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# Caribbean Confederations as Relationalities

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## The Erotics of Archipelagic Thinking

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In this essay, I connect my work on Archipelago studies with Édouard Glissant's notions of relationality and Caribbean confederations to formulate what I denominate as the erotics of archipelagic thinking. My main goal is to share my process of thinking with and through Glissant's work to focus on a series of theoretical gestures that have allowed me to propose modes of reading literary depictions of Caribbean con/federations that go beyond the binary opposition between colonialism and nationalism. I am performing an exercise that I assign to my students when I teach the "Introduction to Critical Theory" course at the University of Miami. Instead of writing an essay with a short theoretical introduction followed by a detailed close reading of literary and cultural texts that illustrate a keyword or a theoretical insight, I conduct a methodological meditation in which I theorize the archipelagic as a form of relationality that configures an erotic imaginary beyond the nuclear family and towards affective networks. To think about the Caribbean as an archipelagic formation, I use my comparative work on the Antillean Confederation in the Hispanic Caribbean (1860-1898) and the West Indies Federation in the English Caribbean (1958-1962) as a historical context in which the region congealed as a network of locations "act[ing] in concert."<sup>1</sup>

I begin with a brief overview of Archipelagic studies as it has informed my work in Caribbean studies. I discuss how archipelagic thinking redefined/transformed my understanding of colonialism and decoloniality in the Caribbean region, and I close this section with a working definition of archipelagoes. In the next section I review some passages from Édouard Glissant's works in which the notions of relation, relationality and archipelagic thinking are developed, and I then build my own arguments about archipelagic relationality. The third section of the essay focuses on relationality and erotics and engages a series of thinkers that have focused on affective networks that transcend the national framework and its focus on the nuclear heterosexual family. In the fourth section of this essay, I consider the Antillean Confederation and the West Indies Federation as two political

projects that invoked kinds of community formation beyond the bounded notion of the nation. The piece ends with the formulation of my research question and a consideration of other modes of relationality that go beyond Glissant's notion of relation and Caribbean models of archipelagic thinking and confederations.

Since this essay is an attempt to delve into the methodological framework behind the discursive analysis informing most of my work on Archipelagic studies, I have named each section of the essay using the term *chaney*, to refer to the pieces of pottery or china that are found on lands of plantations or around beaches and that offer a fragmentary physical link to the different layers of the colonial past in St. Croix.<sup>2</sup> By naming the sections of my contribution in this way, I insist on the contingent nature of the methodology shared here. This essay ends before I engage in concrete literary analysis, to insist on the need to devote time to design and explain the methodologies that inform the research that we conduct in humanistic research.

## Chaney 1-Archipelagoes

Archipelagic studies has been around for a while now and it has become its own field. I recently co-edited a volume with Michelle Stephens entitled *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations* that includes an introductory essay in which we meditate on the notion of the archipelago as a structure that consolidates only in certain places or contexts. We review several other models such as systems theory,<sup>3</sup> "actor-network theory" (Bruno Latour, Michel Callon, and John Law, 1980),<sup>4</sup> assemblages,<sup>5</sup> constellations, planetary thinking, etc., to define what work is done by the notion of the archipelagic that is not covered by these other theoretical frameworks. We define the archipelagic "not only as a system of islands but also as a set of humanly constructed relations between individual locations (islands, ports, cities, forts, metropolises, communities). The archipelagic is conceived, therefore, a set of relations that articulates cultural and political formations (collectivities, communities, societies), modes of interpreting and inhabiting the world (epistemologies), and symbolic imaginaries (as a poetic but also as *habitus*)."<sup>6</sup>

Archipelagic studies is a theoretical framework that allows me to connect the Caribbean region with a series of case studies in other areas of the world that share commonalities in terms of the geopolitical distribution or the extended colonial experiences that have been so crucial in the Caribbean.<sup>7</sup> I conceptualize archipelagic thinking in dialogue with some of the following keywords or debates: "imperial archipelago,"<sup>8</sup> "inter-Atlantic paradigm" of colonization,<sup>9</sup> Archipelagic thinking,<sup>10</sup> Insular, Oceanic and Nissology approaches to the study of groups, networks or systems of islands;<sup>11</sup> "aquapelago," "aquapelagic assemblages,"<sup>12</sup> "terripelago,"<sup>13</sup> and

“archipelagraphy,”<sup>14</sup> among others. In the Introduction to *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking*, Stephens and I offer a detailed review of what each one of these terms contributes to the broader conversation about archipelagoes as a method, discipline, field or heuristic (a question that is also explored by all the contributors of that volume). In this essay, I would like to focus on Glissant’s relationality and archipelagic thinking as points of departure for my comparative work on Caribbean confederations as an instantiation of the Caribbean archipelago.

## Chaney 2: Glissant

My work on archipelagic thinking focuses on four different keywords of his thinking: relation, opacity, confluence and archipelagic thinking. Crucial in my engagement with Glissant’s work is his historical (colonial) re-reading and corrective to Deleuze and Guattari’s at times too abstract meditation on the rhizome to think the Caribbean from the coordinates of colonialism and *antillanité* (questioning the unitary identity and the notion of a single root or identity origin).<sup>15</sup> Insights from Glissant’s thinking have been central in better understanding the moments in which the archipelago congealed to activate concerted actions or projects in a series of overseas colonial regions, through metaphorical rearticulations of Relation as affective erotic networks. I am particularly interested in showcasing Glissant’s capability of grounding his theoretical thinking in specific cases and experiences, while at the same time blurring the boundaries between philosophical meditation, critical theory and creative or poetic writing. It is with this grounded understanding that I revisit some of Glissant’s keywords and moments that have been central in articulating my own critical intervention in the study of the Caribbean within the wider context of colonial archipelagic systems.

