Anthologizing "Little Calibans": Surplus in Junot Díaz's Linked Stories

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The relationship between the literary anthology and the linked short story collection has the potential to shape discourses about transnational American literature in ways that have yet to be sufficiently explored. Though anthology framings of texts offer insight into cultural contexts and interpretive strategies, it is nearly impossible for an anthology to convey the anti-paradigmatic nature of linked collections—particularly collections by authors writing in a transnational Anglophone tradition cautious of neoliberal multiculturalism's totalizing embrace. These collections preempt, primarily through formal means, the flattening and functionalizing of their works into unified exemplars of cross-cultural diversity or universal experience. Linked stories echo and contradict, sidestep and overlap one another, collectively producing a surplus beyond the sum of their parts. Writers develop a paradigm of fragmentation and surplus, which allows them to anticipate and address the totalizing effects curation can have on their stories.

Linked collections are born anthologized, to use Rebecca Walkowitz's idea of "born translated" literature: literature approaching translation "as medium and origin rather than as afterthought," where "[t]ranslation is not secondary or incidental" to works but rather "a condition of their production." [1] She explores texts that "thematize, enact, or anticipate translation and circulation as part of a[n] [ongoing] collective creative process."[2] Stories are born anthologized when writers, through the creative process of building linked story collections, thematize, enact, and anticipate the potential anthologizing of their literary production. These writers ultimately destroy the potential ease with which audiences take their stories as reductively representative or paradigmatic.

Junot Díaz (*Drown*, 1996, *This is How You Lose Her*, 2012), Edwidge Danticat (*The Dew Breaker*, 2004, *Claire of the Sea Light*, 2013), Aimee Phan (*We Should Never Meet*, 2008), Jhumpa Lahiri (*Unaccustomed Earth*, 2008), Louise Erdrich (*Love Medicine*, 1984, revised editions 1993, 2009), and Aleksandar Hemon (*The Question of Bruno*, 2000), among others, craft stories from fragments that burgeon into surplus. Bodies, objects,

capital, and representations circulate in their texts as fragments that refuse unified depiction. Short stories—navigating myriad homes, identities, and experiences—are ripe for anthology selection as excerpted pieces but are also inherently multiplicative in their linked context. What happens if the structure of a linked collection is interrupted—when a story is separated and framed in an anthology? How might linked collections and anthologies operate with different logics as forms that mold transnational paradigms? I focus on contemporary anthologies primarily intended for literature classrooms, typically categorized into ethnic, national, and world literatures. To be sure, anthologies have a varied history. Many have been important to effectively expanding the canon, illuminating underrepresented works ranging from activist writings to marginalized fictions, and articulating particular literary moments. However, my interest is in the totalizing effects anthologies of fiction have on linked stories specifically, as a result of their respective forms more so than their contents.

Linked stories' placements in anthologies express an undeniable tension. Linked collections suggest that transnational literature can be read as assembled fragments that generate surplus. Selves are more than the fragments of their experience, and stories exist in excess of historical or personal loss. On the other hand, anthologies present stories from linked collections as stand-alone pieces contributing to themed or periodized clusters. Editorial policies necessarily domesticate the generically disruptive force of linked stories, even in decisions like adding contextual footnotes or translations of what authors leave untranslated. Drift occurs: transnational literature is institutionalized as part of a globalized literary monoculture. Anthology curation invites celebration of the multicultural hybridity its texts are interpreted to display. Anthologies' formal and generic qualities illuminate how they, despite editors' best intentions, may deploy texts for discursive work centered on a particularly overburdened notion of diversity. When anthologies choose stories to attempt to shore up literary diversity or representative coverage, they create an ideological *telos*. The teleological trajectory is evident in the globalizing impetus present in some anthologies' framing language. The global seems to refer more to a posture that the anthology hopes its readers will adopt. The *Norton Anthology of World Literature* (NAWOL), for instance, imagines no better way to prepare young people for "a global future" than "deep and meaningful exploration of world literature."[3]

Thinking toward "a global future" this way presents a curated diversity contributing to a globalized literary monoculture that is eminently marketable and malleable. As a collection of interrelated writings that center on a topic or are grouped in themed clusters, the anthology's global paradigm commonly brings together two overarching themes with its constituent texts: universal storytelling and celebratory diversity.[4] Pieces of various traditions, authors, and cultures are organized, often through homogenizing restoration and narration, with rough edges smoothed through the framing apparatus of representative variety.

While anthologies center on concepts of global monoculture or multicultural hybridity—where difference or specificity may be leveled or lost—authors like Junot

Díaz ironize precisely this curated, neat diversity. Díaz's writing suggests a transnational paradigm can exist beyond the globalized bicultural or multicultural. I take Díaz as an example of a writer whose connected works create surplus rather than retrace loss. His aesthetic sensibilities and affective states—displaced, fragmentary, migratory—produce surplus through linked stories that focus on the beyond rather than the between, the diasporic horizon of the transnational, rather than the diverse or multicultural as a panacea.

This surplus is arresting, to use Díaz's term. Readers experience temporary paralysis in view of how fragments in Díaz's stories gesture toward larger forces. A neighborhood is a neighborhood but also a universe. A person is a person but also an assemblage of other unlived lives. His writing compels attention to the fissures and devastations of colonialism and diaspora and their attendant mourning. Additionally, his stories throw into relief the racial capitalism underlying transnational writing—the demands the globalized literary market places on writers to express and excavate identity and loss.[5] In capitalist societies where diversity is often both a desirable and distressing aspiration, racial identity becomes a valued commodity. Mediums like anthologies, by nature of their curating enterprise and status as marketable objects, benefit from the market and virtue-signaling values of diversity or non-whiteness as a commodity. This is not to say that anthologies' pursuit of diverse content coverage is wrong or disingenuous but rather to probe how ideologies of diversity, multiculturalism, and liberal antiracism in globalized capitalist societies come to "monopolize the terms of sociality, despite their increasing hollowness in the face of neoliberalism's predations," among other challenges.[6]

The anthology tames a surplus of feeling and knowledge that linked stories collectively generate. Díaz explains:

> I wrote each … story with my top eye aimed always at the large flow of the narrative …. I wanted the stories to work well on their own, but that wasn't enough. The stories also had to work with and against the other stories, had to produce collectively that arresting surplus of feeling and knowledge beyond the simple sum of the parts …. Maybe I could have written conventional novels from both sets of material but I'm not convinced I could have gotten the same jagged punch, the same longing and silences that rise up from the gaps in and between the linked stories.[7]

Díaz develops a transnational paradigm centered on the aesthetic and affective surplus that emerges from connecting fragments of vast, intertwined phenomena: US imperialism in the Americas, the African diaspora, and migrations to and from a Dominican Republic shaped by a US-supported dictatorship. He develops a surplus, a

jagged punch, rather than simply a set of traces to restore. Díaz's stories exceed the constraints of individual form: interweaving as they work with and against one another, producing new spaces for feeling and knowledge, evading enclosure, and letting gaps speak. Remnants of stories remain distinct from anthologies' customary frameworks of the ethnic, the national, and the world.

