

Europe and post-colonial creativity: a metaphysical cross-culturalism

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In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the meeting between Prospero and Caliban is an allegory of a Renaissance colonial encounter. Although Prospero emphasizes his gift of language to Caliban, he deems him incapable of 'nurture' (cultural progress). After the Second World War, the Barbadian novelist Georges Lamming saw in that gift the possibility of a 'new departure', which in the following decades was to modify not only Caliban's prospects but most emphatically the European, and specifically, the British cultural scene. I intend to illustrate this transformation through the contribution of postcolonial writers to the metamorphosis of the 'Great Tradition' of the English novel. The changes are formal, linguistic but also evince a metaphysical cross-culturalism best exemplified, among others, in the fiction of the Guyanese-born, British novelist Wilson Harris.

We only just finish matriciding we mummy-England the other day.

Robert Antoni, *Divina Trace*¹

The imaginative psyche which is steeped in levels of the unconscious, subconscious and conscious ... brings a new rhythm into the cross-cultural genesis of the imagination.

Wilson Harris, 'The Fabric of the Imagination'²

The Guyanese-born, British novelist Wilson Harris, of mixed Amerindian, African and European descent, is without doubt one of the most original writers in the 20th century, one who, through content and form, has completely transformed the art of fiction, particularly the 'Great Tradition' of the English realistic novel. He has also conceived his own idiosyncratic critical approaches to the arts generally and to post-colonial fiction in particular.³ It is impossible in a fairly limited space to sum up Harris's considerable critical opus. I will only mention a few points which seem to me important and, in the light of which, I intend to examine some Caribbean novels that lend themselves to such an analysis and illustrate a new trend in Anglophone fiction. They also suggest in what way it contributes to the cross-cultural relations between Europe and the post-colonial world.

In his very first essay, Harris formulated what was to be a continuing twofold concern with the eclipsed traditions of colonized people(s) and the nature of fiction. He also emphasized the correlation between imperialism and the English novel.⁴ From the beginning, he deplored the fact that the Renaissance encounter between European conquerors and the New World peoples did not elicit a mutually enriching dialogue between different cultures, but led to the destruction of pre-Columbian civilizations. Hence his attempts to retrieve what one might call their 'spirit' and his concept of a cross-culturalism, mainly between Europe and central America, of which he was the first exponent. Harris sees this not just as a necessary mutuality between different cultures but between dominant peoples and 'silent eclipsed voices'.⁵ It is rooted in what he calls 'the cross-cultural psyche of humanity, a cross-cultural

psyche that bristles with the tone and fabric of encounters between so-called savage cultures and so-called civilised cultures.⁶

In this cross-cultural psyche lies 'the substance of a deep-seated mutual dialogue between imaginations.'⁷ In several essays Harris has explained how, in the creative process, this substance ('texts of reality', generally a historical and/or individual past) buried in the protagonist's unconscious emerges into what he called 'the miracle of consciousness'. Arising as it does from a 'universal unconscious', this ontological cross-culturalism implies an inherent plurality at all levels of human nature and experience ('one is a multitude').⁸ This plurality also informs 'a genesis of the imagination ... [that] imbues the human psyche with flexible and far-flung roots in all creatures, all elements, all worlds and constellations, all spaces susceptible to visualisation.'⁹ Imagination, as Harris repeatedly writes, is 'intuitive', an approach he contrasts to the rationalism that has dominated Western culture since the Enlightenment. Understandably then, Harris rejects all absolutes and deems all truths and structures partial, a feature also metaphorized in his fictional imagery. Another major characteristic of his narratives is that many are 'dreamed' as is his first novel, *Palace of the Peacock*,¹⁰ a quintessential recreation by a nameless narrator of the conquest of the Americas. This frequent use of dream naturally matches his conviction that 'images come out of the unconscious, out of the world's unconscious.'¹¹