My thinking is also informed by the work of other colleagues who have explored the very concrete grounding of Glissant’s thinking in the Caribbean historical, political and geographical contexts. Lanny Thompson’s essay “The Chronotopes of Archipelagic Thinking: Glissant and the Narrative of Philosophy”<sup>16</sup> is crucial in my own work on colonial archipelagoes. Thompson’s main argument is that the archipelagic is a chronotope which informs the literary and philosophical imaginaries in Glissant’s oeuvre encompassing spatial, temporal and ontological dimensions. In this chapter he shows:

how archipelagic thinking might move from geography and history in order to address topology, temporality, and ontology. First, topology, understood as emplacement, makes explicit those geographical contexts where we relate with others, construct places, and engage in spatial thinking. This is a conceptual transition from geography to topology. Second, temporality, understood as emplotment, brings together and relates those same places within historical narratives that

suggest notions of time in relation to space. Finally, ontology, understood as situated subjectivity, understands that place, temporality, and being belong together as intricately and intractably connected.<sup>17</sup>

Adlai Murdoch's thinking on Glissant in his essay "From Antillanité to the Archipelagic: Édouard Glissant's Linked Insularities and Non-Continental Thought" is also an important point of departure for my intervention here. He contends that Glissant's archipelagic thinking encompasses the activist and oppositional politics that were central in his critical intervention and criticism of continental (European and first world) philosophical thinking. He argues that the Caribbean colonial condition and its very concrete political, epistemic and civil marginalization from European and French philosophical discourses informs two periods in Glissant's thinking: the first one that focuses on *antillanité* and creolization in the Caribbean and the second one that extends his thinking to the postcolonial world as a whole through the notion of "Tout-Monde." In this context, the Caribbean as a colonial, intersectional diasporic, fragmented and pluralistic region takes the place of the supposedly homogeneous nation as the point of departure to conceive human experience as a constant process of relationality, creolization and *métissage*. Relation is, then, another way of confronting the other that is based on a non-hierarchical respect for racial, ethnic, cultural, social and historical differences and that questions continental and systematic representations of the world.

One of Glissant's main contributions to Caribbean and archipelagic thinking is precisely his questioning of western nationalism as a historical and political model that privileges fixed (and bounded identities):

The West, therefore, is where this movement becomes fixed and nations declare themselves in preparation for their repercussions in the world. This fixing, this declaration, this expansion, all require that the idea of the root gradually take on the intolerant sense that Deleuze and Guattari, no doubt, meant to challenge. The reason for our return to this episode in Western history is that it spread throughout the world. The model came in handy. Most of the nations that gained freedom from colonization have tended to form around an idea of power—the totalitarian drive of a single, unique root rather than around a fundamental relationship with the Other. Culture's self-conception was dualistic, pitting citizen against barbarian. Nothing has ever more solidly opposed the thought of errantry than this period in human history when Western nations were established and then made their impact on the world.<sup>18</sup>

Using the historical vantage point of the Caribbean's late arrival to the modern national state project as a result of the multiple and extended forms

of colonialism in the region, Glissant rethinks the teleology of the nation as the normative script for decolonization.

Relationality, opacity and confluence are some of the alternative notions Glissant explores as a way to find alternatives to nationalism. Glissant conceives relationality as interaction and contact. Relationality is defined by Glissant in the following terms: “Rhizomatic thought is the principle behind what I call the Poetics of Relation, in which each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other.”<sup>19</sup> According to Glissant, subjects and cultures do not have one universal and immutable nature or definition; they are formed through the interactions that take place between them in very specific conditions. In that context, the irreducible difference between individuals and cultures functions as a boundary and point of departure for the relationality and interaction that redefines both. Opacity, a term that is crucial in poetic thinking and production, is used by Glissant to think about the importance of difference in the colonial context of the Caribbean: “The opaque is not the obscure, though it is possible for it to be so and be accepted as such. It is that which cannot be reduced, which is the most perennial guarantee of participation and confluence.”<sup>20</sup> This last term, *confluence*, is also an important theoretical node for Glissant to understand the process of cultural mixing and transformation that has taken place in the Caribbean: “Nothing prohibits us seeing them in confluence, without confusing them in some magma or reducing them to each other. This same opacity is also the force that drives every community: the thing that would bring us together forever and make us permanently distinctive. Widespread consent of specific opacities is the most straightforward equivalent of nonbarbarism.”<sup>21</sup> Although Glissant is still struggling with the normative definition of colonial regions as barbaric, I would like to focus instead on his idea of relationality as a confluence of differences that illuminates cultural specificity without aspiring to produce the sameness of national identity, as defined by Benedict Anderson in his now classical text *Imagined Communities*.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps the best formulation of relationality is Glissant’s translation and grounding of this debate on nationalism vs. relationality into the notion of situated subjectivity (or what Thompson conceptualizes as ontology).<sup>23</sup> Particularly illuminating is his comparison between root and Relation identities, a passage that deserves to be quoted at length:

*Root identity*

—Is founded in the distant past in a vision, a myth of the creation of the world;

—is sanctified by the hidden violence of a filiation that strictly follows from this founding episode;

—is ratified by a claim to legitimacy that allows a community to proclaim its entitlement to the possession of a land, which thus becomes a territory;

—is preserved by being projected onto other territories, making their conquest legitimate,

—and through the project of a discursive knowledge

Root identity therefore rooted the thought of self and of territory and set in motion the thought of the other and of the voyage.

*Relation identity*

—Is linked not to the creation of the world but to the conscious and contradictory experience of contacts among cultures;

—is produced in the chaotic network of Relation and not in the hidden violence of filiation;

—does not devise any legitimacy as its guarantee of entitlement, but circulates, newly extended;

—does not think of a land as a territory from which to project toward other territories but as a place where one gives-on-and-with rather than grasps

Relation identity exults the thought of errantry and of totality.<sup>24</sup>

Glissant's conceptualization of relationality unsettles linear structures that link a subject with a territory through lineage or filiation that is used to justify possession and expansion through violence (the very basis of the nation). Instead, relation assumes chaotic interactions that transform subject and spaces in contingent contexts that do not assume an essential or organic link between space, time and identity. Identity is therefore a contextual experience in a constant process of transformation, that is not linked to possession or entitlement over specific territories.

In this context, then, Glissant's well known passage about archipelagic thinking in his *Treatise on the Whole-World*, can be seen as a culmination or synthesis of his earlier formulations about relationality:

Archipelagic thinking suits the pace of our worlds. It has their ambiguity, their fragility, their drifting. It accepts the practice of the detour, which is not the same as fleeing or giving up. It recognizes the range of the imaginations of the Trace, which it ratifies. Does this mean giving up on self-government? No, it means being in harmony with the world as it is diffracted in archipelagos, precisely, these sorts of diversities in spatial expanses, which nevertheless rally coastlines and marry horizons. We become aware of what was so continental, so thick, weighing us down, in the sumptuous systematic thought that up until

now has governed the History of human communities, and which is no longer adequate to our eruptions, our histories and our no less sumptuous wanderings. The thinking of the archipelago, the archipelagos, opens these seas up to us.<sup>25</sup>

Glissant's proposal acknowledges the contingent nature of any practice or experience of identification grounding this theorization of the archipelago as a counterpoint to continental thinking. He takes the concrete histories of colonialism and dispersion in the Caribbean and links them to the discontinued geographies of the region to propose an openness to change and to difference that becomes a plus instead of a source of weakness or lack. In this regard, archipelagic thinking is an important response to a mainstream body of continental history and philosophy that has tended to identify colonial archipelagoes as areas of knowledge without intellectual gravitas. Instead, Glissant's archipelagic framework identifies the gaps in national, continental, genealogical and historical thinking to properly offer an account of or contain the epistemologies and ontologies produced outside the monologic structures of rooted, identitarian teleologies.