Surplus can also be understood as a literary strategy that foregrounds how global literary markets profit from associating authors of color with cultural authenticity and from expecting writers of transnational fiction to detail loss and difference. Consequently, focusing on authors' generation of surplus usefully moves conversations away from temptations to distinguish between bad readers seeking to consume exotic experience and good readers with insider knowledge and self-awareness. As Sarah Brouillette observes of postcolonial writers and the global literary marketplace, it can be "more fruitful to understand strategic exoticism, and likewise general postcolonial authorial self-consciousness, as comprised of a set of literary strategies that operate through assumptions shared between the author and the reader, as both producer and consumer work to negotiate with, if not absolve themselves of, postcoloniality's touristic guilt."[8] Surplus is a strategy that arises from innate tensions among the forms, institutions, and transactions authors participate in and transform by their participation.

Juxtaposing the anthology and linked collection shows how Díaz's stories ironize and splinter conventions of a transnational immigrant narrative—often a trajectory of individuals assimilating or bootstrapping their way to success, inherited from much American immigrant fiction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The interlocked large narrative flow of multiple stories, not just the one exemplar, breaks apart monolithic narrative by generating affective states and aesthetic sensibilities that proliferate. To curate one linked story in an anthology elevates it to a paradigmatic status to some extent, simply by its presence and function among the chosen texts, regardless of editorial intent—ironic, as these stories are anti-paradigmatic at their core. The linked collection structure turns any representative migration story into multiple incomplete, interwoven pieces.

The born anthologized metaphor bridges the linked collection and the anthology. Díaz's individual stories seem to beckon for anthologizing. Yet, his multifaceted collections are designed with an internal logic—an anticipatory circumvention of flattening or packaging, erasure or enclosure—built into the interlocking structure. This logic, refusing curation, sets individual stories up against the transmutable ways their contents and themes can be detached or conscripted for particular cultural or universal paradigms of experiences. Each story expands beyond itself because it relies on the collection's large, relational narrative form. The linked form expects media like anthologies to attach stories to themes and put them to discursive work, employing the stories' diversity value to the fullest for creating particular pedagogical frameworks or institutionalized readings. The expectation of potential reduction built into the collections evokes other possibilities, anchored by

the sense of displacement Díaz generates across stories**,** even as the stories are flexible to anthologies' framings. Díaz does not merely resist the categories or paradigms that might settle around his works. Rather, acknowledging both the value and the limits of these frameworks is a perspective enfolded into his stories from the outset.

Díaz's texts harbor a logic repelling conventional anthological frameworks, which rely heavily on thematic clusters of the ethnic, the national, and the world. Even when Díaz's texts are anthologized, aspects of this logic cannot be entirely incorporated into the framing. To be sure, anthologies are not always reductive across the board. Yet, the anthology's form necessitates evaluating, pruning, and framing. Stories, seemingly hermetic and detachable, are amenable to anthologizing; yet, in their linked form, they also exceed the spaces allocated to them. This is a promising line of inquiry for rethinking forms of transnationalism. The difficulty of assimilating into an anthology a story that requires association across fragments enables Díaz's works to revise notions of the global into a surplus-driven, irreducibly fragmentary transnational paradigm.

Surplus Feeling and Knowledge

Díaz's stories have affective and aesthetic relations to one another structured by migrations and rendered invisible when reading one story in the context of an anthology's curation. This vanishing is a formal manifestation of how these stories, which are bound together by affective sensibilities and aesthetic echoes, are tamed. The affective states are perceptible feelings, moods, and atmospheres that are as much social, emerging through setting, community, or relationship, as they are individual, arising through character, memory, or psyche. Aesthetic echoes arise through multilingual moments, recurring images, and narrative focalization shifts. Affective and aesthetic work proliferates and accumulates, shaping a migrant consciousness of displacement that ties the stories together and produces surplus feeling and knowledge.

Two collections, *Drown* and *This is How You Lose Her*, link stories that share themes, images, characters, and places, playing off one another the way instruments in an orchestra together layer and build a symphony's sound. Díaz describes a process of continually discarding and discovering stories in relation to one another: "I had swell ideas … I had to dump … because they would never fit into the larger pattern of the narrative. There were also other stories that I would never have written but for the fact that the larger narrative demanded them in order to produce a necessary fire between some of my themes."[9] The larger narrative maintains fragmentation and surplus across stories, a dynamic that eludes unifying closure. This is a dual fragmentation: the collection explores fragments of experiences but also itself expects fragmentation, that people will read delinked, individual pieces excerpted elsewhere. The collections foreground the formal attention their work demands so that readers may not only notice aesthetic echoes but also observe the accumulative, reverberating effects of the stories' affective states.

Writing with the stereotypes and expectations often placed on transnational authors in mind turns the creative process into a subtle, ironized collaboration with different audiences and receptions, including anthologies. Authors like Díaz know the diversity commodity value of their stories as representative narratives. Anthologization is a literal process and also shorthand for the potential pitfalls of representative diversity. It is one way the literary marketplace may bear on writers like Díaz. Authors do not necessarily write for anthologization, but they are attuned to their potentially fraught participation in a global literary system and the roles their works might play in an anthology or in the literary marketplace. Born anthologized stories, expecting misreadings and misrepresentations, approach the literary system strategically as a chance to keep proliferating narratives open, even as they are reframed by anthologies. Taking what Díaz calls the "top eye" view of his stories makes clear how they invite and reject these anthologizing forces.[10] The stories already begin in fragments—of different languages, histories, and places—that do not conform to reductive representations of nation or experience, and the stories intend to maintain their fragmentariness.

