

“Turned Inside Out”: South Asian Writing in Canada'

MICHAEL THORPE

DESPITE ITS FLATTERING reputation in the Third World, Canada, like any other country where races have mingled, has had its due share of racism.² The indigenous Indian has known this from the beginning. The Chinese whose labour contributed essentially to the making of the transcontinental railway, the National Dream, have little part in Pierre Berton's "epic" accounts: it has been estimated that three thousand Chinese died during the railway construction. In 1907, British Columbians, disturbed by the steady flow of oriental immigrants, founded an Asiatics Exclusion League. In 1914, the Komagata Maru incident dramatized the racially discriminatory laws which turned back "the turbanned tide," some four hundred potential immigrants of East Indian origin. This was quickly overshadowed by the outbreak of the First World War and little remembered until a white Canadian playwright, Sharon Pollock, put on her play at the Vancouver Playhouse in 1976.³ The Immigration Act of 1923 kept Asians out; this was repealed in 1947, in which year those who had long been in British Columbia first got the vote. However, the influx of Asians was effectively stemmed until immigration laws were relaxed in the 1960s. With the outbreak of the Second World War, Japanese-Canadians, many born in the country, were deported to camps, euphemistically called "Interior Housing Projects," in the British Columbian backwoods. Their property was liquidated and restitution put off until 1987. This episode is treated in her novel *Obasan* (1981) by Joy Kogawa, who as a child experienced such discrimination but depicts it with balanced understanding: "We came," writes the narrator, "from Canada, this land that is like every land, filled with the wise, the fearful, the compassionate, the corrupt" (226).

Nevertheless, there is also the necessary voice of the narrator's Aunt Emily, who kept a journal of the harsh 1940s and remains determined to delve for and preserve the truth:

"Life is short," I said sighing, "the past so long. Shouldn't we turn the page and move on?"

"The past is the future," Aunt Emily shot back. (42)

This aptly echoes Pollock's Note to her play, *The Komagata Maru Incident*: "I feel that much of our history has been misrepresented and even hidden from us. Until we recognize our past, we cannot change our future" (n. pag.).

That future is the present of more recent Canadian immigrants, many of whom cannot claim kinship with the two "founding peoples" (so-called) and belong to "visible minorities." In the past, all minorities have suffered more than is generally realized: as Miriam Waddington has recently recorded in her *Apartment Seven* (1989), anti-Jewish prejudice was rife in Toronto of the 1930s, with separate sororities at the University for Jews and Gentiles and the sign "No Jews Allowed" commonplace. In short, the familiar European prejudices have never been miraculously shed in Canada, whatever the hopeful immigrant may expect. Recently, this has been crudely illustrated by the controversial lapel pin (made in Taiwan) popular in Alberta: it shows a turbaned Sikh, an oriental in a coolie hat, and a barefoot black holding a spear surrounding and staring at a cringing white man wearing a business suit. A caption asks, "Who's the minority in Canada?" Canada Customs, admitting the pin, ruled it did not constitute hate propaganda.

The Canadian immigrant writing I shall consider is that by South Asian writers, one of several tributary streams included in the *Canadian Encyclopedia's* "Ethnic" entry (the mainstream being really two parallel streams, English-Canadian and Quebec French, which constitute 75 per cent of the population). Canadian South Asian writing is by immigrants either directly from South Asia or indirectly, by way of the Caribbean to which Indians came as indentured labourers from 1845 on to replace the emancipated blacks. I shall quote from individual works published

since the early 1970s and from *The Toronto South Asian Review*, which, founded in 1982, is both a critical and creative forum.