In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Miranda reproaches Caliban with his ungratefulness for the trouble she took to 'make [him] speak', while Prospero asserts that he is incapable of 'nurture', of cultural progress. Caliban's retort is well known: 'You taught me language, and my profit on't is, I know how to curse'.¹² After the Second World War, the Barbadian novelist George Lamming saw in the gift of language the possibility of an 'extraordinary departure'¹³ which, in the following decades, was to modify not only the prospects of Caliban's descendants but most emphatically enrich the British cultural scene and Anglo-Saxon literature generally. Since then, there has been an extraordinary explosion of talented and original writing by writers of Caribbean origin. In the form and language of his novels, V. S. Naipaul fits into the English tradition. But Edward Brathwaite, Derek Walcott and Wilson Harris have expressed their love of the English language, yet have also created new modes of expression, thereby shedding light on the richness and endless possible metamorphoses of English. Writers of a younger generation have followed in their path, devised in turn, alternative modes of writing and contributed to an intercultural Britain, undermining what was once, with a few exceptions, a certain parochialism.

Among writers of Caribbean origin who both challenge and enlarge the British tradition are two writers, both descendants of the plantocracy in Trinidad, Lawrence Scott and Robert Antoni. By a strange coincidence, they both brought out a novel in 1992, in which each deals, in his own idiosyncratic way, with the history of Trinidad, called 'Kairi' (its aboriginal name) in Scott's *Witchbroom* and 'Corpus Christi' in Antoni's *Divina Trace*. Like Wilson Harris, who evokes the 'sublime long-suffering geography of history',¹⁴ *Witchbroom* construes what Scott calls 'the violence of geography'.¹⁵ Literally, 'witchbroom' refers to a parasite which gradually destroyed the plantation whose history the narrative recreates. Metaphorically, it represents the spirit of the plantation system produced by material greed, but eventually self-destructive. As has been pointed out, '*Witchbroom* is a post-colonial text ... deeply rooted in the engagement with colonialism and its attendant demons and monsters.'¹⁶ The novel traces the origins, growth, and legacies of the colonial society through an inextricable web of contacts, often unacknowledged in the past, between races, classes and genders. The main narrator is an androgynous being called Lavren, inspired by his mother and muse, Marie Elena, and by the stories of his black Nanny, Josephine. The two women, mistress and black servant, are the island's living memory and frequently vessels of secret

knowledge and rumours. Josephine, who tells 'other tales,' breaks through Lavren's fragmented narrative 'with words of another life' (pp. 6, 170). So he hears, among others, the tale of the bed, a family heirloom, where Josephine had made love with Lavren's father, given birth to his child and thus felt the right to claim the bed as her inheritance when Marie Elena dies. The tales of the two women are also contrasted by their different use of language, the mistress speaking standard English, the servant Creole:

'[Josephine], my back, someone is beating me.'
'Mistress, I know; they beating Old Moses down in the yard. That is what you feeling. Is your husband's whip you feeling.' (p. 63)

This is but a very short example. We shall see presently how much more obtrusive Creole is in *Divina Trace*. In his narrative role, Lavren, a hermaphrodite emerged from the Gulf of Sadness and who still occasionally swims in its undercurrents, is a vessel for the dreams, ambitions and sufferings of his family and the Caribbean peoples. The emergence of fiction from the Caribbean unconscious (metaphorized by the sea) stimulates the portrayal of social reality rather than the reverse. The end of the novel suggests the openness and promise of the future without being blindly optimistic, for 'the memory of treachery and cruelty' (p. 269) endures and the vestiges of a long history of exploitation and torment are still to be seen. Finally the old plantation, derelict and eaten up by the parasite disappears, and there remains only an absence full of 'remembered selves' (p. 272).