The scope of transnational geography and movement has changed in fiction not only because of writers' formal efforts to put words to diaspora and migration but also due to technological advances—Díaz's stories, for instance, often involve flights between the US and the Dominican Republic. It is not so much that a once national form has now become transnational. Rather, just as critical reception at different points coalesced around the short story to highlight its transatlantic, national, or regional qualities, current and emergent reception of linked stories is ripe for investigating the transnational form as affected by contemporary technologies, economies, and migrations explored by writers like Díaz.[11]

Linked stories have been called short story cycles and composite novels, among other terms. Forrest Ingram gave a capacious definition: "a book of short stories so linked to each other by their author that the reader's successive experience on various levels of the pattern of the whole significantly modifies his experience of each of its component parts."[12] The form's convention was that "each element be sufficiently complete for independent publication and yet serve as part of a volume unified by a continuing setting, or ongoing characters, or developing themes, or coalescent patterns of imagery."[13] While this history traces back to early collected narratives and cyclic poets from around the world, including Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, the cycle's US roots owe much to Washington Irving's influential *The Sketch Book* (1819-1820). Irving began writing *The Sketch Book* in England, spinning tales about American and English life, including stories based on European folklore like "Rip Van Winkle."[14] Short stories and cyclic collections were transatlantic, arguably transnational, from their origins. Yet, reception and criticism created a dominant narrative that short stories were a particularly American form. This argument explains that Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville, and Irving, principally, developed "a national form that highlighted alienation, subjectivity, and an

unmediated form of communication between reader and writer in order to reflect on their peripheral position in relation to British imperial power." [15] Poe's critical vocabulary became prevalent in interpretations, especially the idea that short stories' chief aim should be conveying "unity of impression."[16]

Modernist Frank O'Connor, an Irish writer who taught for many years in the U.S., suggested the short story primarily functions "as a private art intended to satisfy the standards of the individual, solitary, critical reader."[17] Critics later picked up this idea to explain "American literature's special pedigree in the short story," arguing that "separation from major European publishing houses produced a form … especially rich in instances of romantic alienation by which means outsider characters could become detached from the currents of history and able to reveal previously concealed truths."[18] This trope of short stories representing a digestible, "uniquely democratic and American literary form" established persistent discourses of Americanness. [19] Writers and critics celebrated the short story as a national form because of its long tradition of authors and because it was seen as "offering a democratic model of accessibility," particularly in its 1930s popular magazine heyday; this contrasted with the novel's apparent "traditional association with high cultural ideals." [20] Amid midcentury Cold War politics, however, creative and critical attention shifted to prioritize the novel, as concern grew for the formation of a distinctly national literary canon, one that would articulate Americanness over a broad, open-ended historical sweep.[21] The short story came to be considered a less prestigious form of cultural production.

In this narrative of literary history, a watershed moment centers on Sherwood Anderson. After writing *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), he connected the short story cycle to the nation, albeit exaggerating his own innovation: "I have sometimes thought … the novel form does not fit an American writer.… What is wanted is a new looseness; and in *Winesburg* I had made my own form."[22] However, to flesh out literary history in a way that helps further illuminate work like Díaz's, this watershed moment needs to be decentered and another key text, Jean Toomer's *Cane* (1923), considered. [23] *Cane* experiments with sketches, poems, and stories, interweaving threads of oral traditions in recurring phrases, images, rhythms, and characters. Toomer evokes a formal relationship "among texts in the black tradition—relations of revision, echo, call and response, antiphony."[24] Wesley Beal argues *Cane* is most effectively comprehended when "read as a network of forms," given how it "operates on a logic of patterning and repetition that endows its several texts with nodal relationships to each other," where texts both "illuminate one another … [and] the gaps occurring between them."[25]

Cane is among the most formally avant-garde novels of the modernist period; its form is closely linked to its exploration of Afro-diasporic culture. *Cane* and its reception over time changed the paradigm of the American story cycle and its associations with cultural regionalism or nationalism. Much in the same way that Toomer and writers outside the dominant Anglo American paradigm of modernism

necessitated a critical rethinking and a transformative shift of the paradigm, Díaz and other contemporary authors refresh the linked story form's representative possibilities and create a distinctive transnational paradigm. This paradigm hinges on the transnational comprising fragments that teem into surplus, shaped by its irreducibility to the Anglophone anthology's conception of the global.

Díaz's stories are born of a diaspora that necessitates a different relationship to nation. The linked collection for Díaz shows how transnational phenomena—the reverberations of US imperialism and New World colonialism, the history of the African Diaspora, and the movement of Dominican people to the US and sometimes back—generate a surplus beyond the stories' immediate contexts and implications. We see these entanglements in his aesthetics—narrative focalization, recurring images—and affective states—hoping and drowning, losing and loving. Each story produces its own single effect but also reflects the surplus it gains in connection to others.

The simultaneously amalgamated and fractured nature of linked stories makes them suitable for exploring interwoven transnational phenomena: "These are by no means novels, but they're not your standard anthologies either. It's a neither-nor form I happen to like—probably the Caribbean in me. After all, when linked story collections work well they give … both the glorious ephemerality of the short story—its ability to capture what André Bazin called in a different context 'contingency,' the singular one-time event—and also some of the cooler aspects of the novel: its relational *longue durée* and its what-comes-next propulsion." [26] Díaz's collections capture both contingency, in the epiphanic delicacy of lyric individual experience, and *longue durée*, in the deep, long form inspired explorations of character and place. Overlapping social phenomena like racial/ethnic/gender hierarchies, poverty, and violence contour the diaspora and migration that shape the aesthetics of Díaz's stories.

Here, Caroline Levine's view that form in literary studies includes patterns of sociopolitical experience is useful. I draw on her broadening of form to encompass "all shapes and configurations, all ordering principles, all patterns of repetition and difference," as well as her interest in how forms might travel by "moving back and forth across aesthetic and social materials."[27] Form always indicates an arrangement of elements, "an ordering, patterning, or shaping" that affords "repetition and portability across materials and contexts."[28] Levine's analysis of pervasive, portable forms offers another way to consider relationships between literary form and social phenomena.

For Díaz, racial/ethnic/gender hierarchies and diasporic histories are "social forms" that do not simply overlap or relate but rather manifest in and permeate the linked collection to structure its aesthetic modes and affective states.[29] Díaz's writing conceptualizes a "decolonial imagination," shifting American and Afro-Latinx literatures toward a transnationalism invested in the accumulated surplus of the trans-American, hemispheric, and diasporic.[30] Rather than positing a single paradigmatic experience, Díaz attends to Levine's portable forms through linked stories: painting singular, ephemeral moments and conveying aesthetic and affective perceptions

shaped by social phenomena. The fragments of history and experience his stories explore are materials for creative play, assembled and disassembled into the worlds and forms of fiction.