It is not officially expected of new Canadians, writers or not, that they will assimilate — as in the American “melting pot,” losing or submerging their distant origins, characteristics, identity: *unofficially* that may be expected (“If you don’t like it here . . .”). However, only one non-English dominated “distinct society,” Quebec, is defined in the abortive Meech Lake Accord. For the rest, the prescription is multiculturalism: theoretically, this allows immigrants to retain and practise their ethnic inheritance within the national “mosaic” — a favourite figure for many-in-one. However, our previous metaphor, of the stream, is livelier; thus, George Woodcock has looked forward to a multicultural future characterized by “dynamic harmony” (“Leopard’s” 51) — though M. G. Vassanji, editor of *The Toronto South Asian Review*, wonders in the same issue as that containing Woodcock’s essay whether multiculturalism may be an elaborate political device for inclusion, that is, assimilation (“Editorial” 1-2).⁴ Will the mainstream engulf and absorb the tributaries, or will a new, more richly blended stream emerge? How far shall the immigrant writer trust in that mighty river of the future, or cling, in a transitional time of rejection, prejudice, and uncertainty, to known links with the worlds and cultures left behind? Does an Asian immigrant writer still belong rather to the Third World — is it valuable, not reactionary, that he keep that allegiance alive in Canada?

In the writing I shall survey, there is no uniform response to such questions: motives for emigration, and experiences, vary greatly, as inevitably do these writers’ work and attitudes. The most clear-cut motives for emigration are to escape racism and injustice in one’s native country (the Indians from East Africa or Guyana), political corruption and disorder (India, Pakistan, parts of the Caribbean), and civil war (Sri Lanka). However, probably the most common motive is economic, and immigrants so driven, without large moral expectations, may readily assimilate, while idealists may become quickly disenchanting for, as Kogawa says, Canada is “a land like every land” (226).

For immigrant writers, it may prove impossible to move beyond expatriation. They will write nostalgia or grievance: “If you have

to wonder, if you keep looking for signs, if you wait, surrendering little bits of a reluctant self every year, clutching the souvenirs of an ever-retreating past — you'll never belong, anywhere" (*Darkness* 2). Thus says Bharati Mukherjee, in her introduction to *Darkness*, looking back to her departure from Canada, where she had lived, as a citizen, from 1966 to 1980, for the U.S.A., where she claims "immigration" became at last possible.⁵ In Canada, where she had felt driven to adopt the protective irony of the expatriate who belongs nowhere, she wrote Naipaulese. "It's very difficult in Canada," says M.V., a thin cover for M. G. Vassanji, in Nazneen Sadiq's *Ice Bangles*, "You have to be a Naipaul" (186). This is the Naipaul who writes of loss, without compensatory gain; for such immigrants becoming "other" is impossible; translation elsewhere will not "take" spiritually; they are victims of the "great upheaval . . . the great explorations, the unnatural bringing together of people who could achieve fulfilment only within the security of their own societies and the landscape hymned by their ancestors" (32).

Naipaul has, of course, frequently shown how such fulfilment has been denied — in the "wounded civilization" of India or the corruptions of Caribbean independence. The fiction of his nephew, Neil Bissoondath, who emigrated to Canada from Trinidad at eighteen to study at York University, reflects a Naipaulesque duality. The immigrant flees a Caribbean world of nothingness, fear, and insecurity (a word that he employs as the title of a story in his *Digging Up the Mountains*): ". . . our history doesn't lead anywhere. It's just a big, black hole. Nobody's interested in a book about a hole" (92). This is the observation of a failed historian, who "had seen the British, no longer masters and barely respected, leave the island in a state of independence. And he had seen that euphoric state quickly degenerate into a carnival of radicals and madmen" (70).

However, emigration to Canada solves nothing, engendering displacement, not nirvana:

" . . . you mustn't think you can become Canajun. You have to become West Indian."

"What you mean, become West Indian?"

"I mean, remain West Indian . . ."

