"Where else to row, but backward?" Addressing Caribbean Futures through Re-visions of the Past

PAULA BURNETT

Derek Walcott's figure of the rower, introduced as a key image in *Another Life* nearly a quarter of a century ago, bears interestingly on approaches to history in six recent works of anglophone Caribbean literature. "Where else to row, but backward?" (*Collected Poems* 217) seems at first to suggest a compulsive revisiting of the past, but, on reflection, a more complex meaning emerges: taking his bearings by that which he has left behind, his past, the rower proceeds backwards into an unknown future. It is an ambiguous, tricky figure. Adversarial politics can be counterproductive, as Walcott argues provocatively in his 1974 essay "The Muse of History." Direct opposition cannot escape confirming the power of the centre: "by openly fighting tradition we perpetuate it; . . . revolutionary literature is a filial impulse." The real revolution is in the trickster's resistance, the Anansi-stance, which subverts from within, often by a mimicry accepted from the centre as deference when its true meaning is defiance. Walcott collapses Frantz Fanon's three phases of anti-colonial resistance (178-79) back into the first, assimilation, but in reverse. He asserts that "maturity is the assimilation of the features of every ancestor"; for him, the postcolonial artists' task is not to be assimilated but to assimilate, hybridizing the plural traditions they inherit to express their own experience and cultural meanings (111).

Walcott long has adopted a critical stance towards the discourse of history. He praises those writers of the Americas who "reject the idea of history as time for its original concept as myth, the partial recall of the race" ("The Muse of History" 111). There are two crucial distinctions in his use of the term "myth": myth as

collapsing linear history in a continuous present and myth as selective collective memory—"the partial recall of the race." The question of where to row in *Another Life* elicits this answer:

> Where else to row, but backward?
> Beyond origins, to the whale's wash,
> to the epicanthic Arawak's Hewanora . . .

The objective is to go back to origins not in recorded history but in what it obscures—to myth. A distinctive feature of some recent Caribbean writing, including Walcott's, is, however, its return to historical scenarios. In terms of the collective psyche, we may ask, is this a return of the repressed, and does it therefore represent a painful process but one which is necessary to healing? Is it a Marxist self-empowerment by the retrieval of a historical perspective? Is it, in Linda Hutcheon's phrase, a case of writers confronting "the amnesia of colonialism through the memory of post-colonialism" (170)? Or is it a case of the "partial recall" of myth, the narration of a mythified past which is geared to the future, the landmarks of the past providing bearings for the rower? Using a framework of Walcott's ideas, I propose to consider some of the most recent work of V. S. Naipaul, Wilson Harris, and Walcott, and a trio of younger Guyanese writers: Pauline Melville, David Dabydeen, and Fred D'Aguiar.[1] All of the works have been published since 1994, three of them in 1997, but they are not discussed in chronological order, rather in a discursive sequence. All prominent texts, widely reviewed not just in the Caribbean but in the northern metropoles (where the authors spend most of their time), they provide a kind of snapshot of literary tendencies. Other texts might suggest other patterns, but these, however arbitrarily, can be viewed as a kind of group, with related concerns.

Together they indicate, surprisingly perhaps, an almost obsessive revisiting of the region's past, often recounting the most unspeakable events of both early and modern history, including the horrors of "Amerindian" genocide and the Atlantic slave-trade (the term Amerindian is used here, as it is used in Guyana, rather than "Native American," which evokes North America). It might seem that Walcott's cry for myth instead of history has been lost on the wind as the millennium ends with a taste for

apocalyptic narrative, despite the fact that the region's history of genocide raises aesthetic difficulties similar to Europe's Nazi genocide, which Adorno famously argued should not lead to art. But Lois Parkinson Zamora perceives a preoccupation with the apocalyptic in writing from Latin and North America as forging a new model of interpersonal relations: "Because the myth of apocalypse insists on the inevitable link between individual and collective fate, it is precisely those writers prone to apocalyptic visions who are most likely to concern themselves with essential relations between the self and its surroundings, between autonomy and solidarity" (190). Perhaps the recent writing of the Caribbean is exploring a millennarian vision of relevance beyond, not just to, the Americas.

Emerging strongly from the six texts is a focus on language practice as a vital dimension of social practice. As texts they are acutely self-aware. Caribbean people have long lived the reality to which Foucault has drawn attention, that historical discourses are sites for the inscription of power—and indeed there is among Caribbean writers and thinkers a strand of profound scepticism of Western-centred theorizations, which often are read as neocolonial appropriations (a charge to which the present text is also inevitably vulnerable). The Jamaican sociologist Rex Nettleford prefers to pinpoint the two-way stretch of history, demonstrating Caribbean culture's inversion of dominance. Its writers, he says, are "of interest to the North Atlantic precisely because they are not only good writers but writers with something unique to say about the human condition, and where they come from and how they were socialized and bred just happens to give that something a special pitch and tone of importance and relevance to a North Atlantic world, itself in search of new patterns and new designs for its continuing existence" (53). As a result, the Caribbean "is now challenged to fall back on the inner reserves of its own historical experience and cultural dynamic in order to exist on its own terms, which is partly what cultural identity is about" (57). Caribbean cultural identity, as explored by writers as diverse as Harris, V. S. Naipaul, and Walcott, may triangulate, in some sense, not only what Paul Gilroy calls the Black Atlantic but also the wider plural world.

The Amerindian tradition is beginning to ghost the pages of more writers than just Walcott and Harris. Cheyfitz describes how "In the beginning . . . in the European mind, Indians became a pure figure (the homogenizing of these diverse peoples under the name of 'Indians' being the primal act of translation)" (105). V. S. Naipaul, however, is Trinidadian, an East Indian-West Indian who brings his own diversity to bear on a cultural identity which includes both slaves and Amerindians. Naipaul's *A Way in the World*, published in 1994, can be regarded as a complex meditation on the Caribbean condition, as the product of a history of cruelty, but cruelty as a ubiquitous sign of the human. It is an act of recuperation: "as a child," he writes, "I felt that history had been burnt away in the place where I was born" (110). The branding image is grotesque and apt: it implies the narrative's power to heal. Naipaul's perception of history as tragic goes hand in hand with a faith in the word, in culture, which is often missed.

A Way in the World is richly intertextual within the Naipaul canon, as much of it is devoted to topics addressed in his 1969 book, *The Loss of El Dorado.* The earlier book is subtitled "A History," the recent one "A Sequence." Naipaul, who is famous for his revisionist approach to genre, has written about the genesis of the new work:

> At a very early stage I found the novel form I had inherited not suitable to dealing with the many-layered material I knew I possessed. So this book represents (or comes at the end of) years of thought, letting down the sounding rod (as it were) into the earth. Some of the material (the wish to create the slave society of Trinidad imaginatively) has been with me for more than twenty-five years; much of the material was with me for at least fifteen to seventeen years before I began to write. The book was written in sequence and with great intensity. This is why the connections continue to surprise me . . . I am astonished at how much came out quite unconsciously. (Letter)

The force of personal memory and desire is the work's binding chain between past and future.

