

Schizophrenic seas and the Caribbean trans-nation

Los mares esquizofrénicos y la transnación caribeña

Os mares esquizofrênicos e a transnação caribenha

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Abstract

Two concepts which appear titularly, orient this paper – “Schizophrenic Seas” and the “Trans-Nation.” “The Schizophrenic Sea” is Wilson Harris’s term which appears in his classic collection of essays, *The Womb of Space*. The “trans-nation” is Bill Aschroft’s attempt to revise the over-reaching framing of the post-colonial. For this paper, I propose to bring these two concepts together, as constitutive of each other. They move in different directions, but allow for a series of returns to unsettled boundaries, redefined sea-scapes and land-scapes definitely given the nature of island instability and the effects of environmental turns, creating a Caribbean-trans nation that also in my reading redefines Caribbean space.

Keywords: tidalectics; middle passage; Guiana; identity; deterritorialization; diaspora.

Resumen

Dos conceptos presentes en el título orientan este escrito: “mares esquizofrénicos” y “transnación”. El primer término es de Wilson Harris y aparece en su clásica colección de ensayos *The Womb of Space*. “Transnación” es un intento de Bill Ashcroft por discutir el excesivo alcance de lo poscolonial. En este artículo propongo reunir estos conceptos como mutuamente constitutivos. Si bien se mueven en direcciones diferentes, permiten una serie de regresos a fronteras inestables, paisajes marítimos y terrestres redefinidos dada la naturaleza de la inestabilidad insular y los efectos del cambio ambiental, creando una transnación caribeña que también, de acuerdo a mi lectura, redefine el espacio del Caribe.

Palabras clave: marealéctica; paso medio; Guyana; identidad; desterritorialización; diáspora.

Resumo

Dois conceitos que aparecem com o título orientam este trabalho - “Mares Esquizofrênicos” e “Transnação”. O primeiro é um termo de Wilson Harris que aparece em sua clássica coleção de ensaios *The Womb of Space*. A “transnação” é a tentativa de Bill Aschroft de revisar o enquadramento exagerado do pós-colonial. Para este trabalho, proponho trazer esses dois conceitos juntos, como constitutivos um do outro. Eles se movem em direções diferentes, mas permitem uma série de retornos a fronteiras instáveis, paisagens marítimas e terrestres redefinidas dada a natureza da instabilidade insular e os efeitos da mudança ambiental, criando uma transnação caribenha que também de acordo com minha leitura redefine o espaço do Caribe.

Palavras-chave: mareléctica; passo médio; Guiana; identidade; desterritorialização; diáspora.

...but the ocean kept turning blank pages
 looking for History
 Derek Walcott, "The Sea is History"

Two concepts which appear titularly, orient this paper¹ – “Schizophrenic Seas” and the “Trans-Nation”. “The Schizophrenic Sea” is Wilson Harris’s term which appears in his classic collection of essays, *The Womb of Space* (1983)². The “trans-nation” is Bill Aschroft’s attempt to revise the over-reaching framing of the post-colonial.

Harris, characteristic of his narrative style, does not provide a definition of the “schizophrenic sea,” nor does he dwell on what it means; rather he creates a series of suggestive frameworks for its future usage within his larger context of the cross-cultural imagination and the bridging of the Americas. When the wording of the “schizophrenic high seas” does appear it is in reference to *Pym* by Edgar Allan Poe to make his point about the setting of the seas as a place of reconstituting identities, sometimes dangerously. This allows us to read other transoceanic journeys, such as middle passages that is, within the context of schizophrenic high seas that reconstituted African identities in the New World. For this paper, I propose to bring these two concepts together, as constitutive of each other. Schizophrenic seas, larger than the Atlantic conceptually, allows us to incorporate the meaning of passages through Caribbean Seas and other “bodies of water”³ which also reconstitute identities. It is significant that “Guiana” where Harris is from means “land of waters” in indigenous languages⁴.

This is how the surveyor who was Harris in his initial career would have understood a Guiana which provided him with the language of the aquatic metaphors he would later use.