### Chaney 3: Relationality, Erotics, Confederation, Archipelagoes

If Relation focuses on the variable interaction between objects and subjects to produce an alternative narrative for space, time and ontology, how can human affectivity or relationality be redefined? This question presents two different challenges. On the one hand, Glissant's theorization does not engage directly with the issue of affectivity or sexual relationality. On the other hand, Lanny Thompson has noted a significant difference between the meaning of relation in English and French that may preclude the possibility of engaging the layer of affectivity through Glissant's work:

...the French word Relation, which functions somewhat like an intransitive verb, could not correspond, for example, to the English term *relationship* (1997a, 27). Relationships occur between specific things. [...] Conceptually, then, Relation is related to, but different from, relation, the latter understood as structured internal and complex external relationships. In contrast, Relation partakes of flows and movements in which languages, cultural practices, and identities come in contact and, in doing so, influence and change one another. Relation refers to the spontaneous creation through which cultural differences are continuously brought into play with unpredictable results. [...] In contrast to the more static relationships among structural elements, Relation signifies a fluid openness and movement arising from the complex and chaotic dynamics of bringing things into relationship on a grand scale.<sup>26</sup>



According to Thompson, Glissant poses a spatial distinction between closed, structured relationships, represented by the plantation, and the exuberant openness of Relation, represented by the Caribbean topography: islands and beaches, the archipelago and the sea.<sup>27</sup> However, Thompson also offers a pathway towards affectivity when he calls the links between relationality and social relationships entanglements between human beings:

Moreover, he reverses the ontological priority of Being over ontic beings: Relation is not “(of) Being, but (of) beings” (186). This is consistent with the previous aphorism “Relation is relation.” This is precisely because the entanglements of human beings in their structured relationships—also known as relation—are the very ontic foundations of Relation. These ontic foundations underlie the interconnection of all human beings, considered in their existential facticity in the *tout-monde*, that is, the totality of the world. On this view, human beings are a part of—and not merely in—the world. In this way, Glissant’s ontology links specific subjects, encumbered in social relationships, with the singularities of opaque, errant, and autopoietic beings.<sup>28</sup>

I use Thompson’s meditation to think about affective and erotic relationships represented in literary and artistic discourses as allegorical representations of social and political structures of interactions that question the monological narrative of the nation state indexed by the nuclear heterosexual family.

Following a similar approach, Rinaldo Walcott<sup>29</sup> and Max Hantel<sup>30</sup> have meditated on how to add gender and sexuality to Glissant’s theory on relationality to “queer” his philosophical interventions. On the one hand, Walcott identifies queer gestures in Glissant’s theorization on relation as contextual instead of genealogical or essential to explore “relation of non-relation to Africa, the colonial legacy and the postcolonial condition of imposition and disappointment and its sexualized orienting behaviours.”<sup>31</sup> This is his point of departure to study the history of the creolized Queer Caribbean beyond its relation to the Gay Liberation movement in the U.S. Hantel, on the other hand uses Luce Irigaray’s work on gender difference to break away from the gender neutral universalism in Glissant’s writings by exploring creolization in conversation with sexual difference<sup>32</sup>.

I therefore want to conceptualize relation in my work through the symbolic depiction of affective/erotic relationality in artistic and fictional Caribbean narratives as representative of alternative modes of political and social relationality. How can we translate Glissant’s theory of relation into symbolic depictions of affectivity and desire? Several thinkers have theorized affectivity, desire and eroticism beyond the heteronormative frameworks of the nuclear family. As a point of departure, I consider Audre Lorde’s foundational thinking and her call to conceptualize eroticism from the angle of female experience. Most readings of Lorde’s renowned essay, which was

first a paper presented at Mount Holyoke College on August 25, 1978, at the Fourth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, focus on her theorizing of eroticism. But there is another complementary notion that Lorde presents a little before her paradigmatic definition of eroticism: *sensuality*. According to Lorde,

The dichotomy between the spiritual and the political is also false, resulting from an incomplete attention to our erotic knowledge. For the bridge which connects them is formed by the erotic—the sensual—those physical, emotional, and psychic expressions of what is deepest and strongest and richest within each of us, being shared: the passions of love, in its deepest meanings.<sup>33</sup>

Sensuality is presented as an intersubjective connection that includes physical, emotional and psychic dimensions. It is an experience that includes body and mind, knowledge and emotion. Lorde names in this essay a transformative life experience, which would seem reduced if thought as outside the space of the sensual.

The notion of the erotic is then a particular dimension of the sensual where the link with the other is incarnated. It is a passage to the corporeal that, without leaving aside the emotional and psychic, is articulated in a dimension where passion becomes desire, as a creative force. But in this essay, Lorde laments the social loss of the power of eroticism among women as a result of the way in which patriarchal discourse reduces eroticism to sex in its most superficial definition. In her meditation, she attempts to distinguish a desire (sexual and otherwise) in which a person has agency versus the physical activity of sex in which agency (and jouissance) are lost. I would like to remember her claim about the importance of the erotic:

The erotic functions for me in several ways, and the first is in providing the power which comes from sharing deeply any pursuit with another person. The sharing of joy, whether physical, emotional, psychic, or intellectual, forms a bridge between the sharers which can be the basis for understanding much of what is not shared between them, and lessens the threat of their difference.<sup>34</sup>

Crucial in this essay is to think the link between eroticism and difference. For Lorde, difference does not disappear but diminishes, and it is in those moments that potentially productive communications and alliances can be achieved. Her intervention is a call for women to reclaim the power of eroticism that has been socially denied to them in order to bring about encounters in which differences are negotiated without erasure or denial.

Brigitte Vasallo also advances the useful notion of “affective networks” to transcend the normativity of monogamous relationships:

Las redes afectivas no son un nuevo modelo a seguir ni una contra-propuesta cerrada, sino un paraguas desde el que pensar el marco

relacional y sus dinámicas. [...] La ética del cuidado propone una perspectiva distinta al dar y tomar y, más allá de la simetría de la deuda, tiene en cuenta las necesidades de cada cual en su momento y en su contexto. [...] el reconocimiento es la base misma de la posibilidad de la existencia común. Cuando uno de los nudos de la red de afectos conoce a las otras partes, pero no reconoce su implicación en la red, la red no existe, solo existen los fragmentos de un presente sin recorrido, nudos dispersos sin conexión alguna. Y los nudos solos no son la red: la red es, precisamente, la articulación entre los nudos y sus conexiones, el diálogo entre ellos.<sup>35</sup>

[Affective networks are neither a new model to follow nor a closed counter-proposal, but an umbrella from which to think about the relational framework and its dynamics. [...] The ethics of care proposes a different perspective on giving and taking and, beyond the symmetry of the debt, takes into account the needs of each person at his or her moment and in his or her context. [...] recognition is the very basis of the possibility of common existence. When one of the knots of the network of affections knows the other parts, but does not recognize its implication in the network, the network does not exist, there are only fragments of a present without a path, scattered knots without any connection. And the knots alone are not the network: the network is precisely the articulation between the knots and their connections, the dialogue between them.]<sup>35</sup>

In this theorization, Vasallo links monogamy and heteropatriarcal marriage with the obsession of private property central in late capitalist societies.<sup>37</sup> I argue that archipelagic erotics explores the alternative collective affectivities of “espacio fronterizos” [border spaces] in which “devenires minoritarios” [minor becomings] attempt to interrupt the exacerbating impulses of nationalism to open space for colonial and decolonial insular networks.

