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Gender, Biopolitics and Caribbean Feminisms: Blending Flesh with Beloved Clay

Abstract

The sub-title for this issue, “Blending Flesh with Beloved Clay”, comes from Dominican writer and politician Phyllis Allfrey’s poem, “Love for An Island”.¹ The poem speaks to the essays, creative works and reflections contributed here by scholars, artists, poets, students and activists. Its ironic voice critiques romantic and nationalist visions of the Caribbean and its history, but empathy nonetheless quietly emerges from within its scathing lines. The lingering image is one of people’s attempts to define their relationship to a space and, at times, to define the space itself. While in Allfrey’s verse, nationalists’ “legendary politics decay” and ultimate belonging only comes with death, the piece opens questions about the other ways that more ordinary women and men establish their relationship to their homes. Beyond the ways that they seek identities, attachments and symbols of power, it positions the impact of the Caribbean landscape on bodies, lives and desires.
