts traditional poetic forms to explore themes of self-discovery, systemic injustice, and the reclamation of women's suppressed histories. Her fragmented lines and open structure reflect the complexity of feminist struggles, empowering women to navigate their identities on their terms.

Similarly, Audre "Lorde used free verse to address the intersectionality of race, gender, and sexuality. In poems like *Coal* and *A Litany for Survival*, Lorde's free verse form amplifies the urgency and anger of marginalized voices, reclaiming language as a weapon for liberation. Her poetry uses natural rhythms, enjambment, and stark imagery to challenge systemic oppression and celebrate the resilience of Black women. Sylvia Plath, while often associated with confessional poetry, broke formal traditions in works like *Ariel*, where free verse allows her to explore themes of mental anguish, motherhood, and female autonomy with raw intensity. Plath's rejection of rigid poetic structures reflects her resistance to societal constraints, using unrestrained, unpredictable rhythms to convey the chaos of her inner world.

Feminist poets' use of free verse not only liberated their creative expression but also redefined poetic subjects and perspectives. By rejecting the formal confines that reflected patriarchal values, they gave voice to women's lived experiences—whether trauma, rage, love, or empowerment—that had been historically dismissed as unworthy of poetic exploration. Free verse's flexibility enabled feminist poets to reclaim the female body as a site of agency and power, subverting male-dominated representations of women. In contemporary times, poets like Carol Ann Duffy and Rupi Kaur continue to use free verse to engage with feminist themes, breaking down barriers of accessibility and tradition to reach wider audiences. Through free verse, feminist poets have transformed poetry into a medium of resistance, solidarity, and liberation, asserting their right to define their voices and experiences in a world that often sought to silence them.

### **Postmodernism and the Expansion of Free Verse**

Postmodernism expanded the possibilities of free verse, turning it into a playground for experimentation, ambiguity, and cultural critique. Emerging in the mid-20th century, postmodern poets rejected the idea of a singular truth or meaning, using free verse to deconstruct language, narrative, and literary authority. This period saw poets pushing free verse



to its limits, embracing fragmentation, non-linearity, and intertextuality to reflect a world defined by pluralism, disarray, and existential uncertainty. Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* epitomizes the postmodern spirit, using sprawling, unrestrained lines to critique consumerism, repression, and institutional power while capturing the countercultural energy of the 1950s. Ginsberg's rhythmic, breath-driven free verse dismantles traditional poetic forms, creating a space for raw, unfiltered expression that mirrors the chaos and urgency of the world he describes.

John Ashbery, another prominent postmodern poet, further expanded free verse by blurring the boundaries between coherence and abstraction. In *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror*, Ashbery's fragmented syntax and shifting perspectives create a kaleidoscopic exploration of meaning and identity, reflecting the postmodern rejection of fixed narratives. Free verse in postmodern poetry becomes a medium for destabilizing conventional expectations of form, language, and meaning, encouraging readers to engage with ambiguity and multiplicity. Poets like Charles Olson and Denise Levertov embraced free verse to explore the relationship between breath, voice, and the page, developing the projective verse technique, where form emerges organically from the poet's breath and thought processes.

The postmodern expansion of free verse also embraced cultural hybridity, incorporating diverse voices, languages, and perspectives. Poets like Lorna Dee Cervantes and Joy Harjo used free verse to explore themes of race, indigenous identity, and cultural displacement, reflecting postmodernism's emphasis on marginalized narratives. By rejecting linearity and embracing open-ended structures, postmodern poets turned free verse into a form of resistance against literary and cultural hegemony. This expansion not only redefined the possibilities of poetic expression but also made free verse a vehicle for representing the fragmented, pluralistic nature of contemporary existence.

### **Contemporary Free Verse: Identity, Marginalization, and Social Justice**

In contemporary poetry, free verse has emerged as a vital form for exploring themes of identity, marginalization, and social justice, providing a flexible and inclusive space for diverse voices. Poets from various cultural, racial, and gendered backgrounds use free verse to articulate personal and collective experiences, addressing systemic injustices, trauma, and resilience. Claudia Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric* is a powerful example of contemporary free verse, blending prose, poetry, and visual art to examine racial injustice and microaggressions in America. Rankine's use of fragmented structures and varied forms reflects the fractured

realities of marginalized individuals, creating a poetic experience that is both intimate and political. Similarly, Ocean Vuong, in *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*, employs free verse to explore themes of migration, queerness, and familial loss. Vuong's fluid, open-ended lines mirror the complexities of identity and the dislocation experienced by refugees and LGBTQ+ individuals, making his work deeply personal yet universally resonant.

Free verse also thrives as a platform for feminist and queer voices, allowing poets like Tracy K. Smith and Danez Smith to challenge dominant narratives and redefine identity. Tracy K. Smith's *Life on Mars* weaves cosmic and personal themes, using free verse to explore grief, memory, and the human condition, while Danez Smith's *Don't Call Us Dead* confronts racial violence and queerness with unflinching honesty. The flexibility of free verse enables these poets to experiment with form, incorporating silence, pauses, and nonlinear structures to create layers of meaning. Digital platforms and social media have further amplified contemporary free verse, enabling poets like Rupi Kaur to reach global audiences with accessible language and themes of healing, empowerment, and identity.