Since I am mostly interested in the political projects indexed in the symbolic depiction of affective and erotic relationality, I always ground my work on archipelagic thinking on regions that have experienced extended periods of colonialism. To explore the colonial archipelagic dimensions of relationality, my thinking is informed by several suggestive readings that link affectivity and politics in the context of subalternity and colonialism. Crucial in my thinking is “decolonial love,” theorized by Chela Sandoval<sup>38</sup> as a hermeneutic practice whose structure emphatically goes beyond dualisms like consciousness/unconsciousness, the subject and the other, beyond collective affectivity/possessive jealousy, as an experience in which the subject goes beyond their individualism to recognize the fundamental humanity of others in an intersubjective bond.<sup>39</sup> Juana María Rodríguez<sup>40</sup> takes on the notion of sexual fantasies to articulate collective forms of relationality as interdependence and mutual recognition that echo in many respects the ideal behind the political articulation of confederations in the Caribbean:

The fantasies that interest me are not about the individual erotic desires of autonomous sexual subjects, but about how we respond psychically to collective histories of shame and abjection, how colonialism and heteronormativity soak into our erotic proclivities. But my fantasies are also about another kind of sexual future, where intercourse engages all manner of touching, where *interdependence and mutual recognition constitute the daily labor of making our lives livable for ourselves and each other, where articulating our more cherished desires is seen as not naïve but as wholly necessary*. The fantasies I index are both sexual and political, formed through the particularities of our psychic lives and through the contours of various collective formations that shape our understanding of the world. [...] *Through its relation to imagination, fantasy urges us to suppose potentialities beyond and before the now, to step across the borders of the possible.*<sup>41</sup>

Here Rodríguez's thinking resonates with Vasallo's call for an ethics of care that shall inform affective networks for them to be functional at the collective level, to transcend the limitations of defining relationality in terms of individual subjective needs:

La ética del cuidado propone una perspectiva distinta al dar y tomar y, más allá de la simetría de la deuda, tiene en cuenta las necesidades de cada cual en su momento y en su contexto. En relaciones no monógamas estas necesidades incluyen a toda la red [afectiva]: las necesidades de cada una de las integrantes, y las necesidades del conjunto. Dicho así parece un ejercicio muy complicado, pero esa fantasía de poder vivir eternamente ensimismada en los propios deseos no es más que un sueño neoliberal sin realidad alguna: estamos y vivimos en red. La ética del cuidado propone tenerlo en cuenta y hacernos responsables de ello.<sup>42</sup>

[The ethics of care proposes a different perspective on giving and taking and, beyond the symmetry of the debt, takes into account the needs of each person at his or her moment and in his or her context. In non-monogamous relationships, these needs include the entire [affective] network: the needs of each of the members, and the needs of the whole. Put this way, it seems a very complicated exercise, but this fantasy of being able to live eternally immersed in one's own desires is nothing more than a neoliberal dream without any reality: we are and live in a network. The ethics of care proposes to take this into account and make us responsible for it.]

In this context we can reread literary and artistic symbolical depictions of Caribbean relationality to make visible and reimagine the many other alternatives of affection that exceed the nuclear family model. Friendship, alliances, communities or communes, extended or alternative families, among many other forms of affectivity come to mind, and with them the question of

why we tend not to see these forms of relationality at the same level of importance as the romantic couple.

#### Chaney 4: Caribbean Con/federations

Since the archipelago is not an organic condition in the Caribbean, I would like to focus on two particular historical moments in which several countries of the Caribbean region had tried to explore alternative political formations that function as networks of communities instead of on the formation of individual nation states: the Confederación Antillana in the Hispanic Caribbean (1860-1898), and the West Indies Federation in the Anglo Caribbean (1958-1962).

##### *Confederación Antillana (1860-1898)*

The project of the Confederación Antillana cohered between the 1860s and 1898, although the idea existed throughout the nineteenth century. Adriana María Arpini proposes a periodization that begins in 1791 with the rebellion of Black creoles, leading to the independence of Haiti in 1804, and from there to the end of the Spanish occupation of the Dominican Republic in 1866, and to the rise of independence movements in Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1868.<sup>43</sup> Antonio Gaztambide-Géigel also traces the origins of the Confederation to an 1811 proposal submitted by Cuban José Alvarez de Toledo to the Government of the United States.<sup>44</sup> Although the Confederación Antillana is usually linked to the pro-independence movements in Puerto Rico and Cuba (founded in the parallel Grito de Lares and Grito de Yara that took place in 1868 in both countries), a closer examination of these two insurgent movements reveals complex separatist projects that go beyond political independence from Spain.<sup>45</sup> In addition to ambivalence toward Spain, the United States, as a powerful republic in a process of territorial and eventually extra-continental expansion, figures prominently in discussions about how to protect the countries located in the Caribbean region.

The Confederación Antillana has been traditionally defined as a multistate political and symbolic project that imagined a coalition of three Spanish Antilles in dialogue with political projects emerging in Haiti and Jamaica. The thinkers usually invoked when the idea of the Confederation is discussed are Ramón Emeterio Betances (1827–98), Eugenio María de Hostos (1839–1903), José Martí (1853–95), Gregorio Luperón (1839–97), Antonio Maceo (1845–96), Máximo Gómez (1836–1905), and Joseph Anténor Firmin (1850–1911). Although the confederación never materialized legally, some organizations were created to promote it. In 1874 Betances founded in Paris the Liga de las Antillas (League of the Antilles). In 1878, Maceo, Luperón, and Betances founded the Liga Antillana (Antillean League), a secret organization

with the goal of “promoting independence, freedom and confederation for the Antilles.”<sup>46</sup>