Viewed from outer space, the region called the Guianas is a gatherer of vast river systems in an area comparable in size to Western Europe. Guiana is an Amerindian word meaning “land of many waters”: interior rivers, coastal rivers, tributaries and the unexpected straight lines of coastal irrigation. Complex water systems originate in the steep, flat-topped mountains of the interior, descend through ferocious drops (cataracts, waterfalls) into savannah before sloping gracefully to a coastal belt with the Atlantic. (Bundy, 1999, p. 18)

1 This paper was initially presented at the 2013 Callaloo Conference “The Trans-Atlantic, the Diaspora, and Africa,” Oxford University, November 27-30, 2013

2 Wilson Harris novelist and theorist from Guyana (1921-2018) died in London in March, 2018.

3 While Michelle Cliff titles her collection of essays *Bodies of Water* (1990), her essay titled the same is not set in the Caribbean.

4 See wonderful introduction by editor A.J.M. Bundy (1999) to *Selected Essays of Wilson Harris The unfinished Genesis of the Imagination*; especially his section “Guyana: geomythos and theatre of memory” (p.17- 29).

One important distinction is perhaps relevant here: While Derek Walcott had earlier used the languaging of the schizoid,⁵ his framing was the schizophrenic colonized “West Indian”⁶ allied with discourses of hybridity and *mezizaje* or *mullatto*ness, more attune therefore with pathologies of blackness or complications of identities, dualities of racial combinations, but also of cultural belongings and articulations in more than one sphere. This is how Walcott describes this condition:

In that simple schizophrenic boyhood one could lead two lives: the interior life of poetry, the outward life of action and dialect. Yet the writers of my generation were natural assimilators. We knew the literature of Empires, Greek, Roman, British, through their essential classics; and both the patois of the street and the language of the classroom hid the elation of discovery. (Walcott, 1970, p. 4)

But that was 1970’s Walcott, full of contradiction, and capturing the absurdity of colonized “nervous conditions.” Thus, later in the same text, he clarifies further: “The West Indian mind historically hung-over, exhausted, prefers to take its revenge in nostalgia, to narrow its eyelids in a schizophrenic daydream of an Eden that existed before its exile” (1970, p. 20).

His subsequent articulation of the temporal/spatial Caribbean, as in “The Sea is History” used epigraphically above, takes him closer to Harris’s usage of the term in terms of the geography of the sea as a conduit and repository for Caribbean histories. The schizophrenia is transferred to nature in this context, particularly the sea with its contradictory movements. Like Benitez-Rojo’s *historico-economic sea* articulated much later, Walcott’s offers a socio-historical sea. Benitez-Rojo (1997), we know, was concerned with the geography of the Caribbean which lends itself to repetitions with an additional focus on the “peoples of the sea” and their cultural and social reproductions by way of performance and rhythm, the two concepts that orient for him consistently.

Schizophrenic seas, as framed by Harris, captures the nature of the Atlantic and the Caribbean intersections as places of multiple currents and movements from hurricane trade winds to middle passage epistemologies and expresses therefore the motions of the oceans as some would define them and the ways that those movements and journeys have an impact on how the transnational is identified.

So, if we attempt a definition of the Caribbean trans-nation we are clear that it owes its construction to the Caribbean Seas as much as it does to the Atlantic as originary point. Harris is useful again conceptually to think through the Caribbean trans-nation as in the same articulation he describes a pre-Columbian bridge of myth that runs through the Americas and provides in his words,

5 See Derek Walcott’s “What the Twilight Says” (1970).

6 I make a usage differentiation in all my work, using “West Indian” in quotes for the colonized Anglophone Caribbean.

an unconscious synchronicity in the womb of cultural space. Thereby Harris's connection with American literatures and cultures. Thus in this reasoning, the Caribbean trans-nation also moves through the Americas.

Bill Ashcroft provides one of the definitions of the transnation as follows:

If we think of the 'transnation' extending beyond the geographical, political, administrative and even imaginative boundaries of the state, both within and beyond the boundaries of the nation, we discover it as a space in which those boundaries are disrupted, in which national and cultural affiliations are superseded, in which binaries of centre and periphery, national self and other are dissolved. (2010, p. 73)⁷

Having initially critiqued the definition of the post-colonial in *The Empire Writes Back*⁸ as too overarching, I find his "transnation" a more usable category which allows him/us to move beyond the "post-colony" –Achille Mbembe's wording (2001). While he still uses a limited definition of diaspora as defined by "absence and loss," he wants to suggest that

[it] pivots on a critique of the nation, and a utopian projection beyond the tyranny of national identity. [The trans-nation, unlike the post-colony] nevertheless acknowledges that people live in nations and when they move, move within and beyond nations, sometimes without privilege and without hope. (Ashcroft, 2009, p. 13)

He goes to say that the "transnation is not just diaspora, but the outside of the state that begins within the nation –the potential for all subjects to live beyond the metaphoric boundaries of the nation state" (2009, p. 17). While the 'trans-nation' still turns on the logic of nation, as the "post-colonial" incorporates the "colonial", it is an improved category for me largely because it works laterally via the prefix trans as opposed to "post ness" or "after ness".

