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# Living, Learning, and Dying by Water: Materialist Jamaican Environment in *A Tall History of Sugar* by Curdella Forbes

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## ABSTRACT

Water is a crucial element in *A Tall History of Sugar* by Curdella Forbes (2019), which spans Jamaica's recent history from its independence in 1962 to the present day. The novel highlights the importance of the sea and Caribbean and Atlantic waterways in articulating notions of living, learning and dying by water, where all these main events in the story occur. The essay argues that water as a materialist force shapes the narrative and helps tell the story of Moshe and Arrienne, two childhood friends growing up in rural Jamaica, who later marry and build a life together in the middle-class hillside of Kingston, Jamaica. Water in the novel serves a function, like helping Arrienne learn the predatory sexuality of an intrusive teacher on a biology lesson. Ultimately, water helps build a reparative stance on death, tying together environmentally and politically conscious African-Jamaican storytelling with the agentic quality of water.

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## Introduction

Water is an essential element throughout the magic realist novel, *A Tall History of Sugar*, by the Jamaican American Curdella Forbes, which spans Jamaica's recent history from its independence in 1962 to the present day.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the ubiquity of sugar – the title explicitly refers to the narrative as a “tall” tale in its eschewal of realism – the story is very much tied to water. While the author clearly anchors the narrative in its era of late twentieth century political moments in Jamaica and Great Britain, an even stronger guiding force in the novel is water. All main events and encounters in the novel take place by the sea, rivers, waterfalls, and on or in the ocean. The novel offers a poignant engagement with the sea and Caribbean waterways and has a particular sensitivity to the role of water in articulating life experiences such as birth, sex, and death. Part and parcel of this engagement is the novel's preoccupation with sugar, the staple plant in the organisation of chattel slavery societies.

In the same vein as sugar, water is not only portrayed as a liberating, sensual element but it is also a place of sexual violence and ambiguity, and one which teaches lessons by its

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<sup>1</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*.

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proximity and entanglement in the lives of Moshe and Arrienne, but also the people of Tumela Gut in the parish of Hanover on the northwestern coast of Jamaica. Their lives are inextricably linked with both sugar and water as natural forces subject to and places of domination and violence, but also sexual indeterminacy and ambivalence, as Moshe never fully comes to terms with his sexual identity despite same-sex sexual experiences yet becoming happily married to Arrienne in adulthood. Moshe's whole life and its major events are entangled in water: he grows up by the Foster-Reach River, where his mother Rachel does the washing, as well as at the Caribbean Sea where he goes fishing with his father, Noah, from whom "he learned the love of the sea".<sup>2</sup> His first sexual experience is with his friend, Alva Lawrence, in the river at home, and he has another one with an anonymous man when in Europe, by the River Po in Italy. A major turning point in Moshe's life is his trip to England as a stowaway on a banana ship in the 1970s. All of Moshe's life, in other words, is literally "drawn out of water", as he is described upon his discovery as an infant in a basket by the water.<sup>3</sup>

The dynamic relationship between water environments and Caribbean literature and identity is well-documented.<sup>4</sup> This inextricable link is forged not only by the traumatic history of the Middle Passage, but also by the various migrations, landings and moorings in Caribbean watery environments. This connection was perhaps most famously conceptualised by Edouard Glissant and Edward Kamau Brathwaite, whose respective ideas of entanglement and tidalectics helped set the parameters for thinking through water in the Caribbean. The latter refers to the ways in which Caribbean poetics (and by extension, politics) becomes created in concert with the rhythm of the ocean and its related endemic phenomena such as the hurricane, which "does not roar in the pentameter".<sup>5</sup> By this Brathwaite means that Caribbean literary expression must find its inspiration from its own environment, not the colonizers' coerced poetics of British metric poetry.

For Glissant, the Caribbean worldview is non-linear thanks to an oceanic entanglement of past and present, where the process of trans-Atlantic creolisation led to the understanding "that this [Caribbean] sea exists within us".<sup>6</sup> This idea of entanglement becomes reiterated in Forbes' novel when Arrienne remarks quoting Glissant: "*The return is always to a point of entanglement*".<sup>7</sup> By this she refers to how she and Moshe always find their way to one another despite temporal and geographical distance. From the point of view of geopoetics, Glissant's phrase in the novel means the entanglement between humans and nature, particularly water. It serves to articulate how the environment is not just a backdrop but an active, living organism, which necessitates scrutiny on *how* water takes on agentic force and impacts humans as much as they are impacted on by other humans. The same applies to nature as a whole: landscape and flora are indispensable for Caribbean literary expression.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 65.

<sup>3</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 8.

<sup>4</sup>DeLoughrey, *Routes and Roots*; Neumann and Rupp, "Sea Passages".

<sup>5</sup>Brathwaite, *Roots*, 265. Brathwaite's tidalectics first appeared in an interview in the 1970s and has since been developed in critical writing particularly by Elizabeth DeLoughrey, on her own in *Routes and Roots* and with Tatiana Flores in "Submerged Bodies".

<sup>6</sup>Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse*, 26 & 139.

<sup>7</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 400. Original italics.

<sup>8</sup>Smilowitz, "Fruits of the Soil"; Narain, "Landscape and Poetic Identity".

The environment itself determines expression; writers do not just use nature, it also uses *us*. The existence of various types of flora and aqua in the Caribbean physical environment from which the writing emerges, dictates what can be expressed in turn. This essay discusses the various time-spaces in the novel that take place in or in the proximity of water, which these events become guided by. The aim is to showcase not only the ubiquity of water in meaning-formation and self-expression in the novel, but also water as a material force, which takes on an agentic quality and shapes subjectivities, even if very subtly. Meaning in Forbes' novel becomes constructed through the various entanglements between humans, their environments, and the routes and roots from which they originate.

