

Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English

Second Edition

Edited by
Eugene Benson and L. W. Conolly



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Volumes 1, 2 and 3

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Introduction to the First Edition (1994)

In 1989, when we concluded our work on *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Theatre*, we wrote in the introduction that we were ‘eyeing the rich literatures of the British Commonwealth, and expect to sally forth soon on an even longer voyage of editorial exploration than the one we have just concluded’. Now, in 1994, we have ended that voyage and these two volumes constituting the *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English* are a record of our activities during this five-year odyssey.

This *Encyclopedia* represents the work of 574 contributors drawn from around the world, authorities in their fields who have written some 1,600 entries on a wide variety of topics in the area of post-colonial literatures in English. We are aware of the fact that the term ‘post-colonial’ is not as precise as one would like, but it has always proven difficult to find completely satisfactory nomenclature that would accommodate, for example, the literatures of such diverse countries as Canada, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and New Zealand. Terms such as ‘new literatures’ or ‘emergent literatures’ do not adequately describe the literatures in English of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, for example, which have a relatively long and established history.

We employ the term ‘post-colonial’ in the sense in which Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith, and Helen Tiffin use it in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (1989): ‘We use the term “post-colonial”, however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day.’ The entries ‘Post-Colonial Theorists’ and ‘Criticism (Overview)’ in the *Encyclopedia* are also useful in clarifying the term ‘post-colonial’.

We have excluded the literatures of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland because they are already well documented in scholarly reference works and to have included them in these volumes would inevitably have reduced the coverage that we wished to extend to those literatures in English that have not been so extensively examined and documented. And while some of the finest writing in English in the twentieth century has come from the colonies of the former British Commonwealth and the Philippines, it has not generally been accorded due recognition and scholarly assessment.

The entries in the *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English* encompass genres, major subjects, and critical biographies of writers. We also include entries on each country or region whose literatures are discussed in these volumes; these entries describe the countries or regions in terms of geography, history, religion(s), economy, politics, and culture. For a number of important genre entries and subject entries we have included ‘overviews’, which offer a synoptic view of the field. In addition, we have included a number of entries specifically associated with particular countries: in the case of India, for example, there are major entries on *Sanskrit Literature* and on *Gandhi in Indian-English Literature*; in the case of Australia there are entries on *Ireland and Irish Values (Australia)* and *Jewish Writing (Australia)*. The advice of our national and regional editors has been invaluable in this regard.

The Table of Contents shows the rich and varied nature of the genre entries, subject entries, and critical and biographical sketches representing the literatures in English of Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, the Caribbean, East Africa, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, St Helena, South Africa, South Central Africa, the South Pacific, and West Africa. We have encouraged our contributors to adopt, where appropriate, a comparative approach, comparing works with those by other writers in the same country or region and with those by writers in different countries or regions.

Entries are arranged alphabetically; readers should note that bolding throughout the text indicates that these authors or subjects have entries of their own. [*Editors' note:* cross references are denoted by SMALL CAPITALS in the Second Edition.] Dates in parentheses refer to first publication. We have given, where appropriate, cross references to relevant subject entries, genres, and authors. At the end of many entries suggestions for further reading are listed; although these works cited constitute an extensive research resource, it has not been the intention of the editors or contributors to provide exhaustive bibliographical information.

The entries that were chosen for brief treatment allowed mainly for factual information, but most entries were allotted sufficient space for contributors to supplement factual information with critical commentary. We have always believed it to be possible to combine information, evaluation, and interpretation in concisely written entries that can be interesting and insightful both to the specialist and the general reader. Genre entries have been allotted generous space – those on the novel, for example, run to some 30,000 words; the combined entries on the novel, drama, poetry, short fiction, and poetry constitute a significant work in themselves.

If we were to select a second principle governing our editorial work, it would be that we have sought to respect the individual voices of our many contributors from so many lands while maintaining a necessary sense of common purpose and editorial consistency.

We have benefited enormously from the generosity of many people who have assisted us with their advice and guided us with their expertise. Our first and primary debt is to our Board of Research Consultants – Professors Diana Brydon, Gwendolyn Davies, John P. Matthews, Govind Sharma, and Rowland Smith. Between 1987 and 1992 the Board met on six occasions at the University of Guelph where it offered invaluable help and guidance to the editors. Others who assisted greatly include Professor G. D. Killam, Canada, Professor Chris Tiffin, Australia, and Professor Bruce King, USA.

Because of the magnitude of our project and the many literatures we were documenting, we drew upon the expertise of a number of national and regional editors. They represent some of the most knowledgeable scholars in post-colonial literatures in English. We thank most sincerely Professor Stephen H. Arnold (Cameroon), Professor Diana Brydon (Canada), Professor Edward Baugh (The Caribbean), Professor Mimi Chan (Hong Kong), Professor Isagani R. Cruz (Philippines), Philip Dennis and Ann Taylor (Gibraltar), Professor Ken Goodwin (Australia), Professor D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke (Sri Lanka), Professor Alamgir Hashmi (Bangladesh and Pakistan), Professor G. D. Killam (East Africa and West Africa), Professor Daniel Massa (Malta), Professor C. D. Narasimbaiah with Professor Shyamala Narayan (India), Professor Kirpal Singh (Malaysia and Singapore), Professor Terry Sturm (New Zealand), and Professor Chris Tiffin (South Pacific).

We were very fortunate in our staff. Olga Griffin joined us at the outset of the project and was responsible for all inputting, data collection, correspondence, and the maintenance of a complex web of electronic files. She was essential to the work. Ruth Happy, our efficient assistant editor in 1990–1, established many of our working procedures before going on to doctoral studies. She was succeeded by Jennifer Kelly, assistant editor and research co-ordinator, who worked tirelessly to bring the Encyclopedia to its conclusion before she too proceeded to take up doctoral studies in the area of post-colonial literatures in English. She proved to be an ideal colleague.

Les R. Dunn, President, Micro Management Systems, Guelph, Canada, prepared the Camera Ready Copy of these two volumes. [*Editors' note:* this is not the case in the Second Edition.] In collaboration with Eugene Benson, he also designed the program that created the text-generated index, an unusual feature in so large a work as this encyclopedia. The index will help readers locate references to thousands of authors, books, publishing houses, theatre companies, individual short stories and poems, and other relevant

literary materials to an extent that would be impossible otherwise. The program designed by Les Dunn and Eugene Benson was the subject of a paper, 'The "Routledge Encyclopaedia" Project: Indexing Tools and Management Techniques for Large Documents', published in *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, vol. 8, no. 2 (1993).

We are especially grateful to all our contributors who responded patiently and generously to our many queries. In a number of instances we had to cut entries that were too long; we thank these contributors for accepting our editorial surgery with such understanding. During our three-year correspondence with our contributors, we established many epistolary friendships that we have enjoyed greatly; the completion of this multi-authored encyclopedia represents international collegiality at its finest.

We are grateful to many other people who helped us: Dr John Black, Chief Librarian, the University of Guelph, and his staff, particularly Helen Salmon, Patricia Eaves, Pearl Milne (who cheerfully operated the library's optical scanner on our behalf), and Dr Moshie Dahms. We received generous clerical help from Janice Walker, Maria Walker, Gail McGinnis, Fran Keen, Betty King, and Lori Barnsley. To Carol Shennan, Dorothy Collins, Sybil Thorn, and Judy Grasmuck we owe special thanks. Walter McGregor spent many hours helping with all aspects of indexing. In her capacity as Chair of the Department of English, the University of Guelph, Professor Constance M. Rooke encouraged our work and provided generous office space and ancillary services. Dr Carole Stewart, Dean of the College of Arts, the University of Guelph, was also most helpful. Dr Renate Benson, the University of Guelph, helped with various editorial duties, as did Ormonde Benson, Shaun Benson, and Dione Holmes. Barbara Conolly read portions of the book at the proofing stage with an experienced editorial eye. For advice on various aspect of computing technology we thank Madge Brochet, Computing Services, the University of Guelph. Lise Rochon, Communication's Officer, the Canada Council, supplied us with useful statistics concerning the Council. Graduate students Danludi Bature, Heather Smythe, and Yong Huang did useful checking work as did undergraduate students Liana di Marco and Markus Kremer. We acknowledge gratefully the help of Alison Barr, formerly an editor at Routledge, who was of great assistance at the early stages of work. Since 1992 we have benefited greatly from the advice of Alex Clark, development editor at Routledge. Leonard Conolly expresses particular thanks to the Warden and Fellows of Robinson College, Cambridge, for electing him to a Bye Fellowship in 1991 to work on the *Encyclopedia*.

When we commenced planning the *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English* in 1987, we received the enthusiastic support of Dr David Murray, then Dean of the College of Arts, the University of Guelph, who had also supported us throughout the preparation of *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Theatre*. In 1987 the Office of Research, the University of Guelph, awarded the editors a generous grant from the Research Excellence Fund in order to finance our preliminary planning sessions. In 1989 the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada awarded the editors the generous grant that made this work possible, followed by a supplementary grant in 1992. Like so many Canadian scholars, we are deeply indebted to the Council, which we thank most sincerely. We are also indebted to the Alumni Association of the University of Guelph, which awarded us a grant in 1992 that helped us in the last stages of preparing the *Encyclopedia*. Trent University also generously assisted in the final preparation of the book.

And once again we thank Renate Benson and Barbara Conolly, who have tolerated the innumerable meetings and long working days associated with the complex task of editing this *Encyclopedia*. We hope that the final product meets with their approbation.

EUGENE BENSON
L. W. CONOLLY
Guelph and Peterborough, Canada
April 1994

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Introduction to the Second Edition

In this second edition of the *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English*, the General Editors have retained the same format as that of the first edition: entries that encompass genres, major subjects and critical biographies of writers; entries on those countries or regions whose literatures are examined in the *Encyclopedia*; and ‘overviews’ – entries that provide a synoptic view of a number of important subject and genre entries. Where appropriate, entries from the first edition have been updated (to 2002–3); in those cases where contributors to the first edition have been unable to update their entries, new contributors have been commissioned and their names added at the end of such entries. Some 200 entries have been added to accommodate significant new writers who have emerged in the last decade; there are also new entries on Cyprus and its writers. In many cases, bibliographies have been updated to take into account new critical approaches and assessments of writers and their work.

As with the first edition, we have relied heavily on the advice and expertise of National and Regional Editors, who in turn have drawn on the work of the original 574 contributors and that of 96 new contributors. Joining the National and Regional Editors of the first edition are Christopher Lee (Australia), Eugene Benson and L. W. Conolly (Canada); Stephanie Newell (East and West Africa); Stephanos Stephanides (Cyprus); Xu Xi (Hong Kong); I. S. Talib (Malaysia and Singapore); Howard McNaughton (New Zealand); Adrian Roscoe (South Central Africa); and Teresia K. Teaiwa (South Pacific). We thank these National and Regional Editors and all those who contributed to the first and second editions of the *Encyclopedia*. A particular pleasure in preparing this second edition was renewing old epistolary friendships with hundreds of colleagues throughout the world and the commencement of many new ones. May this work be a memorial to these friendships and to an enterprise that celebrates the literatures of so many lands.

We also record our gratitude to Gerard Greenway, Faye Kaliszczyk, Fiona Maclean, Martyn Oliver, Vanessa Winch and, especially, Stephanie Rogers and Dominic Shryane at Routledge, all of whom worked closely and helpfully with us at various stages of our work.

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A

Abad, Gemino Henson (1939–)

Filipino poet, short story writer, critic

Born in Manila, the Philippines, he was educated at the University of the Philippines (BA, 1963) and the University of Chicago, USA (MA, 1966; PhD, 1970). Abad is University Professor of English at the University of the Philippines, and has also been Visiting Professor at the University of Hawaii, St Norbert College in Wisconsin, and Singapore Management University. He was a Fellow at the 1988 Cambridge Seminar, England, and the 1990 International Writers Program at the University of Iowa, USA.

Abad's early poems in *Fugitive Emphasis* (1973), heavily influenced by Wallace Stevens, earned him an instant reputation as the country's leading academic poet. More dense, allusive poems followed in *In Another Light: Poems and Essays* (1976) and *The Space Between* (1985), before his association with the performance-oriented poets of the Philippine Literary Arts Council (of which he was co-founder in 1981) moved Abad to write more easily accessible poetry and poetic prose in *Poems and Parables* (1988) and *State of Play* (1990), as well as short fiction in *Orion's Belt and Other Writings* (1996), *Father and Daughter* (1996, with Cyan R. Abad), and *A Makeshift Sun* (2001). The later texts also exhibit political discontent caused by the Marcos dictatorship. His poetry made Filipino poets aware of the need for control of voice, an issue sometimes neglected in the general rush to comment on political or psychological events.

Abad has also established himself as a literary scholar and critic of note. Starting out as a neo-Aristotelian in *In Another Light* and *A Formal Approach to Lyric Poetry* (1978), he discovered

Saussure in *The Space Between*, leading him to problematize his earlier readings of Filipino poetry. His theoretically sophisticated rereading of earlier poetry in English bore fruit in three anthologies: *Man of Earth: An Anthology of Filipino Poetry* and *Verse from English, 1905 to the mid-50s* (1989, with Edna Zapanta Manlapaz), *A Native Clearing: Filipino Poetry and Verse from English since the '50s to the Present from Edith L. Tiempo to Cirilo F. Bautista* (1993), and *A Habit of Shores: Filipino Poetry and Verse from English, '60s to the '90s* (1999). Abad's phrase 'poetry from English' has gained currency among scholars to describe the way Philippine poets deconstruct the English language to make it suit local aesthetic needs. In *Man of Earth*, he writes:

Nothing perhaps more dramatically *presents* to – show, to gift, to make ever present – the shaping power of language, its inherent way of thinking, than our verses in English; but conversely, paradoxically, nothing more dramatically *sub-verts* – to cultivate and plow under, as it were – the same power by its very means of shaping, of *in-forming* (forming us within), than our poems from English.

ISAGANI R. CRUZ

Abbas, Khwaja Ahmad (1914–87)

Indian novelist, short-story writer

Born at Panipat, Haryana State, India, he started his career as a journalist working for the *Bombay Chronicle*. He published more than seventy books

in English, Urdu and Hindi. Abbas was a committed writer, strongly influenced by Marxism. Of his longer narratives, most are popular film scripts, and even the serious novels do not altogether escape the impact of cinematic conventions. *Tomorrow is Ours: A Novel of the India of Today* (1943) deals with several issues, including leftism, fascism, nationalism and social reform. Parvati, the protagonist, devotes her dancing talents to a leftist drama group, and her doctor-husband proceeds to China to tend the war-wounded. *Inqilab: A Novel of Indian Revolution* (1955) presents a panorama of early nineteenth-century Indian politics as viewed by Anwar, a Muslim youth. The plethora of characters and incidents, mostly from real life, allows for little more than reportage, while the ending, in which Anwar is discovered to be a Hindu's illegitimate son, smacks of film-script romanticism. The sequel, *The World Is My Village* (1984), offers the same mixture, though the setting here is international. Anwar, now a globe-trotting journalist, is finally killed in a communal riot in Bombay, stabbed by both Hindu and Muslim fanatics in separate encounters.

Abbas's short-story collections include *Rice and Other Stories* (1947), *Cages of Freedom and Other Stories* (1952), *One Thousand Nights on a Bed of Stones*, and *Other Stories* (1957), *The Black Sun and Other Stories* (1963), and *The Thirteenth Victim* (1986). Abbas's stories are well constructed and evince considerable narrative flair, but are generally overweighted with ideological import.

Abbas has also produced autobiographical writing, *I Write as I Feel* (1948) and *I Am Not an Island* (1977); travel books, *Outside India* (1939) and *An Indian Looks at America* (1943); a biography of Indira Gandhi, *That Woman – Her Seven Years of Power* (1973); and drama, *Barrister-at-Law: A Play about the Early Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (in collaboration with Pragji Dossa, 1977).