We can define a Caribbean transnation here for though it is similarly a utopian category, it yet assumes the "Caribbean nation," though constantly deferred politically, but which Caribbean people live nonetheless, particularly in culture. Here Benitez-Rojo's "cultural sea without boundaries" (1997, p. 314) provides some of that language. The Caribbean trans-nation can also be seen as a more contemporary version of the "Caribbean nation" which the pre-independence nationalists had imagined as a way of integrating the Caribbean. But it is simultaneously a larger concept, capacious enough to incorporate the Caribbean diaspora.

An earlier conceptualizing of Caribbean transnationalism in the Social Science literature provides an additional contour as we shape a definition of the

7 See also Ashcroft, 2009.

8 Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin (2002). My critique appears in Boyce-Davies, 1994; in Chapter 4, "From Post-Coloniality to Uprising Textualities" p. 80- 112. See especially section titled "On Posting and Postpoining: Post-Coloniality or the Re-Male-ing of Current Discourses."

Caribbean transnation. Goulbourne's (2002) argument was that transnationalism has to be unpacked to identify a 'popular transnationalism' which involves groups of ordinary people who engage in transnational experiences ushered in by migration as they create and maintain links across nation-states. Economic transnationalism has undermined the sovereignty of nation-states as economic activities, banking, markets and their related structures demand a set of actions which may be in direct conflict with or enhance local interests. At the political level, developments necessitating "regional integration" produce unions like CARICOM, which sometimes transcend but can also advance individual nation-state decisions. They demand a set of actions and activities such as freedom of movement, across nation-state borders (Goulbourne, 2002, p. 6-7).

So we arrive at a Caribbean trans-nation – an economic and popular (let us say social and cultural) discursive category but also an assemblage of people, the products of arrival from a variety of other world locations, seasoned in the Caribbean but now occupying places inside and outside of official Caribbean nation-state boundaries.

My deliberate return to Wilson Harris to talk about the Caribbean trans-nation can be made explicit for a few reasons. The most obvious of these is geography – "Guiana: land of waters". But it is intellectual as well because, conceptually, the theorizing of the post-colonial tended to take the place of the intellectual arguments and contributions of theorists like Harris who were studying the Caribbean experience in global context, for what it offers. So while defining a post-colonial it seems was a necessary step to talk about what happened in the wake of coloniality, for scholars like Wynter, the debates between Caribbean indigeniety and creolity got relocated to another framing which privileged European theoretical meanings, especially those arising out of the plantation. A kind of interrupted decolonial debate which Latin American scholars of the coloniality of power like Kelvin Santiago, Annibal Quijano, Walter Mignolo, and Junot Diaz⁹ have since popularized.

Thirdly, given the heavy association of Paul Gilroy (1993) with the theorizing of the "Black Atlantic", I found it useful to begin with perhaps his most fundamental omission, the mother text as I have called it. In an earlier essay on his *Against Race* subtitled "or the Politics of Self Ethnography", I felt it critical, to reference the evacuated mother text – Beryl Gilroy – not so much the person as with the symbolic absence of the meaning of her entire history. Born in Guyana, like Wilson Harris and an inheritor of both the Amerindian and African legacies, hers was a life of rich engagement with what that meant but with how it was translated in diaspora. Thus, in an earlier essay specifically on this erasure of the mother text I wrote:

9 See for example the initial discussions of this from a conference organized by Kelvin Santiago and the Coloniality Working Group, Binghamton University some of which was published in *Centennial Review* edited by Greg Thomas (Boyce-Davies & Jardine, 2003); and more recently Mignolo and Escobar, 2013; and Mignolo, 2007.