Importantly, the Jamaican underground caves affected by tidal water are a liminal aquatic space where key events occur in Forbes' novel, and the materiality of the aquatic space of the cave teaches an important lesson on predatory sexuality propagated by the British colonial school system and its teachers. Another meeting, this time at a coastal graveyard in England, plays a key part in the novel's trajectory of learning one's roots and routes, as the two homonyms elucidated by Elizabeth DeLoughrey point to how one's sense of belonging forms through a relationship between land and water.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the way the novel portrays a moment of dying shows how ultimately, the novel fuses subjectivity into a plural ontology. Here, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's ideas of the texture and the touch help explain the materiality of water in the novel, as well as her idea of dying as a lesson in Buddhist pedagogy, as both highlight the importance of interdependence and companionship of experience; no relationships are without dynamism and co-existence, as when we touch water, we are touched by it in return.<sup>10</sup>

The essay argues that water plays a key role in all central areas of existence, such as learning, finding one's genealogy, and dying, essentially navigating the novel's meandering story spanning Jamaican contemporary history through Moshe's life. Furthermore, as Jann Rupp notes, a "critical engagement with material environments" has become an area of interest in postcolonial world literature recently.<sup>11</sup> In line with this interest in the materiality of Caribbean environments, this article focuses on the meanings suggested by marine and watery environments in Forbes' novel. In the end, material forces including water and various flora as they inhabit Jamaican soil evaporate lines between the subject and the object or the living and the dead through the characters of Moshe and Arrienne and their lives and deaths.

## Growing up by Water: Moshe's Jamaican Childhood

The sugar cane is a plant located at the heart of colonial oppression.<sup>12</sup> Few agricultural plants can be seen as central to historical power as the sugar cane, which has fundamentally affected Caribbean economy, society and administration.<sup>13</sup> It is a cornerstone of slavery-based plantocratic society, and as a literary image it always carries this political weight and value with it. In the words of one Jamaican nineteenth century slaveowner,

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<sup>9</sup>DeLoughrey, *Routes and Roots*, 3.

<sup>10</sup>Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*.

<sup>11</sup>Rupp, "Plantation and Planet", 208.

<sup>12</sup>Smilowitz, "Fruits of the Soil", 29.

<sup>13</sup>Higman, *Concise History of the Caribbean*, 98.

sugar is “one of the most valuable plants in creation”.<sup>14</sup> More recently, Helen Scott depicts Haiti as a country defined by “the ever-present sugarcane”.<sup>15</sup> Sugar cane, the ubiquitous plant in the Caribbean, is imbued with historical oppression. As colonial plantation owners and overseers were known to rape slave women – both for punishment and in order to create more slave workers – sugar cane is also a metaphor for sexual violence and sexuality as destructive in the Caribbean. Furthermore, sugar has negative connotations to characters in Forbes’ novel: Moshe is allergic to it, his father has diabetes thanks to his sugar addiction and the pre-harvest burning of the cane fields stain his mother’s linens. This preoccupation with sugar and the landscape shows a deep-rooted consciousness of environmental and social precarity intertwining in Caribbean writing even when not overtly on the agenda, as is the case in Forbes’ novel.<sup>16</sup>

The cruel history of sugar plantation slavery and water as its transport route come together in the beginning of the novel, when Rachel Fisher, a married rural childless woman, finds Moshe, an abandoned baby on the bank of water in Tumela Gut, a village near Oracabessa-on-Sea, rural northwestern Jamaica in 1958. The narrator remarks, that “here is a child of water”, tying Moshe’s origin to the sea not least because of the woven basket used to carry fish he has been placed in.<sup>17</sup> Upon further inspection, Rachel discovers that Moshe has heterochromia and a skin condition reminiscent of albinism, but not quite: his skin colour (blueish white) and hair (a blonde and brown afro) eschew categorisation. Moshe is at varying times in the novel described as “a black white man”, “a nigger in whiteface”, and even “Backra Bwoy”, by those who are startled by his looks and are unable to fully profile him racially.<sup>18</sup> Moshe is deemed uncategorisable, someone who does not belong, and thus becomes marginalised by the perceived ambiguity of his appearance.

Rachel adopts and raises Moshe with Noah, her fisherman husband riddled with sugar-addiction and diabetes, who brings “the sea with him” to his son as he returns from his fishing trips and later takes him on the sea with him.<sup>19</sup> The novel shows the intimate entanglement of water and sugar as well as Moshe’s entanglement with the various people in his life (particularly his mother, Rachel, and his friend and later wife, Arrienne), who become so invested in nurturing and trying to make sense of him that their subjectivities fuse into a duality-defying ontology, which flows and navigates through the waterways they live by. At the same time, the novel shows the entanglement between Jamaica and Great Britain in their respective contemporary histories.

In her *New York Times* review, Veronica Chambers zooms in on the novel’s highly contextualised historical setting: “Forbes lets us know the novel is written from the vantage of our current political climate”.<sup>20</sup> By this, she means how the narrator, Arrienne, recounts the story while already losing her coherence due to memory loss at barely sixty. “Brexit and the fall of the empire” are mentioned as a present-day reference point, but

<sup>14</sup>Dallas, “Cane and Coffee”, 115.

<sup>15</sup>Scott, “Ou Libéré?”, 463.

<sup>16</sup>Rupp, “Plantation and Planet”, 194. On the covert ecological dimension of Caribbean women’s writing, see also Vété-Congolo, “Love and Lovemaking”, 306.

<sup>17</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 7.

<sup>18</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 213, 237, 189. Backra is an offspring of a white colonialist, which Moshe is referred to at school as a slur.

<sup>19</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 67.