She shake her head slow-slow and say, "You still ain't ketch on. Look, Canajuns like to go to the islands for two weeks every year to enjoy the sun and the beach and the calypso. But it's a different thing if we try to bring the calypso here. Then they doesn't want to hear it . . ." (197)

Later in this story, "Dancing," an ugly confrontation develops between partying Trinidadians in an apartment block and a diffident white man who asks them to turn their music down; it's an opportunity to reverse the insults of white racists, indulging the hurt of colonial resentment: "We have every right to be here. They owe us. And we going to collect . . ." In vain, the new immigrant narrator pleads, "I ain't come here to fight" (208).

Bissoondath's first novel, *A Casual Brutality*, has been attacked as a negative Naipaul-esque repudiation of Caribbean origins which panders to white prejudices. As with Naipaul, it is more complex and self-searching. The East Indian protagonist, Raj, measures his people's shortcomings in the fictional Caribbean island of Casaquemada:

The urge to work, to education, to wealth, came couched beside notions of race, of hierarchy, of caste, that would colour more and more over the years our view of ourselves and of those around us. Blacks we wrote off as lazy, Chinese dirty, Moslems malicious, mulattoes impure. We retained an idea of ourselves as racially superior. . . . (313)

Just as the Hindus' crossing the "black water" to become plantation labour has been "less of a choice than they realized at the time" (313), so Raj's further emigration to Canada is faced as "the challenge," similar to the task of his peasant forebears "of turning nothing into something" (378) — a stage in a continuing migration that leads to Raj's admitting: "I am, by birth, a Casaquemadan; by necessity disguised as choice, Canadian" (34). Such bleak honesty is rare, its meaning, as with V. S. Naipaul, unacknowledged by some whose Third World sympathies prevent their seeing beyond Bissoondath's critique of the independent Caribbean. Though choosing Canadian identity, at least conditionally, may be supposed to be easier in a multicultural context, that may create a feeling of expatriation rather than of immigration — and strengthen, because it need not be rejected, valuation

of what has been left behind, feeding a nostalgia that inhibits new commitment. The simplest form is to pile up every exotic memento, such as voodoo and stick-dancing, as in Cyril Dabydeen's ironic story, "The Committee." The response to the question "What is its contribution to Canada?" always seems to be: "It's part of our identity" (58). More seriously, it may lead only to a limbo sense of displacement, belonging to neither world — in a figure often varied in Canada, "Crushed / Between the snow and the sun" (Sugunasiri 55). Many could identify with the Sun-Man persona employed by the poet Rienzi Cruz, from Sri Lanka, in his earliest published work, *Elephant and Ice*. The harsher implications are caught in Dabydeen's phrase, "mudbound in memory," from a poem entitled "New Life."

It is not only nostalgia: the emigrant has dues to pay. Looking back from a distant, albeit flawed, security much writing is concerned with problems left behind, not without guilt: racial and sectarian enmity, caste, dowry marriage, poverty, and feudalism. Rarely does this mean returning with one's overseas perspective, like the Trinidadian heroine of V. Ramsamooj Gosine's "Nobody's Puppet," a schoolteacher with her B.A. in English and History, who leads a courageous struggle against corrupt local politicians to get piped water installed. Realistically she fails; change comes "slow, slow" (225) at best. More characteristic is the distant lament:

old paint defaces the towns
 the villages are decrepit shelters
 where the old dream of yesterday
 and yesterday and of their children
 fled Toronto-London way

(Itwaru 171)

Flight, however, has been described as exile compelled by "economic necessity"; if so, there is also the possibility of ameliorating the lot of those left behind — a sacrifice for survival. In her ironic inversion of Buddha's search for enlightenment, shunning wealth, the Punjabi poet Surjeet Kalsey's Siddhartha seeks "the other salvation" in North America and promises:

I'll come home very soon
 or apply for your immigration

very soon
 so that with your own eyes
 you can touch that holy tree
 under which doing penance
 I've found the path to salvation
 from hunger.