In *A Way in the World*, Naipaul posits a continuity from pre-Columbian Trinidad to slavery and modernity. He revisits the era of Columbus and Raleigh in order to show what was lost with their arrival, and to invite mourning. The figure of the chain is used repeatedly: not only are the five last Aruac chiefs chained

together, but they are also chained to us, linked to every stage of the intervening history, that "immense chain of events" (40): "we go back all of us to the very beginning; in our blood and bone and brain we carry the memories of thousands of beings" (9). In one of the stories, Amerindians unwrap before the narrator a Tudor doublet. It is an icon of the return of the repressed, with a startling oneiric power, collapsing time with its revelation of simultaneity.

Naipaul insists on presenting the modern as a superficial crust on an accumulated sediment of human history. The present of the writer—a self-persona—is staged to foreground the subjectivity of perception and the instability of narration, both of which make retrieval of any kind of past reality difficult and flawed. As well as historical accounts, he gives us oral accounts, other, unofficial versions of people and events not in the history books—the schoolteacher's account of Leonard Side, Manuel Sorzano's narration of his own private *El Dorado*, the story of the Amerindian who accompanied Raleigh back to Europe and to the scaffold, voiced to and inscribed by a Spanish priest—an actual witness (his story republished in a rare book), never hitherto incorporated into the Raleigh myth. Available academic books on Raleigh make no mention of this Amerindian. He has been silenced—until now. In *A Way in the World*, Naipaul subtitles three chapters "An Unwritten Story," problematizing the narration in print before our eyes. The authority of writing is undermined, as is the status of the author. The discourses which rely on authorized versions and grand narratives are destabilized. But narration is the best we have.

This is a book which refers repeatedly like a conventional history to surviving documents, but unlike the conventional historian, Naipaul instructs us that they bear witness less to facts than to subjectivities. It is the individuals who wrote the records who are there recorded, rather than the events they rehearse. It is Francisco Miranda, the precursor of Bolivar, who emerges from his leather-bound volumes, and Walter Raleigh from his account of Guiana. Their texts are the projections of desire, shaped by fantasy. As he says, "While the documents last we can hunt up the story of every strip of occupied land," but the

mystery will remain, it will be only "a fragment of the truth" (8-9). By the same token it is the author, Naipaul, who emerges from *A Way in the World*: fiction, he says, "reveals the writer totally," but at the same time he projects himself as passive listener, letting down a "sounding-rod" into the earth (9). His fictionalized accounts of how the historical texts came into being enable us to glimpse the mystery of the men and the times—the individual as construct of a particular history but also as pioneer. One of the book's projects is to deconstruct heroism. Raleigh and Miranda are shown as flawed men, taking refuge in their own myth of themselves. Another is to address the nature and meaning of the collective. Naipaul is interested in the significant individual, the man of history (fictional or not)—Raleigh, Miranda, the Trinidadian political thinkers of modern times, "Lebrun" and "Blair" (and how on-going history creates unforeseen ironies)—to access the distinctiveness of the group.

But the mystery of the chain remains: "We cannot understand all the traits we have inherited. Sometimes we can be strangers to ourselves" (*Strangers* 9). This is less a tragic Kristevan self-alienation than an openness to and celebration of pluralism as mystery. "I have rewritten this material now in my own way," Naipaul has said of this book: "I have introduced myself much more into that material. . . . The point about the book is that *this* was my background, and it took me quite a time to understand my background. These are the facts I didn't know about my background. . . . one has arrived at what I feel now is the truth of the material" ("Face to Face"). Naipaul constructs an eloquent symbolic narration at the heart of his book. Raleigh, waiting off Trinidad for his son Wat to return from the Orinoco, is delivered a stranger, a diminutive Indian, dressed in too-big European clothes, stained and worn, who brings news of Wat's death. Naipaul has mythified his own relationship to his complex inheritance in this epic moment. After accompanying Raleigh to Europe and to his death, the Amerindian makes his way back home, and is asked what he makes of his experience: the story ends with the simple but devastating statement, "I think, father, that the difference between us, who are Indians, or half Indians, and people like the Spaniards and the English and the Dutch

and the French, people who know how to go where they are going, I think that for them the world is a safer place" (205). The energies of the story gather to this closure, which relegates the pathos of Raleigh, a familiar pathos, to insignificance compared with the collective suffering of the colonized.

The figure of Leonard Side, however, is the janitor of this book of the dead. His story is brief but significant, evoking a complex ambivalence: he is admired for holding on to his vision of beauty despite his job as undertaker, yet a powerful horror is suggested around his hairy fingers which cross so readily from the mortuary to the kitchen. He is the Kristevan abject (*Powers*) personified, but provocatively the recoil from the trangressive and "between" is located in cross-culturality. This culturally and sexually ambiguous man (imagined as descended from Lucknow transvestites), a Muslim with a Christian icon in his bedroom, begins the book as a symbol of creolization. But the point of the story is to present his different understanding of beauty: its project is one of tolerance not exclusion. Nostalgia for purity is deconstructed: the ancestral Asian culture was not pure either. The book celebrates pluralism despite ambivalence, opening out the term "Indian," which Cheyfitz identifies as the flattened marker of imperialist discourse, into the rich, still diversifying traditions of the Caribbean. Rob Nixon deems *The Loss of El Dorado* "an antihistory of the island," claiming that for Naipaul "there is only the history of Europeans in Trinidad" (123, 128). Naipaul may be offering *A Way in the World* in part as rebuttal of such criticism.

David Dabydeen, like Naipaul a descendent of indentured labourers from India in the post-Emancipation period, also addresses the prior story of the Caribbean as well as that of his own group. He uses his poem "Turner"[2] to focus on the cruelty of the slave trade and the cultural dispossession by Europe, mythifying them as generic symbols of the collective experience; and he inscribes its consequence, the imperative of self-creation. The initial proposition is an intertextual one, between kinds of art, the poem's starting-point being a painting by the English painter J. M. W. Turner. Titled "Slavers throwing overboard the Dead and Dying—typhoon coming on," exhibited in 1840, it is little known in Britain today. Painted not long after the emancipation

of British slaves, it has a historical subject, from the pre-Abolition period. It depicts a Middle Passage practice which became notorious through a court case. Slaves who were ill had been taken from the hold of the slave-ship *Zong* and thrown overboard. The case heard by the London courts in 1783 was not about criminality, however; it was about financial liability. Ship-owners could insure themselves against loss from deaths on the voyage but not against the reduced market value on arrival of sick slaves; the insurers declined to pay for murdered slaves. The painting is now in the US, Ruskin, its first purchaser, who wrote of its aesthetic merit, having (to his surprise, presumably) found it too painful to live with. Most of the coffee-table books on Turner make no mention of it. In the popular mythification of Turner's paintings in Britain as national icons, the painting is simply ignored.