The absent mother is telling in this case as for most black British intellectuals, one has to locate Beryl Gilroy within a generation of Caribbean creative thinkers who worked out of the London space from the 1950's onwards but who also engaged or came from Guyana (Salkey, Wynter, Carew, the Huntleys of Bogle L'ouverture publications, Walter Rodney, John La Rose, the New Beacon Books, Claudia Jones, Ricky Cambridge and subsequent generations). The erasure of Beryl Gilroy then is a simultaneous erasure or ignorance of the entire spectrum of Afro-Caribbean scholarship and creativity and activism. (Boyce-Davies, 2002)

So thereby my deliberate reclaiming of the Wilson Harris Caribbean text as one which began a process of "remapping the Black Atlantic" to include, not exclude the Caribbean. Additionally, Wilson Harris was/is one of the early theorists of the Caribbean, a scholar and writer, born in Guyana, the South American/Caribbean country which is also a place in which myth and history of African and indigenous peoples collide, collaborate or conflict with European derived mythologies, but also where the Caribbean trans-nation moves from the islands to the South American component of the continent deliberately. Harris instead wanted alternative readings of events, an asymmetry that was not just framed as the more symmetrical North America and Europe but one which accounts for the asymmetry which is brought forward once Latin America and the Caribbean are placed in the analytical framework.

Harris talks as well of masquerading features where the bridge arches into the Caribbean and moves into South America. Like Toni Morrison in *Playing in the Dark*, he sees, and is well versed in, a series of underlying New World mythic structures in American literatures (broadly defined for these purposes) which have to be excavated and to which meaning has to be attached. The meaning of new world mythologies, especially as provided by indigenous peoples is what he calls Carnival twinships:

Carnival ambiguities and ambivalences arise within the arts, which require an unraveling of perspectives and of blocked dialogues between cultures, so that the mystery of freedom may be born and re-born and born again and again within terrifying closure or circumstance that threatens to consume all. (Bundy, 1999, p. 126)

Harris wants above all a "cross-cultural carnival" to operate for us imaginatively, without premature closure. Thus there are four features which seem to mark his initial inquiry – the schizophrenic sea, the idea of Caribbean/American space, the cross-cultural carnival, and the grounding in indigenous mythologies.

To provide a more contemporaneous reading of Guyana as that liminal place between the Caribbean and Latin America as is Brazil, is a recent return to

Guyana as a source of myth and race in the Americas is Shona Jackson's (2012) *Creole Indigeneity. Between Myth and Nation in the Caribbean* which claims to advance Sylvia Wynter's call for a reconfigured framework for understanding how contemporary structures of humanity render us in an always-already interpellated set of identitarian positions. To do this, Jackson examines how Africans and Indians established their belonging in the Caribbean landscape within structures already created by aboriginal mythologies. Thus "metaphysical belonging" for her which she brackets as indigeneity and creole/postcolonial nationality become intertwined. On the one hand then is the displacement of native peoples' which led to the drawing of a colonial map; which then set the stage for the creation of new nationalities. For her, both of these exist in a relationship which defines Caribbean modernity. The intertwining/liminality of indigeneity and creolization then is where she places her own emphasis.

One has in this process the contemporary re-mythologizing of the Caribbean using an older framework. Going back to Wynter and the debates between indigeneity and creolization which appear in her 1972 articles on this subject,¹⁰ allows us to rework and update an unfinished argument on these two theoretical possibilities. Limiting analyses to Guyana, the same space out of which Wilson Harris theorized, we can assert that Guyana's location in South America, because it borders both Latin American and Francophone Caribbean, and is one of the Caribbean locations where Amerindians still have an active presence makes it a rich site for political and intellectual work as we witness with Walter Rodney in political and historical analyses and Wilson Harris in literature/literary theorizing.

While there is a sprinkling of references to the Caribbean and a mention of C.L.R James, from time to time, what disappears from Gilroy's framing is precisely the Caribbean, Central and South America. Paul Gilroy is obviously aware of this as in his introduction he says: "There are also many obvious omissions. I have said virtually nothing about the lives, theories, and political activities of Franz Fanon and C.L.R. James, the two best known black Atlantic thinkers" (Gilroy, 1993, p. xi).¹¹

The analytical tendency to privilege the Atlantic, or rather the Angl-European Atlantic, indeed the North American branch of the African diaspora has allowed African scholars like Gikandi, Zeleza, Echeruo to mount a solid responses to this formation of modernity and the erasure of Africa from this Black Atlantic.¹² Femi Taiwo (2009) has a wonderful piece which describes

10 See Boyce Davies (2015), which discusses these early essays.

11 Natasha Barnes, most in her short but pithy review (1996) of Gilroy's *Black Atlantic*.

While Gilroy has to be credited with at least putting "Atlantic" back into the academic lexicon, and perhaps leaving even space with his various omissions for a whole generation of scholarship to take place, if we move outside of the Gilroy owning of the concept, there has been quite a vigorous set of studies before and after Gilroy on the nature of "black atlantic" histories, economies, cultures. What has troubled many though is the obvious disappearances of so much in a framework which was meant to account for this larger unit of study, and an assumption that the Atlantic was only the North Atlantic and modernity gets realized.