Levine identifies one central challenge of "thinking transnationally" as "[coming] from the field's insistence that we think responsibly about local experience" in order to "avoid the danger of folding all cultures into an image of the same." How, she asks, can we "begin to think productively about transnational patterns of culture and politics in a way that neither generalizes too readily nor insists on such radical specificity that it descends into a heterogeneous mass of isolated examples?"[31] Díaz's fiction addresses this challenge. His stories stand out in anthologies that, even when they intend to celebrate difference and avoid folding cultures together, still often end up searching for and emphasizing the universalizable as part of what they provide readers. The stand-alone story in the anthology is placed in a different context of ordering principles and patterns of repetition and difference; anthological framing highlights specific social and aesthetic components for readers. By asserting his "little Calibans" are not "your standard anthologies," Díaz implies these stories are not the kind of curated smorgasbord that anthologies often are. The phrase "little Calibans"—evoking the Caliban of *The Tempest* who desires to fill his isle with hybrid Calibans—reinforces authorial attention to surplus: populating transnational fiction with selves existing in excess of their experiences, capturing the singularity of individuals and events as well as their interwoven place in history's *longue durée*.

Paratextual Framings

In one case of the relationship between linked collections and anthologies, *Drown*'s stories appear in multiple compilations from W. W. Norton and Company. To date, "Drown" appears in two types of Norton anthologies, widely used in US literature classrooms—the national anthology (American literature: 2012 shorter eighth edition, 2015 eighth edition, 2016 ninth edition) and the world anthology (world literature: 2012 third edition, 2018 fourth edition). The collection's first story, "Ysrael," narrated by Yunior as "Drown" is, appears in the ethnic anthology (Latino literature: 2010 first edition) along with an excerpt from Díaz's first novel, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007). Each anthology frames the stories according to its own rationality; each story functionally shifts scales from ethnic, national, and world literary status, depending on the curation. An anthology is a nexus where contextual information, pedagogy, scholarship, student engagement, and texts all meet—at its best, it provides points of access to spark curiosity. Reading one Díaz story might be a hook that entices some to read other works. Additionally, the anthology can reveal assumptions, aspirations, and ideologies behind its own construction for readers to consider.

Certain assumptions emerge from the paratextual apparatuses influencing how Díaz is presented. The inaugural edition of the Latino anthology (NALL) seeks to "represent, classify, and explore the ways that the Latino literary tradition has grown

organically as [a] … component of the nation's literature."[32] The anthology asserts that Latino literature at its core has an ambivalence about the "tension between double attachments to place, to language, and to identity," implying that Díaz's works have been chosen in part to illustrate this tension.[33] The NALL, in its chronological table of contents, places Díaz's "Ysrael" and *Oscar Wao* excerpt in a section entitled "Into the Mainstream: 1980-Present."

The Díaz introduction notes he is the first Dominican American man to write and publish a book-length work of fiction in English. Díaz is heralded as a writer who represents a break from the traditional immigrant acculturation story: "unlike most writers of immigrant narratives, Díaz mixes the temporal sequence into a back-and-forth narration that mirrors the ability of the immigrant to travel easily between homeland and new home," and "Ysrael" is read as a way of examining "the consequences of awareness and the uses of the past."[34] The headnote argues Díaz's novel establishes a dialogue with previous narratives of immigrant experience and represents a break not only from "the traditional acculturation story, but also from the ethnic novel"—for the novel's Oscar character is "post ethnic, and his story announces the demise of 'the novel of the hyphen,' of the immigrant's cultural production of here-or-there assimilation."[35] The introduction takes a leap with the novel—a break from the traditional acculturation narrative straight to the postethnic.

The framing suggests the "making it" trope for Latinx writers, implied by the section heading "Into the Mainstream" and the milestone-focused formulation of "first Dominican American man" to reach particular achievements. The anthology lucidly makes the point that not all narratives within its pages are about immigration, but of those that are, the editors acknowledge a "minefield … typical of immigrant writing"—characterized by writers describing a "journey of arrival, accommodation, and ultimate redemption" or variants treating themes of usurpation or crossroads.[36] "Ysrael," read in this framing, is a noteworthy choice because it is one of the *Drown* stories that does not overtly conjure or play with notions of the idealized immigrant journey. However, read in the linked collection, juxtaposed with "No Face," which Ysrael himself narrates, readers learn that Ysrael is yearning for a trip north—complicated by the fact that it is not a conventional dream of a better economic life that drives him. Rather, he hopes Canadian doctors will surgically reconstruct his face, which had been mutilated by a wild pig; he prepares for this possibility by learning "English he'll need up north."[37] In "Ysrael," Ysrael tells Rafa and Yunior his kite is from his father in Nueva York, after Yunior notices the kite, "no … local job," had been manufactured abroad.[38] This hints at a traditional immigrant narrative trope of a father abroad sending money back, but Ysrael's insistence that an operation will heal his ravaged face adds a dimension that annuls that potential cliché.

The American literature anthology (NAAL) places Díaz in "American Literature Since 1945." Its framing focuses on two neighborhoods that inspire Díaz: Santo Domingo and Parlin, New Jersey. Díaz was a new addition to this anthology, which seeks to "balance traditional interests with developing critical concerns in a way that

points to a coherent American literary history."[39] The anthology highlights Díaz's insight into "the rich duality of any immigrant's experience," shown in part through his use of English laced with Dominican slang; his characters are not so much "people of two worlds" but are rather "creatures of a new world fashioned by multicultural factors and ultimately shaped by their own ingenuity."[40]

The framing instates *Drown* as an inheritor to a lineage of American writing shaped by Sandra Cisneros and Toni Morrison. NAAL says Díaz learned from Cisneros a neighborhood can be a vital presence as much as any character; from Morrison, Díaz's inheritance is how to privilege "the novelist as creator of an otherwise unwritten minority history, a theme [Díaz extends] … to the immigrant's experience of living in two worlds, neither of which conform to dominant cultural models."[41] The headnote underscores themes energizing Díaz's works: the hybridity of American life; questions of identity and inclusion; complexities of a multicultural boyhood; Dominican men creating themselves and waiting for transformation; familial conflict; absent fathers; and dilemmas of sexuality and poverty. NAAL frames Díaz in the American immigrant literary tradition of bicultural and multicultural lives. Though the headnote is rich, the themes it flags fall along the lines of a conventional immigrant narrative, without the same attention to displacement that the linked collection foregrounds. It misses the productively disjointed literary history Díaz avows; his work does not wholly belong to an American or global literary lineage and yet simultaneously belongs nowhere else.[42]

Díaz was in 2012 a new addition to NAWOL's "Contemporary World Literature" section, which emphasizes *Drown*'s linguistic inventiveness and thematic content. The headnote suggests "Drown" vividly "evokes the minority subculture to which the narrator belongs."[43] This fits what NAWOL seeks to impart: "the rush of the unknown, the experience of being stunned, the feeling of marveling over cultural achievements from across the world."[44] NAWOL connects Díaz to the magical realism of Gabriel García Márquez and the epic tradition of Homer's *Odyssey* and James Joyce's *Ulysses*, with Yunior as a Telemachus figure.