Dabydeen has commented on the representation of black people in Western painting, but not hitherto in his poetry. His choice of subject for "Turner"—Turner's painting with its horrific bloodied sea, the limbs of shackled slaves circled by sharks—addresses therefore not only an appalling moment in history but an act of aesthetic representation. Karen McIntyre comments, "Rediscovered in *Turner* is the past, both real and fictional, crafted through an acknowledgement but superseding of Western culture" (152). For Dabydeen, Turner himself is guilty: "The intensity of Turner's painting is such that I believe the artist in private must have savoured the sadism he publicly denounced" (*Turner* x). He centres his poem on "the submerged head of the African in the foreground of Turner's painting. It has been drowned in Turner's (and other artists') sea for centuries" (ix). The British refusal to see—or to see anything other than an aesthetic object—is tackled head on. In the poem, the monstrous events are made devastatingly real, but not by a realistic representation. Dabydeen chooses to narrate a series of mythic incidents, in which the uprooting and cruel abuse of indigenous people—and their cultural translation under empire—is made imaginatively vivid. The poem thus orients itself not only to the history of African-Caribbeans and East Indian-West Indians, but to that of the Amerindians, who remain a significant minority group in plural Guyana. "Turner" becomes a sign of the mon-

strous. The poem is an evocation of loss, a lament but also a celebration. It focuses on the way the rupture of ancestral tradition requires greater creativity from the individual. The drowned African head is the narrator: Dabydeen's preface informs us, "When it awakens it can only partially recall the sources of its life, so it invents a body, a biography, and peoples an imagined landscape" (ix). The narrator not only tells his story, he coins new words for his new environment. For McIntyre, the poem is "a reclaiming, a reappropriation of a lost past, culture and traditions through imagination, postcolonial creativity signalled and initiated by the naming of the part-born at a time when the namer has 'forgotten the words'" (153). The Adamic act of naming so prominent in Walcott, particularly in *Another Life*, is here extended to a Joycean relish of new language, and although the pain of its subject is acutely recreated, the poem as a whole is not negative. Even in its most agonized image, of the woman whose flayed back is packed with Turner's "munificence of salt" (37)—a complex allegory of sexual and capitalist rape—the historical horror of torture[3] is doubled with its heavily ambivalent other, the curing of flesh which ensures its survival.

The people's shaman is called Manu, the Noah of Hindu mythology, who survives, with divine protection, the great flood summoned to destroy the world.[4] In the climactic image, Dabydeen uses the beads he calls *jouti* as symbol, to address the problem of history. Manu warns (in an intertextual revision of T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*) that:

> . . . time future was neither time past
> Nor time present, but a rupture so complete
> That pain and happiness will become one, death
> And freedom, barrenness and riches. He
> Ripped away his jouti necklace without warning,
> The beads rolled from the thread, scattered like coloured
> Marbles and we scrambled to gather them,
> Each child clutching an accidental handful
> Where before they hung in a sequence of hues
> Around his neck, the pattern of which only he
> Knew—from his father and those before—to preserve.
> The jouti lay in different hands, in different
> Colours. We stared bleakly at them and looked
> To Manu for guidance, but he gave no instruction

> Except—and his voice gathered rage and unhappiness—
> That in the future time each must learn to live
> Beadless in a foreign land; or perish.
> Or each must learn to make new jouti,
> Arrange them by instinct, imagination, study
> And arbitrary choice into a pattern
> Pleasing to the self and to others
> Of the scattered tribe; or perish. Each
> Will be barren of ancestral memory
> But each endowed richly with such emptiness
> From which to dream, surmise, invent, immortalise.
> Though each will wear different coloured beads
> Each will be Manu, the source and future
> Chronicles of our tribe. (33)

Dabydeen chooses not to end here, closing instead with a memorial to loss, a reminder of the pain and difficulty of the heroic task of self-creation. Once again he devises an intertextual moment, re-sorting the beads, as it were, by striking an echo from a poem familiar from older school anthologies, "No!" by Thomas Hood, an evocation of an English November, which begins "No sun, no moon, no morn, no noon":

> No savannah, moon, gods, magicians
> To heal or curse, harvests, ceremonies,
> No men to plough, corn to fatten their herds,
> No stars, no land, no words, no community,
> No mother. (40)

The Hood poem ends with the word "November!" By echoing in his bleak closure the seasonal bleakness of a northern winter, Dabydeen leaves unspoken but implicit the possibility of cyclic renewal. His memorial to the lost, for all its tragic resonance, is itself an eloquent witness to the creative originality of which Manu speaks. These first two works share not only a courageous confrontation of ancestral pain but a poignant faith in the self-creation which that history demands. *A Way in the World* makes no concessions to the reader in some of its detailed, even turgid, meditations, but it will be read because it is by Naipaul. "Turner," with its fluid, agonizing grace, is an extraordinary and important poem of great profundity which deserves to be better known.

The most recent work under consideration here, *Feeding the Ghosts*, a novel by Guyanese writer Fred D'Aguiar, goes

back to the same historical period as the Dabydeen poem, but D'Aguiar's new novel brings a different perspective in the story of the *Zong*, a history of the African slave-trade, written as the symbolic genesis of the ethnically plural Caribbean community. This is a recurrent theme in the works under discussion, in which writers having mixed Creole, East Indian, and Amerindian personal ancestries produce texts in which Caribbeanness is inscribed in racially plural, ambiguous, or shifting terms. It is a refusal to sustain in fiction the ethnically split mapping of individual societies, which some politicians prefer. Turner's painting is ignored, as D'Aguiar's narrative goes directly to the story of what happened on the *Zong*, and to the court case in London. The novel also has a conspicuous intertexual relationship with Dabydeen's "Turner" (and thence by implication with the painting, even as a negative marker, as if pointing to the irrelevance of a British painter's *post-hoc* appropriation of the history). Where the Dabydeen poem is mythopoeic from the outset, the D'Aguiar novel follows the convention of the historical novel, re-Africanizing the story interpreted by Dabydeen through mainly Asian references. It thus expands the engagement with the story of Atlantic slavery which D'Aguiar initiated in his earlier novel *The Longest Memory*, of which Bénédicte Ledent comments that for D'Aguiar, as for Caryl Phillips, "slavery is an unstable complex almost impossible to pin down" (280). The objective not "to reproduce it in its social and historical verisimilitude, but rather to bring out and exploit the multifarious symbolical and imaginative potentialities" (272) of slavery is, I would argue, intensified in the new novel, which succeeds the better the further it is from standard realism.

