Aaron Kamugisha, *Beyond Coloniality: Citizenship and Freedom in the Caribbean Intellectual Tradition*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019. xi + 264 pp. (Cloth US\$50.00)

The primary aim of *Beyond Coloniality* is a “meditation” on the “state of tragedy and crisis” in which the postcolonial Caribbean finds itself today. Aaron Kamugisha calls this tragic state “coloniality” to distinguish it from colonialism and neocolonialism in its emphasis on knowledge production and the power of discourses. He contrasts this period of crisis with the more hopeful and revolutionary 1960s and 1970s. And he places the primary responsibility for this postcolonial collapse squarely on the shoulders of the governing patriarchal elites, who have failed to decolonize regional political economies and break with inherited practices of racial and gender inequality. To address this crisis, he engages in excellent “close readings” of C.L.R. James and Sylvia Wynter with the hope of securing glimpses of a better future for the region. On this journey, Kamugisha enlists the aid of a number of other important scholars, including David Scott, Percy Hintzen, and Jacqui Alexander, adopting from Scott the strategy of reading through James and Wynter to grasp glimpses of our future.

In the case of James the major outcome of these future-oriented readings is a more central and equal position for women in the new postcolonial society. In the case of Wynter, it is the more systematic incorporating of the discursive determinants of human behavior and identity formation. Both of these are elements that Kamugisha finds lacking in the discourses of the governing middleclass elites.

In addition to these outcomes, *Beyond Coloniality* is important for its experiments with Foucaultian discourse theory. Making use of this theory, Kamugisha grasps the major players and factors in his analyses through their discursive aspects. Thus, the Caribbean state, the middle classes, states of tradition and modernity are all engaged through their discursive representations. Approached in this manner, Kamugisha is able to take advantage of the strengths of this method. The most obvious of these are the paths that it opens between the discursive aspects of his major players and factors, and the discourses of the larger Caribbean intellectual tradition. Kamugisha moves with great skill between the more specific discourses of the state, the middle class, tradition and modernity, and his close readings of members of the Caribbean intellectual tradition.

The major critical questions raised by this work are the limitations of the Foucault/Scott discursive strategy of grasping our future via texts by scholars like James and Wynter. Too often the close readings become ends in themselves, thus eclipsing the present and future they are to reveal. This is particularly the

case with Kamugisha's reading of James. I think two features of his method contributed to this outcome. The first is the binary oppositional foundation of the method with its positively and negatively marked signs in constant semiotic play—male/female, Black/White, tradition/modernity. Second, while this method is very good at exposing the exclusions produced by the binary infrastructure of an opponent's discourse, it is not as good at focusing on the exclusionary consequences of its centering and privileging of language.

One such consequence that is important here is the binary relation that privileges discourses over institutions. As deployed by Kamugisha, institutional structures are flattened and largely reduced to their discursive aspects, with their distinct logics being subordinated to the interpretive logics of close readings. This particular inverting of the more common ordering has produced problems of its own, as its interpretive strategies often operate above or below the structural logics of institutional change. Thus, in the case of James, it is striking that there is virtually no discussion of his socialist future for the region and its institutional challenges. In Kamugisha's reading of *Modern Politics* and *Party Politics in the West Indies*, the institutional forms of James's participatory socialism are again elided. They are displaced by the narrative aspects in and surrounding these works, such as James's conflicts with Eric Williams. A pro-feminist James displaces the socialist James. This eclipsing of the institutional aspects of the state continues in Kamugisha's ignoring of classic institutional works on Caribbean states such as those of Carl Stone, George Danns, and Clive Thomas, and the institutional aspects of Hintzen's work.

The representations of Wynter and her significance for our future are markedly better, as her major theoretical contributions have been discursive in nature rather than institutional. Here Kamugisha also treats his readers to a brilliant and informative reading of Wynter's unpublished manuscript, *Black Metamorphosis*.

In sum, Kamugisha delivers on his promise of close readings, but falls short on promised glimpses of the future.

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