(49)

Yet this may be, despite its irony, too ideal a view: Kalsey herself asserts: "it is not the starving, after all, who emigrate" (49). Irony is, indeed, the inevitable way to cope with the realization that one may have compromised one's traditions and values, to cut oneself loose with no more exalted motive than the old white colonist. *Within* the new world, facing the need to come to terms with it, the ironic stance is not easily maintained. One of the most successful ironic stories, "Their Fear," is by Asghar Wajahat, a New Delhi writer not himself an immigrant, who travelled in North America. He describes a long car trip with four Muslim immigrants who, shut in their sealed machine, exchange their anxieties and self-contradictions beneath the non-committal observer's eye:

"Here there is a lot of money," Mr. Asad said to me, "but there is no spiritual peace."

I looked at him closely. Didn't he know before he came here that spiritual peace — if there is such a thing — wouldn't be found here? I decided to go along with him and said, "You're right. That you can only find in India."

"But what are we to do, we can't go back to India!" he said, as if he really wanted to go back . . . (66)

The narrator continues:

"I think I should go back," Mr. Ahmad broke the silence in a feeble voice.

Suddenly Dr. Tahir flared up, "I'd rather drive a cab in this country," he said sharply. "Sweep floors even. But I will stay in America. What's so great about India? Where scientists commit suicide? Where even engineers can't find jobs. It's a damn depressing place, that's what India is. Here at least I don't have to worry about communal riots. About getting killed."

No one felt like contradicting him.

"Yes, we must stay here. And from here try to improve the conditions in India," said Mr. Masoor . . . (68)

The conversation then turns to daughters:

Mr. Asad said, "When my daughter Shama gets to be eleven or twelve I intend to send her to India, to her grandparents."

"That's not a bad idea," commented Dr. Tahir. "But do you think your in-laws would look after her education as well as you do now? . . . It may even be bad for her "psychology." But I guess you'll have to do it."

No one spoke for a long time. At least three persons had been frightened by the vision of their daughters going to bed with American boys. Mr. Ahmad was humming some tune. His daughter was in India. She cannot go to bed with some American. But how could he be sure she wasn't sleeping with some Indian? Mr. Ahmad, however, didn't believe in wasting his time on such far-fetched ideas. (69)

Wajahat's poised humorous insight can come readily to few emigrants, who can rarely rationalize their choice so unequivocally as the Pakistani novelist, Zulfikar Ghose: "I could not live in India because I am a Muslim; and I cannot live in Pakistan because I have no interest in being a Muslim" (15). "From here," says Wajahat's Mr. Masoor, "try to improve the conditions in India" (11) — and thus allay one's guilt, feed one's nostalgia, appease one's self-division? The ambivalent attitudes this dilemma creates have meant, according to Uma Parameswaran, that "most of us who have emigrated to Canada [tend] to magnify the mote in his [sic] neighbour's eye" ("Rev." 66). Reviewing *Tales from Firozsha Baag*, for which Rohinton Mistry won the Governor General's Fiction Award in 1987, she is made uneasy by a story partly set in Canada, "Lend Me Your Light." This focuses on the ambivalent position of the narrator, Kersi, whose brother Percy stays behind when he leaves for Canada to devote himself to a movement to support the peasants against the landlords. A friend of theirs, Jamshed, has previously emigrated to New York, but returns to Bombay to revile it, vindicating his departure and ridiculing Percy's humanitarian efforts. Percy becomes alienated from Jamshed, and Kersi follows suit, though he still returns to the easier option of Toronto. He compares himself wryly to Eliot's Tiresias in *The Waste Land*, "throbbing between two lives," free in and of neither.⁶ Parameswaran's own unease, in reviewing the story, stems from her conviction that, while Percy's rejection of the crassly

materialistic Jamshed is understandable, Kersi has less right "to reject Jamshed for rejecting India": this she finds uncomfortably typical of "most of us who have immigrated to Canada" ("Rev." 66). In rejecting Jamshed, Kersi is both questioning and evading the moral challenge his brother's election to stay and struggle poses.