<sup>20</sup>Chambers, “Novel of Jamaica”.

other political landmark events emerge with such frequency, that they guide the reader historically through the narrative.<sup>21</sup> These include Jamaica's independence in 1962, four years after the discovery of the abandoned child, Moshe, the protagonist. Arrienne becomes politically active in the early 1970s after becoming mesmerised by Michael Manley's (only referred to in the novel by his nickname "Joshua") visit to her parish.<sup>22</sup>

Arrienne deepens her political activism as college student in Kingston in the mid-1970s, the tumultuous years of Jamaican nationalist politics. The novel recounts: "she had joined the Union of Democratic Students, a radical socialist group that took their inspiration from the writings of Che, Fidel, and [the Cuban nationalist José] Martí".<sup>23</sup> Cold war Britain is another anchor point in time mentioned by Arrienne, the narrator, who telepathically narrates (or imagines) Moshe's student years in England, where he fends off unwanted advances from an art-school classmate, Ada. Arrienne remarks: "This was London in 1978, still prim and proper (and the height of the Cold War, Arrienne thought, mocking)", thereby contrasting the warmth of her Jamaican home with the jealousy she feels towards those close to Moshe in her absence in the cold England battling its own political complications during the Thatcher era.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, the novel returns to the present day as Arrienne is losing her memory, but acknowledges Trump's America during his first term in office, as well as Brexit as turning points in race relations and increasing police brutality, when "young people have to find another way to fight".<sup>25</sup> For Jamaica, this will likely mean an end of imperial rule in both name, deed, and symbol, when the country ultimately becomes a republic (as did Barbados in 2021). The novel's story, in essence, is deeply rooted in key moments of Jamaica's contemporary history as told and experienced by Arrienne, and her relationship with Moshe, as they grow up by the water in rural Jamaica, but also Kingston, where the two attend university. Furthermore, the story crosses the Atlantic to England, where Moshe studies in art school in the late 1970s to become a successful painter. As such, Arrienne's stability and commitment to national politics in Jamaica enables Moshe's migration, echoing Sara Ahmed's conceptualisation of migration as movement predicated upon others staying in place.<sup>26</sup> In the novel's tightly historicized trans-Atlantic context water, or its proximity, accompanies all major events, scrutinised in more detail next.

## Learning by Water: The Tidal Cave as a Scene of Predatory Pedagogy

The premature baby, Moshe, is born in secrecy above the caves affected by tidal water below Ft Charlotte, an abandoned British fortress. Some seven months prior, it is at the same caves that a white English schoolteacher, who is later through school records revealed to have been a Geography teacher, Arthur Newland from Bristol, had raped and impregnated the birth mother, an unknown schoolgirl. Moshe learns from Myrtle, the seer woman to whom his biological mother surrenders the baby and through

<sup>21</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 7.

<sup>22</sup>Manley was the charismatic leader of the People's National Party, the more populist, nationalist and left-wing party in Jamaican bipartisan politics of the time. He opposed US commercial forces, but was unable to resolve the issues that divided the nation, leading to political unrest and hardship, including mass-migration in the late 1970s.

<sup>23</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 248.

<sup>24</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 224.

<sup>25</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 213, 214.

<sup>26</sup>Ahmed, *Strange Encounters*, 85.

whom the Fishers find him to be adopted, that his mother was planning to commit infanticide on him: "She was going to drown me in the cave where she get pregnant with me," he said, his voice lost. "The same cave under the fort where we went on bio trips. She change her mind at the last minute. She give Myrtle a note."<sup>27</sup> The anonymous mother is thought to have hanged herself in the cave, but the body is never found, explained in Myrtle's vision as having washed out to the sea. Water, in other words, serves as a catalyst and an active agent of change in these situations, as a close reading of a further event in the cave elucidates.

On a school field trip to the same caves as preteens, Moshe's best friend and telepathic "twin", Arrienne, feels the predatory sexual advances of another male teacher, which serves as a telling example of the looming terror associated with water and power. Arrienne relates her memory of a field trip to the caves below the same old cliff-top fort by the water, led by a Biology teacher, who had "touched her twice when she was running in the corridor toward their classroom".<sup>28</sup> Unable to put her finger on the uncomfortable feeling arising from the teacher touching her arm, then waist, Arrienne decides it is best to avoid the teacher on the trip. Nevertheless, the teacher zeroes in on her, demanding that she name the sea creature he is holding: "His palm was pink and wet and the wet gray shell winked inside it".<sup>29</sup> The lesson in marine biology parallels in miniature the colonial endeavours of Victorian British naturalist, Philip Gosse, whose visits to Jamaica – as well as the overlooked input from Black Jamaicans helping him – played an important part in establishing aquariums as a popular attraction in Britain from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.<sup>30</sup> Natural history is intimately tied with the history of systemic racism; Gosse, the naturalist, observed – and objectified – African Caribbean people with the same keen eye as the animal species he was charting in a true Linnean fashion.<sup>31</sup> The teacher's inquiry into the specific type of mollusk on his palm echoes this history of British-Jamaican relations, where the colonial overlords handed knowledge to their inferiors about one's own native flora and fauna. In this case, the pedagogical moment is tinged with predatory sexuality.

The young-acting white male teacher in his thirties portrays a harrowing mixture of authority and youthfulness. When the teacher further enquires, "Come, Arrienne, can you tell us what species this mollusk is?", she apologises that she does not, but the narration reveals a great deal more: "How she hated that man; she had never hated anyone like that".<sup>32</sup> The uneasy encounter illustrates, how the novel's colonial pedagogical power and sexual abuse go hand in hand. When the teacher insists Arrienne participate in his teachable moment of identifying the endemic species, he takes the liberty of deeming it foreign to her. The mollusk is unlikely to be an alien specimen of wonder for Arrienne, who is used to exploring the surrounding environment freely with Moshe. In fact, Senior mentions Jamaicans helped collect and prepare mollusks for Gosse already in Victorian times, as they possessed knowledge of their own endemic species.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 256.

<sup>28</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 117.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>Senior, "Glimpses of the Wonderful".

<sup>31</sup>Senior, "Glimpses of the Wonderful", 137. Swedish Carl Linnaeus created his famous taxonomy of plants (and people as its side product) in the eighteenth century, influencing other botanists and naturalists following in his wake.

<sup>32</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 119.

<sup>33</sup>Senior, "Glimpses of the Wonderful", 134.