The main thinkers behind the political project of the Confederación Antillana did not have a common project in mind. Hostos and Martí, for example, imagined a white *criollo*-led Spanish Caribbean closely connected to Spanish America, while Betances’s vision emphasized links with Black Creole leaders in Haiti and efforts to affiliate Jamaica to the union.<sup>47</sup> In his famous speech “Las Antillas para los antillanos” (“The Antilles for Antilleans”), Betances countered the principle of “America for Americans” that emerged from the U.S. expansionist and hemispheric protectionist policy of the Monroe Doctrine. In addition to Betances’s solidarity with Haitian intellectual Anténor Firmin, Carlos Rama referenced letters he wrote to Haitian president Jean Nicolas Nissage Saget in which they discussed their shared ideas about a Pan-Antillean union.<sup>48</sup> Maceo and Luperón in turn modeled their confederation imaginaries on collaborations between the Dominican Republic and Haiti to end the Spanish occupation of Hispaniola (1863–66).<sup>49</sup>

White *criollismo* and Black creoleness, along with tensions emerging from the massive, coerced immigration of indentured laborers from India and China, complicate debates about the Caribbean Confederation in the nineteenth century. Several critics have studied the connections between the political imaginary behind the Confederation and ethnoracial debates about blackness and sovereignty in the Caribbean.<sup>50</sup> Daylet Domínguez notes that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Humboldt predicts the formation of a Black Antillean confederation if the Spanish empire failed to find an effective way to include Black and mulatto sectors in the imperial/colonial projects of the region.<sup>51</sup> It is also well known that in the Spanish Caribbean, Spain attempted several whitening initiatives during this period by incentivizing massive immigration of people from Spain to Cuba and Puerto Rico.<sup>52</sup>

The Confederación Antillana fomented a decolonial imaginary of regional unity and sovereignty that was expected to culminate by the end of the nineteenth century in a diverse array of political projects linked to separatism, autonomy, and independence from Spain. There were some creole sectors advocating for the separation of Cuba and Puerto Rico from Spain and their annexation to the United States. This decolonizing imaginary sometimes identified the United States as an American republic to imitate and other times as an imperial force to be feared. In the case of the Dominican Republic, the tension between separatism and re-annexation to Spain would be complicated by the Haitian occupation of 1822–1844, raising questions about how to position the participation of the Dominican Republic and Haiti in discourses about confederation. One of the consequences of the tensions between Haiti and the Dominican Republic was the hegemonic elision of the Black creole foundation that had linked the Spanish Caribbean to Haiti, privileging instead a white creole imaginary that disconnected the Spanish

Caribbean from the British and French Caribbean in debates on *criollismo* and creolization.<sup>53</sup>

The Confederación Antillana did not become a real political institution, but it has remained a central reference in Caribbean cultural and historical studies. In my work, I identify this historical moment as a period in which what Glissant defines as archipelagic thinking became a central motive behind a symbolic political imaginary.

#### *West Indies Federation (1958-1962)*

The West Indies Federation consolidated in the English Caribbean between 1958 and 1962, but began to be theorized in the 1860s.<sup>54</sup> The idea of the federation has a long history in the Anglo Caribbean. Since the seventeenth century smaller regional groupings were discussed and at times even became political realities. One of such groupings took place in the British West Indies in 1682 and included Antigua, St-Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, Montserrat, the British Virgin Islands and Dominica joined in a Federal Assembly. The actual federation took place in 1705 and lasted until 1798. A couple of loose administrative groupings took place in the Leeward and Windward Islands in 1871, but none of these associations persisted until 1958. The federation as a viable political project was revived in a regional conference held at Montego Bay in 1947 (Caribbean Elections Website)

The West Indies Federation included the following countries: Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Trinidad and Tobago. Its goal was to articulate an alternative political organization to the formation of sovereign nation states. The proposed structure of the federation was an *executive branch* composed of a prime minister elected among and by the members of the House of Representatives, a Cabinet of 10 members elected by the Prime Minister and a Council of State presided by the governor general and composed of the prime minister and his cabinet; the legislative branch, composed by a Federal Parliament that included a senate (2 representatives from each island) and a house of representatives (with proportional representation for each island); and a judicial branch, comprised by a Federal Supreme Court (that originally had 3 and eventually had 5 justices). The proposed site for the capital was Chaguaramas in Trinidad and Tobago, the location of a U.S. naval base at the time. Since the U.S. and U.K. refused to rescind the lease of Chaguaramas as a naval base, Port of Spain functioned as *de facto* capital of the federation. (Caribbean Elections page). Katerina González Seligmann conceptualizes the federation as a simultaneously regionalist and transnational imaginary in which projects of sovereignty, autonomy, independence and decolonization were settled.<sup>55</sup> However, as we know, this project of collective articulation in the English Caribbean culminated in the formation of states that became

independent between the 1960s and 1980s, while other islands became British Overseas Territories.<sup>56</sup>

The end of the West Indies Federation is still a source of controversy and debate in Caribbean studies. One of the main areas of contention was the actual structure of the administrative government that was going to lead the Federation. The bigger and most populated islands—Jamaica and Trinidad Tobago—had concerns about issues of equity in representation and contribution of resources to the Federation, and there were a series of arguments about two different models for the Federation government: a strong central government with legal and economic power the region (Trinidad, Eric Williams) vs. a more flexible governing structure that would respect the autonomy of the local governments (Jamaica, Norman Manley).

Another important source of tension in the consolidation of the West Indies Federation was the diverse contexts in the coexistence for the Black and Asian populations in each of the participating islands of the English Caribbean. According to Adom Getachew: “In the case of the West Indies, minority groups, particularly East Indian descendants who constituted 12 percent of the federal population but were 40 percent of the Trinidadian population and half of the Guyanese population, were anxious about a federation dominated by Afro-West Indians”.<sup>57</sup> Oftentimes, West Indian discourses on creolization and nationalism were articulated around a notion of Afro-Caribbeanism that denied other experiences of Caribbean diaspora and racial mixing.

The racial and ethnic imaginaries struggling to define the fictitious ethnicity of the Caribbean were, therefore, different in the two confederations: in the case of the Antillean Confederation Black Creole identity is denied or displaced, while in the West Indies Federation the struggle is between *mulataje* and coolitude. Nevertheless, racial debates are a central element in the articulation and disarticulation of relationality and archipelagic thinking in Caribbean con/federations. The other aspect that the confederations unsettle is the false equation between nationalism and sovereignty, between the un-national State and modernity. For example, in her book *Worldmaking After Empires*, Adom Getachew conceptualizes the federation beyond nationalism by advancing the concept of worldmaking and defining decolonization as the search for a “domination-free, and egalitarian international order”.<sup>58</sup>

The political and the racial economies of Caribbean relationalities thus allow us to zoom into affectivity and erotics as an allegorical space where sources of tension can be explored and perhaps sorted out. In the final section of this chapter, I propose a potential research question and identify some areas for future research instead of a conclusion.