In Walcott's poem "The Sea is History" (*Collected Poems* 64-67), which D'Aguiar uses as epigraph, the strategy is to mythify the tragic events of the past in Old Testament terms, as just "Lamentations," not history, allowing a redemptive history to be projected onto the modern. In *Feeding the Ghosts*, D'Aguiar engages with the history of the Middle Passage, which Walcott reduces to a triple symbol—"the packed cries, / the shit, the moaning"—by translating it, initially, into realist narrative. The novel begins by evoking the intolerable reality of an eighteenth-century slave

ship, as the captain's policy to throw sick slaves overboard begins to be implemented. D'Aguiar tries to clothe the bones of the story by creating mixed human beings on both sides of the power relationship.

Hints from Dabydeen's poem have been developed into narrative episodes in D'Aguiar's novel. Where the poem's narrator has a sister Rima, who is "all / The valour and anguish of our tribe" and marries the village idiot "out of jest and spite" (35), the novel has as protagonist the courageous Mintah, who stands up to the slavers and is thrown into the sea. She saves herself by clutching on to the wooden ship and climbing back on board, helped by a simple-minded crewman, Simon, her "simple Simon," whom she grows to love. It is as if patriarchal guilt can only be assuaged through masculinity freed from power and the intellect that calculates profit. In this woman-centred text, Mintah, an archetypal female hero, voices the Africans' *J'accuse*. Recognizing the odious mate, Kelsal, whom she had nursed from fever in a coastal mission, she accuses him, calling his name. A ritual voicing is central to the book's project, particularly when the names of the Africans thrown overboard are recited. The book empowers Mintah to tell her story. Having learnt to write at the mission, she records her life, a text which Simon eventually supplies as evidence to the court: But D'Aguiar is not seduced by easy solutions. Mintah's narrative, which we find ourselves reading, turns out to be a dream-text, its imagery of redemption, recognition, and restoration exposed finally as desire not reality. But in her dream, the power of the mind to model its own happiness marks the epic self-creation that Dabydeen's Manu demands.

There is another significant parallel. In Dabydeen's poem, the narrator says, "I have become the sea's craft" (28), prefiguring Mintah's metamorphosis in the novel into wooden ship, the beautiful symbol of survival and organic life (also used by Harris), which revises Dabydeen's tortured image of survival in terms of live, salted flesh. From an organic parallelism between wood and water, with their flows and dynamic patterns, their surrounding and surmounting of obstacles, D'Aguiar teases a different drama: sea is history and death; wood is the ship and survival. Mintah becomes her own ship and floats into her own

future. She becomes a kind of female Papa Bois, the Caribbean mythic figure. As Mama Bois, she challenges Dabydeen's closure of "No mother." The metamorphic gives the book its poetry, transforming it from realist history to myth, its most successful vein. Part of Mintah's secret is to live within her body as if it were wood—not to allow its capacity for suffering to overwhelm and destroy her. The story echoes Greek myths of the metamorphosis into trees of women fleeing rape, but it also plays on Hindu tradition: Mintah's role as sacrificial wood-woman is finally accomplished when she meets death by fire, an evocation of *sati*.[5] D'Aguiar is following Walcott's call to assimilate the features of every ancestor. In a final short section in a different narrative voice, D'Aguiar's text concludes, "The past is laid to rest when it is told." This is not only about elegy: it is about grieving, and about exorcism, and about the power of narrative. The title is a reminder that a ghost denied can kill. *Feeding the Ghosts* is a way of making the past return in peace to the grave of history.

The suffering of past generations at the hands of European imperialism is tied firmly to the present in Pauline Melville's *The Ventriloquist's Tale.* Melville meditates the modern predicament of Amerindians, an unfolding history often seen as an eclipse, a kind of genocide. She too, like the other writers here, is also engaged on a distinctively intertextual project, and in the privileging of myth over history, as Walcott suggests. Her narrative explores creolization, through the dramas of rivalry and desire which intersecting cultures generate. On the face of it, the book shows an ancient tradition on a collision course with Western modernity, but it is not so simple, although the impact of "progress" in the shape of US companies and development is one of its concerns. The story is an epic saga of the life of a particular family of the Guyana savannah, over the last century. It satirizes some of the region's visitors, particularly those who presume to articulate the region to the rest of the world on their return. The chief targets, the English writer Evelyn Waugh and the French semiotician and mythographer Claude Lévi-Strauss, may not on the face of it have much in common. What they share is an exploiting of the region textually for their own writings, which mythify Guyana to the rest of the world, pejoratively in Melville's

view. Amazonia has suffered for centuries from the constructions of outsiders, flinging the coarse nets of their ideas over its subtleties. Melville now answers back to such colonial appropriations, exposing the theorists' biases and lack of knowledge.

Melville's aesthetic strategy is deceptive: her narration is in two radically different styles. The narrator, the ventriloquist of the title, is a mythic figure, Macunaima, one of the children of the sun, a mischievous water-spirit in Macusi mythology, paired and contrasted with his law-abiding brother. The essence of trickster-figures, prominent in Amerindian myths and in those other cultural traditions (such as the Twi figure of Anansi the spider-man, which transplanted itself so vigorously from Africa to the Caribbean), is that they use their wits to ensure survival. Here the trickster is a hunter who uses mimicry as a lure—a witty and complex trope on the ongoing neocolonial discourse around the aesthetics of mimicry. Malcolm Bradbury characterizes Waugh as possessed of a "hunter's instinct" (167), but here Waugh is Melville's quarry, and she makes her kill. Having allowed her reader a snatch of Macunaima's magic realist voice in all its dizzying originality, Melville proceeds to muffle it with a cloak of realist narration, to lull the unadventurous reader into a false sense of security. But as the narrative proceeds, the reader's world is destabilized and overturned, the revolution effected. The culture of late Western capitalism is being warned that its apparent victories may be illusory—that when, sometimes, in its centrism it perceives its own mastery, it may in fact be facing defeat. Waugh travelled in the Guyanese savannah in 1932, using his experiences for a travel book, *Ninety-Two Days* (1934), and in a short story "The Man Who Loved Dickens," which was re-deployed in a novel, *A Handful of Dust* (1934). Melville pays tribute to Waugh in her image of a wooden Guyanese house creaking in the wind like a ship (63), developed from his (*Ninety-Two Days* 73). Waugh's metaphor is extended, urbanized, and eroticized in a wholly new application. But in other respects Melville's stance is firmly revisionist. Waugh's Eurocentric fantasies are deconstructed and ridiculed. Melville goes further than Naipaul in building her text around a dialectics of sexual taboos, offering the ultimate endogamy of incest at one pole, trans-racial

exogamy at the other, and relishing both. There is no hint here of the abject. The mythic equating of an eclipse with incest, which Lévi-Strauss identifies throughout Amerindian cultures, is related to an earlier brother-sister incest on the savannahs, but also to its seeming opposite, the love affair of a white Jewish woman, Rosa, an English literary scholar, with a Guyanese of mixed Amerindian and European descent, Chofoye (Chofy) McKinnon. He is one of the Wapisiana, who inhabit a zone of exchange between the constantly hybridizing cultural communities of the coastal strip and the unmodified traditional cultures of the interior.