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M. K. NAIK

Aboriginal Literature (Australia)

The emergence in the 1920s of indigenous black writing in Australia saw the publication of *Aboriginals: Their Traditions and Customs* (1924) by well-known Ngarrindjeri speaker and inventor DAVID UNAIPON. Here the Aboriginal mission-born Unaipon emphasized the intricate system that had sustained his race for more than fifty thousand years prior to the British invasion and settlement in 1788. A firm believer that Aboriginal society contained oral literature to rival Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Unaipon transformed Aboriginal spoken forms into Standard English written texts that culminated in the slim volume, *Native Legends* (1929). A far more extensive manuscript by Unaipon, which in 1925 had drawn the interest of publishers Angus and Robertson, appeared five years later as part of a larger work by a white anthropologist, W. R. Smith – *Myths and Legends of the Australian Aboriginals* (1930; repr. 1970). The discovery of this piracy has tended to project white (mis)appropriation of black literature into the broader sphere of white exploitation of black cultural material, reconfirming the political intensity characterizing the production of the black Australian text.

Impediments to Black Australians having their work published lasted well into the 1960s when OODGEROO NOONUCCAL (formerly Kath Walker) published the first volume of verse by an Aboriginal writer, *We Are Going* (1964). Meteoric sales of the book, unprecedented in the history of Australian poetry, are attributable as much to the political changes affecting the postwar conservatism of Australia as to the appearance of a first 'literary' volume by a black. Her representations of Aboriginal life dominated by discriminatory laws have their parallel, particularly in the south-west Pacific basin, in the poetic works a short time later by JOHN KASAI PWALOVA (Papua New Guinea). The indigenous poet sought to explain the tensions, frustrations and joys of his/her people extricating themselves from white colonial authority. Given the close proximity of these countries, a common experience of white domination ensued, but historical and cultural differences assured a distinctiveness in how each colonized group would seek to determine its future. The major factor is that in all the

former Commonwealth colonies *except* Australia indigenous sovereignty and right to ownership of the land (prior or present) had been formally ratified by the British invader.

The Aboriginal 'Tent Embassy' (a tent erected on Australia Day 1972), began as a peaceful demonstration by blacks against the denial of Aboriginal Land Rights and symbolized the political stand of blacks on a national basis. That most of the major figures responsible for creating a black literary movement in Australia identified with this political event is indicative of the crucial role the 'Embassy' would have upon Black Australian literature. Although several writer-activists, such as Gerald Bostock, Dobbi Eykoo and Robert Merritt, remain largely unpublished in the field of literature, their involvement in the Embassy and its aftermath consolidated the realist underpinnings of Black Australian writing.

White Australian criticism tended to circumscribe the scope and influence of black writing by pointing to black writers' use of outdated forms and a preoccupation with confrontational topics. But the continual reworking of themes in later black works belies such criticism and was further repudiated by the rise of black drama. One of the authors targeted by this early criticism, JACK DAVIS, continued to write poetry and was recognised as one the foremost practising playwrights in Australia during the 1980s. More than any other Black writer, Davis epitomized Bostock's statement that he saw drama as an extension of his poetry. It is further revealing that the first five plays performed, including Bostock's 'Here Comes the Nigger!' (premiered in 1976) and Davis's companion plays *Kullark* and *The Dreamers* (in *Kullark/The Dreamers*, 1982), provide an overview of the various forms of dependency upon white institutions that inhibited black advancement. The institutionalized stereotyping of blacks is evoked in the first of the five plays performed, KEVIN GILBERT'S 'The Cherry Pickers' (premiered 1971), through the dependency of a community of black itinerant fruit pickers upon a white orchard owner for their livelihood; Bostock's play 'Here Comes the Nigger!' features a blind black poet who must rely upon a white female tutor to help him qualify for his Higher School Certificate; without the benevolence of the white civilian in Merritt's *The Cake Man* (1978), the Aboriginal household will collapse; despite the continual efforts of the Nyoongahs in all phases

of *Kullark* to meet white society on its own patronizing terms, white justice operates to reaffirm their inferiority; in *The Dreamers*, social inertia fixes the Wallitch family in a cycle of dependency on alcohol and welfare benefits that serves to conceal their spiritual association with their Dreaming. Themes of Aboriginality (encompassing black identity and spiritual affinity with the land) and land rights are thus presented indirectly or implicitly, often with an ironic treatment of white superiority that serves to reinforce the dynamic communalism of the black family and the distinctiveness of black community values.

The group or family as central motif in black community social structures is naturally better facilitated by dramatic representation. Resistance to intrusive white elements upon Aboriginality none the less continues to be the major theme in novels with the broadening of individual consciousness representing the collective black response. Monica Clare's *Karobran: The Story of an Aboriginal Girl* (1979), until 1991 the only published novel by an Aboriginal woman, locates this representativeness in a story common to blacks throughout Australia; the forced separation of black children from their parents was official policy in Australia for much of the twentieth century. The practice was so common and widespread that it became a common subject of biographical writing, particularly by black women, including Glenyse Ward's *Wandering Girl* (1987). The official Government report into the so-called Stolen Generations of aboriginal children (1997) collected aboriginal testimony of the practice and it became a best seller and prompted a number of more commercial versions. Similar fragmentations of family and the debilitating effects of institutional racism are detailed in Marnie Kennedy's *Born A Half-Caste* (1985) and SALLY MORGAN'S *My Place* (1986). Other notable examples of aboriginal biography include RUBY LANGFORD GINIB'S *Don't Take Your Love to Town* (1988), *My Bundjulong People* (1989) and *Haunted by the Past* (1999), and Ruth Hegarty's *Is That You, Ruthie?* (1999).

In *Karobran* the semi-autobiographical account of the break-up of Clare's family and her subsequent institutionalization by white authorities leads to a politicization of the main character that is indicative of both race and class sensitization. The *leitmotif* of coming to an understanding of the

political realities for those who have been denied the freedom to determine their own future occurs coincidentally in the first published play by a Black Australian woman, Eva Johnson's *Murras* (1989). It is instructive that the first of Black Australia's female novelists and playwrights are determined to grapple with this phase. The expectation emerging from both texts is that the individual's struggle will empower the family to repel further assaults by an oppressive white society that seeks to hinder the social advancement of blacks in a subtle denigration of black political initiatives. Variations of resistance emanating from the community-based black perspective – a perspective that in its dynamics of a sharing and caring philosophy is compelled to engage in a reciprocity – are manifest in other works of prose fiction by blacks. ARCHIE WELLER, MUDROOROO NAROGIN, Sam Watson and Eric Willmot probe black mentality as it has developed to invest Australia's black people with a sense of the necessity to struggle against the dehumanizing white man. Mudrooroo published what some consider as the first aboriginal novel, *Wildcat Falling* (1965), and subsequently became a prolific publisher of poetry, fiction and criticism. His study of Aboriginal writing, *Writing From the Fringe* (1990), was a landmark work by an aboriginal intellectual, although revelations about the authenticity of his claimed identity in the late 1990s have called his status in the field into question. *Willmot's Pemulwuy* (1987) traces the exploits of perhaps the prototype of black resistance fighters in the character of Pemulwuy, an Eora warrior who organized a successful thirteen-year campaign against British imperialism from 1788 onwards. Sam Watson's *The Kadaitcha Sung* (1990) explores the magico-mythical spectrum of Aboriginal spiritual power that operates to subordinate white authority in an unconquerable black landscape. ARCHIE WELLER's fantasy epic *Land of the Golden Clouds* (1998) uses a post-apocalyptic future to explore the difficult possibilities of cultural and racial hybridization.

Lisa Bellear's gritty poems of urban protest, *Dreaming in Urban Areas* (1996), and Melissa Lucashenko's exploration of domestic violence on the edges of Brisbane's urban sprawl in *Steam Pigs* (1997), launched promising careers in the late 1990s. Bellear is an activist, poet and photographer who is interested in combinations of image and text. Lucashenko has since produced three novels

for young adults, *Killing Darcy* (1998), *Hard Yards* (1999) and *Too Flash* (2002).

CLIFF WATEGO

Aboriginal Literature (Canada)

Native and Métis literature

Native Canadian literature begins with the ancient oral literatures that aboriginal peoples from different tribes across what is now Canada expressed in prose narratives, songs, chants, speeches, drama and prayers, and utilized in tribal ceremony, ritual and storytelling. Unique and linguistically specific, these oral literatures reflect a rich and complex diversity of culture and history.

Europeans who learned the Native languages marvelled that a people who had neither the wheel nor writing knew the power of the word. They were amazed that the 'untrained savage mind' was capable of eloquence. But with their ethnocentric prejudices towards Native peoples and their antipathy towards oral literature, they dismissed it as 'primitive' or 'pagan', 'curious' or 'quaint', and betrayed its dynamics by infiltrating their translations of aboriginal literature with their own cultural and literary patterns. Traditional prose narratives were transformed into European fairy tales – their importance as repositories of religious beliefs, world concepts, tribal history and communal wisdom was ignored, and their social functions minimized. Speeches of outstanding orators, many of whom remain anonymous, were recorded piecemeal, in the contexts of the fur trade, colonial warfare and missionary activity, and were preserved merely as art objects to illustrate such 'surprising' literary qualities as 'pungent wit', 'metaphorical skill' or 'clever analogy'. It is only recently that scholars have begun to apply new and more appropriate techniques to the study of aboriginal oral literature.

By the mid-nineteenth century, some of Canada's Native peoples were writing and publishing in English – one result of the Christian missionary presence. Young Ojibwa converts in Ontario wrote their journals, life histories, reports, letters, travelogues and sermons in English, many of which were published and circulated through missionary publications, newspapers and in books.

These included GEORGE COPWAY, the first Native Canadian to publish a book in English (*The Life, History and Travels of Kah-ge-gah-bowh* (George Copway), 1847); George Henry, who, as leader of an Ojibwa dance troupe, published a slim volume, *An Account of the Chippewa Indians, Who Have Been Travelling among the Whites, in the United States, England, Ireland, Scotland, France and Belgium* (1848); Peter Jacobs, the first Native Canadian to write a sketch of his Canadian travels, *Journal of the Reverend Peter Jacobs, Indian Wesleyan Missionary, from Rice Lake to the Hudson's Bay Territory, and Returning Commencing May, 1852 ...* (1853); and Peter Jones, the first Native Methodist minister in Canada, whose *Life and Journals of Kah-ke-wa-quo-na-by* (Rev. Peter Jones) *Wesleyan Missionary* (1860) and *History of the Ojebway Indians, with Especial Reference to Their Conversion to Christianity* (1861) were published posthumously.

Because of great non-Native interest in Native Canadians at the time, personal histories, especially autobiography, were in demand. Autobiography was a new form, alien to an oral heritage in which the communal was sacrosanct. Consequently, autobiographical works retained many of the oral features of Native pre-literate cultures. Personal experiences were juxtaposed with communal narratives, with the anecdote and short essay, creating a distinctive literary form that combined history, traditions, beliefs and personal experience.

Another new and enduring genre of Native literature emerged: a protest literature, official in nature, taking the forms of letters, petitions and reports written to a variety of government agencies in Canada and England (including the British monarchy and the League of Nations). The predominant theme is indignation at the loss of land, of hunting and fishing rights, of self-sufficiency and dignity, of nationhood.

The literary accomplishment of this pioneering stage reveals the ability of Native writers to master the English language. It also gives a sense of their cultural identity and contributes something of value not only to social historians but also to early Canadian literature. Despite Christian and acculturated influence, their works are Native accounts. Aboriginal in origin, form and inspiration, they comprise the first body of Native Canadian literature in English. Although they tend to be rhetorical

and exhortatory, preoccupied largely with correcting the historical record of the past, they offer the first written evidence of the ideas, responses and feelings of individual Native Canadians.

The last half of the nineteenth century produced a number of short-lived periodicals sponsored by local missionaries and Native interest groups that encouraged Native correspondents and subscribers, as well as two significant books: *Origin and Traditional History of the Wyandotts, and Sketches of Other Indian Tribes of North America* (1870) by Peter Dooyentate Clarke, and *Our Caughnawagas in Egypt* (1885) by Louis Jackson, which gives a first-hand account of the famous Nile expedition to the Sudan in 1884–85. The period also produced the writings of Louis Riel (1844–85) and PAULINE JOHNSON.

Literary output in the first half of the twentieth century was meagre. Government policies based on the assimilation and suppression of Native cultures, the commonly-held belief that the Natives were a dying race, as well as lack of interest by publishers, a Depression and two world wars, made publication virtually impossible.

The 1960s, however, heralded considerable writing in English. The upsurge of Canadian nationalism that surrounded the 1967 centennial celebrations of Confederation focused peripheral attention on Native peoples. Native newspapers and periodicals funded by Native organizations or government agencies sprang up across Canada to provide a forum for energy and ideas. Native speakers emerged and Native oratory once again became a vigorous literary form. Journalistic reports and essays also became popular as a means of disseminating opinion and information. Whether in speech or in essay, Native voices were quintessentially political, addressing their persecution, betrayal and aspirations in explicit terms. Several books of legends, published by Natives themselves, also appeared: *Legends of My People, the Great Ojibway* (1965), by the well-known artist Norval Morriseau, and *Son of Raven, Son of Deer* (1967) by the Tseshah Indian George Clutesi, who also wrote *Pottlatch* (1969), a detailed description of this important traditional rite. *I Am an Indian* (1969), the first anthology of Native Canadian literature, edited by the non-Native Kent Gooderham, included poems by the angry young political activist Duke Redbird and prose pieces by Chief Dan George, Alma Greene, Howard Adams and Ethel Brant Monture.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s the influence of American civil-rights activists and the spectacular activities of the American Indian movement at Wounded Knee in 1973 drew the attention of the mass media to the plight of Native peoples. The *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy* (1969), the controversial white paper that recommended the abolition of special rights for Native peoples, mobilized Native leaders across the country. The support for Native causes made Canadian publishers eager to publish, and even to seek out, Native authors. A number of political activists published their works: Harold Cardinal, *The Unjust Society* (1969); William Wuttunee, *Ruffled Feathers* (1971); Howard Adams, *Prison of Grass* (1975). Although the 1970s began with books of protest and defence written from partisan motives, works of history with varying degrees of popular appeal also began to appear: *A Social History of the Manitoba Métis* (1974) by Emile Pelletier (Métis); *The Métis, Canada's Forgotten People* (1975) by D. Bruce Sealey (Métis) and Antoine S. Lussier (Métis); *The Fourth World* (1974) by George Manuel (Shuswap); and *These Mountains Are Our Sacred Places* (1977) by Chief John Snow (Stoney). The decade also produced traditional tales and legends retold by tribal elders: *Wild Drums* (1972) by Alex Grisdale; *Tales of Nokomis* (1970) by Patronella Johnston; *Tales of the Mohawks* (1975) by Alma Greene (Forbidden Voice); and *Medicine Boy and Other Cree Tales* (1976) by Eleanor Brass. Several books of poetry appeared: *My Heart Soars* (1974) by the coast Salish poet Chief Dan George (1899–1981); *Wisdom of Indian Poetry* (1976) and *Okanagan Indian* (1972) by Ben Abel; *Indians Don't Cry* (1977) by George Kenny; *Poems of Rita Joe* (1978) by the Micmac poet Rita Joe; and *Delicate Bodies* (1978) by Daniel David Moses.

Autobiography and its allied forms based on oral history, frequently written in the as-told-to tradition or with the help of a collaborator, dominated the 1970s. Many are 'one book' writers with a message to communicate to their predominantly white readership. Although their life stories are central, they tend not to be told sequentially, moving backwards and forwards in time recounting personal history along with communal stories, folklore, the wisdom of tribal elders, and short essays on how to acquire

specialized hunting or fishing skills. Examples of these are *Recollections of an Assiniboine Chief* (1972) by Dan Kennedy (1877–1973); *Geniesh* (1973) by Jane Willis, a Cree from northern Quebec who recalls her childhood and adolescence in Anglican boarding schools; *Voices of the Plains Cree* (1973) by Edward Ahenakew (1885–1961); *First Among the Hurons* (1973), the autobiography of Max Gros-Louis, who played a prominent role in the James Bay hydro project; *Buffalo Days and Nights* (1976), the memoirs of Peter Erasmus (1833–1931), the last surviving member of the Palliser expedition of 1857–60, as told to Henry Thompson in 1920; *My Tribe the Crees* (1979) by Joseph F. Dion (1880–1960); *My People the Bloods* (1979) by Mike Mountain Horse (1888–1964); *Forty Years a Chief* (1977) by George Barker; *Visitors Who Never Left: The Origins of the People of Damelahamid* (1974) by Chief Kenneth B. Harris; and the decade's most popular autobiography, *Halfbreed* (1973), a disturbing reminder of the ugliness of the cultural conflict that is part of Canada's social history, by Métis writer MARIA CAMPBELL.