## Chaney 5: Archipelagic Relational Erotics and Beyond

*The research question.*

If the con/federation is the political alternative to the sovereign national state, then nodes or networks of *patrias* and affectivity become the alternative imaginary to the foundational nuclear family mobilized in nationalist literatures.<sup>59</sup> In my forthcoming book *Archipiélagos de ultramar* I engage in a series of close-readings of texts produced during and after the actual historical periods in which these two Caribbean con/federations took place to find meaning beyond the apparent constant impossibility of the hetero-patriarchal couple. If the romantic couple has been conceived by Doris Sommer as an allegorical representation of the nation in the continental Américas, in the Caribbean texts I analyze here affective and diasporic entanglements replace the nuclear families in nationalist allegories.<sup>60</sup> Failure to configure a nuclear family bonded thru romantic love does not exhaust the possibility of alternative archipelagic projects. In my reading, affective networks are challenged by social class, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, but they are also questioned by the multiple diasporic conditions informing the articulation of colonial Caribbean communities.

Confederations —as a particular instantiation of archipelagic thinking—call for a conceptualization of human social and political relationships beyond individualistic articulations of monogamy and marriage. In these novels individual love is juxtaposed to collective love (in the form of political duty and solidarity) and the latter is conceived as a more encompassing form of affectivity and solidarity. Archipelagic erotics challenge political and historical imaginaries that transcend the master narrative of the nation state as the normative mode of articulation of communal human experiences.

Several colleagues have already begun to explore alternatives to the nation through the erotic imaginaries of con/federations. In the specific context of the Caribbean, Jossianna Arroyo Martínez and Kahlila Chaar Pérez have linked the Caribbean confederation with an alternative collective affective imaginary. Arroyo Martínez analyzes the role of freemasonry secrecy and solidarity in the “affective politics” present in Betances’s conceptualization of the confederation.<sup>61</sup> Chaar Pérez, on the other hand, focuses on Antenor Firmin’s “powerful sympathy between Antilleans” and Ramón Emeterio Betances notion of “revolution of love” that forges a “sentimental bond of community” grounded in male homosocial networks.<sup>62</sup> Alai Reyes Santos explores the notion of Pan Caribbean and Afro-diasporic solidarity as central in the articulation of the Antillean Confederation in the nineteenth century and in creolization discourses in the Caribbean today. For Reyes Santos, confederations invite us to imagine decolonial collective identities that do not reproduce Eurocentric, Hispanic and White Supremacist cultural practices common in Latin American nations.<sup>63</sup> Finally, Katerina

González Seligmann also focuses on the notion of solidarity, and defines it as “a socio-political relation which implies both a partial identification and a separation”<sup>64</sup> and furthers this exploration by studying “the social life on translation and the aesthetic life of solidarity”.<sup>65</sup>

Another challenge posed by archipelagic erotics as an extension of archipelagic thinking is the need to conceptualize colonialism without subsuming it to the narrative and teleology of the nation as its only possible resolution. Approximately half of the countries in the Caribbean region are currently not sovereign nations, and the relationship of the region to state nationalism has been particularly complex.<sup>66</sup> In this regard, the Caribbean seems to be an ideal locus to think beyond some of the central tenets of Latin American studies. Con/federations queer master narratives of collective sovereignty and ethnic belonging by imagining collectivites beyond the teleology of the nation. In this socio-political context love is represented as a strong sense of affectivity that aspires to join more than one country through a relationality that transcends the confines of the heteropatriarchal couple and the romantic monogamous script. Yet the end or impossibility of establishing a working confederation highlights how the structures formed in the context of archipelagic erotics and thinking are fragile and vulnerable, and remain oftentimes a futurity, an aspiration.

The literary texts I study in my book explore relationality through narrative imbrication and juxtaposition. The subjects represented in many of these texts travel constantly or are in a pilgrimage of sorts. As such, there is not one single place of origin that can contain the multiple translocal and diasporic identities of the Pan-Caribbean. In these narratives the Caribbean is conceived as a broken imperial frontier<sup>67</sup> that has and is relentlessly trying to “to act in concert,”<sup>68</sup> to be and become an archipelagic space. In this context, archipelagic thinking/erotics resonate with Ernest Renan’s articulation of the nation as a “daily plebiscite.”<sup>69</sup> We may have come full circle here, since the archipelagic is a reminder of the fragmentary nature of all nations, a thought that has been front and center for colonial and postcolonial thinkers,<sup>70</sup> as well as for indigenous, ethnic, racial and sexual minorities, queer subjects and other marginal communities constantly confronting their invisibility within mainstream national discourse.

Finally, this meditation has made me think about what lies besides and beyond Glissant’s notions of relationality and archipelagic thinking. For example, South American indigenous thinking on “comunalidad” (Jaime Martínez Luna and Floriberto Díaz), or the notion of “radical relationality” advanced by Karyn Recollet & Emily Johnson in Indigenous studies seems to point to different modes of thinking that question the centrality of the Western subject. In conversation with indigenous theorists, Donna Haraway’s notion of “relational ontology” suggests that relationality goes beyond the notion of the human and that knowledge production takes place between human and non-human subjects, including inanimate and animate objects as well as

subjects from different species. These and other theoretical debates shall serve as a reminder of the need to rethink Relation beyond Caribbean studies to establish dialogues with other fields that use the notion of relationality but do not necessarily engage or follow Glissant's significant theorizations. The move here is not only to insert Glissant in the conversation, but to recognize that the term can have alternative genealogies that can but may not need to be connected to one single source. In many respects, to actually adopt relationality and archipelagic thinking in my work means to recognize the contributions and also limits of Glissant and the Caribbean as paradigms from which to theorize. Erotics and sensuality become that expansive space to think otherwise in my work. Although still deeply rooted in the Caribbean, my proposal to read a corpus of texts written during and about Caribbean confederations to explore affective networks beyond the national family romance is an invitation to read against master narratives of the self, the human and the nation to explore a wide array of connections that inform collective experiences. It is an invitation to conceive relationality and the archipelagic as a wide and ever expanding way of being and a source of knowledge that coexists within and between the more limited units of the individual, the family, the nation and its borders, its laws and its definitions. It is finally a way to bring back the sensual dimension of ourselves to become a source of knowing in which we perhaps can embrace Glissant's most challenging invitation, in his poetic articulation of archipelagic thinking, to open the thinking subject beyond the boundaries of the individual cognitive unit, the body, its community or nation state, to open the self to other horizons, coastlines and oceans with "their ambiguity, their fragility, their drifting."<sup>21</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> Godfrey Baldacchino, "More Than Island Tourism: Branding, Marketing and Logistic in Archipelago Tourist Destinations," in *Archipelago Tourism: Policies and Practices* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 6; Katerina González Seligman and I co-edited in 2020 a special section in *Small Axe* (24.1) entitled, "Con-Federating the Archipelago: The Confederación Antillana and the West Indies Federation" *Small Axe* 61 (March 2020), 69-77 in which we invited scholars to collaborate in developing this comparative framework.
  - <sup>2</sup> Elizabeth and Denise Fashaw Smith, "St. Croix's Chaney," *Beach Combing* (February 20, 2019), [https://www.beachcombingmagazine.com/blogs/news/st-croix-s-chaney\\_](https://www.beachcombingmagazine.com/blogs/news/st-croix-s-chaney_)
  - <sup>3</sup> Karl Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *General System theory: Foundations, Development, Applications* (New York: George Braziller, 1968).

