



The Sea as an Archive: Memory, History and Non-Human Agency in Rita Indiana's *Tentacle*

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Abstract— *Rita Indiana's Tentacle* (2015) shows the Caribbean Sea as not just a fragile ecosystem, but also as a lively space where histories, memories, and forms of nonhuman agency meet. Encompassing varied time periods and locations, the novel intertwines environmental devastation with the Caribbean's historical and cultural patterns. The article presents a case that *Tentacle's* sea is a living archive, holding traces of histories unsuited for human archives. Acilde's movement through time and her relationship with the sacred sea anemone disrupt the conventional distinction between the human and the environment. The anemone is essential because it is more than just a passive symbol of nature it is an agent of the temporal, the ecological, and the historical that bears on the possible. The paper applies ecocritical approaches to nonhuman agency, environmental memory, and Caribbean literary studies to examine how water connects colonial history, contemporary environmental degradation, and imaginings of ecological future. The contention is put forth that *Tentacle* reimagines the Caribbean Sea as a repository of historical memory and as an agent in producing Caribbean identity. The novel of *Indiana* challenges anthropocentric understandings of history and proposes a more-than-human framework which may make sense of the ecological and historical crisis as an interconnected phenomenon.



Keywords: oceanic memory, environmental memory, nonhuman agency, ecocriticism, Caribbean Sea.

I. INTRODUCTION

More and more Caribbean writers, will look to the complex relationships between humans and their environments. The sea has a specific placement in this literary tradition. It is a geographical limit, a migration corridor, a memory bank, and a site that is still impacted by colonial exploitation. The Caribbean societies do not understand the sea only as some physical landscape. It holds stories that cross the borders of individual nations and generations. This is especially visible in literature that brings about significant environmental transformation into dialogue with historical memory. An excellent example of this connection is *Tentacle* by Rita Indiana.

Originally published in 2015 as *La mucama de Omicunlé* in Spanish, *Tentacle* has been translated into

English by Achy Obejas. It combines the genres of speculative fiction, Caribbean history, ecological crisis, spirituality, and time displacement. In a not-so-distant future, domestic worker Acilde Figueroa has an encounter with a sacred sea anemone in Santo Domingo, which provokes a sequence of movements in time. The story shifts through multiple historical eras while linking personal experiences to the broader changes affecting the Caribbean environment. Tree of Life's strange time lets environmental destruction become merged with neither history nor attempts to control future by man. Not a lot of attention has been paid to how *Tentacle* engages with queer modes of becoming, but it is definitely present. The polluted and threatened oceanic environment of the novel stands as an important basis for these readings. In focusing

only on ecological calamity, the Caribbean Sea runs the risk of being made into an endangered object for protection. A new reading of Indiana allows for the sea to no longer be simply represented by human characters, but to also intervene in the novel's remembering of history. Marine Environment Participates in Movement Between Temporalities and Complicates Division Environmental History–Human History.

This document therefore treats the Caribbean Sea in *Tentacle* as an archive. The term archive here is not used in the institutional sense that we think of document that has been preserved, usually by some kind of human authority. It is more like a space that is capable of retaining and transmitting traces of experience. The idea of the region as a place of creativity and self-sacrifice is particularly relevant to Caribbean literature. It suggests that official histories are always related or somehow are made by structures of power. In contrast, the sea transcends nation-states and the fixed times and places we like to impose. It can hold the traces of colonial violence, cultural transformation, displacement, and ecological change without reducing them to one official narrative. In this alternative conception of the archive, the sacred sea anemone is at the novel's core. The anemone is more than just a symbol of environmental fragility. In fact, it has its own agency, which reframes human-centric narratives of history. The significance of this is revealed through Acilde's journey through time and broadly, this novel's conception of marine life that could change the historical outcome. The anemone therefore occupies a unique status that encompasses organism, spirit, narrative and transformer. Indiana invites us to reconsider who or what can make history, and whether we belong.