As natives of rural and coastal Jamaica, Arrienne and Moshe are used to their surroundings and perhaps not as in awe of its specific features as expected by their teacher. Natural science deems Jamaica a special environment, crystallised in the following report: "Jamaica has great variety in geology, topography, soils, vegetation and rainfall, ranging from coastal desert and dry limestone forest [...] to montane rainforest [...], and, at high elevations, elfin cloud forest".<sup>34</sup> This means considerable variation within the island's biogeography, flora and fauna, something the children have observed all their lives. Indeed, the lesson learned is not about the mollusk or biology; Arrienne realises her hatred towards the teacher instead. Coupled with the memory of the teacher's disciplining, yet deceptively gentle touch in the school corridor and the sexual implications of the slimy mollusk on the palm of the teacher's hand, Arrienne's instinctual fear and hatred signals, how deep-run some feelings are. Instead of gaining knowledge about marine animals in their natural habitat, Arrienne learns about the sexual predator, the teacher, in *his* natural habitat, the school field trip. The ensuing lesson flows through her like the water in the underground caves; buried deep, but yielding subterranean knowledge about danger related to sexual and gendered relations.

Another waterly setting in the novel that carries special meaning is the river where Moshe's mother Rachel does her washing. It is also where Moshe is bullied by other children for his colour and reticence to speak. Moshe's first sexual experience takes place by the river, as his friend Alva brings Moshe to an unexpected climax, causing him to accuse Alva of nonconsensual sex and to deny he is homosexual.<sup>35</sup> Later on, as a college student in Kingston at the age of eighteen, Moshe escapes homophobic accusations to England as a stowaway on a banana cargo ship.<sup>36</sup> During his years there, he also visits Bristol, his biological father's birth place, and discovers its Transatlantic ties: there is a pedestrian bridge named after Pero, the slave, crossing the water in the Bristol harbour where ships departed to the colonies. Whilst in Bristol, Moshe walks up Guinea Street, "named for a place of kidnapping in Africa, a place from where people were captured to become slaves".<sup>37</sup> Moshe fails to discover signs of his father, but discovers something else: his Trans-Atlantic connection and its point of origin in Bristol which stands for his father's side of the genealogy, which in a way similar to his mother's body which washed out to sea from the cave, disappears into the water from the banks of the Bristol channel.

Upon his return, Moshe and Arrienne finally marry and here again water elements are strongly present: "We had a June wedding, in the morning, amid lots of rain. The hurricane was threatening, so we decided to stay close to home for our honeymoon".<sup>38</sup> The honeymoon begins with enjoyment in the water: "Dunn's River was in spate and it was fay and wonder to climb the falls and lie down afterward in the great pocket of water that foamed between the rocks just above where the river rolled into the sea".<sup>39</sup> However, the joyous experience of immersing together in the overflowing water does not symbolise a future sexual consummation of marriage. Instead, it denotes how the two are at ease together in the water, their element. At night, the unsuccessful

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<sup>34</sup>Rosenberg and Muratov, "Status Report", 117.

<sup>35</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 232.

<sup>36</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 165.

<sup>37</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 231.

<sup>38</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 407.

<sup>39</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 408.

consummation of their marriage is accompanied by a coinciding hurricane, bringing with it echoes of Brathwaite's poetics; the honeymoon scenario marks a homecoming as it is anchored in a decidedly Caribbean natural phenomenon. However, as remarked by Jan Rupp, the hurricane is also a key example of environmental and ontological precarity in Caribbean writing.<sup>40</sup> The looming hurricane in the background when Moshe and Arrienne attempt to consummate their marriage on their honeymoon foreshadows the outcome that they never will, as he experiences erectile dysfunction in the moment and thereafter. The passage is also told in further waterly terms, as Arrienne feels she is in "the bottom of a deep pool where the current is tugging so strenuously at my drowning that I jackknife down and up in terror".<sup>41</sup> Here, instead of the leisurely drifting in the relaxing river earlier that day, Arrienne's experience is that of drowning as the two cannot connect with one another in bed the way they can in and through water. Their relationship remains loving and spiritual, but not sexual, as the precarity of the hurricane in the background signals. These examples of waterly logic occur throughout the novel, serving as similar cases of lessons learned through and by water.

### Navigating by Water: Water as an Active Agent of Touch

When water elements such as the strange encounter in the cave and other events in and by water are used to guide the novel's events and the narrative, we can see how these waterly features can be seen as "orientation devices" as in Rita Felski's understanding of metaphors as guiding elements in a literary text.<sup>42</sup> The novel orientates readers to and by water, which navigates the reader through the text. When significant events in Forbes' novel are orchestrated by water or its various interventions, the reader knows that this is when something meaningful happens. One then learns to navigate meaning through the novel's engagement with water. As such, these moments serve as epistemic or heuristic devices, which conserve a teaching or a lesson, but hardly the type advocated by the dominant discourse, like the teacher's calling on Arrienne to identify a mollusk. Instead, they help moments of heightening intensity materialise. The question then remains, what kind of agency (or agencies) becomes propagated by water in this particular example of Caribbean literary language that time and again leads its readers to waters deep and shallow?

Despite the appearance of water in all meaningful encounters and events in the novel, the narrative is not always easy to navigate thanks to its distinctive narrative style, where despite Arrienne's focalising third-person narration, no one seems to be in full charge of the story. As Carol Mitchell notes in her review of the novel: "Moshe speaks with a quiet thoughtfulness, whereas Arrienne's voice is scrappy and assertive. The input from the omniscient narrator is one aspect of the book that readers might find unsettling".<sup>43</sup> The occasional alternation of first and third-person narration further signals to the ambivalence of subject-object relations and the reader can never be certain, whether the narration is reliable or even who is telling the story. This is, after all, a tall tale.

<sup>40</sup>Rupp, "Plantation and Planet", 204.

<sup>41</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 410.

<sup>42</sup>Felski, *Limits of Critique*, 52.

<sup>43</sup>Mitchell, "Tall History of Sugar", 166.

The co-dependency between Moshe and Arrienne eschews sovereign subjectivity, so entangled their lives are. Arrienne is the novel's main narrative voice, as she spends her life drawing meanings from Moshe. Her narrations also by necessity constantly returns to the topic of water, as she tells about the sea from which Moshe is drawn and by which he escapes to England and later returns to Jamaica. This nature of being in constant touch with water in the novel means that subject-object relations are as much about water as they are about humans. The question is thus not only about the expressive power of water, but also about how it impresses upon and envelops subjects; the way the story is narrated becomes entangled with water.