- 4 John Law, "Actor Network Theory and Material Semiotics," in *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, ed., Bryan S. Turner (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2009), 141-158.
- 5 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka. A Thousand Plateaus*. trans. Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 2004).
- 6 Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel and Michelle Stephens, "'Isolated Above, But Connected Below': Toward New, Global, Archipelagic Linkages," in *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Towards New Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, Rethinking the Island Book Series, 2020), 1-44.
- 7 Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel, *Coloniality of Diasporas: Rethinking Intracolonial Migrations in a Pan-Caribbean Context* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
- 8 Lanny Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago: Representation and Rule in the Insular Territories under U.S. Dominion after 1898* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010); Javier Morillo Alicea, "Uncharted Landscapes of 'Latin America': The Philippines in the Spanish Imperial Archipelago," in *Interpreting Colonialism: Empires, Nations and Legends* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 25-53.
- 9 Anthony Stevens-Arroyo, "The Inter- Atlantic Paradigm: The Failure of Spanish Medieval Colonization of the Canary and Caribbean Islands," *Comparative Studies in Society & History* 35, no. 3 (1993): 515-543.
- 10 Jay L. Batongbacal, "Defining Archipelagic Studies," in *Archipelagic Studies: Charting New Waters*, ed. Jay L. Batongbacal. Diliman (Quezon City: UP Systemwide Network on Archipelagic and Ocean Studies in cooperation with the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies, 1988), 183-194; Édouard Glissant. *Traité du tout- monde*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1997).
- 11 Epeli Hau'ofa, *A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands* (Suva, Fiji: School of Social and Economic Development, 1993); Godfrey Baldacchino, "More Than Island Tourism: Branding, Marketing and Logistic in Archipelago Tourist Destinations," in *Archipelago Tourism: Policies and Practices* (London: Routledge, 2015), 1-18; Jonathan Pugh, "Island Movements: Thinking with the Archipelago," *Island Studies Journal* 8, no. 1 (2013): 9-24; Françoise Lionnet, "Continents and Archipelagoes: From E Pluribus Unum to Creolized Solidarities," *PMLA* 123, no. 5 (2008): 1503-15; Phillip Steinberg, "Insularity, Sovereignty and Statehood: The Representation of Islands on Portolan Charts and the Construction of the Territorial State," *Geografiska Annaler* 87, no. 4 (2005): 253-265; Grant McCall, "Nissology: A Proposal for Consideration," *Journal of the Pacific Society* 17, no. 2- 3 (1994): 93-106.
- 12 Philip Hayward, "Aquapelagos and Aquapelagic Assemblages," *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* 6, no. 1 (2012): 1-10; Helen Dawson, "Archaeology, Aquapelagos and Island Studies," *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* 6, no. 1 (2012): 17-21.
- 13 Craig Santos Perez, "Transterritorial Currents and the Imperial Terripelago," *American Quarterly* 67, no. 3 (2015): 619-24.
- 14 Elizabeth DeLoughrey, "'The Litany of Islands, the Rosary of Archipelagoes': Caribbean and Pacific Archipelagraphy," *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 32, no. 1 (2001): 21-51.
- 15 Lanny Thompson, "The Chronotopes of Archipelagic Thinking: Glissant and the Narrative of Philosophy," in *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Towards New Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations*, ed., Michelle Stephens and Yolanda Martínez San Miguel (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, Rethinking the Island Book Series, 2020): 109-130; Neal A. Allar, "Rhizomatic Influence: The Antigenealogy of Glissant and Deleuze," *Cambridge Journal of*

- Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 6, no. 1 (2019): 1-13; An Yountae, “Beginning in the Middle: Deleuze, Glissant, and Colonial Difference,” *Culture, Theory and Critique* 55, no. 3 (2014): 286-301, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14735784.2013.856768>; H. Adlai Murdoch, “*Tout-monde, chaos-monde*, the DOM, and Caribbean Dance: Inscribing Community Identity in Gerty Dambury’s *Les rétifs*” *L’Esprit Créateur* 61, no. 3 (Fall 2021): 14-29.
- <sup>16</sup> Lanny Thompson, “The Chronotopes of Archipelagic Thinking: Glissant and the Narrative of Philosophy,” in *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Towards New Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations*, ed., Michelle Stephens and Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel (Washington D.C.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2020), 109-130.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.
- <sup>18</sup> Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*. trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 14.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 194.
- <sup>22</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
- <sup>23</sup> Thompson, “The Chronotopes of Archipelagic Thinking,” 110.
- <sup>24</sup> Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 143-144.
- <sup>25</sup> Édouard Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole-World*. trans. Celia Britton (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 18. Translation in Hiepko with my revisions 237-238.
- <sup>26</sup> Thompson, “The Chronotopes of Archipelagic Thinking,” 116-117.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.
- <sup>29</sup> Rinaldo Walcott, “Queer Returns: Human Rights, the Anglo Caribbean and Diaspora Politics,” *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies* 3 (2009): 1-19.
- <sup>30</sup> Max Hantel, “Toward a Sexual Difference Theory of Creolization,” *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy - Revue de la philosophie française et de langue française* 23, no. 1 (2014): 1-18.
- <sup>31</sup> Rinaldo Walcott, “Queer Returns: Human Rights, the Anglo Caribbean and Diaspora Politics,” 9.
- <sup>32</sup> Hantel, “Towards a Sexual Difference Theory of Creolization,” 8-10.
- <sup>33</sup> Audre Lorde, “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power,” in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Berkeley: The Crossing Press, 1984), 56.
- <sup>34</sup> Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 56.
- <sup>35</sup> Brigitte Vasallo, *Pensamiento monógamo, terror poliamoroso* (Madrid: La Oveja Roja, 2018), 80-82.
- <sup>36</sup> This is my translation of Vasallo’s text.
- <sup>37</sup> Vasallo, *Pensamiento monógamo, terror poliamorososo*, 34-38.