This paper claims that in *Tentacle*, the *Caribbean Sea* is no longer just a setting but rather a memory-laden protagonist of historical processes. Connecting marine ecology with temporal disconnection, Indiana shows that environmental destruction cannot be understood apart from the histories through which Caribbean societies have been produced. The novel thus contests an anthropocentric conception of history and ecology. The sea does not just witness history from afar; it is part of the story's capacity for remembering, connecting to and altering history.

The argument will be developed in three stages. To begin with, the article explores the nexus involving the Caribbean Sea as Historical Memory and how the marine rendering of space problematizes conventional understandings of the archive. Another aspect explored is the temporal structure of the novel and the relationship of water, memory, and history. Ultimately, it analyzes the sea anemone as a case study of nonhuman agency and argues that Indiana's depiction of aquatic life enables ecological

processes to contribute to Caribbean history. *Tentacle*, then, can be read as both a novel about the ecological crisis, and as a literary experiment in imagining how the nonhuman might remember human history and intervene in it.

II. THE CARIBBEAN SEA AS A HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

To think of the Caribbean Sea as an archive, we must first move beyond the idea that archives only exist in the written word. Archives are often linked with institutional frameworks that safeguard records and influence knowledge's status as historical documents. Such institutes are never neutral: there is selection with preservation, and selection is never innocent; it is power-full. In colonial contexts, it is especially salient since the official histories of colonial authorities have tended to eclipse the records of enslaved, displaced and marginalized people, and the marginal memory-lives as well. The limitations of Caribbean literature have been repeatedly responded to by alternative spaces of memory. Given this, the sea presents a particularly potent counter-archive as it is outside the nation and does not belong to any one history.

The Caribbean Sea in *Tentacle* illustrates this tension between preservation and disappearance. A space of movement, violence, exchange, and reconfiguration for centuries has been this. The water of the Caribbean Sea can't be separated from the experience of the region. Ships, people, goods, languages, religions, and political systems made their way across the sea. However, the sea does not keep these histories in the same manner as any archival record. It has fluid memory not a fixed one. It persists through repetitions, marks, material modifications, effects on the environment, and the organization of culture. Indiana's abstract story makes this fluidity particularly evident by refusing to maintain a strict separation between past, present, and future.

This understanding of marine memory blurs the lines between natural history and human history. *Tentacle* never presents ecological transformation as a site of isolated environment issue. The health of the sea environment is linked to political decisions, economic systems, technological intervention, and historical patterns of exploitation. The ecological crisis that the novel represents has a history beyond its future. In the Caribbean, environment degradation becomes just another layer in the past rather than something totally new unconnected to earlier forms of violence.

The novel's depiction of Santo Domingo and its surrounding sea illuminates the importance of the ocean.

Acilde lives in a world where degradation of the environment has become a way of life. The impaired environment is not a mere background threat but the ground in which characters walk. This is important because it stops the ecological crisis from being addressed as an abstract global problem. The Caribbean has a specific social and historical landscape that reveals vulnerabilities. Ecological harm is felt through bodies, work, poverty, institutions, and unequal access to resources.

Acilde's place in this world is of great importance. Living under precarious conditions as a domestic worker, she faces social and environmental inequality. Thus, the relationship she has to the city and the sea is different from those who are privileged with greater economic and political power. As a result, class-issues and structural vulnerability are intersected by the ecological imagination of the novel. The environmental crisis does not affect all subjects equally, and the story of Indiana challenges the idea that humanity is a single category, all confronting nature from the same position.

The archival function of the sea becomes most pronounced when the novel begins to disturb everyday time. Acilde's capacity to move through time enables understanding the present not as a moment in itself, but rather as the result of several timelines. The past is capable of acting in the present, whereas the future is susceptible to being imagined, modified or threatened. Water's characteristics allow that temporal instability because it counters the fixed boundaries that spatialize the terrestrial. The sea can hardly be traced or fixed to one point in the same way a monument or written piece can.

Indiana's challenge to standard historic thinking relies on this very fluidity. If we consider history to be a sequence of events naturally following one another, the future is what immediately comes after the present. *Tentacle*, though, makes this sequence difficult continuously. The temporal structure indicates that historical moments can remain connected and that the results of ecological and political choices can have intergenerational impacts. The sea thus was not just a backdrop for characters to float in. It supplies the materials and concepts for temporalities to meet, and stagger to link.