Another story of personal return, "Soap Bubbles" by Matthew Zachariah, is a finely pointed, condensed dramatization of the alienated encounter. Thomas, fifteen years a Canadian, returns to Delhi and meets an old school-friend who has become a Junior Minister. Their initial warmth gradually dissipates, as they exchange experiences, in a deep realization of distance. Padman, the Minister, has recently lost his only son, run down by a careless truck-driver; he is inconsolable; Thomas, seeking to share and lessen his sorrow, asks:

"Padman, didn't they convict the driver?"

Padman looked quietly at his friend.

"You have been away too long, Thomas. You have forgotten how things work over here. The lorryowner's insurance company came to see me. They said the police had decided not to prosecute the driver. They offered me five thousand rupees if I promised not to take him to court. Five thousand rupees for my son. I told them to go away. But you, my Canadian friend, wouldn't understand that now, would you?" (52)

Later, Thomas tries to offer in exchange his barely comprehensible story of loss, divorce after ten years' marriage: there was no-one else, no adultery, merely "the death of a relationship" (53). For Padman, though he too offers sympathy, understanding is difficult:

Padman's face revealed his confusions. There was compassion there also. It asked a lot of questions: Can't you go and see her? Can't you pick up the 'phone and talk to her?

. . . how could [Thomas] explain divorce as a form of death to his friend who had never left India? To someone who takes for granted that marriage is a lifelong matter. . . .

Then Padman said slowly, in a measured voice:

"So, you've become a true Westerner, Thomacha? You marry, you divorce, you remarry. How is that like the death of my son?"

(53)

This is an unbridgeable gap: as Thomas sadly leaves his friend's office, street-urchins blowing bubbles from "a dented, soot-lined

aluminium pan" (54) seem to mock his illusion of return and renewed contact; he has become Canadian, but at what cost?

It is, one supposes, easier to accept emigration as exile, compelled by flight from manifest danger or injustice, like Yasmine Gooneratne's "gone away boy" for whom the headlines and newsreels of Sri Lanka burning alive are reassurance "that Toronto is quite romantic enough / for his purposes" (1). The Vietnamese boat-people, asylum achieved, suffer displacement but rarely, one imagines, regret: it is soon, as yet, for their writers to represent them. A character in the Anglo-Indian L. G. Daniels's "Canadian Experience," who has known an "all-consuming hatred" between Hindu and Muslim, sees Canada as "a land that's closest to perfection *and* Canadians don't even know it" (26).

This, however, is a rare positive extreme. More temperately committed is Uma Parameswaran, who, in two substantial works, affirms the potentiality of a transplanted life while allowing scope to the familiar impediments and contradictions. Her play, "Rootless But Green Are the Boulevard Trees," is essentially a drama for voices; no complex relationships or situations are carried through, but typical opposition and dilemmas are aired through dialogue. It presents the "rootless but green" lives of an Indian family in Winnipeg, foregrounding conflicts between the generations (which is bound to become an evolving theme); enlightened parents patiently seek to bridge the gap, the mother especially speaking for *adaptation*. The angry young have some bitter lines on assimilation and multiculturalism:

VITHAL Assimilate my ass. . . . We have to stay separate from them [the whites] and stay together within and we've got to show them that we have as much right to be here as the pissed-off whites who've bullied their way into this country these last three hundred years. We've got to stay apart, stay together, that's the only way.

DILIP . . . But what's the point in being in ghettoes?

RAJEN Good word, yaar. But that's called multiculturalism out here. Each group stays together and once a year there's a three-ring circus, a zoo called Folkorama where everyone visits everyone else's cafe . . .

VITHAL We've got to stand tall. And by God we shall. We shall build our temple at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine

and then we shall say Okay, we are ready to assimilate. Not here not now. Now it'll be bootlicking, apple polishing. (80-81)

"Not here": an echo of Aziz's last words in *A Passage to India*. And we should note that "the confluence" is a symbolic choice: it is where the first pioneering settlement that led to the founding of Winnipeg was pitched.