Since 1980 there has been a phenomenal burst of creative output in English by Native writers from different communities across Canada describing what it is like to live as a Native in today's society. Novelists such as Beatrice Culleton (Métis) in *In Search of April Raintree* (1983), Jeannette Armstrong (Okanagan) in *Slash* (1985), and Joan Crate (Métis) in *Breathing Water* (1989) depict the dilemma of Canada's Native peoples. In *Honour the Sun* (1987) and *Silent Words* (1992) Ruby Slipperjack portrays the joy and the pain of an isolated Native community in northwestern Ontario, and in his short stories and novels THOMAS KING celebrates, usually humorously, the lives of Native peoples in small communities in both Canada and the USA. Fusing Native oral literary traditions and English literary forms, their writings reveal much humour and their structures are often episodic.

The short story is another favourite medium: *Achimoona* (1985), the first anthology of short fiction by Native Canadians, includes Jordan Wheeler (Métis), whose *Brothers in Arms* (1989) is a collection of three novellas. In 1990 Thomas King edited *All My Relations: An Anthology of Contemporary Native Fiction*, and Jeanne Perreault and Sylvia Vance *Writing the Circle: Native Women of Western Canada*. Eden Robinson's

Traplines (1996) is a collection of four short stories. Autobiography is still a popular form: BASIL H. JOHNSTON, *Indian School Days* (1988); Eleanor Brass, *I Walk in Two Worlds* (1987); Lee Maracle (Métis), *I Am Woman* (1988); Beth Brant (Mohawk), *Mohawk Trail* (1985); Florence Davidson (Haida), *During My Time* (1982); James Tyman (Métis), *Inside Out* (1989); Brian Maracle, *Back on the Rez* (1996); and Gregory Scofield, *Thunder through My Veins: Memories of a Metis Childhood* (1999).

The didacticism integral to Native oral traditions remains a prominent element in recent history books by Native Canadians: *We Are Métis* (1980) by Duke Redbird; *Kipawa: Portrait of a People* (1982) by Kermot A. Moore (Métis); *The Ways of My Grandmothers* (1980) by Beverly Hungry Wolf (Blood); *In Our Own Words: Northern Saskatchewan Métis Women Speak Out* (1986), edited by Dolores T. Poelzer and Irene A. Poelzer; and *Ste. Madeleine Community without a Town: Métis Elders in Interview* (1987), edited by Ken Zeilig and Victoria Zeilig.

In poetry, *Loveshine and Red Wine* (1981) reveals a mellowed Duke Redbird who has moved from bitterness and anger to such new subjects as the beauty of nature and the love of family, home and friends. In *First Person Plural* (1988), Daniel David Moses demonstrates a strikingly original sensibility and probing intelligence in his surreal images and subtle ironies. In *Pale as Real Ladies: Poems for Pauline Johnson* (1989), Joan Crate's sardonic wit and sharply pointed images wonderfully capture the tensions within a family troubled by divided loyalties and Victorian prudery. *Seventh Generation* (1989), edited by Heather Hodgson, includes work by such established poets as Jeannette Armstrong, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias and A. Garnet Ruffo as well as a number of relatively new poets: Marie Annharte Baker, Kateri Damn, Tracey Bonneau and Gregory Scofield.

Although a formal body of literature specifically for children did not exist in traditional times, it has recently become a favourite with Native writers. Maria Campbell, Bernelda Wheeler, Jeannette Armstrong, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias and Beatrice Culleton are creating their own tales for children.

Along with the new literary forms, traditional stories are being retold to keep alive the knowledge of the past: *Earth Elder Stories* (1988) by Alexander Wolfe (Saulteaux), *Kwakiutl Legends*

(1981) by James Wallas as told to Pamela Whitaker, and *Tagish Tlaagu* ('Tagish stories', 1982), recorded by Julie Cruikshank and narrated by Angela Sidney. In *Write It on Your Heart: The Epic World of an Okanagan Storyteller* (1989), Wendy Wickwire has tried to preserve in print the oral storytelling art of Harry Robinson.

Considering the traditional inclination towards drama, the vitality of aboriginal theatre is not surprising. Young playwrights are drawing heavily on traditional cultures. Canada's most celebrated Native playwright is TOMSON HIGHWAY. Others include Daniel David Moses – *Coyote City* (1990) and 'Big Buck City' (unpublished); John McLeod – 'Diary of a Crazy Boy' (unpublished); Val Dudoward – *Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle*, published in *The Land Called Morning* (1986), edited by Caroline Heath; and Drew Taylor, who has written for the stage and other media.

Native Canadian writing in English is evolving. Young Native writers, influenced by the rich spiritual dimensions of aboriginal life, are exploring the reality of aboriginality in Canada. They are particularizing universals within Native sensibilities and are developing their uniqueness within a stronger, more diversified literary aesthetic.

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S. PENNY PETRONE

Inuit literature

Canadian Inuit, who inhabit the arctic coast of Canada from the Yukon border east to Labrador, share their aboriginal language with the Inuit of Alaska and Greenland. Pre-contact Inuit (the term 'Eskimo' being the pre-colonial Algonkian term for the Inuit that gained widespread currency) had a rich, strictly oral, literature. Song, drama, legends and histories of both a religious and secular nature were part of the oral tradition, but none of these were recorded in print until writing was introduced by Europeans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Traditional Inuit song is often magical or ritualistic, but it can also have a narrative or lineal structure. The Greenland ethnographer Knud Rasmussen identified four basic types of Inuit song: mood poems, which are reflective and involve no central action; hunting songs, which are narrative and full of incident; charms or incantations, which employ magical language or code; and songs of derision, which are usually satiric monologues or dialogues. Songs of derision can have a judicial function. Transcriptions of traditional Inuit songs can be found in the works of the ethnographers Rasmussen, Diamond Jenness and Paul Emile Victor. A more recent work, *Poems of the Inuit* (1981), edited by John Robert Colombo, contains examples from all of these ethnographers' collections.

Traditional Inuit prose is generally considered more accessible to non-Inuit readers. Rasmussen divided the legends into five types: creation myths, which are religiously based; monster stories, which involve ghosts, trolls and other odd creatures; epics, which are not political or nationalistic but which feature a heroic leader who has numerous adventures; tales of murder and revenge; and beast fables, involving animals that talk and act like humans. Inuit legends have been collected in the twentieth century; *Tales from the Igloo* (1972), translated and edited by Maurice Metayer, is an excellent representative collection.

Today, two primary orthographies are used to write Inuktitut – a standard Roman orthography and a system of syllabics that was first developed for mission use among the Cree Indians of northern Ontario. English is a second language for most young Inuit, and is the only language of a significant number of Inuit children. Publication by Inuit writers in both Inuktitut and English enjoyed an unusual flowering in the 1970s, and this bilingualism is now considered an accepted and desirable part of contemporary Inuit life.

Modern Inuit poetry still has ties to the oral tradition. The mood poems are much the same, presenting brief pictures of emotions such as loneliness or maternal love. Charms have disappeared or gone underground with the rise of Christianity, and there is now a blossoming of Christian songs and hymns similar to those found in English. Hunting songs are rarely written except out of nostalgia, but there is a significant body of songs and poems about

politics and land-claim negotiations. Political songs tend to be derisive, and frequently take up ecological concerns. Songs and poems about romantic love are also popular. There are four basic categories of contemporary Inuit prose: autobiography, fiction, history of the material culture, and articles and essays on modern life. Like the poetry, the prose builds on the structures of the oral tradition while dealing with issues of contact life.

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ROBIN McGRATH

Aboriginal Song and Narrative (Australia)

Speaking more than two hundred languages and with a traditional culture reaching back thousands of years, the indigenous peoples of what came to be called 'Australia' faced a total invasion of their lands by a European group with nineteenth-century assumptions about the inferiority of 'primitive' peoples. This historical process links Aboriginal culture with that of the North American Indians and other invaded groups such as the Inuit people in Canada. The Europeans saw no writing, no value, no culture. Yet a sophisticated artistic life existed in Australia, with complex spiritual linkages among people, the land, and stories – a considerable oral and material culture.

Aboriginal cultural forms were (and continue to be) part of a holistic social response in which art is a social act and the artist is a communal value-creator whether speaking and singing in 'language' or in the more recent discourse of Aboriginal English. Songs and stories 'traded' across wide areas keep the land and its people alive and, in the process, map the continent with lines of culture and ceremony. The originating time, called (by Europeans) 'the Dreaming', is central: all song and

narrative evoke this period to renew the land, to mark sites of importance, to 'tell the country'. The process of telling and singing is a vital, physical life force that is part of a ritual of living important to all. As Bill Neidjie puts it in *Story About Feeling* (1989):

This story e can listen careful
and how you want to feel on your feeling
This story e coming through your body
e go right down foot and head
fingernail and blood ... through the heart
... White-European got to be listen this culture
and this story
because important one this.

Stories do not exist in isolation but are linked within a subtle matrix of art, ritual, oral performance and physical location. For the indigenous cultural systems conjoin what European terminology would define as 'location', 'history', 'language', 'sexuality', 'biology' or 'mythology'.

One of the major forms of Aboriginal culture is the song cycle or series. Any one cycle, often performed as part of a corroboree, is an epic narrative journey. The *manikay* form, to which the 'Djambidj' series belongs, consists of a group of thematically associated songs about ancestral beings who inhabit the lands of the Djambidj-owning clans. The stories and songs, performed within a symbolic oral formulary with ritualized terms and traditionally established patterns, are in the hands of custodians who have the right and responsibility to perform them. Each text reiterates the world that it evokes and is multimedia in nature (combining story, music and dance with material icons such as paint and flowers). Varied forms of any one song-line exist with open and secret versions and with separate songs and narratives tied to women's or men's experience and authority.

The formal modes of the *manikay* and the corroboree can be contrasted with more individualized forms such as the *tabi* songs in which one singer creates a mix of poetry and music that tells of kinspeople, indiscretions, dream journeys or the alien machines of the newcomer's culture. And there are chants, initiation songs, stories about food, the land, animals, the stars, and the post-contact narratives of murder and Aboriginal resistance. Nothing is outside the realm of song and story.

Paddy Roe says that his book *Gularabulu: Stories from the West Kimberley* (1983) is for

everybody. 'See, this is the thing they used to tell us: Story, and we know.' To know the story is to be alive in a culture. Many contemporary Aboriginal writers in English find inspiration and identity in linking back with the long-standing traditions of their culture. This process is typified in Sam Watson's *The Kadaitcha Sung* (1990) with its focus on when 'time was still young' and the Biamee figure, and is hauntingly echoed in the prizewinning novel *Benang: From the Heart* (1999) by Kim Scott, emphasizing an historical narrative of singing and tale-telling that challenges the colonial story. This work, and that of OODGEROO NOONUCCAL and others such as the contributors to the *Raparapa: Stories from the Fitzroy River Drovers* (1988) collection, continues a narrative and song tradition of major world importance.

Further reading

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HUGH WEBB

Aborigines in Literature (Australia)

The earliest written consideration of Aborigines stems from the journals of European exploration – both to and within Australia – in the second half of the eighteenth century. One example, *A Mother's Offering to Her Children* (1841), written by 'A Lady Long Resident in New South Wales', is an immature amalgam of naivety and sententious moralizing. Until the 1840s Australian poetry and fiction said little about Aboriginal themes or characters. Even in the first novel that depicts extended interaction with Aboriginal people – JAMES TUCKER'S *Ralph Rashleigh* (1845?) – the protagonist's four-year sojourn as a 'white blackfellow' is less significant than the convict system from which he is attempting to escape.

Tucker, ROLF BOLDREWOOD – especially in *Robbery Under Arms* (1882–83) – and ROSA PRAED – particularly in *Australian Life: Black and White*

(1985) and *My Australian Girlhood* (1902) – had strongly ambivalent views of Aborigines. There are interesting parallels between these attitudes and literary approaches to indigenous peoples in nineteenth-century Canadian novels such as JOHN RICHARDSON's *Wacousta; or, The Prophecy* (1832). The nineteenth century also saw the first serious attempts by Australian poets to engage Aborigines as subject matter. These attempts varied from uneven epics such as George Gordon McCrae's 'The Story of Balladeadro' (1867) and 'noble savage' lamentations such as HENRY KENDALL's 'The Last of His Tribe' (first published in 1863 in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as 'Woonoona' and under the quoted title in Kendall's *Leaves from Australian Forests*, 1869) to more skilled and explicitly violent ballads such as CHARLES HARPUR's 'The Creek of the Four Graves' (1853). The push towards Australian Federation in 1901 suggested to authors of the Nationalist school that themes about Aborigines could be redeployed in support of Australian distinctiveness. However, this marginal use of 'the black-fellow' by such authors as JOSEPH FURPHY was confined almost entirely to non-fiction writing (as in Furphy's 'Black Australia', an article published in the *BULLETIN* on 30 October 1902). KATHARINE SUSANNAH PRICHARD's major novel, *Coonardoo* (1929), with its depiction of miscegenation, resituated Aborigines at the centre of fictional attention and moral controversy. From 1930 onwards, perspectives on the thematic use of Aborigines expanded dramatically. At the same time that populist 'settler' fiction of the type made famous by ION L. IDRIESS was first being read – *Lasseter's Last Ride* (1931), for example – XAVIER HERBERT's seminal novel, *Capricornia* (1938), examined the concept of Aboriginal culture as an alternative world view, a process taken even further in his mammoth epic, *Poor Fellow My Country* (1975).

The Moving Image (1946) by JUDITH WRIGHT established the moral dimension of the boriginal theme as never before, involving Aboriginal characters and situations in a symbolic interrogation of white violence and dispossession. This metaphysical approach was later followed by RANDOLPH STOW in *To the Islands* (1958) and by PATRICK WHITE in *Voss* (1957), *Riders in the Chariot* (1961) and *A Fringe of Leaves* (1976). White's novels on the indigenous theme have

been productively compared to those of the Canadian RUDY WIEBE, author of *The Temptations of Big Bear* (1973) and *The Scorched-Wood People* (1977).

Sensitivity to Aboriginal concerns has increased in Australian literature written since 1960. Paradoxically – or perhaps logically – this has resulted in fewer titles dealing with Aborigines as subject matter. Significantly, too, despite selected examples of historical novels – THOMAS KENEALLY's *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (1972) – and contemporary treatments – PETER MATHERS's *Trap* (1966) and Nene Gare's *The Fringe Dwellers* (1961) – it has been in the genres of drama and poetry that this theme has received far more emphasis since the mid-1970s. The one important exception to this trend is the idiosyncratic prose of BANUMBIR WONGAR (Sreten Bozic), whose novels and short stories strike an Aboriginal chord that is in many ways more indebted to Kafka than to Katharine Susannah Prichard.

LES A. MURRAY's 'The Ballad of Jimmy Governor' (1972), 'The Buladelah-Taree Holiday Song Cycle' (1977) and *The Boys Who Stole the Funeral* (1980) utilize the rhythms and tones of traditional Aboriginal song cycles. Billy Marshall-Stoneking's poetry in *Singing the Snake* (1990) is so sensitive to collective Pintupi orality that it is difficult to determine the individual voice of some pieces.

On the stage, DAVID IRELAND's *Image in the Clay* (1964), Jill Shearer's *The Foreman* (1977), Thomas Keneally's *Bullie's House* (1981), and Tony Strachan's *State of Shock* (1986) establish a dramatic universe that revolves around a majority black cast, is focused upon issues of cultural clash, and considers the possibilities for racial accommodation. Like Canadian playwright GEORGE RYGA's *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* (1970), these plays have provided a useful platform for indigenous actors, even though the works themselves are not written by Aboriginal authors.

Further reading

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ADAM SHOEMAKER

Aboud, James C. (1956–)

Trinidadian poet

He was born in Woodbrook, a district of Port of Spain, the capital city of Trinidad and Tobago. Qualified in literature and law, he studied at the University of Western Ontario, Canada, the University of the West Indies, the Polytechnic of London, England, and the Middle Temple, London, England. Aboud has published one book of poems, *The Stone Rose* (1986), and a few poems in other publications. His writing deals with his heritage as part of the later group of arrivals in Trinidad and Tobago – those of Syrian-Lebanese ancestry – that is often perceived to be wealthy, clannish and not integrated into the society. Aboud is the first member of his country's Syrian-Lebanese community to participate in the literary arts of the nation.