Marine life, too, is associated with forms of knowledge outside of human systems in the novel. The sea anemone's worth cannot be reduced to scientific or decorative value. The option of transformation is a spiritual knowledge. It is connected to this knowledge. Through this organism, Indiana offers a form of agency not derived from human reason. Because marine knowledge challenges the assumption that meaning or

historical knowledge is exclusively human in origin or interpretation. Hence, the sea as archive functions on two connected levels. On the historical level, it carries the trace of Caribbean movement, colonization, and exploitation of nature. It allows Indiana at the level of story to connect events otherwise separated in time. The archive is therefore not a stable object. It continues to be active and can remind us of links we held back. The ecological politics of the novel highlight the significance of natural environment which the sea represents. Furthermore, it also show us that to remember is also to remember the historical processes, not just the materiality, that made the environment vulnerable.

This approach changes the ecological question from how do humans save nature. The phrase flows into a more complex question: "What histories become visible when nature is allowed to help tell history?" *Tentacle* does not offer a straightforward answer. But the way its narrative is structured suggests that taking a look back in time could help ameliorate the ecological crisis. The sea is not just a victim of human activity. Another way in which illegible consequences become legible is through the social medium.

The sea's memory – one that cannot be disentangled from its material existence – functions as an alternative archive. The water of the lakes holds similar contemporary narratives of mobility and loss. Indiana successfully merges these aspects together. Making the marine environment the basis of the novel's chronology, she shows that Caribbean history cannot be understood without also taking into account the nonhuman surroundings through which that history unfolds. The sea holds memories in a way different from humans, but its silence doesn't mean there's no history. The work *Tentacle* tells us about the sea as a living archive, whose changing condition reveals that environmental memory and historical memory cannot be separated.

III. WATER, MEMORY, AND TIME TRAVEL

The Caribbean Sea's archival quality in *Tentacle* becomes highly relevant due to the novel's disruption of linear time. Indiana doesn't show past, present, and future as separate stages in time. They repeatedly overlap through Acilde's experience and through the seascape that corresponds with the differing times of the story. The temporal organization converts the sphere of the environment into the history. Water is particularly suitable for this purpose because it possesses inherent mobility: it flows, travels, links up distant sites and cannot be permanently contained. In *Tentacle*, the material quality of water gets translated into

a narrative structure, where even historical time refuses to be fixed.

Acilde's traversal through various time frames of history is first shown as an extraordinary disturbance of normal experience. However, the movement through time gradually takes on broader ecological significance. She is not merely journeying back to historical events as a disembodied voyeur. Her movement forms part of a larger effort to transform the ecological future of the Caribbean. Consequently, the history cannot be separated from the nature. In order to glean the valuable mysteries of the future of the sea, Acilde must learn to meet the Caribbean in the past. Time becomes an ecological investigation approach.

This relationship undermines the "memory/history" dichotomy. Memory is usually conceived of as subjective and personal, while history is commonly associated with collective documents and chronological reconstruction. *Tentacle* complicates both categories. Acilde's experiences fall within a larger historical story, while the ecological environment has its own continuity that transcends individual memory. The sea materializes the link between these two types of memories. It persists over time even with changes in state so that the environmental present bears the traces of past historical processes. Therefore, the movement through time of the novel is not only a science-fictional device. It allows Indiana to question what it means to inherit an ecological crisis. Environmental harm is seldom caused by one generation, yet its effects are ill-distributed among subsequent generations. *Tentacle* reveals the unevenness of time by moving between periods. Actions taken in one-time period can become environmental consequences in another. The future, then, is not separate from the past, but materially produced by it.

This notion is of particular significance with regard to the Caribbean, that the area's modern ecological condition could not be divorced from longer histories of colonial exploitation and economic dependency. The novel's shifting through time disallow readers from considering the environmental crisis merely contemporary. It doesn't happen overnight; rather ecological vulnerability is part of a history of accumulation. The sea serves as the connecting medium that permits us to perceive these layers of history simultaneously.