Díaz does consider *Drown* a "Goldilocks space (not too much, not too little)" between novel and short story that enables a "weird Dominican Odyssey from the Telemachus point of view … [the view] of the son left behind on the island while the father is on his epic immigrant journey," noting this tale is "necessarily incomplete but [its] very incompleteness adds to its poignancy."[45] It is an odyssey conveyed through multiple possible identities that revolve around Yunior and his persistent sense of belonging to multiple places. Additionally, gender contributes significantly to the multiplicities and gaps characterizing Díaz's linked works, which could arguably be read as a Penelopiad, fragmented among Virta, Beli Cabral, Yasmin, Nilda, and others, that has been obscured by attention to the various Yuniors. The Dominican Odyssey's *telos* generates surplus from fragmentation. Homer's *Odyssey* is not similarly fragmented: the father's return reinforces an unbroken home and consistent identity. NAWOL gives "Drown" completeness as a cultural achievement that the linked collection leaves open and incomplete. This framing reveals how anthologies filter

narrative through a perspective for the anthology user's benefit. NAWOL's contextualizing functions as a filter. A reader who seeks to know something of minority subcultures and world cultures can read texts that NAWOL has constellated in relation to the Joyces and García Márquezes. Consequently, this creates the impression of a world republic of letters with space for Díaz's works to fit, providing Caribbean or Dominican coverage and attainable cultural value.[46] This obscures his writings' interplay of fragmentation and surplus and how his works think transnationally—they do not effortlessly belong to a global tradition and yet, hailing Telemachus and Macondo, concurrently claim belonging.[47]

Despite their best intentions, anthologies develop an ideological *telos* of ethnic, national, or world literature. Ironically, they draw on diversity to uphold ideals of multiculturalism or hybridity, yet their curatorial practices smooth out the edges of fiction like Díaz's, flattening stories into a kind of happy cross-cultural universalism that veers into postethnic ideology. Postethnicity views multiracial subjects as signifying an era beyond ethnicity, in which individuals from different ethnic and racial backgrounds all resist the "grounding of knowledge and moral values in blood and history," instead living together bound by voluntary affiliations and civic nationalism.[48] Jeffrey J. Santa Ana contends that due to "consumption-based flattening and waning of emotional diversity" in an age of globalization, "euphoria and indifference are the primary emotions of postethnicity." [49] Díaz's interwoven stories are skeptical of this postethnicity and its conformity to a set of primary emotions that crowd out the affective range of the displacement that their characters experience. Anthologies are not purveyors of indifference. Their good intentions, however, may skew them toward a false euphoria that marvels over cultural achievements from a smorgasbord of cultures or heralds the triumph of ethnic writers becoming part of what is considered the mainstream.

What the anthology describes as duality or diversity misses the displacement affect and fragmentation aesthetic central to Díaz. Díaz's transnational subjectivities not only evade models of assimilation but also move away from traditional forms of resistance dependent on working through loss or mourning, recovery or repair. Díaz poses an alternative in the shape of the generative gain that can develop from the fragmentation and displacement that loss triggers. His stories foreground multiple social forms tied to a framework of transnational migrations, with the potential to create surplus irreducible to conventional organization. Levine asserts that, when forms meet, "their collision produces unexpected consequences, results that cannot always be traced back to deliberate intentions or dominant ideologies."[50] We see this in how the anthology form never fully imposes an order on Díaz's stories, which disrupt the anthology's logic and frustrate its "organizing ends, producing aleatory and sometimes contradictory effects."[51] The anthology's formal qualities and underlying assumptions—about how loss and diversity structure narratives with ethnic, national, or world content like *Drown*'s—are unsettled when they run up against the surplus principle Díaz uses to disrupt conventional narrative organization.

Linked collections reveal a transnational paradigm distinctive from anthologies' conceptions of the curated global, multicultural, or universal. Writers like Díaz develop surplus to unsettle the global unity or integration into universal storytelling that anthologies tend to affirm. The surplus that radiates outward in linked collections represents transnationalism's deterritorializing qualities and tensions with various articulations of nation. Linked works revise paradigmatic notions of the American immigrant in an age of globalization and migration inflected by loss and still reckoning with colonial and diasporic histories. Linked stories provide a starting point for considering a transnational paradigm emerging among writers experimenting with social forms.

James Nagel speculates that the contemporary proliferation of linked stories by multiethnic writers may be due to the fact that such cycles originate "in the oral tradition and [descend] through cultures in every part of the world, uniting them in a legacy of universal storytelling."[52] While it is true that linked stories have a long tradition and are formally well suited to exploring fragments of experience, the changing nature of the literary market and MFA writing programs has also ensured contemporary writers often establish careers first through short stories.[53] Nagel's conjecture about universal storytelling, however, could also be read as part of the thin line anthologies walk, one that blurs diverse representation and the flattening institutionalization of that diversity in a globalized Anglophone literary monoculture.

Affective Storytelling

Díaz confronts the storytelling conundrum in "The Sun, The Moon, The Stars," through Yunior discussing his love of Santo Domingo. Yunior begins one passage with a storytelling conditional and ends with an insistence that undercuts the opening hypothetical:

> *If this was another kind of story, I'd tell you about the sea*. What it looks like after it's been forced into the sky through a blowhole. How when I'm driving in from the airport and see it like this, like shredded silver, I know I'm back for real …. I'd tell you about the shanties and our no-running-water faucets and the sambas on the billboards …. I'd tell you about my abuelo and his campo hands, how unhappy he is that I'm not sticking around, and I'd tell you about the street where I was born, Calle XXI, how it hasn't decided yet if it wants to be a slum or not …. *But that would make it another kind of story*, and I'm having enough trouble with this one as it is. You'll have to take my word for it. Santo Domingo is Santo Domingo. Let's pretend we all know what goes on there.[54] (emphasis added)

Yunior gives a knowing, sharp statement on what kind of story he is not telling, even

as he raises and sets aside details that could branch into alternate stories. This story is about Magda and their Santo Domingo vacation, a final effort to save their disintegrating relationship. Yet it seems impossible to talk about Magda without including Santo Domingo, evoked first by shredded silver—directly echoing an image in "Aguantando," where Yunior travels within the Dominican Republic. In "The Sun, The Moon, The Stars," he arrives from the US; the same silver surf is how he knows he is back for real. This echo evokes contemporary types of migration within and across nations that technologies like flight enable. Leaving is further complicated when returning becomes possible; losses can be relived or buried with trips that serve different purposes.