This openness is again obvious in Lawrence Scott's latest novel, *Night Calypso*,¹⁷ and in spite of its recreation of the horrors of world history, it is not a mere background but is experienced by the individual characters as 'living history' (p. 320). The narrative is framed by a session of psychoanalysis undergone in 1983 by one of the major characters, Theo, now a middle-aged man who has never been able to overcome the psychological wounds inflicted on him as a child: the sexual exploitation of his women ancestors, black servants on plantations, by their white planter masters and his own experience as a child repeatedly raped and beaten by his mother's master and lover, testified by an awful scar on his back; his emotional involvement in the hell of the Second World War and the sufferings of leprosy patients quarantined on the small island of El Caracol, part of the Trinidad archipelago. Theo has been taken in by a young doctor who treats the patients at the leprosarium, helped by a young French nurse from the local convent. With a Catholic mother and a Jewish father, she joined the order in order to serve on a mission. The sufferings and humanity of the lepers are recreated with great sensitiveness, and the refusal of the Americans based on the island during the war to give them the appropriate medication in their possession is reminiscent of the recent refusal in South Africa to give the necessary remedy to poor patients with Aids.

At night, Theo sleepwalks and dream-talks in successive episodes what he and his matriarchal ancestry have gone through on the plantation. Gradually, his personal history and that of the slaves and servants is pieced together. As the pharmacist of the leprosarium says, 'Is not the disease of the skin. Is the disease of the mind I worry about, is the politics of the matter' (p. 112), which recalls the witchbroom metaphor as the self-destructive parasite of the plantation system. The main narrative runs from 1938 to 1948 and recreates the impact on the island of the Second World War, the revelation of the concentration camps, and the atom bombs on Japan, with president Truman's declaration that the bomb 'was a gift of God' (p. 391). There is an impressive symbiosis between personal and world suffering and an obvious, though implicit, parallel between the holocaust and the extermination of the Carib Indians as well as between these and the plantation master's sadism. It evinces a cross-culturalism rooted in the individual and humanity's nature, his/its capacity for good and evil.

It is sometimes argued, including about Harris, Scott and Antoni,¹⁸ generally by critics who became interested in post-colonial fiction via their work on post-modernism, that post-colonial literatures are a branch of the post-modern plurality on the ground that the dismemberments and disruptions they portray, the sense of living in a spiritual and psychological void, are of a similar nature and have generated similar narrative techniques. I have expressed elsewhere my disagreement with this view.¹⁹ Post-Modernism is an essentially Western phenomenon even if it shares with Post-Colonialism a sense of disorientation and loss, a post-Second World War feature in Western societies but experienced with greater intensity in the Caribbean from the beginning of its colonization and throughout its history. Post-Modernism and Post-Colonialism share some formal and stylistic characteristics. However, the major distinction between Post-Modernist and Post-Colonial fiction, especially Caribbean, is that the collapse of former certainties, the dissolution of forms and the new strategies this entailed in the Post-Modern novel originated in scepticism and a loss of values. Caribbean fiction from the 1950s and 1960s onwards, however, has generally been essentialist and evinces a constant search for, and re-definitions of, values: from the experience of alienation, fragmentation and void to an assertion of purposefulness and potentiality. As a Caribbean playwright said, 'We are not post-anything but a new people.'²⁰

It has also been argued that the writers I have mentioned were influenced by magical realism. Lawrence Scott has acknowledged the influence of Garcia Marquez when he was writing *Witchbroom* and the most characteristic features of this mode in the novel are Lavren's hermaphroditism and, in one version of Marie-Elena's death, her assumption when she dies on 15 August. Harris has been more ambivalent about such classification, occasionally assenting to it but also, in spite of his admiration for Alejo Carpentier, rejecting the label. I tend to agree with the latter view. For, if magical realism is indeed 'the amalgam of realism and fantasy in a single literary mode',²¹ there is in his fiction neither realism, which he repeatedly criticizes in his essays, nor fantasy. His imaginative and stylistic rendering of South American life is inspired, rather, by his metaphysical cross-culturalism, which also extends to the natural world and the cosmos. As Jean-Pierre Durix pointed out, 'Wilson Harris has conflated the novel, poetry and philosophy into one "macro-genre".'²²