Most of the time Indiana's relationship with time shakes the notion of predetermination. If the future was simply the product of technology and nature in development, then the Acilde journey would have little politics. The potential for transition between time periods allows for making interventions. History is not

deterministic. What has happened does not determine what must happen next. However, the novel does not represent this possibility as mere human domination of time. Acilde's capacity to intervene is enabled by the non-human organism encountered. The agency of human beings relies on the relationship with the non-human.

The sea anemone plays an essential role in this process. Its entity connects oceanic ecology, spirituality and changing of time. The organism is a thing that Acilde does not find in the sea. Instead, it enables the story to disrupt its own temporal boundaries. The importance of the anemone is thus partly due to its not conforming to established classifications. This can be understood biologically as a form of marine life, culturally as part of a (spiritual) system, and narratively as a power of transformation. Indiana intentionally permits the coexistence of these interpretations. Such ambiguity is crucial, for it ensures that we do not take the novel to reproduce a mere instrumental grasp of nature. If the anemone were just something we could use to repair the environment, then its function would remain a human one. On the contrary, it is beyond human intention. An organism contributes to the production of knowledge and historical processes. Acilde does not just use nature; she becomes enveloped by a nonhuman force that alters her experience of time and her place in history.

The concept of relational agency is handy for understanding the connection between Acilde and the anemone. In *Tentacle*, agency is not shown as the one-off ability of an autonomous individual. Through relationships between people, marine organisms, historical forces and technologies and environments. The future depends on Acilde's attempts to change relationships. In this light, the novel provides an ecological conception of action in which no actor is ever entirely sovereign over history.

Water strengthens this bonding model. The ecological crisis cannot be associated with a place or a political community; this is because it is transborder. Environmental damage, global warming, ocean decay, and the loss of ecosystems do not recognize borders. The sea joins together spaces that maps disconnect. The Caribbean setting of Indiana is thus especially effective for imagining environmental interdependence. The health of one marine space can impact faraway communities, just as events in one place in history can impact events in others.

Relationship between permanence and change is further complicated by the sea. In one sense, there is an unbroken continuity: the Caribbean Sea has always been there. On another level, it is everchanging. As species vanish, waters are contaminated, coastlines change, and human-environment relations are altered. The continued

naturalness of the sea coupled with the ability to transform the landscape makes it an archive. An archive must keep something, but keeping does not mean not moving at all. The sea's constant motion and transformation of matter is what preserves traces in *Tentacle*.

This idea of memory is very different from a writing. Attempting to store information so it becomes permanent and retrievable is a written archive. The ocean never offers such stability. The memory of this is distributed through organisms, sediment, currents, coastlines, human communities and ecological change. The work of Indiana turns this material instability into narrative. The reader must recreate links between periods and events rather than being presented with a single historical account of authority. The novel's fragmented structure therefore reflects the fragmented shape of environmental memory.

The time-format naturally asks one to rethink responsibility. If the future is materially connected to the past, responsibility is not confined to the moment damage becomes identifiable. Characters are born into conditions created long before their existence. Their actions create effects for those who will be born. The environmental ethics of this have intergenerational dimensions. In this context, novel implies that ecological responsibility should not only seek to meet current human needs, but also historical processes and future effects. Similarly, the novel stops short of depicting history as a straightforward lesson whereby humans can learn and then gain ecological redemption. The futuristic style has a certain anxiety attached to it. Changing the future is possible but it always accompanies uncertainty, violence and sacrifice. This uncertainty is crucial as it prevents the novel's ecological fiction from transforming into a simple account of a technological or political remedy. The environmental future still depends on the unpredictable interactions of human and nonhuman forces.

The ocean finally offers the novel a model for comprehension such uncertainty. Water does not move along a singular linear path. In this complication of currents, separation and return occurs, whilst distance happens through circulation. The way Indiana accounts for time is similar. Historical events that at first appear disconnected, actually connect through the sea and the anemone. The past comes back in the present, and the imagined future reinterprets the meaning of past. *Tentacle* applies an environmental memory through this structure and gives it force. The ocean has memory, of what's happened, and what's to come. Based on what's happening, this would indicate what can happen next. Consequently, the novel's politics becomes productive by theorizing a relationship between ecology and movement.