Contemporary free verse reflects a world marked by cultural hybridity, technological change, and ongoing struggles for justice and equality. Its openness allows poets to dismantle literary boundaries, amplify marginalized perspectives, and address urgent social issues. By rejecting formal constraints, contemporary poets transform free verse into a dynamic tool for resistance, storytelling, and self-expression, ensuring its enduring relevance in a rapidly evolving world.

### **Techniques and Innovations in Free Verse**

Free verse, while rejecting the fixed constraints of meter and rhyme, employs a variety of innovative techniques to create rhythm, meaning, and emotional resonance. One of the most significant techniques in free verse is the use of line breaks and enjambment, which disrupt the flow of a sentence to emphasize certain words or ideas, create tension, or mirror fragmented thought. This technique allows poets to control pacing, introduce pauses, and highlight key images or emotions. For example, William Carlos Williams' *The Red Wheelbarrow* uses line breaks to create a minimalist, visual rhythm that underscores the simplicity and importance of the poem's subject.

Another hallmark of free verse is its reliance on natural speech rhythms, often mimicking the cadence of spoken language to create an organic, conversational tone. Walt Whitman pioneered this technique in *Leaves of Grass*, where his expansive lines reflect the breath and flow of



natural speech, creating a sense of intimacy and immediacy. Imagery and symbolism also play a central role in free verse, as poets rely on precise, vivid language to evoke emotions and convey meaning. Modernist poets like Ezra Pound used imagism to strip away ornamentation, focusing on concise, clear imagery to capture fleeting moments of clarity and beauty.

Contemporary poets have expanded free verse by experimenting with visual form and the use of space on the page. Poets like E. E. Cummings and Claudia Rankine manipulate line lengths, indentations, and white space to create visual tension, enhance meaning, and draw readers' attention to the relationship between form and content. Free verse also embraces fragmentation and juxtaposition, reflecting the disjointed nature of modern and postmodern life. T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* epitomizes this technique, using fragmented voices, allusions, and imagery to capture societal collapse and existential uncertainty.

Additionally, free verse often incorporates multiple voices and perspectives, reflecting the pluralistic nature of contemporary identity and experience. This inclusivity allows poets to explore themes of race, gender, queerness, and marginalization, amplifying underrepresented voices in literature. Rhythm without meter is another defining feature, as poets use repetition, alliteration, and assonance to create internal musicality and flow. Free verse's adaptability has made it a dynamic tool for innovation, enabling poets to experiment with form, language, and voice to reflect the complexities of the modern world". By rejecting rigidity, free verse continues to redefine the boundaries of poetic expression, empowering poets to explore themes of freedom, resistance, and individuality with limitless creativity.

## **Conclusion**

Free verse has redefined the boundaries of poetic expression, transforming poetry into a powerful tool for subversion, innovation, and liberation. By rejecting traditional structures of meter and rhyme, free verse allows for artistic freedom, empowering poets to explore themes of identity, social justice, and resistance. From Walt Whitman's democratic vision to modernist fragmentation, feminist reclamation, and contemporary explorations of marginalization, free verse has remained a dynamic and inclusive form. Its flexibility reflects the complexity of human experience, enabling poets to challenge conventions and amplify diverse voices. As a continually evolving medium, free verse reaffirms poetry's role as a force for personal and collective transformation.



## Reference

- Apollon, Willy, 1976, *Le Vaudou: Un espace pour les "voix,"* Paris: Editions Galilée.
- Apollon, Willy, Danielle Bergeron, Lucie Cantin, 2002, *After Lacan: Clinical Practice and the Subject of the Unconscious*, ed. Robert Hughes and Karen Ror Malone, Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Aragon, Louis, 1954, "Du sonnet," *Les Lettres françaises* 506,4 March: 1-5.
- Aragon, Louis, 1954, "Préface to Guillevic" in *31 Sonnets*, Paris: Gallimard, 9-42.
- Arnold, James, 2017, "Glossary" in *The Complete Poetry of Aimé Césaire*, trans. Clayton Eshleman and James Arnold, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- Canning, Peter, and Tracy McNulty, 1999, "The Crisis of Possession," *Jouvert* 3.1&2, <https://legacy.chass.ncsu.edu/jouvert/v3i12/apollo.htm>
- Césaire, Aimé, 2017, *The Complete Poetry of Aimé Césaire*, trans. Clayton Eshleman and James Arnold, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 805-809.
- 1955, "Sur la poésie nationale," *Présence Africaine*, 2nd série, IV, Oct-Nov: 39-41.
- 2010, "Letter to Maurice Thorez," trans. Chike Jeffers, *Social Text* 28.2.
- Ciccariello-Maher, George, 2017, *Decolonizing Dialectics*, Durham: Duke University Press.
- Dayan, Colin. *Haiti, History, and the Gods*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Depestre, René, 1955a, Letter to Charles Dobzynski in *Les Lettres Française*, 573, June: 16-23.
- 1955b, "Réponse à Aimé Césaire (Introduction à un art poétique haïtien)," *Présence Africaine* 2nd série, n.IV, oct-nov: 42-62. Reprinted in *Présence Africaine*, "Débat Autour d'une Poésie Nationale," n.165/166, 2002: 207-269,
- A Rainbow for the Christian West: Voodoo Mystery*, trans. Joan Dayan, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977.
- Dupuy, Alex, 2014, "Touissant Louverture, the Haitian Revolution, and Negritude" in *Haiti: From Revolutionary Slaves to Powerless Citizens*, London: Routledge.