A further complication is brought on by Arrienne's suffering from early-onset dementia, which reflects the narrative time that fluctuates from one time period to another and back, even if the narrative in the end depicts Moshe's death in his fifties. One cannot fully ascertain who or what the subject or object are in the narrative shifts in the novel complicated by Arrienne's memory loss. Storytelling through dementia is a narrative position relatively rarely utilised in literary fiction as dementia patients are often deemed unable to tell their own stories.<sup>44</sup> Yet, the novel highlights the validity of a dementia sufferer's perspective on her own life experiences and the relevance of the illness as a cultural phenomenon.<sup>45</sup> Not only through this choice of narrative style, but also through its grounding in Jamaican folk worldviews, the story eschews rational subjectivity. In the same way, human-sea relations shake up this duality of who narrator and narratee are: it hardly makes sense to draw strict boundaries around who exactly is telling the story at each moment, as all are immersed in and touched by the waters on and by which they travel, live and narrate.

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's idea of touch as obliterating dualities helps make sense of this idea of being touched by water as an act of creating collective agency. She writes that "the sense of touch makes nonsense out of any dualistic understanding of agency and passivity; to touch is always already to reach out, to fondle, to heft, to tap, or to enfold, and always also to understand other people or natural forces as having effectually done so before oneself".<sup>46</sup> Applied to water, one is always touched by water at the same time as one touches it, just as others have done historically. Sedgwick's example of touch as constitutive of both subjects and objects deals with Walter Benjamin's accounts of the birth of the bourgeoisie, who preferred textile materials such as velvet and silk, as they were felt pleasant and luxurious on the body to wear.<sup>47</sup> The use and wearing of such fabrics helped create bourgeois identities, as their touch and enveloping of the people in question surrounded their environments (such as bodies and houses) and made distinctions between those who wore those styles and those who wore other textures.

For Sedgwick, "a particular intimacy seems to subsist between textures and emotions."<sup>48</sup> Water is a multisensory, tactile environment encompassing a range of textures when it is perceived and experienced: the formation of waves, the temperature, salinity, the sounds and colours all create a specific kind of texture felt by the one coming to contact with it. In all the bodies of water in question, the texture is different so their

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<sup>44</sup>Bitenc, "Representations of Dementia", 306.

<sup>45</sup>Christ, *Fictions of Dementia*.

<sup>46</sup>Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 14.

<sup>47</sup>ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 17.

touch, intimacy and the emotions they elicit are also different, something illustrated by the following example of the mollusks in the underwater caves below Fort Charlotte, where Moshe is first found and where Arrienne learns her school lesson.

If we return to this significant marine biosphere in the novel, the specific nature of the Jamaican caves allows mollusks to reside in that habitat. In this very environment, Arrienne encounters her male teacher's unwelcome pedagogical moment tinged with predatory sexuality. The limestone terrestrial make-up, tropical temperatures, and heavy rainfall are responsible for the over 1000 caves throughout Jamaica.<sup>49</sup> Fauna such as various types of snails, spiders and bats, but also marine animals such as types of fish, mollusks and shrimp live in them.<sup>50</sup> The caves are also very different from one another in the sense that some species can only be found in certain ones and some have poorer ecosystems with fewer species in them. This means that the cave visited in *Sugar* is a particular kind of environment and not just any cave, highlighting the contextual and situational nature of the kinds of lessons Jamaican schoolgirls learn. Mollusks have sexual connotations by their materiality.<sup>51</sup> In one, a whole history of colonial mastery and sexual domination materialises. Touching them creates identity and a lesson. The teacher's predatory pedagogy is conveyed by the marine organism, mollusk's, textural materiality.

Thanks to this keen eye on the materiality and the textures of the marine environments Forbes depicts in the novel, the story becomes strongly centred on the characters' lived bodies and experiences. The novel helps envision "a new oceanic imagery" as elucidated by Elizabeth DeLoughrey, which is materialist in nature: "Caribbean writers and artists have long theorised the ocean in terms of the violent convergence of environment and history" and seen the ocean as a material rather than merely symbolic entity.<sup>52</sup> This materiality directly bears upon the narrative, as we now understand the ocean's (and other waterways') agency and not just view it as an empty space.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, when Moshe is drawn out of the water his whole existence is aquatic in origin, a result of the transatlantic routes, spaces, and time levels that drive it as a force rather than a place.

Such an idea of an oceanic ontology disrupts linear logic as it simultaneously carries history as well as imagines future, as DeLoughrey demonstrates in the case of underwater sculptures in the Caribbean Sea by Jason deCaires Taylor, where the sculptures not only serve as visual and tactile memories of the brutal history of the Caribbean Sea; they also use water as a co-creator by exposing the sculptures to ecological forces such as marine species, waves, salt, and pressure.<sup>54</sup> In this manner, the ocean's biodiversity forms the artwork, like in the novel, where potentially insignificant organisms, mollusks, become vital to the story and its message. This also means, as DeLoughrey sums up, that The

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<sup>49</sup>Donovan, "Contrasting Patterns".

<sup>50</sup>Peck, "Invertebrate Fauna".

<sup>51</sup>A similar sexual connotation involving a mollusk takes place in Erna Brodber's *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* (1980), when the protagonist, Nellie, performs oral sex on a boy who has taken her to cinema. The scene is depicted with a mixed metaphor, where both the snail, a mollusk, and the oppressive sugarcane stand in place of the penis, when Nellie feels the "snail" making its way to her mouth: "One long nasty snail, curling up, straightening out to show its white underside that the sun never touches. [...] The first root of cane you've ever popped out. [...] Premature but this is your effort so you eat it like it is sweet" (28). For a close reading of the scene, see Valovirta, *Sexual Feelings*, 111.

<sup>52</sup>DeLoughrey, "Submarine Futures of the Anthropocene", 34.

<sup>53</sup>ibid.

<sup>54</sup>DeLoughrey, "Submarine Futures of the Anthropocene", 37.