Waugh's discourse typifies the imperialist phallocentric act of cultural penetration of the colonial other, a fantasy of mastering which obliterates the reality of those subsumed in the discursive take-over. Melville models a different kind of interaction, one based on openness to the reality of the other, of which lovemaking without dominance is the text's token at the individual level. Rosa, it seems, will not eclipse Chofy. Just as earlier generations of the savannah people are portrayed closing round the Scottish McKinnon, who imported his name and his genes, naturalizing him to their ways (assimilating him as Walcott recommends), so Melville seems to hold out the hope that the local tradition will be able to select what it wants from Western culture and adapt it without losing its distinctive qualities. In particular, she suggests, the distinctive sexual mores of the Amerindian people seem likely to survive, based as they are on a natural, unrepressed response to desire. She believes that the complex survival-politics of remote communities—facing real choices between endogamy and exogamy—may be less urgent than it seems. The element of tragedy in the history of the indigenous peoples of the Guyanas is not, however, evaded. Chofy's son Bla-Bla, symbolizing his future, is blown up (eclipsed) by oil prospectors, his death ironically precipitated by his own imperfect ventriloquism. The boy's name seems an elaboration of the time-honoured joke revising Churchill's adage that "jaw-jaw is better than war-war," in its "Waugh-Waugh" variant: the book promotes Bla-Bla over Waugh-Waugh (local orality over written appropriations, anti-colonial over colonial discourse). Melville

says that Bla-Bla is "the real nickname of one of my Wapisiana relatives who used to babble a lot as a kid" (Letter). The reader is warned against an uncritical acceptance of tragic mythifications —of history, of the human condition—when the inner story may tell of epic survival. Where one culture reads eclipse, another reads erotic exchange, in which the question of mastery may not be what it seems. The book is an important reminder that theorizations of the colonial encounter are often simplistic and misleading, repeating yet again centrist assumptions of power and control, when the concealed truth may be much more subversive—and, basically, good news.

Openness to such ambiguity has been a mark of Wilson Harris's work from the beginning. Since Donne and the Dreamer in *Palace of the Peacock* in 1960, he has continued to explore ways of going beyond the limited rationalist approach to the human condition, and beyond the time-locked linear plots of realism. To Walcott, Harris is the "most audacious explorer of our psychic condition so far," who has had the courage to "simply transfer his stupendous poetic powers directly into prose," and who argues that "it is the power of the imagination that illuminates the truth, not a journalistic recording of it" (Collier 231-33)—the last point following a critique of Naipaul. The younger Guyanese writers cannot avoid writing in Harris's shadow (with echoes of Jung, perhaps). Melville's novel, which historically follows a year after Harris's, echoes its concerns in a snatch of dialogue:

> "Let's go to Jonestown."
> "Why do you call it Jonestown?" asked Chofy, bemused.
> "Because people come in here and disappear," laughed Tenga.
> (53)

The idea of eclipse (potentially tragic) is here amusingly applied to another collective extinction, snatching life-enhancing energy from slaughter, *eros* from *thanatos.* Harris's latest fiction *Jonestown* once again stages twin protagonists in a mythopoeic narrative, but this time the starting-point for the fiction is a historical event. In the Jonestown apocalypse of 1978, a community of 913 people died, including 276 children. That collec-

tive slaughter—suicide and murder on a grand scale—shocked Guyana and the world. In taking it as a literary subject, Harris is, however, engaging not only with history but with a Caribbean intertext, in that Shiva Naipaul (the late brother of V. S. Naipaul) wrote a sociohistorical study of it, *Black and White.* He interpreted it as the failure of the 1960s' idealism in which a flawed messianic leader, Jim Jones, gained destructive power over vulnerable people. Many of the victims were black Americans. It was a Californian dream gone wrong, translated from North to South America for its cataclysmic end. Just two figures, Jones's lieutenants, were seen escaping from the killing fields.

Harris, in creating a story around these two, whom he makes a binary pair, approaches the imaginative understanding of those events from a very different perspective. He reaches back into a more distant past, into an earlier apocalypse, the unexplained eclipse of a whole cultural group in Central America, the Maya. The Mayan sacred book, the *Popol Vuh,* is the seminal text for Harris rather than Shiva Naipaul's history. It provides a story of heroic twins whose task is to defeat death, like Harris's Bone and Deacon, but above this, it provides an imaginative climate in which mysteries can be addressed. The key to the power of Harris's text is its intertextual harmony with an ancient book of Amerindian myths.[6]

Harris's book illustrates with brilliant clarity Walcott's thesis in "The Muse of History" that the distinctive writing of the New World rejects history as time for its original concept as myth: the writers' philosophy is "revolutionary, for what they repeat to the New World is its simultaneity with the Old. Their vision of man is elemental, a being inhabited by presences, not a creature chained to his past" ("The Muse of History" 111). In his subsequent essay, *Merlin and Parsifal: Adversarial Twins,* Harris demonstrates how close he is to this concept, speaking of the "enormously real heart of synchronicity" (10). Where the other writers have in varying proportions balanced historical discourse against myth, Harris has jettisoned history. Like the other writers, he foregrounds the nature of textuality. In discussing the adversarial binarism of the cry of Merlin, the wielder of pagan magic, against the scientific rationalism of Parsifal, the Christian hero,

he glosses a phrase he uses in *Jonestown*, "live fossil nursery of language."

> "Live," he says, "refers to a living language, 'fossil' bears on the great age of the language. 'Live' and 'fossil' therefore seem antagonistic in that the living language is susceptible to new roots interwoven with old, fossil roots. That interweaving seems to reflect a tension and rivalry of forms. But 'nursery' implies trials of the imagination in which 'old' and 'new' become psychically supportive one of the other in the music of the senses." (15)

The idea of binary opposites being of mutual psychic support, collapsing the gulf between old and new, provides a creative way into the horrors of Jonestown. Hena Maes-Jelinek relates this to a trickster-strategy, describing Harris's conception of comedy as "a process of conversion initiated by an awareness that any existential predicament potentially contains its reverse, that any kinds of fact or behaviour are the very doorways *through* which one can tend towards deeper, antinomical proportions" (217).

Jonestown relates such interpenetration specifically to Mayan philosophy. The Maya believed in cyclic time in which "history repeats itself whenever the divine influences are in the same balance" (Thompson 165). They had an extremely sophisticated double numerical system by which they calculated back millions of years to identify conjunctions and make predictions. Like Walcott's rower, they went backwards into the future. But like Jim Jones, they also believed that the world would come to a sudden end. For Harris, the unexplained collapse of the pre-Columbian culture of the Yucatan anticipates the failure of Jonestown, as if a cycle of cataclysm had come round again, time looped like a lasso in the hand of a gaucho.