An attorney and political activist, Aboud is critical of contemporary Caribbean poets, whom he characterizes as being 'soft at the core'. He finds their poetry 'not fresh and newly created. It takes no risks or gambles'. While Aboud finds such work unmistakably Caribbean, he also states that 'it is derivation rather than true creativity', evolving 'by always looking backwards, plodding forwards into its own same self'.

Uncommitted to any order or tradition of poetry, Aboud does not want to change the world through poetry; he wishes simply to write it, with any social or political changes being incidental. His poems in *The Stone Rose* are occasionally marked by strange juxtapositions and refreshing images that conform to his approach to the writing of poetry. He often speaks about the search for voice, as in 'Pizza':

The man's voice
will find him
eventually . . . Sooner or later
The man's voice
will find him –
Or mock him
from a distance.

Although Aboud has not published since 1986, he retains his anti-neo-colonialist stance, viewing neo-colonialism as a crutch for facile attempts at creativity.

ANSON GONZALEZ

Abrahams, Lionel (1928–)

South African poet, short-story writer, editor

Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, he graduated from Witwatersrand University in 1955. His collections of poetry include *Thresholds of Tolerance* (1975), *Journal of a New Man* (1984), *The Writer in Sand* (1988), and *A Dead Tree Full of Live Birds* (1995). The best poems combine a deeply philosophical approach with a controlled lyricism. His selected stories, essays and poems, *Lionel Abrahams: A Reader*, appeared in 1998 to mark his sixtieth birthday, while *A Writer in Stone* (1998), comprising contributions by various South African writers, honoured his seventieth birthday.

In 1977 Abrahams published *The Celibacy of Felix Greenspan: A Novel in 18 Stories*. Some of these stories are strongly Johannesburg-bound and, according to PATRICK CULLINAN, 'are rooted in the unique joy and suffering of an individual life'. A sequel to this collection, the novel *The White Life of Felix Greenspan*, appeared in 2002. As an occasional essayist Abrahams has had a considerable influence in intellectual circles and was at one time a regular columnist on literary matters in the *South African Literary Review*.

In 1956 Abrahams founded an occasional literary magazine in Johannesburg, *The Purple Renoster*. The magazine continued to espouse values of liberal tolerance throughout much of the repressive apartheid era and had accumulated twelve issues by 1972. It was eventually succeeded by Abrahams' *Sesame*, another occasional magazine. He was co-editor, with Walter Saunders, of a literary annual, *Quarry* (1976–83). He has also co-edited with NADINE GORDIMER the well-regarded Penguin anthology, *South African Writing Today* (1967).

Abrahams has been respected for his encouragement of fellow writers through workshops and reading groups. He has also, through editing and publishing ventures, promoted the work of at least three widely regarded South African authors: H. C. BOSMAN, MONGANE SEROTE and OSWALD MBUYISENI MTSHALI. Through the Renoster Press he proved himself to be a courageous publisher of alternative literature during the repressive apartheid regime.

Abrahams has come to be regarded as an elder statesman of South African letters. His diverse

literary contributions were acknowledged in 1992 with the award of a medal by the English Academy of South Africa.

Further reading

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GEOFFREY HARENSAPE

Abrahams, Peter (1919–)

South African novelist

Born to James Abrahams, an Ethiopian seaman, and his Coloured wife Angelina du Plessis, in Vrededorp, Johannesburg, South Africa, he began his schooling only in his tenth year, attending Grace Dieu, near Pietersburg, and St Peter's College, Rosettenville. The turning point in Abrahams' life was his encounter with the Bantu Men's Social Centre in Johannesburg, where he was exposed to black American literature. In 1939 he went into exile in order to pursue his desire to be a writer and to find his identity. After two years at sea as a ship's stoker, Abrahams married an English woman and worked in London with the Communist Party as an editor of the *Daily Worker*. After spending time in Paris, he returned to England, married his second wife Daphne Miller, and in 1952 was sent by the *Observer* to report on the colour question in South Africa and Kenya. In 1955 he visited Jamaica, at the request of the Colonial Office that he write a book on the island. This resulted in his documentary, *Jamaica: An Island Mosaic* (1957), and in his immigration to the hills above Kingston with his family in 1959. Abrahams has worked for the Jamaican radio service, and has been a contributor to *Holiday* magazine, and editor (1958–62) of the *West Indian Economist*.

Abrahams' lifelong preoccupation has been with the attempt of black people to find identity within a white world as a precondition for achieving true independence – as individuals and, collectively, as a race. Abrahams' early vision of a society in which colour played no part was gradually modified through his involvement with the Pan-African Movement to a position where he now advocates

black people's withdrawal from Western society and the discovery of their identity in a black world. His early novels place freedom of mind over political freedom; the emphasis shifts in the later novels as his life experience proved the importance of political power as a condition for racial liberation.

Following his only volume of poetry, *A Blackman Speaks of Freedom* (1941), and a collection of sketches, *Dark Testament* (1942), Abrahams published two novels with an overtly Marxist thrust: *Song of the City* (1945) and *Mine Boy* (1946). The novels were among the first in Africa to deal with tribal peoples' attempts to come to terms with industrialized society, one circumscribed, moreover, by racial discrimination. Taken together with *The Path of Thunder* (1948), which celebrates love across racial barriers in South Africa, these works constitute the early period of Abrahams' career and reflect his liberal conviction at the time that the freeing of the white mind from fear and prejudice would enable the black person to shed the burden of colour.

Some have seen *Wild Conquest* (1950) as the start of a new artistic creed by which Abrahams became particularly concerned with the history and future of the black race; he continued to wrestle with these issues in every subsequent book. *Wild Conquest* tries to find in the encounter between the Afrikaner and Matabele people during the Great Trek the seeds for the race conflict in South Africa and, like his earlier novels, still expresses the belief that individuals can transcend the colour consciousness of their society. However, the realization that such individuals will not have a significant impact on society led Abrahams to his later examination of political change as a prerequisite for a change of heart.

Abrahams returned to South Africa for six weeks in 1952 and his findings gave rise to the uncharacteristic bitterness of *Return to Goli* (1953). This documentary is crucial to an understanding of his art and beliefs and was the spur he needed to consolidate his life story in his autobiography, *Tell Freedom* (1954). The first autobiography by a black South African, it chronicles Abrahams' life under the oppressive system in South Africa before he went into exile. Influenced by the autobiography of the American Richard Wright, *Tell Freedom* shows Abrahams' differentiation from his community, anticipating his increasing isolation from the masses in his life and writing. In his later novels it is the figure of the artist or writer who is empowered to comment on individual and society alike. (See LIFE WRITING, SOUTH AFRICA.)

The publication of *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956) marks a third phase of Abrahams' career. In its indictment of colonialism and its prophetic insight into the problems that would beset the newly-independent African countries of the next decade, the book has features in common with the post-colonial novel, anticipating those of AYI KWEI ARMAH of Ghana. *A Wreath for Udomo*, however, bears out Abrahams' conviction that the writer must stand aside from direct political engagement in order to criticise those policies that threaten the autonomy of the individual or community. In the novel, the artist Paul Mabi has difficulty in accepting a political portfolio in independent Panafrica and relinquishes it after realizing to what lengths Udomo is prepared to go to keep his country on the road to freedom.

This question of how to resist the inroads made into individual integrity during attempts to set a community free is central in Abrahams' *This Island Now* (1966), a novel set on an island modelled on both Jamaica and Haiti. This critique of neocolonialism depicts how, some twenty-five years after independence, effective power remains in the hands of a minority of expatriates and is gradually transferred to a dictator. Through the reporter Martha Lee, Abrahams examines how colour consciousness and industrialization constitute the cruel legacy left to former colonies by the colonizer. Josiah, like Udomo, is finally alienated from his constituency because of his ruthless attempts to translate his noble ideals into political reality.

Abrahams' own sense of alienation is suggested in *A Night of Their Own* (1965), which marks a return to a South African setting, probably prompted by the Rivonia treason trial of 1963. The hero, Richard Nkosi, an artist working for an underground political movement, is elevated at the end to the status of a mythical figure. This sense of remoteness from the masses is still evident in *The View from Coyaba* (1985), which begins and ends in the hills above Kingston, Jamaica. Abrahams uses crucial periods in 150 years of international black history, such as slavery on a Jamaican plantation, share-cropping in the American South, and the transition from colonialism to independence in Uganda, to show his belief that black people must withdraw from Western society to free themselves from the centuries-long occupation of their minds. This saga is the culmination of Abrahams' life and writing and a view of his own place in the history of the black people. *The Coyaba Chronicles: Reflecting*

on the Black Experience in the 20th Century (2000) is Abrahams' most recent work.

The first prolific and widely read black writer from South Africa, Abrahams has exerted enormous inspirational influence on other black African writers in English, including CYPRIAN EKWENSI and NGUGI WA THIONG'O. Unlike the latter, however, Abrahams has tried to meet Western literary demands in the form of his novels. The development of his thought, however, indicates how African writing has attempted to deal with power, race and culture during the past fifty years. In both his life and his writings Abrahams has tried to reconcile the tensions between individual and social needs, and he has embraced contradiction. Apart from his initial espousal of Marxism, he has never submitted to ideological constraints in his work, but neither does he deny the necessity of political commitment in a writer. Abrahams' politics have always determined his art; ultimately, it is his experiences as a black man that have shaped his artistic consciousness.

Further reading

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Kolawole Ogunbesan, *The Writing of Peter Abrahams* (1979).

CATHERINE WOEBER

Abruquah, Joseph Wilfred (1921–)

Ghanaian novelist

Born in Saltpond, in the Central Region of Ghana, he was educated at Wesley College, Kumasi, Ghana, at King's College, Cambridge University, England, and at Westminster College, London, England. He taught at Keta Secondary School, Ghana, and later became headmaster of Mfantshipim School, Cape Coast. His importance as a novelist derives from *The Catechist* (1965) and *The Torrent* (1968).

At the beginning of *The Catechist* an omniscient narrator describes the death of the older Abruquah, whose *nom de plume* is Kobina Afram. This narrator then relinquishes the narrative thread to an internal narrator, the catechist, who recalls the story of his life from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. The self-indulgent catechist, however, has a fuzzy memory and is

paranoid about church officials. The novel reveals little about the tensions that marked the early history of the Christian church in Ghana; moreover, the narrative is strained by too much sermonizing and by the author's inability to mesh various episodes into imaginative art. However, Afram, self-righteous though ironically naive, is an interesting, quixotic character whose self-delusion is balanced by his kind heart.

The Torrent is a *Bildungsroman* about Josiah Afful, a boy-hero who moves out of a traditional Nzimah village to attend a grammar school, modelled after Mfantsipim School. In this urban setting, Afful is confused by issues of sexuality and relationships and by the conflicts between Ghanaian and European cultures. Unfortunately, Abruquah crowds his canvas with details about boarding school and with episodes (Afful's final examination and visit to his village) that are residuals of a plot sustained too long. In contrast to a similar work, GEORGE LAMMING's *In The Castle of My Skin* (1953), which reveals the experience of Barbadian society through the consciousness of a child-narrator, *The Torrent* barely shows Afful's personal response to the socio-cultural transformation of his society. The apparent weaknesses of his two novels notwithstanding, Abruquah is one of the first Ghanaian writers to record the experience of the indigenous society in transition as Western values gained ground.

Further reading

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CHRIS KWAME AWUYAH

Achebe, Chinua (1930–)

Nigerian novelist, short-story writer, poet

Chinua Achebe is arguably the best-known West African writer today. Born and raised in eastern Nigeria, Achebe had a Christian upbringing through his devout Anglican parents yet was very much immersed in local lore, tradition and history. Although he initially studied medicine at University College, Ibadan, Achebe soon switched to English literature. As he himself says, 'I took a false step at the university ... I was abandoning the realm of stories and they would not let me go'. Though he initially pursued

a traditional English degree replete with Shakespeare, Milton, Defoe, Wordsworth, Joyce *et al.*, Achebe was eventually presented with a novel about Africa written by the Anglo-Irishman Joyce Cary entitled *Mister Johnson*. Shocked by the 'absolute power over narrative' that a writer can have in general and how Cary had misrepresented Africans in particular, Achebe began writing *Things Fall Apart* in 1954, a story about the Igbo peoples, one of the many Nigerian civilizations. Published in 1958, *Things Fall Apart* ends with the musings of the British District Commissioner who strongly believes that he has come to Nigeria 'to bring civilization'. Concerned about the opinion the natives will form of him after a particularly disagreeable incident, he imagines the counter-narrative that he will produce to set the story straight in the book that he is planning to write. Though initially certain that he could devote an entire chapter to this experience, he finally decides that a paragraph might be more than enough. The title of the book is 'The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger'.

This closing paragraph of *Things Fall Apart* reveals Achebe's central concern: the power of the storyteller to change the true course of events. 'Man is a story-making animal', Achebe claims, and in order to re-possess African history, Achebe has devoted an entire book, one could even argue an entire life, to re-telling the stories of his country, Nigeria.

Things Fall Apart traces the daily life and experiences of Okonkwo in his native village of Umuofia, up until the arrival of missionaries, and finally the imposition of colonial rule. This introduction of an alien culture ushered in first through religious induction, and followed by the unwarranted intrusion of an extraneous law, leads to the humiliation and dishonouring of an entire community.

Achebe was most concerned with 'investiga[ting] further the history and theology of his own people', and through seizing the power of the storyteller he went on to write four more novels specifically recounting the trajectory of Nigeria under colonial rule, the problems surrounding independence, and the uncertainties of self-rule.

No Longer at Ease (1960) describes the difficulty of reconciling Igbo values with Western values and attitudes. What is at stake here is the

position of the individual who tries to ignore his past whilst simultaneously embracing his future, a future influenced by outsiders. This results in an 'uneasy' predicament where one's imagined history is divorced from one's sense of identity. In his next novel, *Arrow of God* (1964), Achebe returns to the 1920s and surveys the changes that colonization brought to the Igbo community. Achebe has often lectured on the openness of Igbo culture and its non-hostile attitude to the unknown. Having initially allowed the missionaries to establish a church within their land, the Igbo were unprepared for the zeal with which these missionaries practised their conversion techniques. In *Things Fall Apart* Achebe portrays how the Anglican missionaries influenced those members of the Igbo community considered outcasts and turned them against their own culture and religion through empowering them with a new system of belief. *Arrow of God* heightens this problem of the uncertainty surrounding religion and power.

In 1964 and 1965 Achebe gave two lectures entitled 'The Novelist as Teacher' and 'The African Writer and the English Language' respectively. These formed part of a series of lectures over the years in which Achebe sought to explain his role as a writer and the precarious nature of writing in English, essentially the colonizer's language. The writer, Achebe maintains, has an educational role towards his community, a role that allows him to re-shape experience in order to address the social and political issues at hand. The use of a language that can reach many is preferable to writing in local African languages; although this is a highly contested point amongst African writers, most notably the Kenyan writer NGUGI WA THIONG'O, Achebe has countered this issue through emphasizing the creative use of any given language. Thus, he claims, the English that he uses 'will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings'.

The year 1966 saw the publication of Achebe's fourth novel, *A Man of the People*, set in independent Nigeria. Political greed and misplaced nationalism here regulate or foreclose the power and potential of tradition. With this novel Achebe reminds us of the writer's influential position with regard to politics and the individual's relationship to his community. Achebe's now famous lecture 'An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of*

Darkness' has its roots in the determination to strike back at what he considered the misplaced representation of Africa from the 'outside'. Achebe chose to take Conrad to task due to the latter's immovable place in the English literary canon. According to Achebe:

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* ... better than any other work I know displays that Western desire ... to set African up as a foil to Europe, as a place of negations at once remote and vaguely familiar, in comparison with which Europe's own state of spiritual grace will be manifest.

This influence from 'without', as Achebe calls it, must be countered by writers from within Africa who can tell their own stories, thereby restoring dignity to their own peoples.

Three lectures given by Achebe at Harvard in 1998 were published under the title *Home and Exile* (2000). Here Achebe returns to reinforce the fundamental ideas underlying his creative output. In emphasizing the power of those who tell their nations' stories, Achebe claims that:

there is such a thing as absolute power over narrative. Those who receive this privilege for themselves can arrange stories about others pretty much where, and as, they like. Just as in corrupt, totalitarian regimes, those who exercise power over others can do anything.