To recall the Caribbean environment is to acknowledge that its present condition has been historically produced; to imagine its future is to rethink the histories that have produced that condition. Water refers to an archive and a passage in this sense. It keeps marks while permitting moving, connects the time while resisting time stability, and links the human with the nonhuman. The speculative narrative of Indiana focuses on animal's capacity of communication in history. The Caribbean Sea joins in historical continuity, while its ecological fragility gets caught up in the memories and futures of surrounding communities.

IV. THE NONHUMAN AGENCY OF THE SEA ANEMONE

The role of the sea as an archive is most neatly explained in *Tentacle* by the figure of the sea anemone. The organism occupies a strange position in the novel; it cannot be properly understood by the nature/culture distinction. Although it is part of the biological world, it is also a spiritual form that has undergone historical and temporal metamorphoses. Through the anemone, Rita Indiana calls into doubt the assumption that nonhuman life exists merely as a being that humans act on. The organism instead gets equipped to steer the course of human choices and history possibilities.

This representation is important within an eco-critical framework because even when the environmental crisis highlights nature, it tends to be anthropocentric in its outlook. Humans must protect, restore, manage or save nature and its life. This strategy of engagement can inadvertently maintain a situation in which humans remain the central agents, while the nonhuman world remains passive. *Tentacle* impedes this hierarchy. The sea anemone isn't just an endangered organism needing human help. Its existence creates intervention in the first place.

The difference is essential. The novel's ecological crisis drives the attempts to alter the future, but it is through the agency of a nonhuman that this possibility arises. Human activity relies on meetings with nonhuman activity. Acilde's behaviour is inseparable from the anemone because the organism alters the conditions under which she apprehends time, history and ecological responsibility. It follows that the relationship is reciprocal rather than purely instrumental. Through its ambiguous status, the agency of the anemone is exemplified. Indiana allows the reader to accept both scientific and spiritual explanations of its power without forcing a choice. It has meaning in all the categories. The Caribbean understanding of nature is complex, and it encompasses not just material components, but also cultural, spiritual,

and historical ones. Anemone thus pushes back against modernity's trend to part ecological understandings from other forms of knowledge's.

Resistance is often relevant when considering colonial history. Colonial systems often classified landscapes, plants, animals, and natural resources based on how well they would fit into particular economic systems. Property and resource were metamorphosed from nature. In *Tentacle*, the anemone does not lend itself to get refined, since what is important about it is exactly its ability to escape human control. What humans extract from it does not exhaust its value. Rather, it has a meaning that alters the relationship of human beings to their environment. The creature they encounter in the novella also complicates the notion of temporal superiority. When imagining ourselves as ahead of history and thus technologically capable of controlling the future, we forget that we don't control the future. The anemone undermines this certainty. It connects different times without relying on the technology through which humans usually understand time. The existence of this evidence suggests continuity beyond human life itself.

The connection between human agency and environmental memory is quite productive as we saw. The sea as an archive, the anemone is one of its archives, which has its active participant. All that the information does is to keep something the same. On the contrary, its existing ties diverse historical potentials and makes human agents experience forms of knowledge beyond ordinary historical systems. As a result, the organism is transformed into a vehicle of accessibility to the environmental archive. The anemone also blurs the line of subject and environment. At first, Acilde seems to pinpoint a human subject acting on an external world. However, her meeting with this sea organism alters this relationship. She joins an ecological network where human and nonhuman actors all share in the agency of action. Her choices affect the surroundings, but the atmosphere in turn alters her choices. Thus, the novel presents agency as ecological and relational rather than autonomous. This relational model is very important in the context of responsibility in the novel. If only humans were behind the environmental crisis, we might think that they alone could choose to take on its responsibility. The situation presents a tentacle complication. The damage that people cause is introduced into networks that cannot be fully controlled. Oceans, organisms, weather systems, technologies, and human communities interact in ways that exceed individual intention. Responsibility thus implies acknowledging the limits of humanity.