Caribbean Sea is both a cultural and a material entity, as we understand “maritime space as a multispecies and embodied place in which the oceanic contours of the planet, including its submarine creatures, are no longer outside of the history of the human”.<sup>55</sup> Our sense of place in the sea is therefore not a static location, but fluid and process-like, as much dictated by water’s materiality as by ourselves as readers and those who narrate it.<sup>56</sup>

## Living and Dying by Water: Making Meaning through Water

The idea of water’s material agency means thinking beyond the human when thinking about water symbolism. As argued by Janine McLeod: “When water appears in metaphor, its material properties inform our understandings of the concepts it helps to signify”.<sup>57</sup> In Forbes’ novel, like in Divya Anand’s reading of the materiality of water in the work of Amitav Ghosh, water is not just a symbol; it is also a material being doing things, such as making meaning fluid while it guides the story of Moshe and Arrienne’s shared life with its keen focus on Moshe’s journey from a rural Jamaican boy to an established international visual artist.<sup>58</sup> For Anand, water is not just a theme, but an active creator of meaning, making the narrative fluid as a result. Furthermore, the novel is crosscut by the different landings, moorings, and encounters with water on land. Crucial to these encounters, as will become clear, is the presence of death and dying, which follows Moshe throughout his life course from his birth mother’s death in his infancy to his own and Arrienne’s deaths. When the focus shifts in the end of the novel to Arrienne and her approaching death, the story becomes unfixed from water and returns to land or at least stays connected to terrestrial focal points, but even here the water is present as the recurring “perpendicular oceans” that Arrienne imagines to guide her. Before that resolution, however, another scene connected with death and water informs Moshe’s journey, as he negotiates his father’s origins on a graveyard by water in England.

After having arrived in England three years earlier as a stowaway on a banana ship, and successfully enrolling in a London art school while working menial jobs to make ends meet for his small living quarters in Brixton, Moshe visits a graveyard in search of his father’s tombstone. He only knows his last name, Newland. This search for roots sparks further meandering encounters with water that drift Moshe onwards on his journey. The graveyard is located in Ramsgate, Kent, “north of the River Stour”.<sup>59</sup> He meets a deceased soldier’s sister, Mavisette, whose brother Sheldon died “in the colonies” in Guyana at twenty-one, four years before Moshe’s birth.<sup>60</sup> Through this chance encounter, Moshe learns about Newlands in Bristol and heads there next, but the meeting has another function. It is yet another self-defining moment in the novel taking place in a location marked by water; “north of the River Stour” is the co-ordinate given by Moshe. This denotes how a sense of self is influenced by one’s sense of place, but

<sup>55</sup>DeLoughrey, “Submarine Futures of the Anthropocene”, 42.

<sup>56</sup>Omise’eke Natasha Tinsley makes a similar point that sexuality and landscape are ongoing processes in Caribbean women’s writing, as they are mutually dependent and draw on one another for expression. Tinsley, *Thieving Sugar*.

<sup>57</sup>MacLeod, “Water and the Material Imagination”, 40.

<sup>58</sup>Anand, “Words on Water”.

<sup>59</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 196.

<sup>60</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 197.

also by the proximity of death as a condition of life. The graveyard experience leads Moshe onwards towards another watery place, Bristol, in search of his roots and routes.

Zooming in on this “strange encounter” between Moshe and Mavisette in the graveyard denotes how, as Sara Ahmed has famously theorised, meetings with others can be subjectivity-forming and affectively ambivalent.<sup>61</sup> While it is hardly new for Moshe to be encountered with suspicion and doubt over his racially ambiguous looks, this experience of being subjected to inquiry about his origin sparks a new feeling: homesickness for Arrienne who has not replied to his letters.<sup>62</sup> The feeling of isolation and estrangement grows, as he is interrogated by the woman and once again notes the ignorance with which white British people encounter those they deem strangers. These strangers nevertheless refer to England as “mother country”, the way Rachel does in her letters to Moshe in England.<sup>63</sup> Moshe muses that the suspicious tone with which Mavisette relates to him is “familiar, yet it never failed to make him speechless with astonishment and something approaching pity”.<sup>64</sup> It makes him cognizant, once again, of how he does not belong, but also that they both share a sense of loneliness and loss; she through her brother and other family members’ deaths, he through his sense of alienation in England. As a result of their conversation, Moshe is filled with “an irrational feeling of hope” that drives him forward in the quest for his father.<sup>65</sup>

Moshe’s visit to Bristol is unfruitful in leading to his father, but he does find a sense of satisfaction in having visited Bristol. After seven years in London Moshe finally returns to Jamaica. His first encounter with Arrienne is once again connected to water, as she is in her garden watering plants. The cultivated space of the garden mirrors not only the education and growing the two have acquired in Moshe’s absence from Jamaica, but also the imported nature of their mutual existence: Arrienne’s staying put has enabled Moshe’s mobility all the while dedicating herself to PNP politics at home. Arrienne is the roots to Moshe’s routes. This is where the novel’s time begins to compress as the two begin their married life, setting up home in Kingston and raising Betina, Arrienne’s daughter together.

Several decades are dismissed as if those years together are the ones with the least to remember, but to the reader they seem the most fulfilling and energetic, particularly from Arrienne’s perspective. She works multiple jobs as a human and children’s rights advocate as well as Moshe’s agent while raising farm animals and tending to her garden. The quest for Moshe’s missing father comes to a close as they are now adults with connections and able to find in the old school records information about Arthur Newland, the geography teacher who stayed in Jamaica from 1955 to 1958. The story of Moshe and Arrienne’s family life is anchored in the more affluent hills of Kingston and life together passes by quickly until Moshe dies of an undisclosed but sudden cause, barely in his fifties. His death appears predestined, as “it was a miracle he lived so long”, but does not signify the end of life as he continues to communicate with Arrienne who keeps asking to join him on the other side.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Ahmed, *Strange Encounters*.

<sup>62</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 185.

<sup>63</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 189. Mother country appears throughout the novel as an ironic designation for England.

<sup>64</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 194.

<sup>65</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 202.

<sup>66</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 427.