Here Achebe returns to his starting point. His seizing of narrative control from those in power and his appropriation of a narrative voice with which to tell the story of Nigeria from the inside remain his primary responsibility. His hope, revealed towards the end of the lectures, is that the twenty-first century will 'see the first fruits of the balance of stories among the world's peoples'.

Much of Achebe's work has been involved in depicting the intersection between one's traditional inheritance, so called 'modern' innovation, and the effect of this on the individual. Often his characters are torn between the terms of this duality, and they struggle to understand and formulate a response to the changes around them. Achebe's collection of short stories *Girls at War* (1972) contains an example to illustrate this. 'Marriage is a Private Affair' tells the story of Nnaemeka and Nene, a modern Nigerian couple who live and work in Lagos. Their decision to get married is not without its problems, as they come

from different tribes and Nnaemeka's father does not accept this union – in fact he renounces his son. Finally, Nene writes a letter in which she begs him to see his two grandsons. His response is to enter into dignified introspection that results in a reconsideration of his decision based on heritage and traditional belief. Achebe describes this turn using images that belong to Igbo culture, introducing the forces of nature that operate in conjunction with people's thoughts:

The old man at once felt the resolution he had built up over so many years falling in. He was telling himself that he must not give in. ... He leaned against the window and looked out. The sky was overcast with heavy black clouds and a high wind began to blow filling the air with dust and dry leaves. It was one of those rare occasions when even Nature takes a hand in a human fight. Very soon it began to rain, the first rain in the year. ... His mind immediately returned to the children. ... By a curious mental process he imagined them standing, sad and forsaken, under the harsh angry weather – shut out from his house.

Chinua Achebe has also published a collection of poems, *Beware, Soul Brother* (1971), as well as several children's books, among which are *How the Leopard Got his Claws* (1976). Achebe's most recent novel, *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), fuses together his concerns and hopes with regard to a renewed Nigeria, replete with the possibility of a new leadership that is sensitive to the needs of all. Set in a fictional African capital struggling under a military régime, this novel reveals the dangers associated with leaders who lose sight of their initial motives and instead inhabit a world of conspiracy, suspicion and deceit. Significantly, however, Achebe introduces the centrality of literary production for a healthy political régime: a production that is creative, uncensored and reflective.

Further reading

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A. VALASSOPOULOS

Adams, Arthur H. (1872–1936)

New Zealand poet, novelist, dramatist

Born in Otago, New Zealand, he was a prominent editor and journalist who wrote poetry, novels and a number of plays that were successfully produced in New Zealand and Australia. His career, in fact, epitomizes the period of unparalleled closeness between Australian and New Zealand literary culture. Adams went to China as a war correspondent (1900–1), during the Boxer rebellion, and was in England until 1905. In 1906, after a brief period in New Zealand, he was back in Australia, where he worked for the *BULLETIN*, *Lone Hand* and the *Sun*.

Adams worked as a journalist in Sydney, Australia, and his first volume of poetry, *Maoriland, and Other Verses* (1899) was published there. Its intended audience was Australasian and it is among the first New Zealand literary productions to express a sense of exile *from* rather than exile *to* New Zealand. *The Nazarene: A Study of a Man* (1902) contains Adams's most accomplished verse; the Christ of its title poem has strong affinities with R. A. K. MASON's later explorations of the Arian heresy. *Collected Verses* (1913) marked the end of his poetry career, though he continued to publish prose and dramatic writing.

Adams wrote several novels, beginning with *Tussock Land: A Romance of New Zealand and the Commonwealth* (1904). His continued interest in drama is demonstrated in *Three Plays for the Australian Stage* (1914). The sketch called *A Man's Life* (1926) is a fictionalized autobiography.

Further reading

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MICHELE LEGGOTT

Adams, Glenda (1939–)

Australian novelist, short-story writer, playwright

Born and educated in Sydney, Australia, Adams moved to the USA in 1964 to study journalism at Columbia University. After teaching college fiction-writing workshops in the USA, she returned

to Australia in 1990 to teach creative writing at the University of Technology, Sydney. Despite her long absence, Adams has characteristically used Australia as her narrative impulse. It has been suggested that, like other expatriate writers, Adams's 'bifocal vision' generates 'original and critical responses to Australia' in her work.

The ambiguous situation of the expatriate writer was illustrated when Adams won the prestigious New South Wales Premier's Literary Award for fiction in 1988 for her second novel, *Dancing on Coral* (1987) – which also won the Miles Franklin Award; however, notoriously, Adams was not awarded the prize money because she was not resident in Australia. *Longleg* (1990) was also a prize winner, awarded The Age Book of the Year in 1990 and the NBC Banjo Award for fiction in 1991.

The theme of separation and her usually female protagonists' search for identity are major elements in Adams's fiction. Her narratives are intricately structured, often comic, and always informed by her political concern with issues such as colonialism, imperialism and oppression. In her first novel, the underrated *Games of the Story* (1982), the examination of totalitarian political structures and power relationships between human beings and the state recalls George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. This futuristic fiction, with its female narrator, is also reminiscent of work by MARGARET ATWOOD and DORIS LESSING.

Adams's first publication was a collection of short fiction, *Lies and Stories* (1976), followed by *The Hottest Night of the Century* (1979). Her stories have been widely published and anthologized. *Dancing on Coral* has been read as a wittily parodic reworking of CHRISTINA STEAD's *For Love Alone*. The novel also brings into question many of the conventions of masculinist narratives.

Adams says Luigi Pirandello taught her that truth and reality are not fixed. Increasingly, this notion and its narrative consequences are the subjects of her writing. In her third novel, *Longleg*, the central character, William Badger, learns to inhabit, finally to construct, an uncertain and shifting 'reality' as he grows up and undertakes the archetypal Australian journey to the 'old world' and back. As Badger, who may be compared with PATRICK WHITE's Sam Parker or Hurtle Duffield in some instances, loses his naivety and consolidates his position as the individualistic outsider, he

typifies the wayward, creative energy of contemporary Australian culture.

Another novel, *The Tempest of Clemenza*, was published in 1996, and Adams's first play, 'Monkey Trap', was performed in Sydney in 1998 to good reviews.

DELYS BIRD

Adamson, Robert (1944–)

Australian poet

Born in Sydney, Australia, he has lived all his life either there or near the Hawkesbury River. He spent some of his adolescence and early adulthood in correctional institutions. In the late 1960s he was a major figure in changing the direction of the Poetry Society of Australia's *Poetry Magazine* to the modernist *New Poetry* (1970–), which he controlled until 1981 either as editor, associate editor, or through close involvement with the editor. He founded and co-edited Prism Poets and Prism Books, was co-editor/co-director of the poetry publisher Big Smoke Books, and is co-director of the poetry publisher Paper Bark Press.

Adamson's poetry volumes are *Canticles on the Skin* (1970), where he is an outlaw and surrealist, a drug-using visionary nevertheless attracted to the Hawkesbury; *The Rumour* (1971), where he creates a private, autonomous universe of language; *Swamp Riddles* (1974), where the Hawkesbury provides a way of searching for meaning in the universe and which contains 'Sonnets to be Written from Prison', in which he is reminded of Stéphane Mallarmé; *Theatre I–XIX* (1976) and *Cross the Border* (1977), where, under the influence of Mallarmé and the Hawkesbury, he creates a self-referential, imaginary world, including an exploration of the Arthurian legend; *Selected Poems* (1977); *Where I Come From* (1979), where he selects from childhood memories to create an impression of outrageous realism; *The Law at Heart's Desire* (1982), where he explores his adult self in conflict with a materialistic society; and the award-winning *The Clean Dark* (1989), where he returns to the Hawkesbury to re-explore themes from his earlier work, including conventional social criticism from the alienated artist's viewpoint; *Wards of the State: An Autobiographical Novella* (1992), half of which is short prose, the

other half a collection of poems – with each presenting a series of autobiographical vignettes concerned with formative experiences; *Waving to Hart Crane* (1994) explores personal and poetic estates and experiments with language poetry; *The Language of Oysters* (1997) again returns to the poet's fertile concern with the Hawkesbury; *Black Water: Approaching Zukofsky* (1999) continues Adamson's interest in material reality and the elusive significance of language in relation to art and the quotidian practices of life; *Mulberry Leaves: New and selected Poetry: 1970–2001* (2001) supersedes *Selected Poems 1970–89* and includes a section of new poems which continue the trend towards sparse word pictures of an acutely observed environment and the suggestive, contemplative potential of poetry. Adamson also co-authored *Zimmer's Essay* (1974), which analyses prison experience, and he co-edited with M. JURGENSEN *Australian Writing Now* (1988).

Adamson's poetry combines romanticism with modernism. His obsession with writing poetry becomes a triumph of the will and a means of redemption, ironically facilitated by his violent adolescent experiences. Despite the lack of formal education, he read Western poetry extensively and frequently alludes to other poets and poetry in his own work. His unresolved adolescent hero-worship continued, not just as hero-worship of poets but also as deliberate imitation of their poetry. (The American poet Robert Duncan told Adamson to stop imitating him.) Adamson's criminal convictions and imprisonment reinforced his detestation of society, his extremely relativist viewpoint, and his need to impose particular opinions on other people. His use of hard drugs reinforced his relativism, contributing to his view that literal and imaginative worlds are almost identical. While many critics see his Hawkesbury poetry as his best, Adamson sees his poetic survival as the sum total of perpetual changes of personae (as distinct from social role-playing). He regards the entire body of his poems as unfinished, revising published work and writing new poems to give new meanings to earlier work. No matter how impressive his descriptive ability in some Hawkesbury poems, his main drive is to convert riverscape into the paradoxical mirror maze of a modernist altar.

Further reading

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GRAHAM ROWLANDS

Adcock, Fleur (1934–)

New Zealand poet

She was born in Papakura, New Zealand, but spent part of her childhood in England. She graduated in classics from Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, and taught briefly at Otago University. In 1963 she left New Zealand permanently to live in England. For many years she worked as a librarian, but has been a freelance writer since 1979. Her poetry collections include *The Eye of the Hurricane: Poems* (1964), *Tigers* (1967), *High Tide in the Garden* (1971), *The Scenic Route* (1974) and *The Inner Harbour* (1979). Her *Selected Poems* (1983) was followed by two volumes of translations – *Orient Express: Poems by Grete Tartler* (1989) and *Letters from Dark-ness: Poems by Daniela Crăsnaru* (1991).

Whether or not Adcock is a New Zealand poet is a question that arises in the poems themselves – 'Please Identify Yourself' (*The Scenic Route*) and 'Instead of an Interview' (*The Inner Harbour*), for example. Adcock has managed to make the transition to the British literary mainstream while retaining close links with New Zealand. Her early poems, such as 'Ngauranga Gorge Hill' and 'Stewart Island' (*High Tide in the Garden*), deal explicitly with New Zealand and her decision to leave it; later poems record her perception of her homeland when she returns as a visitor 'ingrained; ingrown; incestuous'.

Adcock's poetry has always exhibited a classical economy of phrasing and a distinctive air of detachment. Decorum, precision and control are the hallmarks of Adcock's poetic style. Her distinctive voice, with its characteristic mixture of candour and detachment, has given rise to a school of New Zealand imitators.

Adcock is an exact and unsentimental commentator on human relationships. 'Advice to a Discarded Lover' (*Tigers*) is an early example, providing a rebarbative, unforgettable final image:

If I were to touch you I should feel,
Against my fingers fat, moist worm-skin.

Do not ask me for charity now:
Go away until your bones are clean.

The tone of these poems is wry, ironic, cool. 'Against Coupling' (*High Tide in the Garden*) wittily advises against the act of love – 'this no longer novel exercise'. Adcock's elegies are judicious, stoical, yet there is a sense – rare in her work – that they have barely controlled the underlying emotion. *Time-Zones* (1991) builds on the political poems of *The Incident Book* (1986), observing with Adcock's typical detachment the anxieties of the time – birth defects, AIDS, Alzheimer's disease and World War Three.

Adcock has published translations of Roman and Greek poets, a collection of medieval Latin poems, *The Virgin and the Nightingale* (1983), and has also contributed translations to Peter Jay's *The Greek Anthology* (1973).

ANNE FRENCH

Adewale, Toyin (1969–)

Nigerian poet, short-story writer

Born in Ibadan, Adewale was educated at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife. She founded and was coordinator of Women Writers of Nigeria. She has worked in advertising, as an editorial consultant and a freelance journalist and, more recently, as an editor for the *Literary Review* of the *Lagos Daily Times*. With Omowunmi Segun she was co-editor of a pioneering anthology of Nigerian women's writing, *Breaking the Silence* (1996). This volume contains one of Adewale's own stories, which have otherwise been collected in German translation in two volumes, *Die Aromaforscherin (Explorer of Aromas)*, 1998, and *Flackernde Kerzen (Flickering Candles)*, 1999. Here Adewale addresses themes familiar in Nigerian fiction, such as political oppression, corruption and poverty. Her primary emphasis, though, is on different forms of violence committed against women. Often experimental in form, these stories are always provocative, though sometimes compromised by technical problems. The 1998 volume also contains around thirty poems (in dual-language format). Adewale's poetry had previously been collected in *Naked Testimonies* (1995). Often technically ambitious, these poems explore themes such as the celebration of love and

the pain of broken relationships (a particular focus being the callousness and untrustworthiness of the male partner), and the vitality of poetry and the poet's role in addressing the violence and oppression of Nigeria's military régimes. Throughout, much of the power of Adewale's poetry comes from her unflinching depiction of the particularity of women's experience.

CHRIS DUNTON

Africa in Canadian Literature

Africa features in Canadian literature as subject, setting, image and idea. Several Canadian writers have lived in or visited Africa and adapted their experience into fiction or poetry. Some have written of an imaginary Africa. A number of African-born writers have also emigrated to Canada and written of or alluded to their homeland.

Among the earliest documentary allusions to Africa in Canadian writing are the comments of various nineteenth-century travellers and military personnel who recounted their African experiences autobiographically. J. W. Dunbar Moodie told in *Ten Years in South Africa* (1835) of his experiences as a magistrate in that colony and of his interest in Africa's 'wild sports'. Returning to his native England in 1829, two years before his marriage and emigration to Canada, Moodie met his future wife, Susanna Strickland (see MOODIE, SUSANNA) at the London home of THOMAS PRINGLE, the English-born author of *Narrative of a Residence in South Africa* (1834) who is now claimed as one of South Africa's most prominent colonial poets. As secretary of the Anti-Slavery League, Pringle encouraged the Moodies, as well as numerous other figures, to question institutional racism, but such questioning did not altogether eliminate conventional European literary and social stereotyping of non-European peoples and places.

Evidence of the British Empire's ability to construct resistant images of Africa shows in the stereotypes of the 'dark continent' and the numerous colonial allusions to imperial heroes. European soldiers who ventured into Africa were frequently depicted as dauntless figures in conflict with 'savages' or 'rebels'; such images helped to justify, to the imperial mind, the European military, political and missionary presence abroad. General

Gordon's defence against the Mahdi's siege of Khartoum in 1885, and Lord Kitchener's efforts to retake the city in 1898, were both deemed subjects suitable for romantic poetry in Canada, as was the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902. Wilfred Campbell's 'Show the Way, England' (1905) typifies how imperial conquests were read as signs of a manly heritage and adapted to local political conditions. Selectively reading history, Campbell wrote:

We, whose fathers were
Victors with Wellington,
Masters with Nelson,
Under the old flag
They flapped at the Nile,
...

Won you, with Wolfe,
Canada's glorious
Mile upon mile.

In 'Ahmet' (1905), Campbell also re-wrote a North African folk tale, but early adaptations of this kind characteristically did not appreciate the sophistication of oral cultures; rather, they fostered an image of an Africa that remained 'primitive' until European contact. Many missionary hymns encouraged a similar image and hence constructed Eurocentric versions of power.