Harris wrestles here with the problem of violence and traces it to the unconscious springs of sexuality. In the essay, he makes the paradoxical binarism clear: "Love's ecstasy and uncanny lament is its precarious but real bridge between the pitiful and the pitiless. The forces that divide love from conquest cannot be taken for granted. They interweave in unpredictable and startling ways" (13-14). The quest of Bone, the benign twin, comes to be defined as a quest for intercourse without violence, a theme Melville develops. The phallic project, which has domi-

nated the cultures of the world, is set against its other, the symbolic womb of feminine space, secreted in the global mythologies. Just as Christianity has the Virgin Mother, the Maya had a moon-goddess, Ix, to set against the terrible sun-god, the jaguar in his nightly passage through the death-world, on whose skin, the night sky, Bone is told to write his dream-book.

The redemption theme, which balances the convulsions of violence is evident in some of the fiction's key images. An imagery of bread as healer unfolds throughout the book to be realized finally in the Ship of Bread, which Bone constructs. The old sacrificial sacraments of flesh and blood are remade in bread and water, asserting finally a non-violent moral politics of nurture. This bears no trace of nostalgia or romance. It is a tough-minded stance. As Harris writes in *Merlin and Parsifal*, "Profoundest self-confession, self-judgement is the supreme goal of art. . . . Self-judgement . . . implies the price humanity and the animal kingdom pay to perceive themselves within interchangeable roles of bride and bridegroom, priest of God and sacrificial victim" (14). The association of sacrificial blood with life rather than death is inscribed in the image of birth. In the *Popol Vuh*, the divine twins' mother-to-be defeats death by offering the clotted blood-like sap of a tree instead of her heart. In Harris's story, one of three archetypal Virgins sits by a cradle, empty "save for a beautiful toy, a wheeled chariot . . . within which lay a minute cherry from a flake of bloodwood in a Christmas tree" (93). The Maya did not use the wheel but they did have wheeled toys—a wonderful illustration of how art in all its playful creativity can lead culture. Harris's exquisite image makes cross-cultural use of myth to illustrate unforgettably the principle of life, of potentiality.[7] This is not apolitical, as Gareth Griffiths observes: Harris's work, "though it seems to refuse a rhetoric of politics, is oddly enough, profoundly radical as a result, insisting, as it does, very vigorously on the need to consume the biases of fixed cultural and political positions, to initiate what is an ongoing sense of dialectic and historical change" (442). In fact, the lesson of *Jonestown* is that only the imagination can liberate history from its tragic cycles of apocalyptic violence. Harris is a believer in

change, in mutability. His attitude to chronicity is subtly different from that of the final writer of the group, Walcott.

In Walcott's latest collection of poems, *The Bounty* (1997), time is thinned to a travelling present, without past or future. The tropics can teach: "here we have merely a steadiness without seasons, / and no history, which is boredom interrupted by war. / Civilisation is impatience" (35). He insists on the now as an absolute in a spirit of deep gratitude. "The one light we have" (75) is the gift of the world. The bounty of the title is this divine gift, "the bounty which is His Word" (10), which includes the gift of love, felt most keenly in loss. There are many commemorative poems here, paying tribute to and giving thanks for the growing crowd of dead family and friends. The book also gives thanks for what Yeats dubbed the "bounty of Sweden," the Nobel Prize, which has enabled Walcott to build a house in St. Lucia, his spiritual home, a house on the shore: "No bounty is greater / than walking to the edge of the rocks where the headland's / detonations exult in their natural metre" (61). And it is also Captain Bligh's ship, *Bounty*, famous for Fletcher Christian's mutiny—an area of history new to Walcott's work. This work is above all a votive act of thanks—the poet gives, finally, "unembittered thanks for all a gift gave" (34).

The long title poem is an elegy to Alix, his late mother. Re-using the Dantean *terza rima* he adapted for *Omeros*, Walcott pitches the poem at a metaphysical level, addressing the mystery of life and death and recording his own questioning speculation. As before, Walcott follows Dante in replacing the apocalyptic Biblical revelation of the heavenly city with a vision of a paradisal rose. The pathos of the aged mother whose mind wanders (portrayed in *Omeros* as at times unable to recognize her own children) is delicately transformed by a parallelism with John Clare, the eighteenth-century poet, who in his insanity wrote of the wonders of nature as proofs of God's bounty. The parallel delivers a loving portrait of the grace of a mind freed from the chain of linear time.

Her death liberates the poet too: "There is no change now, no cycles of spring, autumn, winter, / nor an island's perpetual summer; she took time with her; / no climate, no calendar

except for this bountiful day" (15). Grief and loss return the poet to his present, a futureless present, which he will inhabit like a rock in the rain, giving thanks within the circle of his horizon, full of the "awe in the ordinary" (7). Death is the eternal return, part of the natural cycle. He realizes with "astonishment: that earth rejoices / in the middle of our agony, earth that will have her for good." Unlike those who mourn, the dead are without sorrow, without hunger, "without any appetite," but are "part of earth's vegetal fury," offering themselves as sacrament, "their absence in all that we eat" (13-14). The metaphysical question about life after death is answered in the organic, which makes a sacrament of ordinary food, grown from an earth nourished by the beloved. Like Harris, Walcott counters the cannibalistic and death-ridden images of sacrifice on which colonialism traded.

History produces nothing but grief. Once more the holocaust, and the curse of Europe visited on the rest of the world through empire, are the subject of bitter memory. Only language liberates from history: "we have no solace but utterance, hence this wild cry" (9)—like the cry of Merlin of which Harris speaks. The blackbird's singing, we are told, does not mean it has forgotten grief. Voicing the pain, once again, counters despair and means survival. The abiding task, taught by the mother, is "to write of the light's bounty on familiar things" (16). The poems are full of small creatures, ants, butterflies, mice, and weather, and light —the astonishing revelation of that other life which teaches humility:

> . . . Because memory is less
> than the place which it cherishes, frames itself from nowhere
> except to say that even with the shit and the stress
> of what we do to each other, the running stream's bliss
> contradicts the self-importance of despair
> by these glittering simplicities, water, leaves, and air,
> that elate dissolution which goes beyond happiness. (27)

The love of the mother is presented, unusually for Walcott (whose preoccupation with his lost father is generally separate from his writing about his mother), as an oedipal drama which frames the collection. The title poem tells how the mother taught her sons that "the Christ-Son / questions the Father, to

settle on another island, haunted by Him" (10). The children's remoteness from the father who died when they were small is mythified, the archetypal explained at the same moment as the personal, for it is also a symbol of the Caribbean experience, explaining and naturalizing the historic dispossession and the heroic task of self-creation (prominent in the Dabydeen poem).