12 Paul Zeleza, 2005, is a good representative text in this area.

how the idea of modernity got detached from Africa and reattached solely to Europe. “Africa and her Challenge to Modernity” (text of UWI lecture available from author) which argues that the relations between Africa and modernity have been rocky because of the impact of colonialism. And work like Francois Verges’s (2003) “Writing on Water: Peripheries, Flows, Capital, and Struggles in the Indian Ocean” describes well the ways that the Indian Ocean also figures in transnational discourses with additional echoes of schizophrenic seas.

Another useful perspective is Benitez-Rojo’s assertion that the Caribbean gave birth to the Atlantic discourse, from a kind of graphic raping by Europe which led to the Western capitalist accumulation that fueled the Industrial Revolution (1997, p. 5):

In short, how do we establish that the Caribbean is an important historico-economic sea and, further, a cultural meta-archipelago without center and without limits, a chaos within which there is an island that proliferates endlessly, each copy a different one... (Benitez-Rojo, 1997, p. 9)

The Caribbean trans-nation and the deterritorialization of space

and then each rock broke into its own nation
Derek Walcott, “The Sea is History”

All of the major Caribbean theorists have privileged oceans and seas, without limiting the aquatic metaphors to the singular theoretical Atlanticist anchoring that it became recently. Walcott’s “The Sea is History,” is one of those theoretic/creative assertions, bringing together the movement of the troublesome seas with Caribbean history: “Then came the men with eyes heavy as anchors/who sank without tombs...” “Each rock broke into its own nation” is a succinct capturing of the post-independence Caribbean and the fragmentation into island nation states which remains or the repetition which Benitez-Rojo visualizes into the meta-archipelago:

The Caribbean is the natural and indispensable realm of marine currents, of waves, of folds and double-folds, of fluidity and sinuosity. It is, in the final analysis, a culture of the meta-archipelago: a chaos that returns, a detour without a purpose, a continual flow of paradoxes; it is a feed-back machine with asymmetrical workings, like the sea, the wind, the clouds, the uncanny novel, the food chain... (1997, p. 11)

Glissant had called, the “archipelagization” and deportation of the Africans as a reality, but a precious one (2011, p. 7). And this for him is what gives us “multiplicity.”

[This] multiplicity comes from those somewhat secret, somewhat unknown places that overturn in themselves what’s being created in the world, the world’s passage, and which resonate unbeknownst to those who inhabit the great continental land masses of power and force. (Glissant, 2011, p. 10)

J. Michael Dash (2001) in “*Libre sous la mer – Submarine Identities in the Work of Kamau Brathwaite and Edouard Glissant*” puts the two in conversation in the shaping of an archipelagic discourse even though their approaches vary. That Brathwaite (Mackey, 1991) had theorized that the “unity is submarine” would be picked up again with a difference by Glissant (1997) in his *Poetics of Relation*.

But perhaps Dash was too much bent on constructing Glissant as the meta-theorist and Kamau as the writer, and seemed therefore to present a certain closure of hardened positions for Brathwaite. But he does this without the benefit of *tidalectics* which like the schizophrenic seas is another framework waiting to be fully refigured in thinking through the Caribbean trans-nation, not so much as fragmented archipelagoes but in terms of movement.

According to Elaine Savory,

[...] tidalectics can be expressed (or as Brathwaite would put it, xpressed) as the ways in which ideas flow together and separate like the edges of waves on a coral beach. They weave together, reshape, separate, flow back, and come forward again. This is more accurate as an image of Caribbean intellectual traditions than are such Euro-American oppositional models as dialectics, on which tidalectics is an obvious play. (Savory, 1994, p. 754)

Thus beyond Kamau Brathwaite’s “tidalectics” which defines seas as sites of permanent circulation is Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o allied formulation he calls “Globlectics” which describes his method of reading and thinking globally, approaching any text from whatever time or place, the better to make it yield its maximum to be human. It is to read a text with the eyes of the world, to see the world with the eyes of the text (Thiong’o, 2012, p. 60).