North Africa appears relatively infrequently in Canadian writing. One nineteenth-century writer who travelled to Egypt was Alice Jones, whose travel sketches were published in the Toronto *Week* as 'Nile Vignettes' from 19 July to 16 August 1895. Prominent among twentieth-century allusions is Scott Symons's 1986 novel *Helmet of Flesh*, a tale of homosexual desire set in Morocco, which aims primarily to attack blandness in Canadian society. Other works include stories such as ETHEL WILSON's 'Egypt' and JACK HODGINS's 'Separating', and travel essays (to Morocco, Algeria and the headwaters of the Nile, respectively) by Kildare Dobbs, Alberto Manguel and CHRISTOPHER ONDAATJE. South, East and West African allusions recur more frequently in Canadian literature, perhaps because more immigrants to Canada from these areas have themselves been writers. Among these immigrants are the poets Jeni Couzyn and ARTHUR NORTJE, the fiction writers William Schermbrucker, John Peter, Réshard Gool, M. G. Vassanji and Ernst Havemann, and the critic Cecil Abrahams. Couzyn's books of poetry – among them *Monkey's Wedding* (1972), *Christmas in Africa* (1975) and

House of Changes (1978) – include a variety of charms, memoirs, political comments and glimpses of place and character. Nortje's residence in Canada was brief, and his dissatisfaction with the society is revealed in his sardonic 1967 poem 'Immigrant' (posthumously collected in *Dead Roots*, 1973), which contrasts Canadian materialism with his spiritual longing for home. Schermbrucker's fictions, *Chameleon and Other Stories* (1983) and *Mimosa* (1988), recall his childhood in Kenya and his quest for a lost family history in South Africa. Havemann's *Bloodsong and Other Stories of South Africa* (1987) tells of social violence under apartheid, as do Peter's *Along That Coast* (1964) and *Runaway* (1969), which juxtapose the political naivety of visitors to South Africa with the racial realities of living in that country. Gool's realistic anti-apartheid novel, *Price*, appeared in 1973.

Among Canadian writers who have lived in Africa and written of it are MARGARET LAURENCE, Dave Godfrey, AUDREY THOMAS, DOROTHY LIVESAY and Richard Stevenson. Godfrey went to Ghana with CUSO (Canadian University Students Overseas) in 1963 and was acting head of the department of English at Adisadel College until 1965. Thomas lived in Kumasi, Ghana, with her husband, an art teacher, between 1964 and 1966. Livesay worked with UNESCO in Northern Rhodesia between 1960 and 1963. Stevenson taught at teachers' college in Maiduguri, Nigeria, from 1980 to 1982. Livesay's poems about the Zambian religious figure Alice Lenchina, together with several celebrations of voice and sensuousness, were published as *The Colour of God's Face* (1964) and republished in *The Unquiet Bed* (1967) and as the 'Zambia' sequence in *Collected Poems: The Two Seasons* (1972). Godfrey's documentary *Man Deserves Man* (1968) details CUSO experiences and calls for international solutions to economic disparities; his novel *The New Ancestors* (1970) transforms Ghana and Mali into fictional political territory, a symbolic ground on which forces of power (and separate systems of language) compete for control but succeed only in hastening social fracture. In Thomas's fiction – some of the stories in *Ten Green Bottles* (1967) and *Ladies and Escorts* (1977), and especially the Isobel Cleary trilogy: *Mrs. Blood* (1970), *Songs My Mother Taught Me* (1973) and *Blown Figures* (1974) – Africa is more personal than political. Thomas's Africa is the setting for her central character's psychologically devastating miscarriage and is also the embodiment of her sense

of estrangement, both from others and from herself. In *Coming Down from Wa* (1995) Thomas extends this sense of estrangement to a third person, a young Canadian-born man of African heritage, whose trip to the Ghanaian interior takes him closer to the mystery attending his parents' lives and to the moral and political ambiguities that touch his own generation. Stevenson's experience of West Africa in the early 1980s resulted in *Driving Offensively* (1985) and marked later poems as well. In the preface to *Driving Offensively*, Stevenson observes that he is less concerned with culture shock than with recognizing the depth of his own acculturation.

Margaret Laurence, who had accompanied her engineer husband to Somaliland in 1950 and lived there and in the Gold Coast until 1957, preceded all of these writers into print: with a translation of Somali folk tales, *A Tree for Poverty* (1954), which showed her interest in women's roles and rights, especially in male-dominated societies; a novel, *This Side Jordan* (1960); an autobiographical travel-journal, *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963; published in the USA the next year as *New Wind in a Dry Land*); several short stories, most collected in *The Tomorrow-Tamer* (1963), all concerned with a culture in transition; and a critical tribute to CHINUA ACHEBE and other Nigerian writers, *Long Drums and Cannons* (1968). The autobiography reveals her indebtedness to the writings of O. Mannoni, demonstrates her growing appreciation of the power of oral cultures, and (like some of her subsequent essays, collected in *Heart of a Stranger*, 1976) reflects on the unthinking biases that travellers continue to take to Africa.

Some of the more conventional references to Africa show in works by Ralph Allen, HUGH HOOD, Jacques Godbout, and Jacques Ferron, most of whom have imagined Africa without actually visiting it. Hood's *You Can't Get There from Here* (1972) uses Africa as an exotic setting for a satire of North American society. Ferron's *Le Saint-Elias* (1972) parallels an imaginary Africa with a real Quebec, emphasizing the marginality of both, and Hubert Aquin's *Trou de mémoire* (1968) adapts the conventional parallel between Quebec and Africa (in this case the Ivory Coast) to explore symbolically the nature of political separation. Godbout's *L'aquarium* (1962) only implies Africa as its setting, the idea of 'tropic' serving as an intellectual construct, a deliberate contrast with 'north'. Allen's *Ask the Name of the Lion* (1962) casts the Congolese 'rebellion' as the setting for a romantic

narrative thriller. By contrast, David Knight's poems, in *The Army Does Not Go Away* (1969), tell realistically of social violence, and his 1971 novel *Farquharson's Physique and What It Did to His Mind* portrays a man being drawn into commitment and action as the horror of the NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR becomes clear to him.

After 1990, representations of Africa appeared more frequently in works by writers whose link with Africa was autobiographically direct. Among them are Damian Lopes, whose East African poems refer to the lands his family fled, and the cultural essayists Taban lo Liyong (from Uganda) and KEN SARO-WIWA (from Nigeria). Several novelists and playwrights also immigrated to Canada – from South Africa (Rayda Jacobs, Archie Crail), Kenya (Miguna Miguna, David Odhiambo, Jane Tapsubei Creider), Uganda (George Seremba) and Zimbabwe (Paul Tiyambe Zeleza). Nega Mezlekia's autobiography *Notes from the Hyena's Belly* (2000) tells of an ambitious childhood in wartorn Ethiopia, while Sharon Butala's novel *The Garden of Eden* (1998) – drawing on a UN-sponsored trip to Ethiopia to observe agricultural practices – dramatizes the threat of famine and pleads for biodiversity. Moyez G. Vassanji, editor of *The Toronto Review of Contemporary Writing Abroad* (formerly the *Toronto South Asian Review*), moved to Canada from Tanzania. Among his half-dozen fictions, *The Book of Secrets* (1994) evokes the Shamsi heritage in East Africa, while *Amriika* (1999) traces African concepts of American history. In a more comic vein, *No New Land* (1991) reveals the stresses of relocating when African immigrants try to find a new community in a resistant Toronto.

Of relevance, too, are several black writers in Canada – whether Canadian-born, such as GEORGE ELLIOTT CLARKE, Maxine Tyes and Wayne Compton, or immigrants from Britain or the Caribbean, such as the playwright Djanet Spears, the novelist AUSTIN CLARKE and the poet DIONNE BRAND – who have made clear their claim upon an African heritage, however distant or indirect. The influence of the Nigerian poet JOHN PEPPER CLARK-BEKEDEREMO on Trinidad-born CLAIRE HARRIS, for example, shows in such works as *Traveling to Find a Remedy* (1986), while other works, equally sensitive to linguistic and cultural variation, focus more openly on questions of racism and gender.

Critics have generalized about Africa in Canadian literature. Some read 'Africa' in Jungian

terms, treating it as an image of the psychological 'unknown' into which individuals must venture in their quest for 'wholeness'. Some stress the politics of Canadian–African relations, focusing on such issues as imperialism, race, economic disparities and exoticism. The notion of 'otherness' – whether perceived as the characteristic of 'natural' distinctions or the product of socially engendered bias – has been extensively analysed. Critics also emphasize the differences between written and oral cultures and the degree to which contemporary Canadian writers have learned to read their own society more sensitively by becoming more familiar with alternative sophisticated versions of history, community and civilization.

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W. H. NEW

African Connections (Caribbean)

To date no African epic has surfaced in the Caribbean; this fact indicates the fragmentation of ethnic units in the region and the erosion of historico-cultural memory as encompassed within that literary form. Rather, culture-specific and transcultural literary retentions emerge in genres such as Yoruba religious myths (in Cuba and Trinidad), folk tales, proverbs and riddles, abuse styles and song types. In the search for greater authenticity in representing the culture of Caribbean people, scribal artists have increasingly turned to reproducing and refashioning such oral traditions.

Storytelling is conventionally a moonlit-night activity; as in Africa, its enactment during daylight (i.e., work-time) is taboo. Nevertheless, it also accompanies non-time-specific manual work such as corn- and pea-shelling. Although a declining art in contemporary rural environments because of

expanding technology and mass media, storytelling is being revived by libraries, bookshops, mass education programmes and audio-visual media.

Obviously of African tradition are the Caribbean trickster stories of Anansi the Spider and his brother/friend/adversary Takooma, those of Tortoise, and of Hare, also called Brer/Bra/Bredda ('Brother') Rabbit. These trickster heroes derive from various African culture groups. Their use of cunning for survival in certain famine-prone African subsistence economies translated well into the Caribbean's similar ecological and economic conditions, while their status as disrupters of the African communal ethos assumed positive value under conditions of plantation servitude and ethnic confrontation. There are also aetiological, cautionary and wonder-child tales. Many tales feature animal characters, but some present humans and spirits. Structurally, many tales have lost the songs characteristic of African storytelling methodology, but others have retained refrains, some now cryptic. (See FOLKLORE (CARIBBEAN).)

Attempts to incorporate this narrative tradition into scribal literature have met with varying success. Examples include Neville Dawes's cumulative folk-tale epilogue to *The Last Enchantment* (1960); DEREK WALCOTT's adaptation of performance technique and allegory in *Ti-Jean and His Brothers* (1970); ANDREW SALKEY's parabolic satires, *Anancy's Score* (1973); ERNA BRODBER's symbolist use of folk tale in *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* (1980); the storytelling narrator of TREVOR RHONE's *Old Story Time* (1981); EARL LOVELACE's *The Wine of Astonishment* (1982); VIC REID's *Nanny-Town* (1983); and some of the stories in OLIVE SENIOR's collection *Summer Lightning* (1986).

In several Caribbean islands, as in Africa, riddle contests between storyteller and audience precede traditional storytelling sessions. (The interconnection of the two genres is so established that in Dominica riddles are called 'tim-tim', whereas in Grenada 'tim-tim' announces the start of the folk-tale session.) It appears, however, that the riddle has not yet been consciously reworked in the scribal literature, the nearest example of riddle technique being Brodber's novels *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* and *Myal* (1988).

Caribbean proverbs derive from African, European and Indian as well as Biblical sources. African proverbs and riddles, for example, are characterized by their indirect and metaphoric allusion to images drawn largely from flora and

fauna, some of which have been replaced with correspondingly familiar items in the Caribbean environment. For example, imagery of African lions and hyenas has yielded to that of cat and dog. Other resemblances between African and Caribbean proverbs in terms of structure, imagery and philosophical content are striking and are further confirmed by proverb similarities among varying Caribbean island communities. Proverbs still exert great influence on the expression of ideas and enter the forms of popular songs, such as calypso and reggae, performance-oriented poetry, and the novel. GEORGE LAMMING's *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953), Vic Reid's *Nanny-Town* and LOUISE BENNETT's *Jamaica Labrish* (1966) draw on this tradition. The brevity and common sense of proverbs have no doubt been reasons for insufficient critical awareness of their function in Caribbean scribal literature. Also of note, however, is the relationship between education and the use of proverbs – the more educated the speaker, the less homely is proverb use; Shakespeare and Latin authors instead supply the anglophone speaker with parallel, succinct, philosophical comment.

In topic and in vocal and gestural behaviour, Caribbean abuse styles bear resemblance to various African modes. Abuse content focuses largely on the opponent's physical attributes, insisting on data – real, exaggerated, even fictive – regarding height, size, disabilities, uncleanness, infertility, illness, sexual unattractiveness and deviance. Caribbean creole languages are replete with ideophonic perjorative terms for physical appearance and action that are either African words or neologisms based on African-language sound symbolisms. (An ideophone is a word suggestive of a sound.) The abuse genre characterizes some calypsoes, much stage, radio and audio-visual drama, Claude McKay's 'A Midnight Woman to the Bobby' (in *Songs of Jamaica*, 1912, introduced by Walter Jekyll), and some of Louise Bennett's most memorable poems. V. S. NAIPAUL's early works and MERLE HODGE's *Crick Crack, Monkey* (1970) also make creditable use of the genre.

The love-song tradition in the Caribbean is relatively weak when compared with the impulse to narrative and commentary, both satiric and protest. This may signal the comparative weakness of the ecstatic Arabic poetic traditions channelled through Islam (which passed from a caste to a

popular religion in West Africa only in the nineteenth century) in relation to the vibrancy of pragmatic attitudes to sex and marriage in sub-Saharan traditional Africa, where less emphasis was placed on love and courtship than on procreation and the realization of socio-economic needs through clan and family alliances. Such pragmatism was reinforced under Caribbean slavery by unstable family-life conditions and the absence of familial imperatives and censure in the regulation of mating.

The dirge was fed by slavery, but this genre has weakened recently, leaving the popular song of news/gossip, celebration or censure of behaviour and event, and socio-political commentary and critique. Electronic recording and mass dissemination have made popular song the most overt oral literary form in the Caribbean. (See SONGS AND BALLADS (CARIBBEAN).) Its musical idiom reflects African influence in its insistent rhythmic base and its marked rhythmic syncopation (in some territories), in cantor-chorus structural complementarity (whether responsorial or in simultaneous vocalization), in vocal imitations of musical instruments, and, whether for semantic punning or technical flamboyance, in intensive sound echo/rhyme (the European-language substitute for African tonal matching). These rhythmic and singing styles cross-fertilize E. K. BRATHWAITE's poetry and are integral to dub/performance poetry.

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MAUREEN WARNER-LEWIS

Afrika, Tatamkhulu (1920–2002)

South African poet, novelist

Born in Egypt of Egyptian and Turkish parents, he came to South Africa as a young child and was raised by foster parents on a farm in Northwest Province. After matriculating, he served in the Second World War and subsequently worked for many years in the diamond mines of Namibia before moving to Cape Town in the 1960s, where,

in a gesture of political solidarity with the oppressed black majority, he changed his racial classification to 'coloured'. He became actively involved in the political struggle as an armed militant and was given the name Tatamkhulu Afrika ('old man of Africa') by young township comrades. A convert to Islam, he was a founder member of the Al-Jihaad organization. He was banned in 1987 for five years from writing and public speaking.

After the manuscript of an early novel, 'Broken Earth' (1940), was destroyed in the bombing of London during the Second World War, there was a break of many years before Afrika began writing again at over 60 years of age. He published several volumes of poetry, including: *Nine Lives* (1991), *Dark Rider* (1992), *Maqabane* (1994), *Flesh and the Flame* (1995), *The Lemon Tree and Other Poems* (1995), *Turning Points* (1996), *The Angel and Other Poems* (1999) and *Mad Old Man under the Morning Star: The Poet at Eighty* (2001). Apart from his youthful venture into fiction, he has also published one other novel, *The Innocents* (1994), and a collection of four novellas, *Tightrope* (1996).

In *Tightrope* contemporary (and, in one case, future) South African society is laid bare to Afrika's penetrating and pitiless gaze. In Afrika's world there is no room for finer human sentiment, no sense that human togetherness, empathy and support will somehow win out. The thin veneer of human decency has worn off in this *fin-de-siècle* dystopia, and raw desire, malice and self-interest have burst through. 'The Vortex' and 'The Treadmill', the first two novellas, are linked. They trace the descent of the hapless Johnny Jackson from disaffected stepson to matricide, convict, 'wife' to a cell-boss, parolee, rape-victim and, finally, murderer once again. In his descent into the vortex, the maw of self-destruction and the abasement of others, he leaves a bisexual, drug-dealing, rent-boy lover who dies of AIDS, and two prostitutes who suffer similarly awful fates. It is testimony to Afrika's remarkable skill as a storyteller that this sordid tale is so utterly compelling. 'The Quarry', which concerns the narrator's encounter with a musician-poseur who momentarily captivates the women in a small mining town before falling foul of the local racists, and 'The Trap', which explores the narrowing circle of life for a Cape Town 'bergie' (tramp), are no less riveting.