On the other hand, there is no doubt that Robert Antoni's *Divina Trace* is an unusual and remarkable creation of magical realism, although the influence of James Joyce, William Faulkner and Jorge Luis Borges have also been mentioned. It is mostly written in Creole, which is also the case in *Night Calypso*, but in a much more sober language and in what appears (to a European reader at least) as an authentic recreation of Anglophone creolity, which Gordon Collier, in the case of Lawrence Scott, calls 'an essence of the Creole.'²³ Compared to this, the language of *Divina Trace* is extravagant and, as Gordon Collier wrote about Creole, 'endlessly fascinating and endlessly frustrating and paradoxical.'²⁴ The novel has been criticized for failing to deliver 'a coherent rounded text' and for destabilizing 'our sense of the distinction between what is and what is not real',²⁵ although this, I think, is precisely a major intention in the novel. Yet without enjoying the novel for what a European reader might see as pure exoticism – a danger Derek Walcott draws attention to in his Nobel lecture concerning the Caribbean²⁶ – one cannot help admiring the sheer resourcefulness and vitality of the oral tradition, over-exploited as it may seem to the Caribbean critic. Without claiming to understand all its subtleties, I, for one, recognized recurring words and linguistic patterns and did not find it too difficult to follow. Here is just a short example of the African servant's voice addressing Johnny:

YES DOODOO, now de burden of dis curse must fall pon you. Because old Evelina not here to push she foot but few more step long de road again. And you

is de firstborn Domingo manchild, beget by de first Domingo manchild, beget by dis wajank-diab who is Satan self, who defile Papa God own sweet saint of heaven to beget dis diab-crapochild and bring down he curse pon you, pon all Domingos, pon dis whole island Corpus Christi, pon all de earth. (p. 69)

The novel juxtaposes two time schemes: on the island of Corpus Christi (a disguised Trinidad), Dr Johnny Domingo on the eve of his 90th birthday sits in his office through the night facing the black sea and listening to the voices of the past rising into his consciousness. In a much-quoted passage reminiscent of Harris's perception of imagination, he describes the process in which he is involved:

Slowly, very carefully, I reached and touched my index finger to the pointed tip of my imagination. I felt it. I touched the tip of that white wing. The farthest extremity of my deepest, most sacred self, and I sat back calmly... telling myself once more. *It is only a dream. A dream... my dream was real... more real than reality itself.* (p. 69)

The central substance of the narrative is the different perceptions by the seven voices Johnny hears of Magdalena, actually Trinidad's Black Virgin, *La Divina Pastora*,²⁷ and her child. She is variously seen as virgin, saint, whore or as a mythological persona still living with her biological father and lover, also the father of her child.²⁸ This child, also enigmatic, is both dead and alive, perceived by some as a 'frogchild' (p. 76), a satanical 'crapochild' (p. 72), by others, more rationally, as an 'anencephalic' newborn (p. 98).²⁹ As the least partial narrator says, 'there are certain things in this world which defy explanation. Explanations, that is, in the terms which we recognize: the explicit terms of science and logic' (p. 42). In the 'all-embracing, all-comprehending expansiveness of she great love' (p. 347), Magdalena recalls the Arawak Virgin in *Palace of the Peacock*, but she is also the Hindu Goddess Kali (p. 349).³⁰ Indeed her own version of her story is inspired by the *Ramayana*, while the middle chapter of the narrative is told by Hanuman, the Monkey God or 'monkeyscribe', whose language most critics recognize as modelled on that of *Finnegans Wake*. Since, as has been pointed out, the novel is also a quest for Caribbean and even humanity's origins,³¹ one can compare it, in spite of its parodic vein, to Harris's ontological perception of man and the universe, of mankind's existence 'across ages',³² and of his perception of a language 'beyond human discourse'.³³

The different versions and voices that speak through Johnny are so many partial views of a truth that remains forever out of reach. Succeeding one another, they also constitute a kind of 'infinite rehearsal', a Harrisian concept implying repetition with a difference,³⁴ although in Harris's case it is an existential metaphysical enquiry as well as an unfinished quest for the origins of art and creation. The 'stories' in *Night Calypso* are also a kind of rehearsal, as in the 'repeated journeys' of the Black American GI into the Slavery past of the American South. Above all, the doctor thinks, 'There's the repeated journey to be made. That's what I realise now. Over and over, till something breaks it. Till [Theo] decides, or it's decided for him to disrupt it' (p. 387). However, unlike the doctor himself and the nurse who have been going over their past (pp. 402, 404), and also unlike the metamorphosis of the caterpillar he watches turning into a chrysalis (p. 394), Theo will never be free of what he himself and his ancestors went through.