Yunior is ostensibly "too depressed to notice the ocean" on rides to Boca Chica in "Aguantando." Nevertheless, the future-Yunior narrating either remembers or adds the detail of "surf exploding into the air like a cloud of shredded silver," an image he indelibly associates with Santo Domingo.[55] In both stories, the narrator offers a stunning image while simultaneously disavowing it, either claiming not to notice or insisting dwelling on lyrical description would transform his story into another tale untrue to its teller: "If this was another kind of story, I'd tell you about the sea." Díaz hints at what could be said before moving into details of island life. Yunior wryly asserts authority, insisting readers "take [his] word for it" and join him in "pretend[ing] we all know what goes on [in Santo Domingo]."[56] He provides a litany of possible stories—about the shanties, billboards, or streets—centered on the island's conditions and people, which could be taken as representative stories.

Writer Taiye Selasi has identified tendencies in critics, readers, and markets to read for transnational content and assume writers produce "explanatory ethnographic texts dolled up as literary fiction."[57] Díaz plays with expectations about "specify[ing] in advance the kind of experience the work of art should produce" when writers and readers try to "[program] what is inherently and constitutively unprogrammable."[58] He acknowledges how stories might become texts from which readers seek to extrapolate cultural or ethnographic information. Díaz responds by insistently foregrounding the dynamism of the formal. In this passage, he refracts images, emotions, and experiences that he explores throughout the linked stories. Díaz playfully, ironically dismisses the lyrical description but nonetheless makes effective use of it, proffering potential story elements and discarding them: "*But that would make it another kind of story, and I'm having enough trouble with this one as it is.*"[59] Díaz raises a crucial set of questions: what kind of story is this? What are other possible stories and lives? He does not spell any of it out, but his commitment to multiplicity and surplus remains clear. This passage encapsulates the surplus mechanism: aesthetic echoes, like shredded silver, provide insight into affective sensibilities and produce effects beyond what the narrative immediately presents.

Surplus through aesthetic echoes is also manifested in the ambiguity of recurring characters, many of whom share names. We learn only in *Drown*'s last story that Yunior is the second Ramón, son of Ramón Senior and half-brother to a Ramón

born to his father's new family. Yunior is the narrator of many works, but he may or may not be the same individual. In another example, Nilda, the woman Ramón Senior marries in New York in "Negocios," has "daggers of black hair," while Nilda, one of Rafa's girlfriends in "Nilda," has a "slash of black hair."[60] Díaz builds structural, affective sensibility on aesthetic echoes that recur and open out into larger moments. The Nildas respectively experience tumultuous romances with the two Ramóns. The highs and lows of love, the displacement of self that can characterize relationships, reflect the characters' displacement and loss in different environments shaped by diaspora. Characters navigate multiple possibilities of home and identity and complicated love for people and places.

Another way *Drown* establishes affective states is through focalization. The perspective and consciousness through which narrative is filtered shifts to zoom into or away from a particular character's point of view. Focalizing shifts are especially effective when they reveal temporal slippages—Yunior narrating the same story from the present and also from the future looking back. Moments of hindsight and speculation create fissures where Yunior's emotional tenor seeps through. "Maybe I already knew how it would all end up in a few years, Mami without Papi," he says in "Fiesta, 1980," and different facets of this absence's impact appear in other stories like "Drown" or "Negocios."[61] The narrative is focalized through Yunior in "Aguantando," as he interrupts his childhood narration to comment with future insight: "I didn't know that he'd abandoned us. That this waiting for him was all a sham."[62] In other instances, Yunior tells Ramón's story with knowledge beyond what could have been transmitted to him: whenever Ramón "felt weak, he'd take from under the couch the road map he bought at a gas station and trace his fingers up the coast, enunciating the city names slowly."[63] The narrative homes in on Ramón's interiority and memory, and dislocates Yunior from narrative control, offering a fragment important to the sense of displacement permeating the stories.

Drown's movement across historical and geographical scales of events also contributes to aesthetic and affective entwinement. In "Aguantando," Yunior notes Mami's "scars from the rocket attack she'd survived in 1965."[64] Reference to the US invasion of the island echoes the story's beginning. Yunior describes knowing his father only through "photographs my moms kept … under her bed," how he always thinks of one specific shot "[t]aken days before the US invasion: 1965."[65] This seeming aside is brushed off almost as soon as it is mentioned with a description of the photograph's scalloped edges. These moments brim with multivalence. The fragmentation shaping them irrupts into the narrative, taking an individual or local focal point and illuminating it against the characters' larger historical backdrop of displacement.

Additionally, photographs are significant to the linked stories and recur throughout *This is How You Lose Her* as literal fragments of other lives that carry over into the characters' present lives. In "Otravida, Otravez," the narrator Yasmin knows about Ramón's previous family through photos, in an echo of "Aguantando": "[Virta]

looks thin and sad, the dead son at her side. [Ramón] keeps the pictures in a jar under his bed, very tightly sealed."[66] Yasmin's first photos mailed home are "weak fotos of me grinning, well dressed and uncertain," "[one] in front of the McDonald's, because I knew my mother would appreciate how American it was."[67] Photographs bridge the distance between those left behind and those scrabbling for footholds in a new place. The "one[s] from the other life" evoke guilt, memory, and disturbance.[68] Their photos must be either sealed or exhumed for those who left to survive and build new lives.

When asked by a friend if she loves Ramón, Yasmin tells her about Santo Domingo, which reflects Yunior's association of love and Magda with the city: "I told her about the lights in my old home in the capital, how they flickered and you never knew if they would go out or not. You put down your things and you waited and couldn't do anything really until the lights decided. This, I told her, is how I feel."[69] "Otravida, Otravez" touches on mourning, hope, and loss but never settles or dwells on one overriding emotion. Díaz conjures affective states structured by transnational migrations to connect fragments of experience and to destabilize identities. Santa Ana argues that a particular "structure of feeling" is constituted by the dialectical relationship between affect and racial identity.[70] In Díaz's fiction, this structure of feeling shapes transnational subjects. Racial identity in the contemporary era, Santa Ana contends, is in large part "an affective process of articulating and resolving the contradictions between historically painful emotions and the euphoria of commercialized human feeling in consumer postmodernism."[71] Díaz rejects the easy entanglement and assimilation of identities and feelings into reductive models of immigrant subjectivity. The linked form shows how characters mediate feelings that "communicate material and historical conditions specific to their ethnic histories" without necessarily being limited or bound by them.[72] Díaz explores the structure of feeling of diasporic subjects. But rather than solely focusing on expressing historical affects of pain and loss, he turns attention toward the surfeit of narratives, emotions, and identities that such structures of feeling, in the linked story form, are capable of generating while mediating that pain and loss.