However, it is Afrika's poetry in particular that is highly regarded. Although his style is

direct – down-to-earth, even – it characteristically reaches towards the archetypal and the mystical. The poetry describes engagements with daily life in a way that renders these experiences concrete and precise even as they are pressed into providing an opening onto the unknown, the numinous, or what may be called the 'other', which is represented in one poem as 'the shade that inhabits the familiar shadows'. The poems are distillations of a life marked by austere frugality, passionate intensity and spiritual striving. *Flesh and the Flame*, in particular, is explicitly Islamic in its concerns.

Afrika was the recipient of the 1990 Sydney Clouts Memorial Prize, the 1991 and 1993 Thomas Pringle Award, the 1992 Olive Schreiner Prize, the 1992 CNA Debut Award, and the 1994 and 2000 Sanlam Literary Award.

Further reading

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DIRK KLOPPER

Agard, John (1949–)

Guyanese/British poet

Born in Guyana, he published his first poetry collection, *Shoot Me with Flowers* (1973), in Guyana, but moved in 1977 to England, where he has published several books and established a considerable reputation as a poet-performer. His work has always challenged the conventional colonial norms of English poetry, not only in his broadly political concerns, but in his use of language and, most particularly, in the manner of delivery his poems demand. A self-styled 'poetsonian', Agard toured with the All-Ah-We theatre company before settling in the UK. *Shoot Me with Flowers* anticipates many of the concerns of Agard's later work and establishes his essential idealism. If these early poems read now as rather naive in their politics, the collection is memorable for some striking love poems.

Agard's characteristic brand of witty, ironic satire owes much to the wry survivor humour of Caribbean oral traditions. Since he moved to England, one aim of his work has been to highlight and undercut the pervasive stereotypes of black

people there. In 'Palm Tree King', for example, the persona turns the feigned interest in exotic trees shown by his patronizing English acquaintance into a pointed lesson in post-colonial economics:

If 6 straw hat
and half a dozen bikini
multiply by the same number of coconut tree
equal one postcard
how many square miles of straw hat
you need to make a tourist industry?

Underpinning Agard's wit is a core of lyrical anger that gives his work its distinctive bite. *Mangoes and Bullets* (1985) contains several impassioned poems lamenting the corruption and injustice that have maimed the dream of an independent Caribbean. Nowhere has that dream been more tarnished than in Guyana, and Agard's superbly measured poem 'Come From That Window Child', written in response to the assassination of Walter Rodney, exemplifies both Agard's rage against the cynicism of Guyanese politics and the despite-it-all optimism that is another hallmark of his work.

In many ways Agard's well-deserved reputation as a performer has distracted attention from the style and originality of his poetry. On the page his poems work well enough, but it is Agard's voice-print rather than the type's imprint that carries the force of his words. In performance he uses the full range and power of his voice to unleash the energy and resonance crafted into his poetry. This is particularly true of his Casa de las Americas Poetry Prize-winning sequence *Man to Pan* (1982), written in celebration of the steel pan as a metaphor for Caribbean creativity.

Lovelines for a Goat-Born Lady (1990) is a collection of raunchy, sensual love poems, typically wry and politically alert; these poems represent the inclination to praise-song that has always been a counterweight to Agard's satire.

Agard has also published several books for children, including *Quetz de Saviour* (1976), *Letters for Lettie* (1979), *Dig Away Two-Hole Tim* (1981), *I Din Do Nuttin* (1983), *Say It Again Granny* (1985) and *Laughter Is an Egg* (1989).

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STEWART BROWN

Ahmad, Sayeed (1931–)

Bangladeshi dramatist

He was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh, into an affluent family that owned the city's Lion Theatre and had a number of its members as practising thespians and painters. Ahmad had early training in music, attended university in Dhaka and at the London School of Economics, England, and followed a career in government bureaucracy, writing his dramas at night.

Ahmad's plays staged to date have placed him at the forefront of Bangladesh theatre. Like fellow playwrights Syed Shamsul Haq, Alauddin Al-Azad, Shaukat Osman and Munier Chowdhury, he wrote his plays in Bengali, but, unlike them, he also created them in English. *The Thing*, first published in *Vision* (Karachi) in 1961, was premièred in 1962 by the Drama Circle in Dhaka and has since been staged in other parts of the world. It deals with the tug of force and circumstance between humanity and nature, a contest and a companionship so evident in the cyclonic Bangladeshi existence. A similar concern is the focus of *The Milepost* (first published in *Vision*, 1964), based on the horrendous 1943 famine in Bengal, in which the stunning forces of nature are contemplated and reconciled with human courage. *Survival* (first published in the weekly *Holiday* in 1967) dramatizes the legend of a mother crocodile who entrusts her seven children to a fox, who eats up six of them, keeping the seventh to show each time the mother visits. A powerful metaphor of the exploitation of the masses, *Survival* was first staged in 1967 in Punjabi, under the title *Jungul da rakha*, by Najm Hossain Syed, who translated and directed it. Performed under the auspices of Majlis Shah Hosain of Lahore without a government licence, it was feared that it would arouse riots as the underclasses began to fill the stalls.

The Thing, *The Milepost* and *Survival* were collected in *Three Plays by Sayeed Ahmad* (1979; 2nd edn, 1989) and were translated into Bengali by Ahmad and collected in *Sayeed Ahmad-er Tinti Natok* (1976).

Ahmad's later play, *The Last King* (published in Bengali as *Shesh Nawab*, 1989), is historical, interpreting and capturing a time of grand transition, the year 1757, when Bengal's last king, Sirajuddaula, was defeated at the Battle of Plassey by the British under Robert Clive. Ahmad combines elements of the realistic, legendary and folk theatre in the style of Chinese opera and packs a power into his language that links him to the Indian tradition of Street Theatre.

ALAMGIR HASHMI

Aidoo, Ama Ata (1942–)

Ghanaian poet, dramatist,
short-story writer

Born Christina Ama Ata Aidoo, near Saltpond, Ghana, she graduated with a BA from the University of Ghana in 1964. Much of her published work, all appearing under the name Ama Ata Aidoo, dates from the mid- and late 1960s. Unlike other West African women writers such as EFUA SUTHERLAND, TESS ONWUEME, FLORA NWAPA and 'ZULU SOFOLA, Aidoo has declined to concentrate on a single genre; she has published two novels, two plays, a book of short stories and two poetry collections. She has worked in the USA (where she held a fellowship in creative writing at Stanford University), at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, and at Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria.

Aidoo's first published play, *The Dilemma of a Ghost* (1965), deals with a conflict of values between a young Western-educated couple and the village community. Husband and wife here share the same cultural preferences: the fact that he is village-born Ghanaian and she is Afro-American is not of central thematic importance (unlike in plays on mixed marriages by OLA ROTIMI and JOE DE GRAFT). However, in her novel *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977), Aidoo establishes a more complex conflict of principles: the central character, a Ghanaian woman, asserts her opposition both to white supremacy and to male compatriots who, despite their nationalist rhetoric, are unable to accept that her own more radical critique is legitimate and not a symptom of neurosis. Among African

English-language novels of its time, *Our Sister Killjoy* is also boldly experimental in form and in the daring with which it characterizes lesbian affection to highlight the interrelationship between race and gender.

Aidoo's second play, *Anowa* (1969), moves from a relatively light treatment of parent-child conflict over marriage (the chief point of friction in *The Dilemma of a Ghost*) in its early scenes towards the heroine's articulation of a more profound vision of social freedom though her rejection of her husband's resort to slave-keeping. Technically a highly assured play, *Anowa* employs an increasingly formal *mise-en-scène* to mark the alienation between Anowa's values and her husband's. The image of false masculinity with which the play closes (wealth and slave-ownership identified with impotence) ensures its provocative impact, especially for a male audience.

In all these works and in her short stories (*No Sweetness Here*, 1970), Aidoo establishes how acutely individuals may feel themselves under the critical observation of the community, and how identity and role are often the subject of fierce negotiation. Aidoo's work also shares an important source in orature. In the poetry collections *Someone Talking to Sometime* (1985) and *An Angry Letter in January* (1992) she writes on both the diaspora and external visions of Africa and on the continent's problems – poverty, ethnicity and the abstractions of the élite revolutionary. The novel *Changes* (1991), winner of the 1992 Commonwealth Writers Prize for Best Book (Africa), deals again with conflict of value systems, but here, as with major novels by BUCHI EMECHETA and Mariama Bâ, Aidoo focuses on the husband-wife relationship.

During the nineties, Aidoo produced a second collection of short stories, *The Girl Who Can and Other Stories* (1996). These showed African women moving into new professions and, against all odds, achieving great things. Appropriately, it was issued by Sub-Saharan publishers, which is run by a Ghanaian woman, Akoss Ofori-Mensah. The new millennium saw Aidoo firmly re-established in Ghana and, acutely aware that 'the atmosphere in which one writes has changed' since she started out in the 1960s, creating opportunities for women writers. For example, she has set up an NGO, Mbaasem, partly to promote the publishing of work by women, and she has encouraged authors such as Kari Dako.

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CHRIS DUNTON
 JAMES GIBBS

Alexander, Meena (1951–)

Indian poet, novelist, critic,
 autobiographer

Born in Allahabad, Mary Elizabeth Alexander, called Meena from birth, comes from a Kerala Christian family. When she was five years old, the family moved to Khartoum. She was educated in Sudan (BA, 1969, University of Khartoum), and England (PhD, 1973, University of Nottingham). She worked in Delhi University and the University of Hyderabad for a short time. In 1979, she moved to New York City with her husband, David Lelyveld, a historian. She is currently a professor at Hunter College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She has published eight volumes of poetry, including *River and Bridge* (1995) and *Illiterate Heart* (2002), and two novels, *Nampally Road* (1991) and *Manhattan Music* (1997). She has also written two autobiographical books: *Fault Lines: A Memoir* (1993) and *The Shock of Arrival: Reflections on Post-Colonial Experience* (1997) which integrates poems and prose passages. She claims that the 'poems and prose pieces in this book braid together difficult truths of body and language'. Alexander is noted for her sharp, post-colonial perception of India's colonial past and for her feminist focus. She is passionately involved with issues like immigration and race relations. Her critical study *Women in Romanticism: Mary Wollstonecraft, Dorothy Wordsworth and Mary Shelley* (1989) reveals her concern for the feminine self.

Because of having lived in countries as diverse as India, Sudan, England and the USA, she is particularly interested in 'fault lines', the areas of fracture between one cultural tradition and another. She has grown up speaking many languages – her mother tongue Malayalam, English,

Hindi, the Arabic of Khartoum, and French. Her work deals with personal as well as national concerns, and one of these is the use of English. As she writes in *Fault Lines*, 'Colonialism seems intrinsic to the burden of English in India, and I felt robbed of literacy in my own mother tongue.' *Nampally House* is based on a real-life incident of police repression in the town of Hyderabad. The central character, a young college lecturer, speaks of her mission, as a poet and as an individual, as one in which she could 'stitch it all together: my birth in India a few years after national independence, my colonial education, my rebellion against the arranged marriage my mother had in mind for me, my years of research in England'. Alexander's second novel, *Manhattan Music* deals with the lives and problems of Indian immigrants living in the USA. The two major characters here are women: Sandhya, a Syrian Christian, and Draupadi, a Hindu. She uses a complex narrative technique: Sandhya's doings are reported by the omniscient narrator, while Draupadi speaks for herself. Alexander uses a variety of epigraphs for chapters; sources range from Kafka to Kalidas (the Sanskrit poet) and Akkamahadevi (a medieval Kannada mystic woman poet).

Alexander's poetry collections include *The Bird's Bright Ring: A Long Poem* (1976), *I Root My Name* (1977) and *Without Place* (1977); these poems are included in the volume *House of a Thousand Doors: Poems and Prose Pieces of Meena Alexander* (1988). In the latter collection Alexander projects the emerging self of a New Woman through a symbolically structured pilgrimage into the 'selves' of two grandmothers, Kanda, political grandmother, and Mariamma, her father's mother. *The Storm: A Poem in Five Parts* (1989) also highlights Alexander's feminist concerns. Although she has been living abroad for more than two decades, her roots are firmly planted in her native Kerala soil. Hence, while reacting to her Western experience, her mind keeps on making an effortless transition to the Eastern milieu. Thus, the speaker in 'City Street' in the USA turns for a simile to 'a burnt dosa on a griddle/idlis wasting in steam'. A strong political awareness is another striking feature of Alexander's poetry. She searches continually for the possible roles of women as mother, freedom fighter, social ameliorator and feminist in the post-colonial milieu.

One of India's most vigorous and prolific post-colonial feminists, Alexander deserves profitable comparison with KAMALA DAS and the Canadians MARGARET LAURENCE and MARGARET ATWOOD.

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N. RAMACHANDRAN NAIR
 SHYAMALA A. NARAYAN

Alfon, Estrella D. (1918–83)

Filipino short-story writer,
 dramatist, journalist

Born in Cebu, Alfon later set many of her stories in the fictional community of Espeleta, a recognizable lower-middle-class district of that city. Though she wrote mostly in English, she also wrote some stories in Cebuano. Of the women writers of the region, she is among the most prominent.

Unable to complete a pre-medical course at the University of the Philippines because of poor health, Alfon instead earned an Associate in Arts certificate. Her first story, 'Grey Confetti' (1935), was quickly followed by many others. The only female member of the Veronicans, an avant garde group of writers in the 1930s led by FRANCISCO ARCELLANA and H. R. Ocampo, she was also regarded as their muse. A regular contributor to Manila-based national magazines, she had several stories cited in JOSE GARCIA VILLA's annual rolls of honour. A collection of her early short stories, 'Dear Esmeralda', won Honourable Mention in the Commonwealth Literary Award of 1940. Seventeen of her stories appear in *Magnificence and Other Stories* (1960), the only published collection of her short fiction. Of these stories, Francisco Arcellana said, 'When I say that these stories are powerful as stories, I mean they are compelling. They are told with urgency. They make you think of the ancient mariner.'

While critics found cause to commend her, a conservative group of Catholics charged Alfon in court with obscenity over one of her short stories,

'Fairy Tale for the City', about a young man's initiation into sex. Fellow writers were quick to rally around her, claiming her as a martyr to the cause of artistic integrity. The present generation of readers, having dismissed obscenity as a legitimate issue in the critical discussion of literature, prefers to claim her as a writer for the feminist cause. By populating her fictional world largely with women and children, she calls attention to their marginalized roles in Philippine patriarchal society. Though most of her women characters are unable even to recognize themselves as victims, Alfon's sympathetic portrayals allow for readings subversive of the society that victimizes women.

Reportedly the most prolific Filipino woman writer before the war, Alfon was at times charged with sloppy writing and suspected of writing for money. Undeterred, she continued to write, not just more stories and journalistic pieces, but also plays. In the Arena Theatre Play Writing Contest of 1961–62, four of her one-act plays won all the prizes: 'Losers Keepers', 'Strangers', 'Rice' and 'Beggar'. That same year she won the top prize in the Palanca Contest for 'With Patches of Many Hues'. A posthumous collection, *The Collected Stories of Estrella Alfon*, was compiled by her long-time friend Lina Espina Moore in 1994. In 2000 De La Salle University Press published the first of a three-volume compilation of all her works. This volume is a critical edition of thirty-six of her short stories. Alfon died in 1983 following a heart attack suffered onstage during the award night of the Manila Film Festival.

EDNA ZAPANTA MANLAPAZ

Ali, Agha Shahid (1949–2001)

Indian poet

Born in New Delhi and raised in Kashmir, he spent the most prolific years of his life in the USA where he taught, researched and wrote. Ali acquired a definite identity on the Anglo-American literary scene as an American–Kashmiri–American poet of remarkable competence. He published eight collections of poems between 1972 and 2001: *Bone Sculpture* (1972), *In Memory of Begum Akhtar and Other Poems* (1979), *The Half-Inch Himalayas* (1987), *A Walk Through the Yellow Pages* (1987), *A Nostalgist's Map of America* (1991), *The Beloved*

Witness: Selected Poems (1992), *The Country Without a Post Office* (1997) and *Rooms Are Never Finished* (2001). He also published his translations from the poetry of Faiz Ahmad Faiz in *The Rebel's Silhouette* (1991), edited *Ravishing Disunities: Real Ghazals in English* (2000), and wrote a critical study, 'T. S. Eliot as Editor', for his PhD.