The "bounty" in terms of Captain Bligh's ship, the scene of a necessary oedipal mutiny, is an allegory of competing ideologies: the Old Testament ethic of justice ("the white God is Captain Bligh") is replaced with the New Testament revolution and revelation of mercy. The passage combines spatial geography and temporal history with mind-expanding mythic mapping: "the soul's Australia is like the New Testament after the Old World, the code of an eye for an eye" (9). Walcott now ties a fresh continent, Australia, to his world-embracing web of Caribbeanness. The breadfruit seedlings which were the *Bounty*'s cargo, intended as food for the slaves of the Americas, provide a counter-image to the horrors of the human cargo of the middle passage, the ship of bread undergoing a further metamorphosis. After the mutiny, which puts the symbolic Christian on the island (historically Tahiti, but unmoored from its location to become a generic island) the sea distributes the seedlings to root themselves wherever there is hunger, like "our blown tribes dispersing over the islands" (35). Its palm-shaped leaf provides a sequence of hand images, a gentle, nurturing hand. Mr. Christian as castaway is linked with the mad outsiders—the mother, John Clare, poor Tom from *King Lear*—visionaries inspired by their own ambivalent isolation, prison, and liberation in one. The poet on his sea-girt rock sums them up, a solitary meditator familiar from decades of Walcott's work. In the final poem, the book revisits Oedipus, now at Colonus, the sometime-tyrant now a contemplative, with "no father to kill."

But for Walcott, the oedipal drama, the attack on the father, is the Anansi-stance against authority, the revolutionary *geste*. The need for change without violence demands a repudiation of the tragedies of history. Contemplation is seen as a new kind of imaginative revolution, like rain that erodes with apparent softness the hard structures of power:

> . . . the sun withdraws behind drapes
> like a king or a president on the palace balcony
> who hears the roar of a square and thinks it is only
> the rain, it will pass, tomorrow will be sunny,
> praise to the rain its hoarse voice dissolver of shapes,
> of the peaks of power, princes, and mountain slopes. (60)

The poet looks to nature for redemption: "Perhaps it is the fog that erases the sins / of history" (72). He pictures "yam vines trying to hide the sugar-wheel's ruin" (48). Nature teaches the power of patience, persistence, growth. With art, it is the redeeming force. D'Aguiar (who, like the other writers here, is engaged in cultural discussion beyond his creative work) argues that, in his essays on aesthetics, Walcott, confined to a binary vision, stops short of true Caribbean pluralism. Only Harris, in his view, "comes to grips with this complex reality made up not of composite pairs but a kaleidoscopic whole" ("Ambiguity" 167). On the contrary, *The Bounty* offers further evidence that there is little essential difference between the thinking of Walcott and Harris, although their aesthetic strategies are markedly different. The one remaining difference in their philosophies does, however, relate to chronicity, Walcott having abandoned the privileging of the new, while Harris retains a faith in it.[8] It is for this reason that Walcott's work is placed last in this argument; it represents the extreme position on synchronicity.

Apocalyptic events, which are among the most terrible events in a world history steeped in cruelty, are addressed very differently in these works. Pain is given voice with diverse eloquence, most distinctively in Dabydeen's poems. "Turner," an epoch-making text in Caribbean literature, marks the enormity of events without collapsing into Gothic hyperbole: it demonstrates both rigour and faith in creativity. The three senior writers, V. S. Naipaul, Harris, and Walcott, although they demonstrate remarkable interior consistency with the canon of their own works, can also be seen perhaps surprisingly as essentially grappling with similar problems, though with different aesthetic strategies. The three younger Guyanese are clearly listening to their seniors and to each other as they move with increasing confidence into their own distinctive differences as articulators of the Caribbean

experience (in subtle ways less optimistic articulators perhaps than their elders).

To move from Naipaul's Blair to Melville's Bla-Bla to Walcott's Captain Bligh is to see a development from historicity exemplified in a realistic deconstruction of the political, to the tragedy of the loss of the future and of indigenous speech, to the mythification of necessary mutiny, the courageous defiance of tradition—of the Father—which is the precondition of self-creation. Extended to the collective cultural self-creation, this progression is the Caribbean's distinctive achievement and its imaginative gift to the world. The binaries of power—dominator and dominated—are stirred and mixed in Caribbean writing, their mutual involvements and ambivalences deconstructed. The Blair/Bla-Bla/Bligh paradigm reaches its conclusion in another assonant, "blur," as used in Joan Dayan's study of Haitian culture, which illuminates also the wider Caribbean's: "Terror is the place of greatest love. When I ask, 'How are gods made?' I am also asking, 'How are histories told?' I want to reveal the blur at the heart of hierarchy. A mutually reinforcing double incarnation, a doubling between violation and sentiment, purity and impurity" (xx). Harris has long argued the need to reconcile binary oppositions through a consumption of their own biases. In exploring ways of modelling Caribbean pluralism, these writers in particular revisit the core myths of sexuality, deconstructing history as rape and sadism, but also mythifying other kinds of contact, that is, gentler interactions. The loss not only of father but also of mother (Dabydeen's poem ends, "No mother") liberates from hierarchy and requires a reaching out to peers—brothers and sisters, of all kinds, familial and collective. The new locus is the key, the place in which the multiple traditions have become Caribbean, have become American, and are still creolizing, and in which the opportunity for a real democracy can be realized. Benítez-Rojo distinguishes Caribbean culture by its "desire to sublimate apocalypse and violence" (16).

These six texts confirm that desire, mixing history and myth in varying degrees, producing art which devises subtle strategies of resistance and survival—and celebration. Dabydeen's account of his relationship to "Turner" has echoes in the other five texts:

"'Turner' is the only thing that I have written so far which I feel comfortable with. I suppose I spent twenty years just trying to find an Africanness or find an Indianness or find a Creoleness; a kind of constant grind to find something, and now you settle for a world of your own making, and you settle for metaphor—the sheer beauty and autonomy of the metaphor" (Dawes 208-09). Or as Walcott puts it in his Nobel speech: "All of the Antilles, every island, is an effort of memory; every mind, every racial biography culminating in amnesia and fog. Pieces of sunlight through the fog and sudden rainbows, *arcs-en-ciel.* That is the effort, the labour of the Antillean imagination, rebuilding its gods from bamboo frames, phrase by phrase" (*Antilles* 27). As the millennium approaches, these writers share an awareness that while history still hurts, the timeless zone of myth, if imaginatively read, can provide landmarks to progress, so that the mythopoeic artist may row the people's boat steadily towards a more benign future.[9]

NOTES

[1] This study grows from works I have reviewed, with the exception of the D'Aguiar text: David Dabydeen, *Turner, New Statesman,* 22 Apr. 1994: 40; V. S. Naipaul, *A Way In The World, New Statesman,* 13 May 1994: 36; Wilson Harris, *Jonestown, New Statesman,* 12 July 1996: 48; Pauline Melville, *The Ventriloquist's Tale, The Independent* (The Long Weekend), 24 May 1997: 8; Derek Walcott, *The Bounty, The Independent* (The Long Weekend), 12 July 1997: 6.