Managing emotions, as Yasmin does with her metaphor of waiting, creates mixed feelings. Yasmin communicates an uncertainty, structured by displacement, that expresses her sense of self as cautious immigrant, joyous new homeowner, and ambivalent lover. An "emotionally based identity," or what Santa Ana calls an "affect-identity," emerges.[73] However, none of these feelings or identities defines a single paradigmatic immigrant experience. In fact, Yasmin's response suggests a reverse assimilation. Instead of placing immigrant experience in the terms of a standardized narrative, "Otravida, Otravez" grapples with and subverts the forward-looking, bootstraps-pulling trajectory of love, work, and success. Díaz asks readers to dismantle the standardized, unified narrative and instead adopt Yasmin's reference point of Santo Domingo. He positions readers in the uncertain feeling of waiting on the lights.

Yasmin's new lover and American house do not add up to a cohesive story of triumph. You wait "until the lights decided," but her actions also show survival is more

than waiting or working. Her story is one of fragile hope, spiky with shards of emotions, from compassion tinged with irritation toward a new immigrant at work to the mix of feelings she holds for the wife left behind. Yasmin considers Virta's letters as she turns away immigrants eager to buy the house she and Ramón have just acquired after years of saving. She suggests a parallel between Virta and these unknown individuals: "This is what I know: people's hopes go on forever."[74] The hopes of different characters persist, centered on what they have already lost or might yet lose.

Social Intimacies

A transnational paradigm of arresting surplus depends on the intimacies of feelings and forms. Díaz declares the critical importance of being misaligned "with the emotional baseline of any mainstream society" or "to hegemonic emotional frameworks"—and he affirms the importance of building "contemplation, mourning, working through difficult contradictory emotions" into a culture's civic imaginaries and nuanced, reflective modes of thought.[75] Responding to contemporary US politics, Díaz also emphasizes the importance of feeling: "we need to feel," to do the hard work of connecting and mourning. Simultaneously, he claims, individuals should avail themselves of "old formations that have seen us through darkness."[76] While formations include sociopolitical organization and solidarity, fiction is also important to this call to hope. Feeling and forming: from fragments, necessary fire sparks, and arresting surplus builds. Díaz is fascinated by the creative potentials and formations that a range of affective states misaligned with hegemonic emotional frameworks—like indifference or euphoria, loss or triumph—can fuel. Sianne Ngai observes in critical reception what Díaz explores through fiction. Contemporary literary critics have come to accept feelings are not "merely private or idiosyncratic phenomena" but are as "fundamentally 'social' as the institutions and collective practices that have been the more traditional object of historicist criticism."[77] Intimacies—emotional, relational, sexual, and familial—are a type of social form in Díaz's writing, useful for disrupting transnational fiction's dominant emotional baselines and formal conventions.

With linked stories, Díaz writes about individual experiences of the *trans-* and the *national*, productively destabilizing both parts of the term without heralding the postnational or pronouncing the predominant value of the local and rooted. His stories' linkages make it difficult to instrumentalize a single piece as a convenient illustration of any unified idea of immigrant experience or global interconnectedness. Focusing on surplus enables Díaz to enrich the between, betwixt, or both-and dynamics characterizing globalized multiculturalism and the US-Dominican Republic relationship. The transnational instead becomes a question of empowering exploration of the beyond: the form and space Díaz describes as neither-nor.

Díaz's linked stories, and their insistence on fragmentation, suggest a form that reflects a transnational migrant ontology: always belonging to multiple places. Linked collections generate liminal spaces, offering points from which stories can interact and produce surplus beyond their own immediacies. Each story in the collection helps

develop a larger narrative pattern, never completely settling or sealing a narrative from its full scope of possibilities and permutations. The stories enable social phenomena to radiate into characters' lives, manifesting through the aesthetic expression of the transnational as surplus. Díaz and other writers of linked collections pursue fiction's capacity to convey experiences and build worlds, but any extant commonality in transnational experience, their stories contend, must be located in fragmentation. Linked collections evoke consciousness of displacement and leave multiple possibilities open for home, self, and relationship. They bring together fragments that never entirely fit together to question a globalized, homogenized vision of affect, identity, and experience. Rather than recuperating identity or loss to construct more unified notions of ethnicity, nation, or world, these little Calibans are neither-nor transnational forms giving shape to the fragments that constitute an arresting, irreducible surplus.

Notes

[1] Rebecca Walkowitz, *Born Translated: The Contemporary Novel in an Age of World Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 3–4.

[2] Walkowitz, *Born Translated*, 3–4.

[3] Martin Puchner, ed., "Preface," *The Norton Anthology of World Literature* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2012): xxiii.

[4] See Jeffrey R. Di Leo, ed., *On Anthologies: Politics and Pedagogy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004) for an overview of scholarly debates surrounding anthologies.

[5] See Nancy Leong, "Racial Capitalism," *Harvard Law Review* 126, no. 8 (2013): 2154, where she explains how a specific manifestation of racial capitalism occurs when "a predominantly white institution derives social or economic value from associating with individuals with nonwhite racial identities."

[6] Jodi Melamed, "Racial Capitalism," *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 76.

[7] Cressida Leyshon, "This Week in Fiction: Junot Díaz," *The New Yorker*, July 16, 2012, https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/this-week-in-fiction-junot-daz-3.

[8] Sarah Brouillette, *Postcolonial Writers in the Global Literary Marketplace* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2007), 7.

[9] Leyshon, "This Week."

[10] Here I echo Díaz's statement that, as a writer, he aims a "top eye" toward the larger flow of narrative that all the linked stories collectively produce. Taking a "top eye" view toward these stories as readers, then, enables us to see the formal and interpretive effects that result from their placement in anthologies. See Leyshon, "This Week."

[11] See Paul Jay, *Global Matters: The Transnational Turn in Literary Studies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010) for one of the first critical appraisals of Díaz's work as transnational.

[12] Suzanne Ferguson, "Sequences, Anti-Sequences, Cycles, and Composite Novels: The Short Story in Genre Criticism," *Journal of the Short Story in English* 41 (2003): 103–17.

[13] James Nagel, "The American Short Story Cycle," in *The Columbia Companion to the Twentieth Century American Short Story*, eds. Blanche H. Gelfant and Lawrence Graver (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

[14] See Michael T. Gilmore, "Washington Irving," in *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, ed. Sacvan Bercovitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): 661–75.

[15] Michael J. Collins, *The Drama of the American Short Story, 1800–1865* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016): 26.

[16] Collins, *Drama*, 26.

[17] Frank O'Connor, *The Lonely Voice: A Study of the Short Story* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1963): 14.

[18] Collins, *Drama*, 27.

[19] Sam V. H. Reese, *The Short Story in Midcentury America: Countercultural Form in the Work of Bowles, McCarthy, Welty, and Williams* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2017): 28.

[20] Reese, *Midcentury*, 28.

[21] See Reese, *Midcentury*, 28.