These limits become powerful with the sea anemone. It has transformative significance but doesn't act

like human forms of politics or technology. It doesn't use traditional language or arrange itself based on human institutions. After all, it affects the events. Indiana thus invites readers to rethink what qualifies as action. We don't need speech, political organization, or conscious intention in a human sense to have agency. It doesn't mean the novel merely attributes human traits to the anemone. Actually, its worth depends on its difference from the human being. An organism is not meaningful because it looks like a person. It gains meaning because it inserts another way of existing into the story. The biological and spiritual otherness of Indiana allows us to think through forms of agency that cannot be contained within anthropocentric categories. As a result, the anemone enriches the critique of human exceptionalism. Human exceptionalism posits that humans occupy a unique place due to their consciousness, rationality, technical ability or historical self-awareness. *Tentacle* argues against this hierarchy by placing a marine creature in the center of its temporal and ecological imagination. The survival and agency of a living form that human systems may otherwise deem marginal will be interlinked with the future of human communities. It also results into an ethical reversal. The book not only gives us reason to nudge humans toward imagining what happens when humans rely on environmental and other-than-human's processes, but it also offers advice. If such dependence occurs, it does not negate human responsibility but rather clarifies why responsibility is necessary. While humans can inflict enormous ecological harm, they cannot live so easily outside the systems which they harm.

The Caribbean context makes the argument stronger. The Caribbean's identity, culture, history and geography are shaped by the sea, which is not a conceptual global space. so, causing damage to the sea is damaging a space through which Caribbean histories and communities have been forged. But the novel does not depict the sea solely as a victim. Giving nonhuman life agency allows the marine environment to shape history rather than merely suffering the consequences of human history. In this connection, the anemone's relationship with time becomes significant. Its presence makes it seem that the future is open to change, but it also shows that not all change is of our making. Acilde's journey relies upon a non-created ecological encounter. The possibility of history emerges through interaction. The novel's speculative dimension is fundamentally ecological: the future is produced through relations among multiple lives and material forces. As a result, agency is distributed. Humans have agency, but so does the environment, the organism, the technology, and the history. These agencies function in cooperation with one another. They cross paths and at times create

problems. *Tentacle's* imagined ecological future thus cannot depend solely on human control. We must accept that we are all interconnected.

Indiana broadens the definition of historic participation via the sea anemone. The organism does not just live in Caribbean history; it gets to be part of the apparatus within which history is changed. That is the vital link between nonhuman agency and the archival function of the sea. The sea keeps what it recalls, but it also acts on what it remembers. The organisms found in it have ecological continuity and at the same time engage in processes that form human possibilities. Thus, the sea anemone changes the story from one about human beings facing an environmental disaster to one in which humans confront the boundaries of their own exceptionalism. The ecological world doesn't wait for humans to intervene. It has its own forms of continuity, agency, and resistance. Focusing on a marine organism at the center of time-transformation, Indiana indicates that visualizing an ecological future requires more than representing environmental destruction. It needs acknowledging the nonhuman world as an agent of history itself.

V. TRANSITIONING FROM BEING OBJECT TO AGENT

The importance of *Tentacle* rests in the end with the refusal to disjoin environmental crisis from questions of historical agency. The novel does not merely portray a Caribbean environment harmed by man and envisage its restoration. By making these ecological forces part of the movement of the narrative, it reorganizes the human-environment relation. The sea, the things in it and the histories they make active what can be remembered as well as what futures can be imagined. In other words, environmental literature may produce a hierarchy that it is against. When the natural world is only depicted as a victim of ruthless male human exploitation, it is still human at the centre. As nonhumans are considered useful only in relation to humans, its degradation becomes a problem as human life is threatened. Indiana's new narrative expands this framework by assigning a role of the oceanic environment to the production of narrative possibilities.

The transformation revolves around the sea anemone. Its significance goes beyond its symbolic link to environmental fragility. It has an influence on the narrative's structure. Through its link with Acilde and the temporal movement of the novel, the organism becomes implicated in the creation of alternative historical possibilities. Nature thus does not simply represent; it also helps determine the conditions of representation. When the

environment becomes a narrative agent, so shifts corresponding responsibilities and concerns for the children. The environmental crisis isn't something we have to prevent in the future. It is already containing within historical relationships between peoples, places, technologies and ecosystems. *Tentacle* demonstrates how these relationships caused the environmental damage in the Caribbean. The ecological crisis is thus seen as a historic condition rather than a specific disaster.