The story begins to stretch again towards the end when Arrienne is in her sixties and suffering from dementia and Moshe has already passed. The novel ends in Arrienne's impending death, where her and Moshe's inseparable bond and merging of subjectivity intensifies. Once again, natural elements such as the garden play a part in this process. The novel is no longer as tied to water as the rest of the narrative. Moshe is the one who has lived most in connection with various waterways and he has already passed. Arrienne becomes more confined to her house and garden, both of which she roams in confusion, dissociating to third person and at times rearranging her furniture while communicating with Moshe either telepathically or without a border between the living and the dead.

Arrienne marvelling at the beauty of her garden towards the end of the novel approaches traditional elements of Caribbean women's writing, where the "land-as-Eden" image appears most strongly; thusfar, Arrienne has been all about Moshe and his mobility.<sup>67</sup> Importantly, the Edenic landscape does not emerge through a naïve paradise discourse. Arrienne's connection with nature and her garden instead echoes Denise DeCaires Narain's observation of how Caribbean woman writers consciously (and sometimes ironically) engage with this conflation of woman and landscape.<sup>68</sup> In the novel, the plant varieties are a mixture of endemic and foreign species, such as anthuriums and hostas, but the garden is now overgrown and the greenhouse neglected as Arrienne dissociates and takes in her surroundings as if from the outside, marvelling at the beauty created by her own hand.<sup>69</sup> The constructed paradise has faded into oblivion just as Arrienne's consciousness is moving to another dimension. She can only deictically refer to the garden as "this garden", whereas its creator is not her in the first person but an anonymous third person actor, "the woman": "The woman planted this garden".<sup>70</sup>

Despite Arrienne's confinement to her home and garden water appears here, too, even if in a much smaller role. She continuously refers to "perpendicular oceans" which as a phrase first appears in the novel during Arrienne and Moshe's honeymoon, where they climb the waterfall at Dunn's River and see the horizon between the river and the sea to which the river flows. There, Arrienne sees "a long perpendicular line separating the tan water from the blue, and you wouldn't think they had mingled at all if you hadn't known better and instead been fooled by the illusion of the line".<sup>71</sup> In this meeting of waterways, Dunn's River, the popular honeymoon and wedding destination, flows into the Caribbean Sea, but the breakwater between the two forms a line which Arrienne thinks might confuse the viewer to think the two are separate; the fresh water meeting the salt water has a visible line but no clear boundary. The idea of the perpendicular oceans is a phrase to which she returns throughout the novel's final chapter, as if to remind about the fallacy of making an artificial boundary between life and death, the realms of being that are at the same time equally existent yet discernibly different.

A reparative stance on death as not an absolute end of life is common in Jamaican cosmology, where spirits and ghosts communicate with the land of the living, something Arrienne only begins to accept towards the end of her life as she approaches Moshe

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<sup>67</sup>Narain, "Landscape and Poetic Identity", 41.

<sup>68</sup>Narain, "Landscape and Poetic Identity", 50.

<sup>69</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 430.

<sup>70</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 429.

<sup>71</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 408.

in her dream-like musings. Jamaican author and sociologist, Erna Brodber writes in "Re-engineering blackspace" that physical death is not the end but marks a new beginning as ancestors continue to communicate across the lifeline and influence the world of living.<sup>72</sup> A similar notion develops towards the end of Forbes' novel where Moshe and Arrienne fuse realms of existence and subjectivity as they communicate across the lifeline. When brought to the domain of materialist thought, this idea of fusing life and death receives an explanation through the holistic way Sedgwick explains the rich Tibetan Buddhist tradition of viewing death and dying in reparative terms in the end of her *Touching Feeling*. Here she uses the concepts of "thusness or suchness" to explain the irreducibility of being to separate entities.<sup>73</sup> In a similar manner, Moshe and Arrienne refuse to separate in life or death. Sedgwick exemplifies pedagogy and learning through the gesture of pointing; it makes no difference in the end whether one is pointing at the moon or looking at the finger pointing at the moon, as the consciousness with which one learns makes the lesson a process, not a quantifiable learning objective to meet and finish. Similarly, in Forbes' novel's terms, subjectivity is fused across planes of existence between Arrienne and Moshe. In environmental terms, also the human and nature (here: water) are inseparable, and exist mutually, and at times, in solidarity, as they do in Forbes' novel's engagement with the various waterways.<sup>74</sup>

Sedgwick further explains how the conscious dying movement rising in the wake of the AIDS epidemic in the US started to bring forward ideas about the subjective experience of dying.<sup>75</sup> Death became a cultural experience and phenomenon, forcing people to face the hardest teaching in life; one's own mortality and not just to learn, but *realize* its significance hence approaching Buddhist principles of one end of life as not an absolute end of things thanks to the cycle of life known as reincarnation.<sup>76</sup> In the case of Sedgwick's Buddhist pedagogy on dying as well as the case of the novel, both expand the thought environment available on death. As Sedgwick observes in personal reflection: "the landscape [of death] has become a lot more spacious".<sup>77</sup> For Arrienne, memory loss does not mean diminished mental capacity, on the contrary; it is only in the process of illness and dying that she can freely roam her memories, places, and journeys instead of the purpose-oriented life she has led "believing only in Moshe and justice".<sup>78</sup>

While environmental questions are not in the centre of Sedgwick's Buddhist pedagogy on dying and intimate relationships, it shares similarities with Greta Gaard's views on materialist ecocriticism and Buddhist ideas; non-human agency fits very well with Buddhist philosophy, because both acknowledge the fundamental interconnectedness of all beings and life forces.<sup>79</sup> Dependent origination means that all of our life events are an amalgamation of specific circumstances; child sexual abuse, for example, occurs in a specific time and place and keeps resonating for a long time. Similarly, the overall omnipresence of water and waterly environments keeps resonating throughout the novel.<sup>80</sup> A

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<sup>72</sup>Brodber, "Re-engineering Blackspace", 160.

<sup>73</sup>Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 170.

<sup>74</sup>Rupp, "Plantation and Planet", 196, 207.

<sup>75</sup>Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 175.

<sup>76</sup>Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 173.

<sup>77</sup>Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 178.

<sup>78</sup>Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 425.

<sup>79</sup>Gaard, "Mindful New Materialisms", 292.