Commenting on the different versions of the protagonist's death in *Palace of the Peacock*, Wilson Harris writes:

Each text illumines in various ways its partiality so that it may become a strand in a tapestry of unsuspected connections and linkages within a cross-cultural tradition ... each imagistic text ... creatively undermines itself into a threshold ... into a wholeness which ceaselessly remains beyond seizure or capture or structure.³⁵

In *The Dark Jester*, his 22nd and penultimate novel, and also a dream, Harris reverts to the conquest of the Americas and recreates the encounter between Pizarro and the last legitimate Inca, Atahualpa. A major strand in this novel is the contrast he draws between 'Cartesian form' and 'Atahualpan form', proceeding through intuition as one penetrates into a dimension in which all boundaries between categories of being and between the senses dissolve, although the move towards reconciliation in the narrative and the attempt to revise the doom of history represent a striking cross-culturalism between so-called 'pagan' and 'civilized' cultures. Since *Palace of the Peacock*, considered disorientating when it first appeared but, with the passing of time, as fairly simple, Harris's language has evolved considerably, and there is a sense in which the imagery in some of his fictional creations could be compared to a development from figurative to abstract painting. It often presents a harmony into a seamless whole, 'the music of the elements,'³⁶ man's connection with his environment, as well as his historical and social experience. Above all, Harris believes in the convertible power of language, its potential capacity to convert reality. Here is a brief example of the language of the dreaming narrator in *The Dark Jester*:

I knew Pizarro's hubris. And then I felt the tears, the bitter tears, falling from my eyes, if not from his. Did the whip of prayer strike through stone to dreaming blood, did it speak of divisions (pre-Conquest and post-Conquest) affecting retainers – let us call them nobles and retainers – of apparently lost causes *seen now* ... in their wholly unseen, misunderstood tragic domain around the globe? Did such divisions – spoken to in the language of dreaming, healed blood – translate the Wood of the heart into an instinct for true originality, Imagination's paradoxical originality? It was so peculiar and forbidding – despite everything I had heard and learnt – to contemplate a heart of Shadow, that one needed to translate, that it left me utterly forlorn. Yet my lips were less frozen than they had been, the stone was awakening in the Sky of Dream. I needed to penetrate ... more deeply than ever the diverse arts of the jester. So it seemed to me now as I penetrated the melting arts, melted by neglected history, of pre-Columbian sculptures in their strangeness and Dream array within me. Did they belong to the gods of art who sought many natures, visible and invisible? (pp. 15-16)

Another major aspect of cross-culturalism is the imaginative recreation of myth in the novels discussed and in their re-vision of history. For Harris myths are cultural variations of an archetypal cross-cultural source. In several of his essays he underlines the distinction between 'the mimicry of fact and the originality of myth.'³⁷ In both *Witchbroom* and *Divina Trace* myth fleshes out in the Characters' lives the origins of Trinidad and its connections with the South American continent, especially Venezuela. And, as we saw in *Divina Trace*, the Black Virgin, her 'frogchild' and the Monkey God, Hanuman are mythological figures. In Harris's work myth is a major feature from his early poetry onwards through all his novels. Significantly, however, Harris transforms the original meaning of Western myths. For example, in *Palace of the Peacock*, the protagonist's expedition towards El Dorado parallels Ulysses' journey home, but contrary to Ulysses, with Harris the homecoming generates a vision of reconciliation