[22] Paul Rosenfeld, ed., *Sherwood Anderson's Memoirs* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1942): 289.

[23] See Mary Jane Dickerson, "Sherwood Anderson and Jean Toomer: A Literary Relationship," *Studies in American Fiction* 1, no. 2 (1973): 163, for more on Toomer and Anderson and how they shared mutual friends in literary circles.

[24] Henry Louis Gates, "Canon Formation, Literary History, and the Afro-American Tradition: From the Seen to the Told," in *Afro-American Literary Study in the 1990s*, eds. Houston A. Baker, Jr. and Patricia Redmond (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989): 38.

[25] Wesley Beal, "The Form and Politics of Networks in Jean Toomer's *Cane*," *American Literary History* 24, no. 4 (2012): 658.

[26] Leyshon, "This Week."

[27] Caroline Levine, *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015): 5.

[28] Levine, *Forms*, 3, 15.

[29] Levine, *Forms*, 5.

[30] Monica Hanna, Jennifer Harford Vargas, and José David Saldívar, eds., *Junot Díaz and the Decolonial Imagination* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015): 6.

[31] Caroline Levine, "Scaled Up, Writ Small: A Response to Carolyn Dever and Herbert F. Tucker," *Victorian Studies* 49, no. 1 (2006): 101–102.

[32] Ilan Stavans, and Edna Acosta-Belén, eds., *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2011): liii. I use the term "Latino" to reflect the anthology's choice of title and term.

[33] Stavans and Acosta-Belén, NALL, liii.

[34] Stavans and Acosta-Belén, NALL, 2351–52.

[35] Stavans and Acosta-Belén, NALL, 2352.

[36] Stavans and Acosta-Belén, NALL, v.

[37] Junot Díaz, *Drown* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1996): 154; 159.

[38] Díaz, *Drown*, 16.

[39] Nina Baym and Robert S. Levine, eds., *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2011): xxiii.

[40] Baym and Levine, NAAL, 1239.

[41] Baym and Levine, NAAL, 1239.

[42] *Drown*'s epigraph, from Gustavo Pérez Firmat's poem "Bilingual Blues," foregrounds this tension: "The fact that I / am writing to you / in English / already falsifies what I / wanted to tell you. / My subject: / how to explain to you / that I / don't belong to English / though I belong nowhere else."

[43] Puchner, NAWOL, 1241.

[44] Puchner, NAWOL, xvi.

[45] Leyshon, "This Week." Díaz's Dominican *Odyssey* is also homage to Derek Walcott's epic poem *Omeros* (1990), a Caribbean *Odyssey*.

[46] See Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. Malcolm DeBevoise (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). Casanova develops a systematic model for understanding how literature is produced, circulated, and valued as language systems, genres, and aesthetic orders compete for dominance and prestige worldwide.

[47] See Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2007): 7. The narrator alludes to Macondo, the town featured in Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967).

[48] David Hollinger, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1995): 3.

[49] Jeffrey J. Santa Ana, "Affect-Identity: The Emotions of Assimilation, Multiraciality, and Asian American Subjectivity," in *Asian North American Identities: Beyond the Hyphen*, eds. Eleanor Ty and Donald C. Goellnicht (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004): 22–23.

[50] Levine, *Forms*, 9.

[51] Levine, *Forms*, 7.

[52] Nagel, "The American Short Story Cycle."

[53] In Díaz's publication history, the short story "Drown" appeared in *The New Yorker* in the January 29, 1996 issue. The first Riverhead Books hardcover edition of the collection *Drown* was released August 1996.

[54] Junot Díaz, *This is How You Lose Her* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2012): 10.

[55] Díaz, *Lose Her*, 10.

[56] Díaz, *Lose Her*, "The Sun, The Moon, The Stars," 10.

[57] Taiye Selasi, "Stop Pigeonholing African Writers," *The Guardian*, July 4, 2015, https://theguardian.com/books/2015/jul/04/taiye-selasi-stop-pigeonholing-african-writers. Selasi identifies a dilemma of expectations writers confront: "the wider literary establishment has trouble with writers who belong to diasporas. It doesn't know where to put us. It can be unclear which team we are playing for: home or away, or neither? Our art is subjected to a particular kind of scrutiny; it is forced to play the role of anthropology." I argue that writers like Díaz conceive of the transnational in terms of the surplus it creates (home, away, neither, both, beyond) as one way of acknowledging and ironizing readers' potential expectations of ethnographic representation.

[58] Derek Attridge, *The Work of Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015): 7.

[59] Díaz, *Lose Her*, "The Sun, The Moon, The Stars," 10.

[60] Díaz, *Drown*, 182; Díaz, *Lose Her*, 29.

[61] Díaz, *Drown*, 41.

[62] Díaz, *Drown*, 70. Focalization is heightened by consistent lack of quotation marks, which serve as a way to distribute agency. Their absence creates a sense that readers and characters share authorship with Díaz as description and dialogue intermingle.

[63] Díaz, *Drown*, 173.

[64] Díaz, *Drown*, 71.

[65] Díaz, *Drown*, 69.

[66] Díaz, *Lose Her*, 53. The photographs' placement echoes "Aguantando," where Virta keeps photos of Ramón under her bed.

[67] Díaz, *Lose Her*, 62.

[68] Díaz, *Lose Her*, 74.

[69] Díaz, *Lose Her*, 66.

[70] Santa Ana ("Affect-Identity," 25) defines "structure of feeling" as "'a particular sense of life'"—quoting Raymond Williams's *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961):

48. See Ian Buchanan's entry for "structure of feeling" in *A Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780199532919.001.0001/acref-9780199532919.

[71] Santa Ana, "Affect-Identity," 25.

[72] Santa Ana, "Affect-Identity," 25, 41. See footnote 13, where Santa Ana draws from Paul Gilroy. Gilroy suggests that ontological development of a "modern black identity that derives from the historical pain expressed" in black cultural production of the Atlantic diaspora expresses affiliation through historical affects and "registers a structure of feeling for diasporic subjects of the black Atlantic." See Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 1995: 203.

[73] Santa Ana, "Affect-Identity," 25.

[74] Díaz, *Lose Her*, 72.

[75] Junot Díaz, "Radical Hope is Our Best Weapon," interview by Krista Tippett, *On Being,* September 14, 2017, transcript, https://onbeing.org/programs/junot-diaz-radical-hope-is-our-best-weapon-sep2017.

[76] Junot Díaz, "Under President Trump, Radical Hope is Our Best Weapon," *The New Yorker,* November 21, 2016, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/11/21https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/11/21/under-president-trump-radical-hope-is-our-best-weapon/under-president-trump-radical-hope-is-our-best-weapon.

[77] Sianne Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007): 419–20.

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