The speculative dimensions of the novel make visible its historical dimension by allowing the effects of environmental choices to appear across time. The future shifts into a field where presently caused effects can take place, while the past morphs into a legitimate source of explanation for currently vulnerable ecologies. The final outcome is a conception of environmental history that is circular. What happens in one period affects what happens in another. Such a vision has particular importance to Caribbean Literature because the region's inventive environments are wedded to a history of colonialism, extraction, migration, and economic inequality. The Caribbean Sea has served as a pathway of connection and a space of exploitation. The river has unleashed the movement of people and goods, even as its waters have witnessed histories of violence and dispossession. Indiana's new work positions this historical complexity within an imagined ecological frame, showing that environmental vulnerability cannot be disentangled from the political histories of a place.

The environmental future envisioned by *Tentacle* is thus not one in which all human beings are subjected to the same ecological threat. Vulnerability is more easily inflicted on those lower down the social hierarchy. Acilde's vulnerable state indicates the intersection of environmental conditions with class and labour. People with less social and economic means are often more exposed to environmental degradation directly whereas those with more powerful have more chance to avoid it or manage it. The archive value of the sea is thus not only a function of memory. The environment registers inequalities that official histories may overlook. Whether it's a polluted coast, a devastating ecosystem or a vanishing marine species, the consequence of political or economic decision gets revealed in spite of absence in institutional narrative. Therefore, ecological change is a form of history.

The sea's archival role, in other words, cannot be disentangled from those of environmental justice. To regard the environment as an archive is to ask who acted to produce its present and whose lives are caught up in that present. *Tentacle* fosters this kind of reading, whereby one observes ecological transformation embedded in a

Caribbean social world instead of as an abstract planetary crisis. At the same time, Indiana refrains from stating that the environment is merely there to testify against man. The ocean is more than a proof of human wrongdoings. The fact that it is an independent agency complicates causes and consequences. When ecological systems are modified they produce effects greater than those foreseen by the people who modified them. Environmental mechanisms take on their own paths. No human being can fully control the ensuing crisis.

The representation of nonhuman agency in the novel is important politically. Acknowledging agency beyond the human does not imply they are off the hook. Instead, it reveals the limits of human control while making responsibility more necessary. Humans may initiate changes to nature, however, they do not determine the outcome. The environment can reconfigure and modify possibilities that are social, historical and biological. As a result, the novel proposes an understanding of the ecological based on interdependence. Water has been an invisible fish in which our relationship with the sea, technology, economy, and history takes place. No organism functions completely isolated. The making of the future did not depend on single human decision but the interplay of these.

This relationship also explains why the novel's treatment of spirituality matters. The anemone's sacred dimension enables Indiana to contest a purely instrumental conception of nature. The economic value or scientific utility is not the full story of the marine organism. The spiritual significance of nature enables human beings to encounter nature through another mode of relatedness, one that isn't useful but significant.

Collapsing of the ecological, spiritual and historical dimensions is particularly effective because it resists the dis-embedding of environmental thought from the Caribbean cultural experience. Instead of bringing an abstract environmental framework to the Caribbean, Indiana creates ecological imagination by drawing from the region's histories and symbolic systems. The ocean becomes at once material, historical, spiritual, and political. *Tentacle* contributes to a rethinking of the Anthropocene in this sense. The phrase, in general terms, stresses the profound abilities of humans to alter planetary systems. The new novel of Indiana complicates the notion of a unique, undifferentiated "human" agent. Human beings have unequal powers and responsibilities, while the ecological systems they change still have capacities that exceed human control. The novel thus seeks a more nuanced understanding of environmental history.

The Caribbean landscape makes this distinction

particularly very evident. The ecological crisis of the world cannot remove local histories. Global environmental processes do not bear the same meaning everywhere. Thus, Caribbean futures cannot be envisioned apart from its colonial pasts, nor can its environmental present be disassociated from its social inequities. The basic structure of the novel renders this insight into a question of possibility. Changing our relationship with each other, the world and the future sustainably produces a better future. It is important for human beings to try and change their position in the environment instead of just looking for technological ways to control it.