which subverts the urge to vengeance and punishment that animated Homer's hero. This revised myth blends with the Carib myth of the bone-flute. The Carib Indians used to fashion this instrument out of their cannibalized Spanish enemies in order to acquire their strength. They also saw in the flute the very origins of music. The bone-flute metaphor suggests the encounter between inimical cultures but is cross-cultural and can stimulate creativity since destruction (cannibalism) generates creation (music) and the two merge in the instrument. In *The Carnival Trilogy*³⁸ metamorphosed Homeric characters also realize the need to breach 'their unthinking acceptance of epic formula' (p. 393). In *Carnival*, subtitled 'A Divine Comedy of Existence,' Harris questions the move towards eternity in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, though he deeply admires it. But, in his eyes, the conception of eternity is a dangerous absolute, 'an extinction of birth and death in creative terms', and '*the very genius of love* [*The love that moves the sun and the other stars*³⁹] lies in creative forces that ... make fissures in eternity.'⁴⁰ In *The Infinite Rehearsal* it is the myth of Goethe's *Faust* that is metamorphosed. In the Postscript to this novel, subtitled 'Remember me' (p. 255), the narrator, echoing Hamlet's father's appeal, calls for another hand to take up the narrative of human history. Harris's own fictional canvas is, as he repeatedly wrote, 'an unfinished genesis', so is the human creativity which, in spite of his warnings against violent destructions, he trusts optimistically.

References and notes

1. R. Antoni (1992) *Divina Trace* (New York: The Overlook Press): 368. Further references are given in the text.
2. W. Harris (1992) The fabric of the imagination in: A. Rutherford (Ed) *From Commonwealth to Post-Colonial* (Sydney/Mundelstrup: Dangaroo Press): 18-29, 27.
3. W. Harris (1967) *Tradition the Writer and Society. Critical Essays* (London/Port of Spain: New Beacon Press); W. Harris (1970) *History, Fable and Myth in the Caribbean and Guianas* (Georgetown, Guyana: Ministry of Information and Culture); W. Harris (1983) *The Womb of Space. The Cross-Cultural Imagination* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press); W. Harris (1992) *The Radical Imagination. Lectures and Talks*, edited by A. Riach and M. Williams (Liège: L3, Liège Language Literature); W. Harris (1999) *The Unfinished Genesis of the Imagination. Selected Essays of Wilson Harris*, edited by A. Bundy (London: Routledge).
4. See *Tradition, the Writer and Society*: 29. Harris made this point 26 years before Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993).
5. *The Womb of Space*: xix.
6. (1989) Comedy and modern allegory: a personal view, in: *A Shaping of Connections. Commonwealth Literature Studies – Then and Now*, edited by H. Maes-Jelinek, K. Holst Petersen and A. Rutherford (Sydney/Mundelstrup: Dangaroo Press): 127-140; 137.
7. Comedy and modern allegory: 128.
8. W. Harris (1996) *Jonestown* (London: Faber and Faber): 5.
9. The fabric of the imagination: 18.
10. (1960) *Palace of the Peacock* (London: Faber and Faber).
11. See W. Harris, Judgement and dream, in *The Radical Imagination*: 17.
12. W. Shakespeare (1954) *The Tempest*, edited by Frank Kermode (London: Methuen), I,ii: 365-367.
13. G. Lamming (1960) *The Pleasures of Exile* (London: Michael Joseph): 109.
14. W. Harris (1965) *The Eye of the Scarecrow* (London: Faber and Faber): 32.
15. L. Scott (1992) *Witchbroom* (Oxford: Heinemann): 198. Further references are given in the text.
16. K. Dawes, A genuine Caribbean text. A review of Lawrence Scott's *Witchbroom*, *Journal of Caribbean Literatures*, 1,1:121.