For the present, all are like Trishanku, the mythological king suspended upside down between heaven and earth: this corresponds to Orion, Parameswaran's poem *Trishanku* being a constellation of the many Indian voices, of exile, expatriation or immigration — and, appropriately, she tells herself:

Begin with here
Not with there

Begin with the world that is
Though the worlds that were
And the worlds that will be
Clamour and hammer
To enter.

(6)

As in Parameswaran's play, a wife and mother, Chandrika, sensitive to others' trials and indignities, is the psychic centre of the poem. The poem aptly closes upon a celebration of her and her husband's twentieth wedding anniversary in a temple whose building has become a symbol of hard-won community under pressure. However, as in "Rootless But Green Are the Boulevard Trees," the younger generation, themselves Canadian in education, feel more urgently the pull of assimilation.

An uncompromising and emotionally seductive answer to the complexities of adaptation, assimilation or tenuously sustained identity is sheer opposition — the immigrant writer as postcolonial gadfly, a subversive agent of the Third World. Encounters with racism, mealy-mouthed pieties towards "ethnic" identities or "visible minorities" — private or official — are clear targets. Thus responds Maara Haas: "It takes great discipline on my part not to vomit when I hear the word ethnic. My reflex action is to spit on the word that was spat on me . . ." (136). A combative critic, Arun Mukherjee has, in a series of broadsides, mostly in *The To-*

ronto South Asian Review, collected as *Towards an Aesthetic of Opposition*, erected this into the needful stance, almost a mystique. I have argued elsewhere⁷ the narrowness of her reaction which at worst becomes a sterile anti-racist racism, in such poets as Himani Bannerji who, though she can deal strongly with women's issues, stereotypes black-white oppositions in such works as "Love in Black and White" and *A Separate Sky*. Bannerji's political poetry exemplifies that squinting leftism which beats Western evil with an idealized "socialist" alternative (lately much eroded). At best, Mukherjee has drawn attention to certain non-mainstream writers, such as Cyril Dabydeen and Rienzi Crusz (less noted than the "cosmopolitan" Michael Ondaatje) whose "voices . . . are important . . . because they report on Canadian society from a vantage point that is not available to a well-adjusted, native-born, 'invisible' Canadian" (A. Mukherjee 98).

Crusz, the most delicately nuanced of such voices, uses his to balance a history, a role, and a difficult displacement:

Dark I am,
and darkly do I sing
with mucus
in my throat

(90)

By contrast, Crusz's originally Sri Lankan compatriot, Michael Ondaatje's inevitably good seller, *Running in the Family*, indulges in oriental exoticism, diverting his Western readers rather than substantiating the darker self-image he claims: "I am the foreigner. I am the prodigal who hates the foreigner" (79). Rienzi Crusz, like the West Indian poet Derek Walcott, will not indulge in simplified opposition, whether of language, culture, or colour:

A Portuguese captain holds
the soft brown hand of my Sinhala mother.
It's the year 1515 A.D.
when two civilizations kissed and merged,
and I, burgher of that hot embrace,
write a poem of history⁸. . .

("Singing" 42)

Yet, inevitably, in the racist's eye, he remains the absolute other and the Sun-Man needs a strategy to withstand that by language alone:

Who, brown and strolling
 down a Toronto street,
 came up against these black vinyl jackets
 with mouths hurling their PAKI PAKI words like knives;
 Froze, then quickly thawed to his notebook:
 'Color of offender's eyes: hazel, blue, blue.
 Hair: All long, like Jesus, down the nape.
 Estimated educational background: TV's "Police Story"
 Starring Angie Dickinson.
 Home Address: Paradise Blvd., Toronto
 Possible motives: Kicks
 So much poetry in the trajectory of crow sounds.'
 ("Singing" 65)

Such encounters defy connection, of course, but that, however difficult, is the only way forward, as Cyril Dabydeen — elected in 1985 Poet Laureate of Ottawa — shows in his poem "Patriot":

I remind myself that I am
 tropical to the bones
 I blend with a temperate
 carapace
 hard lines form
 across my face
 I am anxious to make Canada
 meet in me
 I make designs
 all across
 the snow.