The anemone presents a different way of being because it is not reducible to human uses. The essential ecological transformation of *Tentacle* is the transition from environmental object to narrative agent. The sea starts as a troubled space but, as I will show, it becomes involved in the novel's historical imagination. The anemone best embodies this change; it participates in the sea, exists spiritually, and is a force associated with temporal change. Indiana ascribes narrative importance to a mode of living that is outside the accepted structures of human historical agency. The outcome is an ecological politics not of human supremacy, but of acknowledgment. The importance of nature does not need to be humanized. It is important precisely because it is diverse, dynamic, interconnected and capable of shaping human futures. *Tentacle* thus invites readers to imagine history as a more-than-human process that continually crosses the boundary between environmental and human memory.

Indiana changing the archival and narrative mean of the Caribbean Sea from the background setting, changes environmental memory meaning. When we remember the sea, we remember the histories contained in it; in our recognition of its agency, we acknowledge that history continues to shape human possibilities. The novel therefore shows that an ecological crisis is also a crisis of memory, of history, of imagination. Ultimately, *Tentacle* does not merely inquire about humanity's ability to survive ecological disaster. Can we rethink our relationship to the nonhuman world before thinking about what comes next? The sea tells the story. Through the sea, a space without writing that offers a memory, that connects without limiting itself to political borders and that acts without imitating human agency. By means of this alteration, Indiana depicts the Caribbean setup as not just a mere spectator of History but a partaker.

VI. CONCLUSION

Rita Indiana's *Tentacle* renders a conceptual apparatus for thinking about the environmental crisis, historical memory,

and nonhuman agency. The novel does not treat the Caribbean Sea as merely a threatened natural landscape. It allows the Caribbean Sea to become a space through which different histories, temporality, and life forms pass. The sea is an archive not composed through files but through the constant reference of ecology, traces, beings, and the effects of humans. Looking at the Caribbean Sea as an archive, also tells us why environmental crisis in *Tentacle* can't be modern. The Caribbean's ecological situation links to longer histories of colonialism, exploitation, inequality, and technological intervention. The connections that struggle to be articulated in a linear way are made visible in Indiana. As a result, the future is not independent from past, rather, it is produced as a result of past actions.

According to the sea anemone, agency can take on a meaning that exceeds human-centred models. Its importance goes beyond its representation of vulnerability to the environment. In 1984, through its link with Acilde and the novel's temporal architecture, the organism becomes an active agent in the creation of historical potential. So, the anemone thus questions the belief that only humans can shape history. This representation also allows *Tentacle* to think beyond the human-centred approach towards environmental crisis. Humans are the instigators of ecological destruction but this novel suggests they do not exercise complete control over the environments they alter. The actions of marine organisms, water, climate and technology along with historical forces interact. As a result, agency is not merely human but relational.

The Caribbean Sea's archive function connects ecological memory to environmental justice. The environmental present documents the effects of the past. The unequal social conditions ensure that those who suffer the most are the ones who undergo ecological vulnerability. Because Indiana focuses on Acilde's precariousness, the ecological catastrophe is never viewed as an abstract planetary problem. Destruction of nature is faced through certain bodies and communities.

In the end, *Tentacle* calls on readers to rethink the meaning of history and who is authorized to create it. The answer cannot be conceived as a simple replacement of human history by natural history. On the contrary, the novel proposes a continuum model in which human and nonhuman histories produce one another. While the ocean bears memories, it is also an agent that permits, in this case, the anemone, existing within the environment but also affecting human history's possibilities. By situating the Caribbean Sea as both a storehouse and an agent, Indiana thus creates new possibilities for Caribbean ecologies. The *tentacle* shows that environmental

literatures do not have to depict nature only as a "victim" awaiting human saving. Instead, the world can be nonhuman or more-than-human which can participate in memory. A reading of that sort makes evident the novel's wider significance: in order to imagine an ecological future, we need to do more than confront environmental destruction. Indeed, we must also question the anthropocentric assumptions through which history itself has been understood.

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