- <sup>38</sup> Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
- <sup>39</sup> Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed*, 140-144.
- <sup>40</sup> Juana María Rodríguez, *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures and Other Latina Longings* (New York: NYU Press, 2014).
- <sup>41</sup> Rodríguez, *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures and Other Latina Longings*, 27.
- <sup>42</sup> Vasallo, *Pensamiento monógamo, terror poliamoroso*, 81.
- <sup>43</sup> Adriana Arpini, "Abolición, independencia y confederación: Los escritos de Ramón Emeterio Betances, 'El Antillano,'" *Cuyo* 25-26 (2008-2009): 168.
- <sup>44</sup> Antonio Gaztambide-Géigel, "The Rise and Geopolitics of Antilleanism," in *General History of the Caribbean, vol. 4, The Long Nineteenth Century: Nineteenth Century Transformations* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011), 431.
- <sup>45</sup> Separatist political discussions in the Spanish Caribbean include debates about emancipation, abolition, separatism, annexation, and political independence. See Sybille Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); and Rodrigo Lazo, "Filibustering Cuba: Cecilia Valdés and Memory of Nation in the Americas," *American Literature* 74, no. 1 (2002): 1-30.
- <sup>46</sup> José Buscaglia-Salgado, *Undoing Empire: Race and Nation in the Mulatto Caribbean* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 248.
- <sup>47</sup> Gaztambide-Géigel, "The Rise and Geopolitics of Antilleanism," 430-452. Jossianna Arroyo, "Revolution in the Caribbean: Betances, Haití and the Antillean Confederation," *La Habana Elegante, Segunda Época* 49 (2011).  
[http://www.habanaelegante.com/Spring\\_Summer\\_2011/Invitation\\_Arroyo.html](http://www.habanaelegante.com/Spring_Summer_2011/Invitation_Arroyo.html)
- <sup>48</sup> Carlos Rama, *La idea de la Federación Antillana en los independentistas puertorriqueños del siglo XIX* (Río Piedras: Librería Internacional, 1971), 19.
- <sup>49</sup> Adriana Arpini, "Abolición, independencia y confederación: Los escritos de Ramón Emeterio Betances, 'El Antillano,'" *Cuyo* 25-26 (2008-2009): 178, 182.
- <sup>50</sup> See Buscaglia-Salgado, *Undoing Empire*; Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed*; and Gaztambide-Géigel, "The Rise and Geopolitics of Antilleanism."
- <sup>51</sup> Daylet Domínguez, "Alexander von Humboldt y Ramón de la Sagra: navegación y viaje al interior en la invención de Cuba en el siglo XIX," *Hispanic Review* 83, no. 2 (2015): 143-164.
- <sup>52</sup> José Buscaglia-Salgado, *Undoing Empire: Race and Nation in the Mulatto Caribbean*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 182-264. Kahlila Chaar- Pérez, "'A Revolution of Love': Ramón Emeterio Betances, Antónir Firmin, and Affective Communities in the Caribbean," *Global South* 7, no. 2 (2013): 11-36.
- <sup>53</sup> Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel, "Poéticas caribeñas de lo criollo: Creole/criollo/créolité," in *Poéticas de lo criollo: La transformación del concepto "criollo" en las letras hispanoamericanas (siglo XVI al XIX)*, ed., Juan M. Vitulli and David M. Solodkow (Buenos Aires: Editorial Corregidor, 2009), 403-41. José Antonio Mazzoti, "Criollismo, Creole, and Créolité," in *Critical Terms in Caribbean and Latin American Thought*, ed., Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel, Ben Sifuentes-Jáuregui, and Marisa Belausteguigoitia (New York: Palgrave, 2016), 87-99. H. Adlai Murdoch, "Tout-monde, chaos-monde, the DOM, and Caribbean Dance," 14-29.

- <sup>54</sup> “The first recorded suggestion for uniting the territories was made, a bare generation after Emancipation, in an appendix written in 1860 to the *Lectures on Colonisation and Colonies* delivered before the University of Oxford by Herman Merivale, of the Colonial Office, in the years between 1839 and 1841” (Lewis, 1957, p.49).
- <sup>55</sup> Katerina González Seligmann, *Small Axe*, 69-77.
- <sup>56</sup> F. W. Ganzert, “British West Indian Federation,” *World Affairs Institute* 116, no. 4 (1953): 112-114.
- <sup>57</sup> Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: the Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 119.
- <sup>58</sup> Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: the Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*, 2.
- <sup>59</sup> In the case of the Antillean confederation, the corpus of texts written during the second half of the nineteenth century belongs to what is known as the Romantic period (Angel Rivera), and as a result the topic of heteronormative love plays a central role in the narrative plots. Some of the writers of the Anglo-Caribbean belong to what is commonly known as the Windrush generation, and their plots explore not only the impossibility of the hetero-patriarchal couple, but also the challenges experienced by the affective networks of the characters as a result of their diasporic conditions.
- <sup>60</sup> María Rodríguez Beltrán has questioned the limited focus on the romantic couple to propose a wider understanding of *negrura* in the context of Caribbean literature in her dissertation entitled “Below the Surface of *Negrura*: Blackness and Communitarity in the Spanish, French and English-speaking Caribbean.”
- <sup>61</sup> Jossiana Arroyo, *Writing Secrecy in Caribbean Freemasonry* (Nueva York: Palgrave, 2019), 99.
- <sup>62</sup> Kahlila Chaar- Pérez, “‘A Revolution of Love’: Ramón Emeterio Betances, Anténor Firmin, and Affective Communities in the Caribbean,” 26.
- <sup>63</sup> Irmayr [Alaí] Reyes-Santos, “On Pan-Antillean Politics. Ramón Emeterio Betances and Gregorio Luperón Speak to the Present,” *Callaloo* 36, no. 1 (2013): 142-157.
- <sup>64</sup> Katerina Gonzalez Seligmann, “Caliban, Why? The 1968 Cultural Congress of Havana, C. L. R. James, and the Role of the Caribbean Intellectual,” *The Global South* 13, no. 1 (Spring 2019): 59-80.
- <sup>65</sup> Katerina González Seligmann, “Caliban Why?,” 59-80.
- <sup>66</sup> Yarimar Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures: Caribbean Politics in the Wake of Disenchantment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
- <sup>67</sup> Juan Bosch, *De Cristóbal Colón a Fidel Castro. El Caribe frontera imperial* (Santo Domingo: Editora Alfa y Omega, 1981), 12.
- <sup>68</sup> Baldacchino, “More Than Island Tourism,” 1-18.
- <sup>69</sup> Ernest Renan, “What is a nation?” in *Nation and Narration*, ed., Homi K. Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990), 8-22.
- <sup>70</sup> Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- <sup>71</sup> Édouard Glissant, *Treatise on the Whole-World*, 18.