Tidalectics is a discursive category which in Torres-Saillant’s terms “promises to account for the uncanny, for trauma, and stasis, for hope and catastrophe in the archipelago” (2006, p. 241). We see thereby a continuum perhaps with Wilson Harris’s eclipsed selves which move nevertheless beyond fragmentation.

While Benitez-Rojo’s (1997) similarly in *The Repeating Island* describes the movement of the seas as fundamental to defining Caribbean identity, his emphasis on rhythm and performance at times obscures the painfulness of

these movements. From the writerly side, Edwidge Danticat responds with “Children of the Sea” (1995) providing a creative counter voice to the theoretical Benitez-Rojo, capturing the separation, pain, loss and impending doom for those who take on the sea as precarious escape.

Transnationalism and diaspora have become loaded terms, the first initially signifying the movement of capital across nations but now also reflecting a series of movements including culture and a series of socio-economic and political practices; the second capturing both the communities and locations recreated following migration – voluntary, forced, induced as well as the larger imagined community with emotional and historical origins elsewhere.¹³ Global migratory processes have ushered in new identities, as they create parallel histories. These ongoing migrations consistently create new identities as their actors struggle to hold on to older ones.

Migration Studies reveal that none of these flows of people which create diasporas are accidental but are all related to larger forces like enslavement which created the initial transatlantic, transpacific and Indian Ocean traffic and which also created the conditions for Europe and America’s capitalist expansion; colonialism and neo-colonialism and underdevelopment. Immigration legislation, in actuality creates the push and pull of transnational labor and migration flows. But we see as well the intellectual, cultural and political linkages and a basic human desire for movement but also for reconnection.

Lara Putnam *Radical Moves* (2013), for example, documents global migratory processes continued throughout the 20th century to create new identities and parallel histories. These identities – sexual, religious, ethnic, class, gender operate tectonically. Putnam’s definition of a *circum-Caribbean migratory sphere* advances beyond Knight and Palmer’s definition in their regional overview of “The Caribbean” as largely a geographical region and therefore amplifies the larger definition of the Caribbean (Knight & Palmer, 1989; Knight, 2012). What she defines then as the “circum-Caribbean migratory sphere” is the migratory destinations and returns, in and around the Caribbean, island to island, island to continental locations and the residential locations which began to be created in places like Harlem.

The Caribbean trans-nation is also an imagined, politically-advanced community which incorporates the pre independence desire for and claims of a Caribbean nation, and the actual current migrations which have created Caribbean communities – island, continental, and diasporic. Goulbourne’s definition of the transnation as maintained outside of borders, economically and via migrations applies. The Aschroft definition similarly is one “of a space in which those boundaries are disrupted, in which national and cultural affiliations are superseded, in which binaries of centre and periphery, national self and other are dissolved” (2010, p. 73).

13 See my essay with Monica Jardine (Boyce-Davies & Jardine, 2010).

The logic of deterritorialization of space presupposes a different spatiality outside of received geographies and state sovereignties, the latter already disrupted via U.S. imperialism and drug trafficking. Deterritorialization of space has to have an aquatic version that can be applied here if we are talking about seas. For Deleuze and Guattari (2004), deterritorialization refers to moving beyond boundaries to a space where all shapes are shapeless and meanings meaningless... for the benefit of an uniformed matter, of deterritorialized fluxes.

Thus schizophrenic seas and the Caribbean trans-nation, are each constitutive of the other, a set of imagined trans-nationalities that pull *tidalectically*.¹⁴ They move in different directions, but allow for a series of returns to unsettled boundaries, redefined sea-scapes and land-scapes definitely given the nature of island instability and the effects of environmental turns, creating a Caribbean-trans nation that also in my reading redefines Caribbean space.¹⁵

The artists, the writers, the singers already live the Caribbean trans nation, articulated, at the level of imagination but also in Harris's terms via the "unfinished genesis of the imagination" and desire.

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14 See also Torres Saillant, 2001, which ends with a discussion of the Caribbean positionality of tidalectics.

15 This is the argument of my recent book (Boyce-Davies, 2013). The escapes like the underground railroad works in both directions depending on context, history, environment, politics.

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