

Cuadernos del Caribe - Call No. 32

Aurality and Cultural Forms of the Greater Caribbean.

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Aurality has established itself in recent years as an interdisciplinary field of study that connects anthropology, literature, cultural studies, philosophy, and history. From the pioneering proposals of Ana María Ochoa Gautier (*Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia*) to the recent debates encompassed by the so-called "sonic turn," it has been emphasized that listening constitutes a form of knowledge and a primary social practice. This perspective questions the historical centrality of writing in the production of knowledge and shifts attention toward sensorial, corporeal, and communal modes of cultural creation.

In the Greater Caribbean, sound and orality have played a decisive role in shaping identities, preserving memories, and constructing imaginaries of resistance. The region is distinguished by its linguistic and cultural plurality, where Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, Dutch, and multiple Creoles coexist, among a vast array of other languages, as well as by its musical and performative practices, which have become vehicles of historical memory, political expression, and popular creativity. From ritual songs of African descent to contemporary sound experiments, the Greater Caribbean has emerged as a laboratory for cultural forms where aurality reveals tensions between coloniality, modernity, and emancipation projects.

The study of aurality also raises questions about the politics of listening and the conflictual dimension of soundscapes. As authors such as Mayra Estévez Trujillo (2021) have pointed out, sound can be understood both as a field of oppression and discipline—a space where the "coloniality of power, knowledge, and action" is exercised—and as a horizon for the emergence of new forms of sensitivity and knowledge. Listening, therefore, is not a passive act, but an active practice that involves relations of power, memory, and creation.

In this special issue of *Cuadernos del Caribe*, we propose to open a space for reflection on the ways in which aurality permeates the cultural and social experiences of the Greater Caribbean. We invite contributors to consider how sounds, voices, music, and silences are

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interwoven with historical processes, community practices, political struggles, and artistic productions. The objective is to foster a transdisciplinary dialogue that brings into conversation perspectives from literature, anthropology, history, linguistics, philosophy, ethnomusicology, and cultural studies.

The Greater Caribbean has been the scene of an intense circulation of people, languages, music, and narratives within the framework of colonial, migratory, and global processes. This dynamic has shaped an exceptional sonic richness that, however, has often been rendered invisible by the epistemic hierarchies of Western modernity. Listening, as suggested by Steven Feld (1985) and other theorists (Martínez, 2022; Cárcamo-Huechante, 2013) of “acoustemology”, constitutes not only a sensory medium, but also a form of situated knowledge, which allows us to understand the relationships between body, territory and community.

In this sense, the study of aurality in the Greater Caribbean sheds light on fundamental dimensions of social life: the ways in which orality preserves memories of slavery and diaspora; the way in which urban soundscapes condense racial and class tensions; the ways in which music embodies horizons of resistance to colonialism; and the centrality of the voice in processes of literary and artistic creation. From Afro-Caribbean ritual polyphonies to Indigenous oral narratives, from work songs to contemporary productions of hip hop, reggaeton, champeta, and rancha, the region displays a sonic diversity that deserves to be considered as a living archive and a horizon for the future.

Likewise, aurality raises urgent questions in the context of current ecological and technological transformations. The expansion of extractive and energy projects in Greater Caribbean territories profoundly affects local sound ecologies and has altered the relationship between communities and their environment. Furthermore, new recording, transmission, and digital circulation technologies multiply the ways in which sound is archived and redefined, offering opportunities to rethink the region's cultural and political practices.

The purpose of this special issue is to build an interdisciplinary space for analysis and debate on aurality and its multiple expressions in the Greater Caribbean, addressing its centrality to the region's cultural, political, and social life.

First, we seek to examine the relationship between sound, memory, and archives in local and diasporic contexts. The Greater Caribbean constitutes a space marked by population mobility

and colonial violence and, simultaneously, by the construction of living memories transmitted through songs, oral narratives, and sound recordings. As Ochoa Gautier (2014) has shown, archives are not limited to written material but include forms of listening that allow for the recovery of historically silenced experiences. Thinking about memory through sound implies recognizing both the persistence of orality, transcription, and transduction, as well as the emergence of new recording and preservation technologies.

Secondly, this issue invites to delve deeper into the links between orality, literature, and artistic practices, with special attention to the polyphony of languages and traditions that defines the Greater Caribbean. From indigenous oral narratives to contemporary poetics, and from the linguistic hybridity of Creoles to current digital productions, the region forms a network of expressions where the oral and the written constantly intersect (Lienhard, 1990). In this context, aurality is affirmed as an aesthetic and critical principle that permeates literary texts, performances, theater, film, radio, podcasts, and other cultural manifestations, and that allows us to understand how the sonic dimension transforms the forms of artistic creation, reception, and circulation in the Greater Caribbean.

A third objective is to reflect on the sonic ecologies of the Caribbean, considering both the environmental dimensions and the everyday experiences of listening. The notion of "acoustemology" proposed by Feld (1985) invites us to understand sound as a form of situated knowledge, closely linked to territories and community practices. In the Greater Caribbean, soundscapes are shaped not only by music and oral tradition, but also by the rhythms of the sea, the wind, migratory birds, and urban activities. Analyzing these ecologies makes it possible to visualize the interrelationship between environment, culture, and politics.