(*Islands* 29)

Crusz and Dabydeen, though compelled by their "visible" otherness to react in such ways, remember that they fled native countries far more inimical than Canada to individual vision. Their positive impulse is to come to terms beyond the dominating, potentially stifling, themes of immigration and discrimination, with an alternative society they have chosen — self-exiled and open-eyed — and in the margin of freedom gained there to be a writer, write of "the expanding consciousness" (*Islands* 6). Their "vantage point," to use Arun Mukherjee's phrase, is not then *only* that available to a "visible minority," but shares, or aspires to share, beyond ethnicity, a broader humanity with her "'invisible' Canadian" (98).

East and West, First and Third World (the Second rapidly crumbling) are sterile polarities if we believe in them too literally: "in our colony," recalls the Trinidadian critic John Ramsaran, "we cultivated the twin sensibilities of East and West" (38). Ramsaran's — alas — old-fashioned civilized appeal for mutual understanding and respect for the ethos of the other in a multicultural society is not easily answered where the "other" is diverse, encompassing greatly differing beliefs and practices and antipathies of race or creed beyond simple black-white opposition. Such is the case with the Rushdie affair in England: he is himself an immigrant from Pakistan, condemned by other Asian immigrants who, in endorsing Khomeini's death sentence, are Muslim before they are British. Judging by the similar reaction of many Canadian Muslims, they are Muslim before they are Canadian. There will surely be more such breaking-points for the multicultural ideal. Although it has commendably been said that there is "opportunity . . . in Canada to invent a culture that reflects and respects diversity" (Corbeil 14), one can envisage no quick or easy solutions to the divisions and tensions of our new multicultural societies, but in Canada South Asian writing will have an increasingly large and responsible role to play. For "Literature" — it seems fitting to give Salman Rushdie the last word, from his recent Herbert Read Memorial Lecture — "is the one place in any society where we can hear voices talking about everything in every possible way" (111).

NOTES

- 1 "Turned inside out / language and feelings" (Parameswaran, *Trishanku* 5). This article is essentially the text of a paper delivered at the Asian Voices in English Symposium, Hong Kong University, April 1990, and the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, May 1990. For an article of allied interest, see Thorpe.
- 2 See Woodcock, *Canada and the Canadians*, and Craig, who says: "The attempts in every way — militarily, politically, economically, and in literature — by English-Canadians to dominate Canada and make it one homogenous state modelled after Britain, are perhaps the most significant internal events in its history. At least until World War Two many English-Canadians viewed these attempts as a racial struggle" (140).
- 3 For a balanced, if dry historical account of the Komagata Maru incident, see Johnson.
- 4 See also Vassanji *A Meeting of Streams*.
- 5 See also Mukherjee, "An Invisible Woman."

⁶ Eliot's phrase is used by Fulford in a welcoming article on *The Toronto South Asian Review* and picked up as a "romantic notion of South Asian writers" in Sadiq's *Ice Bangles*. It is ironically adopted by her aspiring writer, Naila, who finally rejects the temptation it offers "to milk her difference" (181).

⁷ See Thorpe.

⁸ In Sri Lanka, "burghers" are of mixed racial descent.