17. L. Scott (2004) *Night Calypso* (London: Allison & Busby). Further references are given in the text.
18. On Harris and Scott, see K. Dawes, A genuine Caribbean text: 121. On Antoni, see E. D. Smith (2000) Johnny Domingo's epic nightmare of history, *Ariel*, 31(4): 103-115; 104. W. Harris strongly objects to Post-Modernism which he equates with nihilism. See, for example, *The Radical Imagination*: 58.
19. H. Maes-Jelinek (1997) Post-modernism and its others: cross-cultural counterpoints in British fiction, *Anglistik*, 8 (Marz), Heft 1: 61-73.
20. R. Gibbons (1998) Room to pass: carnival and Caribbean aesthetics, in: R. Borgmeier, H. Grabes and A. H. Jucker (Eds) *Anglistentag 1997* (Giessen & Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag): 117, 123.
21. A. Flores (1955) Magical realism in Spanish American fiction, *Hispania*, XXXVIII (May): 2. Quoted by J. Delbaere-Garant (1987) Le Domaine Anglais, in: J. Weisgerber (Ed) *Le Réalisme Magique* (Bruxelles: L'Age d'Homme): 154-179; 156.
22. J.-P. Durix (1998) *Mimesis, Genres and Post-Colonial Discourse. Deconstructing Magic Realism* (London: McMillan): 12.
23. See his excellent essay (1993) Two aspects of Creole in literary expression, in: *A Pepper-Pot of Cultures. Aspects of Creolization in the Caribbean* (Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi): xxxvii-1. See also in the same volume B. Ledent, Creolization in Robert Antoni's *Blessed is the Fruit*: a linguistic analysis: 433-441.
24. Two aspects of Creole in literary expression: xlvi.
25. R. Cobham (1998) Of boloms, mirrors and monkeymen. What is real and what's not in Robert Antoni's *Divina Trace*, in: G. Collier, D. Riemenschneider and F. Schulze-Engler (Eds) *Postcolonial Theory and the Emergence of a Global Society* (Frankfurt-am-Main: ACOLIT Special Issue No. 3): 102-136; 121, 123.
26. D. Walcott (1993) *The Antilles. Fragments of Epic Memory* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux).
27. She also appears in Lawrence Scott's fiction.
28. For more detailed presentations of the narrative with its train of incest, rape and violent history, see J. C. Hawley (1993) Robert Antoni's *Divina Trace*, *Ariel* 24(1): 91-104; E. D. Smith (2000) Johnny Domingo's nightmare of history, *Ariel*, 31(4); and Raphael Dalleo, Robert Antoni's *Divina Trace*, *Ariel* 32(4): 21-45.
29. As with Lavren in *Witchbroom*, 'it is as if a demon navigates within the imageries of the text'. W. Harris (1989) Validation of fiction: a personal view of imaginative truth, in: M. Butcher (Ed) *Tibisiri. Caribbean Writers and critics* (Sydney/Mundelstrup: Dangaroo Press): 45.
30. See also The Hindus processed as fervent devotees of La Divina Pastora, *Night Calypso*: 203. V. S. Naipaul satirized this religious syncretism in an early novel, *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958).
31. See E. D. Smith: 113.
32. W. Harris (2001) *The Dark Jester* (London: Faber and Faber): vii. Further references are given in the text.
33. See, among others (1996) Profiles of myth and the new world, in: W. Zach/K. L. Goodwin (Eds) *Nationalism vs Internationalism. (International Dimensions of Literature in English)*, (Tubingen/Stauffenburg Verlag): 77-86.
34. Note, however, that all Harris's essays were written *after* the realization of their substance in fiction.
35. *The Radical Imagination*: 20. See also his novel *The Infinite Rehearsal* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987).
36. W. Harris (1988) Note on the genesis of *The Guyana Quartet*, in *Palace of the Peacock* (1960) (London: Faber and Faber): 7.
37. W. Harris (2001) Some aspects of myth and the intuitive imagination, in: H. Maes-Jelinek (Ed) *Explorations. A Selection of Talks and Articles 1966-1981* (Mundelstrup: Dangaroo Press): 97-106; 100.
38. W. Harris (1993) *The Carnival Trilogy* (London: Faber and Faber). It contains *Carnival* (1985), *The Infinite Rehearsal* (1987) and *The Four Banks of the River of Space* 1990). Further references are given in the text.
39. See the ending of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.
40. W. Harris (1983) The quest for form, *Kunapipi* V.1: 21-27; 22.

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