<sup>80</sup>*ibid.*

good example of this is the biology lesson Arrienne experiences in the specific cave at the specific moment in time in the novel, which undoubtedly contributes to her feelings of social injustice and spurs into political action as she grows up.

The way Gaard explains dependent origination explains this conjecture of mindfulness and materialism: "Each one of us emerges as a product of specific material interactions, involving sexual desires, gestation and birth, ingestion and elimination, respiration, and responsiveness to the agency of other beings (plants, insects, animals, buildings, machines)".<sup>81</sup> This means that humans, non-human-animals and natural forces work in tandem, where binaries like human-animal or culture-nature no longer hold explanatory weight the way they did in the anthropocentric theories of the linguistic turn.<sup>82</sup> This resonates with the dynamic understanding of nature and subjectivity in Forbes' novel, where each human and natural element becomes fully entangled and fused with each other to the extent that it ultimately becomes difficult to even differentiate between them.

In the final chapter, the novel's narration begins to fuse the first and third person in a rapid fashion. The chapter begins in Arrienne's first person, then jumps into the third person with Arrienne as the internal focaliser after a few paragraphs only to switch back to the first person in that same paragraph.<sup>83</sup> In addition, Moshe and Betina's voices appear inside the narrative as they speak to Arrienne in the midst of her musings which reflect her free-flowing mind. Arrienne has kept the narratorial voice throughout the novel to the degree that Moshe's life in England is filtered through her narration despite her absence. As she is losing her memory, her conversation with Betina exemplifies this letting go of narratorial control because the text does not differentiate the dialogue by its usual quotation marks; the only differentiation is marked by each speaking turn starting on a new line.<sup>84</sup> Betina's voice only becomes separated from the conversation by quotation marks after she herself has made a distinction between those grieving for Moshe as she exclaims: "You don't believe anyone except you feels for him, do you? You were always the only one!"<sup>85</sup>

While Betina's interjection shows how she differentiates between the three family members, Arrienne has always held the conviction that she and Moshe are conjoined spirits. The idea receives its explanation in her view of them as identical twins: "she and Moshe were born as an embryo that split".<sup>86</sup> A similar idea of conjoined spirits or spiritual non-biological twins is another recurring trope in Caribbean women's writing, where individual subjectivity gives way to a more collective notion of selfhood.<sup>87</sup> This collective notion of selfhood appears throughout the novel in the case of Arrienne and Moshe's entanglement but also in Arrienne's political activism, which relies on a

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<sup>81</sup>Gaard, "Mindful New Materialisms", 293.

<sup>82</sup>Gaard, "Mindful New Materialisms", 297.

<sup>83</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 418–419.

<sup>84</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 425.

<sup>85</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>86</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 375.

<sup>87</sup>Examples of this appear, for example, in the Haitian mythology of the twin souls, Marassas, in Edwidge Danticat's *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, where the protagonist Sophie's mother, Martine, compares the Marassas to the mother-daughter bond. In Opal Palmer Adisa's *It Begins with Tears*, for contrast, the two biological cousins, Arnella and Valrie, identify as twins and willingly share the same man as their love partner. The former is an example of a negative entanglement, as Sophie and Martine's relationship is toxic and damaging, whereas the latter is a deeply consensual and erotic love "throuple".

collective ethos. In the end, the narrative comes full circle when Arrienne and Moshe are finally reunited.

Moshe and Arrienne become one again as she experiences fulfilment in death, where she looks up with “rejoicing eyes” as Moshe tells her – like in Betina’s case – without dialogue-marking quotations: “come, my love, it is time”.<sup>88</sup> Betina observes her mother rearranging furniture and sitting with Moshe’s picture while she waits for him to fetch her. Finally, Betina is left to hear a long sigh on the wind, which is in fact two sounds, as Arrienne dies. The final sentence of the novel begins with the third person: “The long sigh that she hears on the wind is not one, but two”, and ends in the first, as Arrienne narrates: “I know she [meaning Betina] will stay, weeping, to close my, her mother’s [Arrienne’s] rejoicing eyes”.<sup>89</sup> The possessive forms “my” and “her” further confuse the narrative position of the scene: at this moment, the daughter, too, sees herself in her mother and then continues on living her own life as an independent person.

## Conclusion

The sugarcane and water are historically connected phenomena in the sense that both lay at the heart of colonialism and the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Forbes’ *A Tall History of Sugar* showcases the entanglement of water and sugar in a tragic and ambiguous way, where both have predominantly negative connotations for sex and sexuality. Sugar is decidedly not a source of enjoyment the way it was, for example, for European café culture which developed by using colonial products such as sugar, coffee and cocoa for urban leisure time.<sup>90</sup> Instead, it is a toxic substance from whose cultivation and consumption the people of Jamaica have suffered for centuries in very tangible ways.

In the case of water, research has oftentimes viewed the world’s seas as social constructs and symbolic entities.<sup>91</sup> This essay, in turn, has attempted to analyse, how *A Tall History of Sugar* moves beyond the symbolic and approaches the materialist notion of various Caribbean waters, including the Caribbean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, and the rural rivers and waterfalls that the protagonists Moshe and Arrienne live with. Water is a space made of its own movement, “its very geophysical mobility”, and not just a space by which to move, as in migration forced or voluntary.<sup>92</sup> Neither is water simply a space to which literary symbolism or meaning can be affixed: water as a material makes those meanings possible. The quality and quantity of that material makes a difference; places are “permeable and permeated with water – as shaped by water quality, scarcity, or abundance”.<sup>93</sup> In the case of this novel, there is an abundance of water of various qualities, and these different types of water guide the plot: despite the novel’s title, the whole story is rather “drawn from water” like Moshe. This condition of being drawn from water, in turn, sketches out and fulfils the whole narrative, demonstrating the materialist force of water in living, learning and dying by it in the context of Jamaican recent political history.

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<sup>88</sup>Forbes, *A Tall History of Sugar*, 431.

<sup>89</sup>ibid.

<sup>90</sup>Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*.

<sup>91</sup>Steinberg, “Of Other Seas”, 156.

<sup>92</sup>ibid., 165.

<sup>93</sup>Chen, “Mapping Waters”, 275.

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