WORKS CITED

- Bannerji, Himani. "Love in Black and White." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 3.1 (1984): 27.
- . *A Separate Sky*. Toronto: Domestic Bliss 1982.
- Bissoondath, Neil. *Digging Up the Mountains*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1985.
- . *A Casual Brutality*. Toronto: Macmillan: 1988.
- Corbeil, Carol. "Exchange." *Books in Canada* Jan.-Feb. 1990: 10-14.
- Craig, Terrence. *Racial Attitudes in English-Canadian Fiction 1905-1980*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1987.
- Crusz, Rienzi. *Elephant and Ice*. Erin, Ont.: Porcupine's Quill, 1980.
- . *Singing Against the Wind*. Erin, Ont.: Porcupine's Quill, 1985.
- Dabydeen, Cyril. *This Planet Earth*. Ottawa: Borealis, 1979.
- . "The Committee." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 2.3 (1984): 58.
- . *Island Lovelier Than A Vision*. Leeds: Peepal Tree, 1986.
- Daniels, L. G. "Canadian Experience." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 7.2 (1989): 26.
- Fulford, Robert. "Throbbing Between Two Lives." *Toronto Star* 23 June 1984.
- Ghose, Zulfikar. "Conversation with Zulfikar Ghose." With M. G. Vassanji. *The Toronto South Asian Review* 4.3 (1986): 14-21.
- Gooneratne, Yasmine. "gone away boy." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 2.2 (1983): 1.
- Gosine, V. Ramsamooj. "Nobody's Puppet." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 5.1 (1986): 225.
- Haas, Maara. "Hyphenated Canadians: the Question of Consciousness." *Identifications: Ethnicity and the Writer in Canada*. Ed. Jars Balan. Edmonton: Alberta Library Ukrainian-Canadian Studies, 1982.
- Itwaru, Arnold. "Ragblown Roadless." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 5.1 (1986): 171.
- Johnson, Hugh. *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru*. Vancouver: U of British Columbia P, 1987.
- Kalsey, Surjeet. "Siddhartha Does Penance Again." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 2.1 (1983): 49.
- Kogawa, Joy. *Obasan*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1981.
- Mistry, Rohinton. "Lend Me Your Light." *Tales from Firozsha Baag*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1987.
- Mukherjee, Bharati. "An Invisible Woman." *Saturday Night* 96.3 (1981): 38-40.
- . *Darkness*. Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1985.
- Mukherjee, Arun. *Towards An Aesthetic of Opposition*. Toronto: Williams-Wallace, 1989.
- Ondaatje, Michael. *Running in the Family*. Toronto, M&S, 1982.

- Parameswaran, Uma. "Rootless But Green Are the Boulevard Trees." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 4.1 (1985): 62-103.
- . Rev. of *Tales from Firozsha Baag*, by Rohinton Mistry. *The Toronto South Asian Review* 6.3 (1988): 64-67.
- . *Trishanku*. Toronto: TSAR, 1988.
- Pollock, Sharon. *The Komagata Maru Incident*. Toronto: Playwrights Canada, 1978.
- Ramsaran, John. "My Colonial Inheritance." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 5.1 (1986): 35-47.
- Rushdie, Salman. "Is Nothing Sacred?" *Granta* 31 (1990): 111.
- Sadiq, Nazneen. *Ice Bangles*. Toronto: Lorimer, 1988.
- Sugunasiri, Suwanda. "Which Is Fun?" *The Toronto South Asian Review* 2.2 (1983): 55.
- Thorpe, Michael. "Opposition, Multicultural Apartheid or Connection?" *The Toronto South Asian Review* 9.1 (1990): 1-10.
- Vassanji, M. G. "Editorial: Five Years of TSAR." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 5.3 (1987): 1-2.
- . *A Meeting of Streams*. Toronto: TSAR, 1985.
- Woodcock, George. *Canada and the Canadians*. Toronto: Oxford, 1970.
- . "The Leopard's Spot." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 5.3 (1987): 41-51.
- Wajahat, Asghar. "Their Fear." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 3.3 (1985).
- Zachariah, Matthew. "Soap Bubbles." *The Toronto South Asian Review* 7.1 (1988): 48-54.