Likewise, we propose to investigate the tensions between coloniality and aurality, as well as the forms of resistance and creativity that emerge from sound. The concept of "coloniality of power" (Quijano, 2000) has been expanded to include an acoustic dimension, in which the control of voice, silence, and audibility constitute mechanisms of domination (Cárcamo-Huechante, 2013). However, in the Greater Caribbean, sonic practices that disrupt these hierarchies also occur, from the songs of the Maroons to contemporary popular music, reconfiguring listening as a political act.

Through all this, this issue seeks to contribute to the consolidation of a field of studies on aurality in the Greater Caribbean by articulating regional perspectives with global debates surrounding the sonic turn. As Mitchell and Smith (2023) argue, Latin American (and Greater

Caribbean) literature and culture offer fundamental keys to enriching sound studies internationally, while these debates also allow for a revaluation of the region's aural practices. In short, it is a question of opening a space for dialogue that recognizes Caribbean specificity but also situates its contributions within the framework of critical transnational discussions.

Key Topics

- 1. Sound Memories and Archives:** Oral Traditions, Ritual Songs, Popular Music, Recordings, and Preservation of Caribbean Sound Culture.
- 2. Aurality and Coloniality:** Imposed Silences, Acoustic Resistance, Subaltern Listening Practices, and Critique of Acoustic Colonialism.
- 3. Literature and Artistic Expressions:** The Sound Dimension in Literary Texts, Performances, Theater, Film, Radio, Podcasts, and Digital Productions.
- 4. Multilingualism and Voices of the Greater Caribbean:** Translation Experiences, the Circulation of Creoles, Indigenous and Afro-Caribbean Languages, and Other Subjugated Languages, Through Oral and Sound Communication.
- 5. Sound Ecologies:** Connections between Territory, Nature, and Sound; Experiences of the Sea, the Wind, Animals, and Other More-Than-Human Beings in Greater Caribbean Culture.
- 6. Everyday aurality and community life:** modes of listening, urban landscapes, festivities, religious practices, and other social practices that are articulated through sound.

Submission Information

Contributions will be accepted in the following formats: Research articles, Reflection articles, Review articles, Book reviews related to the call for papers, and works fitting the FI WI KANA section.

FI WI KANA Section. The journal maintains the FI WI KANA section, dedicated to articles, notes, and short essays that address topics related to the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina. On this occasion, we invite submissions that help rethink the archipelago's literature from this aural dimension of the dossier, in an effort to dislocate, overflow, or surpass the already customary readings of island works and authors from identity-based perspectives. We are deeply interested in the aural presence of all worlds, not

only the human world, but also that of maritime life, mineral life (corals, stones, sands, etc.), and the currents in these works. In this sense, we consider it desirable for this issue to include works that help understand and make visible forms of transatlantic contact with the Greater Caribbean, including relations with the Indian Ocean and all sides of the African continent.

Considering the thematic and methodological orientation of this issue, the journal is open to contributions of an audiovisual nature or sound productions, in the following two formats:

Audiovisual essays. The author must upload them to YouTube or Vimeo privately and without their name visible (for anonymous review). They must send the following to the journal's email:

Link to the video. Access password. A presentation text (300-500 words) with a title and keywords in Spanish and one additional language. Maximum length: 20 minutes. Languages: Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, and Caribbean Creoles.

Audio essays. These can be submitted following the same protocol as the videos (link + presentation text), or sent directly to the journal's email as a supplementary file, along with a presentation text (300-500 words) with a title and keywords in Spanish and one additional language.

Languages: Contributions may be submitted in Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, and San Andrés Creole, as well as other regional Creoles.

Submissions: Abstracts, manuscripts, and audio or audiovisual essays should be sent to: cuadernos_caribe@unal.edu.co, with a copy to the guest editors of the dossier (daniel.hernandez.guzman@gmail.com and monicatraductora@gmail.com).

Author guidelines, citation standards, and formatting requirements are available on the Cuadernos del Caribe journal's official website: <https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/ccaribe/index>

Important: For the National Bibliographic Index Pubindex, audiovisual products are not recognized as research articles. However, authors can register them in CvLac as digital productions (audiovisual or audio).

Call for Submissions Schedule and Dates

Those interested in contributing to the dossier should initially submit only a summary of their proposal, of a maximum of 200 words, in Spanish and English, with keywords and title, accompanied by a brief academic biography: full name, email address, ORCID, most recent title received, current institutional affiliation, and bibliographic details of their two most recent publications. Abstracts should clearly state the purpose, type of analytical approach, and intended conclusions, and should include a background bibliography. The type of contribution (research article or reflection, review, audiovisual essay, or audio essay) should also be explicit.

Opening date: October 2, 2025

Abstract submissions: December 1, 2025

Notification of authors selected for the dossier: December 16, 2025

Closing date for submission of full articles: February 28, 2026

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