[2] Dabydeen has published another novel since *Turner, The Counting House* (1996), although he asserts that his "instinct is for poetry" (see his 1995 interview with Kanaganayakam).

[3] The difficulty of writing about the actualities of slavery without producing a kind of pornography is real. "Let us recall the most popular form of torture in colonial Saint-Domingue, sanctioned and recognized by the Black Code: the whip. Once the skin was flayed, pepper, salt, lemon, and ashes were applied to the wounds" (Dayan 265).

[4] Dabydeen told me, 9 Dec. 1994, that he had not known the name's mythical significance until reading of it in my review. In a published interview (with Kanaganayakam), he has since mentioned the matter and its bearing on the Jungian idea of the collective unconscious.

[5] Both Greek and Hindu myths are now assimilated as Caribbean myths, the latter particularly in Guyana and in Trinidad. The central climax of D'Aguiar's preceding novel, *Dear Future* (1996), also involves a symbolic death by fire.

[6] Harris has written to me that he is pleased with my perceived connection with *Popol Vuh,* which he says he has not read, putting the parallel down to the numinous—again, the idea of the collective unconscious.

[7] There may be a relationship between Harris's *Jonestown* and D'Aguiar's subsequent *Feeding the Ghosts.* Where Harris has a Ship of Bread and symbolic use of wood in

relation to sacrifice, D'Aguiar transforms a sacrificial woman into a wooden ship symbolizing survival.

[8] In a discussion in Milan, May 1996, Harris commented to me on a remark of Walcott's that afternoon that Dante had said it all—that it was not possible to go beyond that—that that was the difference between them.

[9] This article is a modified version of a lecture sponsored by the British Council, given at the University of Castille, La Mancha, Spain, November 1997, to be published in *Narratives of Resistance,* edited by Jésus Benito and Aña Manzanas.

WORKS CITED

Benítez-Rojo, Antonio. *The Repeating Island: The Caribbean and the Postmodern Perspective.* Trans. James Maraniss. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1992.

Bradbury, Malcolm. "America and the Comic Vision." *Evelyn Waugh and his World.* Ed. David Pryce-Jones. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973.

Cheyfitz, Eric. *The Poetics of Imperialism.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991.

Collier, Gordon. "His True Alien Spiritual Love: Walcott Wrestles with Harris (A Masquerade)." *The Contact and the Culmination.* Ed. Marc Delrez and Bénédicte Ledent. Liège: U of Liège P, 1997. 229-40.

Dabydeen, David. *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth-Century Art.* 1985. Manchester: Manchester.UP, 1987.

———. Interview. *Configurations of Exile: South Asian Writers and their World.* Ed. Chelva Kanaganayakam. Toronto: TSAR, 1995. 37-46.

———. *The Counting House.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1996.

———. *Turner.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1994.

D'Aguiar, Fred. "Ambiguity without a Crisis? Twin Traditions, the Individual and Community in Derek Walcott's Essays." Ed. Stewart Brown. *The Art of Derek Walcott.* Bridgend: Seren, 1991. 157-68.

———. *Dear Future.* London: Pantheon Books, 1996.

———. *Feeding the Ghosts.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1997.

———. *The Longest Memory.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1994.

Dawes, Kwame. "Interview with David Dabydeen: 1994." *The Art of David Dabydeen.* Ed. Kevin Grant. Leeds: Peepal Tree, 1997.

Dayan, Joan. *Haiti, History, and the Gods.* Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1995.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth.* 1961. Trans. Constance Farrington. London: Penguin, 1967.

Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things.* London: Tavistock, 1970.

Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness.* London: Verso, 1993.

Griffiths, Gareth. "Culture and Identity: Politics and Writing in Some Recent Post-Colonial Texts." *From Commonwealth to Post-Colonial.* Ed. Anna Rutherford. Coventry: Dangaroo, 1992. 436-43.

Harris, Wilson. *Jonestown.* London: Faber, 1996.

———. *Merlin and Parsifal: Adversarial Twins.* London: Temenos Academy, 1997.

———. *Palace of the Peacock.* London: Faber, 1960.

Hutcheon, Linda. "'Circling the Downspout of Empire': Post-Colonialism and Post-Modernism." *ARIEL* 20.4 (1989): 149-75.

Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection.* Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1982.

———. *Strangers to Ourselves.* Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1991.

Ledent, Bénédicte. "Remembering Slavery: History as Roots in the Fiction of Caryl Phillips and Fred D'Aguiar." *The Contact and the Culmination.* Ed. Marc Delrez and Bénédicte Ledent. Liège: U of Liège P, 1997. 271-80.

Maes-Jelinek, Hena. "'Tricksters of Heaven': Visions of Holocaust in Fred D'Aguiar's *Bill of Rights* and Wilson Harris's *Jonestown.*" *Union in Partition: Essays in Honour of Jeanne Delbaere.* Ed. Gilbert Debusscher and Marc Maufort. Liège: Université de Liège, 1997. 211-23.

McIntyre, Karen. "Necrophilia or Stillbirth? David Dabydeen's *Turner* as the Embodiment of Postcolonial Creative Decolonisation." *The Art of David Dabydeen.* Ed. Kevin Grant. Leeds: Peepal Tree, 1997. 141-58.

Melville, Pauline. Letter to Paula Burnett. 23 Jan. 1998.

———. *The Ventriloquist's Tale.* London: Bloomsbury, 1997.

Naipaul, Shiva. *Black and White.* London: Hamish Hamilton, 1980.

Naipaul, V. S. *A Way in the World.* London: Heinemann, 1994.

———. "Face to Face." Interview with Jeremy Isaacs. BBC2, London, 16 May 1994.

———. Letter from V. S. Naipaul to Paula Burnett, 4 June 1994.

———. *The Loss of El Dorado: A History.* 1969. London: Penguin, 1973.

Nettleford, Rex. *Inward Stretch, Outward Reach: A Voice From The Caribbean.* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993.

Nixon, Rob. *London Calling: V. S. Naipaul: Postcolonial Mandarin.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992.

Popol Vuh: The Maya Book of the Dawn of Life. Trans. Dennis Tadlock. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985.

Thompson, J. Eric S. *The Rise and Fall of Maya Civilization.* Norman: Oklahoma UP, 1966.

Walcott, Derek. *Collected Poems 1948-1984.* New York: Farrar, 1986.

———. *The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory.* London: Faber, 1993.

———. *The Bounty.* London: Faber, 1997.

———. "The Muse of History." *Is Massa Day Done?* Ed. Orde Coombes. New York: Anchor Doubleday, 1974. 1-28.

Waugh, Evelyn. *Ninety-Two Days.* London: Penguin, 1964.

Zamora, Lois Parkinson. *Writing the Apocalypse: Historical Vision in Contemporary US and Latin American Fiction.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.