Ali held teaching positions at Delhi University, India, and at Penn State, Binghamton, Princeton, Hamilton College, Baruch College, the University of Utah, Warren Wilson College and New York University, all in the USA. He taught creative writing at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst for seven years. He received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Pennsylvania Arts Council on the Arts, the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference and the Ingram–Merrill Foundation, and was awarded a Pushcart prize. His last collection of poems, *Rooms are Never Finished*, was a National Book Award finalist for 2001.

The poetry of Agha Shahid Ali poses questions concerning love, death and loneliness; myth, memory and history; location, language and form. Kashmir concerned him as a poet, a citizen, a political being, a cultural historian and a myth-maker; it emerges in his work as a refrain of love, anger and despair. He also created a community of chosen contemporary writers, friends and parents in his poetry, as well as others drawn from myth, memory, faith and history.

Ali grew up with the English canonical texts and with constant auditory intermixing of Persian, Urdu and Kashmiri. He enriched his literary baggage by trying and testing the potential of the English language interfaced with other languages. His concern with the ghazal through his career ultimately resulted in editing *Ravishing Disunities* where he saw this form offering an open space to poets writing in English. A technical virtuoso, he followed a strict discipline in whatever he cultivated: a canzone, a sestina, a terza rima, a sonnet, a ghazal or a prose poem.

Ali was a keen observer of the European–American literary and cultural tradition, but he felt a strong pull towards the Orient. He was a unique writer of the multiple text that worked through the principle of interface. His strength as a poet lies in appropriating his unique baggage to create a new concept of form and language, and in striving for an intriguingly individual identity.

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ANISUR RAHMAN

Ali, Ahmed (1910–94)

Pakistani novelist, poet, critic

He was born in Delhi, India, and educated at Aligarh Muslim University and Lucknow University. Ali began a career in teaching in 1931 as a lecturer in English at Lucknow and, apart from an appointment as director of Listener Research for the British Broadcasting Corporation's New Delhi office during the Second World War, served as professor at Agra, Allahabad and Calcutta, India, before leaving for China in 1947 as a British Council visiting professor. He was a founder of the Progressive Writers' Movement in the 1930s. Following Partition, he moved to Karachi and joined the Pakistan Foreign Service, retiring in 1960. Until his death, Ali worked as a businessman and as a visiting professor at a number of universities.

Ali started his writing career as a poet and a playwright and soon found his forté in the short story and the novel, developing fast as a bilingual (English and Urdu) writer who wrote most of his short stories in Urdu but his plays, poems and novels in English. In fact, it can be argued that some of the characterization and symbolism in his novels *Twilight in Delhi* (1940; repr. 1984) and *Ocean of Night* (1964) were drawn from the sociological and structural kernel of his plays and short stories of the 1930s, which ranged stylistically from the realistic and the allegorical to the autobiographical/psychological and the surrealistic.

Ali's other publications include the poetry collection *Purple Gold Mountain: Poems from China* (1960), selections in *First Voices: Six Poets from Pakistan* (1965) edited by SHAHID HOSAIN, *Selected Poems* (1988), the plays 'Break the Chains' (premiered 1932) and *The Land of Twilight* (1937), and the novel *Rats and Diplomats* (1986; first published in India as *Of Rats and Diplomats*, 1985). His short-story collections, in Urdu and English, are *Sholay* (1934), *Hamar Gali* (1944), *Qaid Khana*

(1944), *Maut Se Pahlay* (1945) and *The Prison House* (1985), and he contributed to *Angaray* (1932).

Twilight in Delhi and *Ocean of Night*, as well as much other fiction in Urdu, were written, Ali stated, to 'depict a phase of our national life and the decay of a whole culture, a particular mode of thought and living, values now dead and gone. ...' Accordingly, *Twilight in Delhi* is set in the great Indian centre of Muslim civilization, Delhi, and the plot revolves round the simple love story of a boy and a girl, of Mughal and noble Arabic extraction respectively, who experience cyclical joys and difficulties to have their love accepted, formalized and renewed despite social barriers or death. Around it is built a whole way of life, customs and ceremonies that sustain a colourful though declining feudal culture, including the father's pigeon-flying pastime, the zenana and the wedding rituals. In the outer circle, around the old house in a by-lane of Old Delhi, history is seen at work in the Great Durbar held by the King-Emperor in 1911, the influenza epidemic of 1919, the Jallianwalla Bagh Massacre of 1919 in Amritsar, and the political turmoil of 1920 in Northern India – nearly everything to interest Bonamy Dobrée, Edwin Muir and E. M. Forster, who commended the novel – and also in elements that could barely pass the British censor's examination of the manuscript during the Second World War.

Ocean of Night, dealing with life between the two world wars, explores the possibility of the modern spirit within a feudal structure, and whereas E. M. Forster finds, in *A Passage to India* (1924), the 'heart' to be undeveloped, Ali finds it here half atrophied, half searching in confusion. The novel is set in the other great Muslim centre, Lucknow. The mood is somewhat subdued, the atmosphere one of repose and contemplation amid a celebration dance and Muslim ideas of love, peace and friendship. The Nawab's mistress is a fine courtesan, and the young lawyer in love with her cannot overcome the class barrier to find fulfilment. The intellectual and mystical elements in the Muslim tradition are related to the political degeneration of the Muslim civilization; both ordinary feelings and the more delicate emotions are seen as atrophied or sacrificed to the remaining oligarchy's reckless lifestyle and idle, indiscriminate social pursuits.

These early novels were concerned with the last of Muslim civilization in British India. Both are in the realistic-poetic tradition and use verse

quotations as explicating, moralizing and foreshadowing frames within the straightforward prose narrative. But Ali's later concerns in *Rats and Diplomats* are with a general decay in the world, in which representatives of the 'newly-freed fourth world' find analogues of decay and depravity matched to their own and prevalent on a universal scale. Consequently, the poetry disappears completely – so does realism.

In *Rats and Diplomats* a dismissed general is appointed ambassador of Bachusan and posted to Micea, the capital of Ratisan. He finds himself flung headlong into quasi-diplomacy in a country that he had earlier found difficult to locate on map or by compass. His handling of actual life and affairs in the territory proves no better than his theoretical grasp of the place, and after a clumsy and rather public escapade he is peremptorily recalled by the president of Bachusan. There ends the novel, as well as our hero's short and not-too-happy career in diplomacy. But what is more important is that, before the end, he wakes up one morning with a tail grown at his back and transformed into a rat. The ratty business has taken its moral toll, whose evident denomination, as in Oscar Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), is biological and (un)aesthetic. The historical imagination in the earlier works did not offer to subvert history so as to re-order the moral universe, and such verve and humour had never been to the forefront. *Rats and Diplomats* aspires to the moral status of a fable. The general relates all in his vigorous and sometimes self-parodic language, and what he relates is bleak though humorous, in a style now gravid, now brisk, and in a novel that takes Ali's fiction into the post-colonial era and into a post-colonial mode.

Ali's example in this respect is most instructive. From historical fictions of decay at a time when reconstructive urges were paramount in the writing in major Indian languages, including English, as in the work of MULK RAJANAND, R. K. NARAYAN, RAJA RAO and K. A. ABBAS, his long fictional silence and preparation only led him to wielding what he called the 'scalpel'.

While Lao She's (Shu Ch'ing-ch'un's) *Cat Country* (written in and serialized in 1932; first published in book form in 1949), a satirical novel of China in the 1930s, may have been a model for Ali, considering his Chinese interests, this development had not taken place in isolation from the South Asian and international literary milieu, wherein the

non-realist work of Gabriel García Márquez, Grass, Borges, Fuentes, Fowles and Kundera held the attention of a large readership and even pepped up the vogue for magic realism. Evidently an ironic instrument of discourse, the 'scalpel' had to replace the realistic and reconstructive fictions of the colonial period, which insufficiently grasped the historical forces at work and the tremendous flux they had caused in the fundamental structure of colonial societies. SALMAN RUSHDIE's *Saleem Sinai* (*Midnight's Children*, 1981) thus demolishes the distinctions between the internal and the external experience and between private and public history, both of which undergo an equally mythical 'perforation', 'chutnification' and 'pickling'. Rushdie's *Shame* (1983), likewise, uses the fairy-tale/nightmare technique to structure a fabulistic *roman à clef* that satirizes well-known referents picked from the contemporary common life that first pretend to a mock history. The choppy text is made to mimic the discontinuity of good sense and harmony in the subject itself.

The search for harmony and love is indeed the main concern in Ali's fiction as much as in his poetry. His poems reflect influences imbibed from the Chinese lyric, English Romantic, Urdu and Persian traditions. Often written in a deliberately antiquated style – as if an English translation of old Chinese – these poems achieve a certain distance and impersonality while dealing with personal details or human, moral and metaphysical themes; they also lend themselves to both personal and political allegories, to which most of Ali's work since the 1930s responds rather readily. Their main interest today is in the inventive and expressive aspects of form.

Non-fiction and translation were also among Ali's active interests. He produced an important translation of the *Qur'an* entitled *Al-Qur'an: A Contemporary Translation* (1984), as well as a penetrating critical anthology of Urdu poetry, *The Golden Tradition* (1973). Considering his career, which spanned the better part of the twentieth century, and his output, which closely concerned both Pakistani and Indian cultural contexts, it is necessary to see Ali's position as a man of letters in South Asia and not only in Pakistan.

Ali's other works include criticism (*Mr Eliot's Penny World of Dreams*, 1941, *The Problem of Style and Technique in Ghalib*, 1969, and *The Shadow and the Substance: The Principles of Reality, Art and Literature*, 1977); non-fiction (*Muslim China*, 1949); and numerous translations,

including *The Flaming Earth: Poems from Indonesia* (1949), *The Falcon and the Hunted Bird: An Anthology of Urdu Poetry* (1950), *The Bulbul and the Rose: An Anthology of Urdu Poetry* (1962) and *Ghalib: Selected Poems* (1969).

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ALAMGIR HASHMI

Alkali, Zaynab (1950–)

Nigerian novelist

Born in Biu, Nigeria, she attended Bayero University, Kano, where she obtained a BA in English (1973) and an MA (1979). She has taught English and African literature at various institutions in Nigeria, including Bayero University and the University of Maiduguri. Alkali won the Association of Nigerian Authors' award for prose fiction in 1985 with her first novel, *The Stillborn* (1984). *The Virtuous Woman* followed in 1985. Her collection of short stories, *Cobwebs and Other Stories* was published in 1997.

Alkali's arrival on the male-dominated Nigerian literary scene was highly acclaimed because she was one of the first female novelists from northern Nigeria and because of her examination of the position of the African woman in patriarchal Africa. Her concern with the position of African women in Africa, the challenges facing young African women, and African women's reactions to patriarchy, can be situated within the sociological dialogue in which Nigerian and other African literatures have been involved.

Unlike those of colonial literatures (e.g. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*) and some earlier Nigerian novels (such as CHINUA ACHEBE's *Things Fall Apart*, 1958), Alkali's protagonists are women who challenge their position in society, offering a corrective to the depiction of African women in previous works. Interestingly, these characters are still contained within the marital institution they

set out to question. For example, Li, in *The Still-born*, cannot sustain her initial subversion of patriarchy, especially after her marriage to Habu Adams; and Nana Ai, in *The Virtuous Woman*, accepts patriarchy unquestioningly. Although Li is unable to sustain her assault on patriarchy (she comes from a predominantly Islamic and patriarchal northern Nigeria), her struggle, like Alkali's efforts, is significant.

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ADETEYO ALABI

Alley, Rewi (1897–1987)

New Zealand poet

Born of European descent in Springfield, in a farming area outside Christchurch, New Zealand, he was named after a Maori chief prominent in the Land Wars of the 1860s. After war service in Europe, Alley travelled to Shanghai in 1927 and lived in close contact with Chinese workers until his death. He was involved in the wars of resistance and liberation, organizing Gung Ho industrial cooperatives, and schoolteaching.

From the 1940s Alley published in both New Zealand and China many volumes of poetry that he later described as 'Poetry to Deal with Life and People'; *Upsurge: Asia and the Pacific: Poems* (privately published in 1969) is a representative volume. The simplicity of his writing has deflected critical attention, but is consistent with its ideological motivation; clarity is essential to its acknowledged propagandist function; imagery and symbolism are extremely simple; and the immediacy of its purpose results in a lack of polishing and revision beyond the elimination of any obscurity. Alley's style was also determined by his extensive readership in developing countries, especially in Africa and India, where English was often a second language. His work also shows stylistic affinities with poets he respected: the Maori HONE TUWHARE and the Australian Aborigine OODGEROO NOONUCCAL (Kath Walker).

Alley's Communist commitment (from the early 1930s) co-existed with his high regard for

traditional Chinese culture; during the Cultural Revolution his translations of Chinese classics were termed a 'poisonous weed'. Many of his English poems express a love for China's landscape and buildings. Alley's autobiographical writing – *At 90: Memoirs of My China Years* (1986), reprinted as *Rewi Alley: An Autobiography* (1987) – and other non-fiction have an unpretentiousness similar to that of his poetry.

Further reading

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Anne-Marie Brady, *Friend of China – The Myth of Rewi Alley* (2002).

HOWARD McNAUGHTON

Allfrey, Phyllis Shand (1915–86)

Dominican novelist

Born Phyllis Byam Shand in Roseau, Dominica, the Caribbean, she never attended school but was educated by a series of tutors. She travelled to England, where she met her husband. They moved to the USA and later returned to England, where Phyllis Allfrey became secretary to the novelist Naomi Mitchison and became involved in socialist politics. In London she wrote mostly poetry and began the novel *The Orchid House* (1953). The family returned to Dominica in 1954, where Allfrey co-founded the Dominica Labour Party. In 1958 she became minister of labour and social affairs in the Federal Government of the West Indies (based in Trinidad). She returned to Dominica in 1961 (when the Federation failed) and, with her husband, ran *The Dominica Herald*. In 1965 she founded the weekly *Star*. She wrote a second novel, 'In the Cabinet', which remains unpublished.

As most of her work (including *Palm and Oak I*, 1950, *Contrasts*, 1955, and *Palm and Oak II*, 1974, all privately published) is virtually inaccessible to the public, Allfrey's reputation rests on *The Orchid House*. The novel is divided into three parts, one devoted to each of three sisters, Stella, Joan and Natalie, who precipitate the action in the almost torpid house and are a life-force in the moribund society. The central motif is the orchid, which has a symbiotic and epiphytic relationship

with its host. Having no roots, it draws moisture from the air and not the earth. The image of the three-petalled flower suggests that the three sisters provide not only beauty but utility. The story is narrated by the ageing nurse Lally, who is dying of cancer.

Subtle image patterns, conspicuously Keatsian, evoke the hot-house atmosphere of disease, death and drugs; the novel's major focus is the paradox of beauty and disease, represented, for example, in the Master, who has retreated into a drug-sustained pipe-dream, and in Andrew, a consumptive Knight-at-Arms straight out of 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci'. The possibilities for vital change lie with the three sisters, especially Joan. Stella murders the drug dispenser Lillipoulala, and Natalie flies her invalid father to his death, but Joan (like Allfrey) remains on the island to help the black radical Baptiste with political, social and economic reconstruction. She cannot take direct action because she is blackmailed by the Roman Catholic priest (who suspects Stella's involvement in the murder of Lillipoulala), but she persuades her husband, fighting in the Spanish Civil War, to return to the island. As well as evoking the total society, Allfrey sharply criticises the Roman Catholic Church, which is seen as rigid, conservative and stifling.

The Orchid House succeeds in avoiding the promotion of a single group, the clichés of race, colour, class and tourist landscapes, didacticism, bitter flourishes and wooden allegorical characters.

Further reading

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BARRIE DAVIES

Aluko, Timothy Mofolorunso (1918–)

Nigerian novelist

Born in Ilesha, Western Nigeria, he studied civil engineering and town planning in Lagos, Nigeria, and in London, England. After leaving his position as director of public works for Western Nigeria in 1966, Aluko studied public health engineering at

the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, England, and later at the University of Lagos, where he lectured and from which he retired as associate professor in 1979. He later took up a career as a consulting engineer and writer in Lagos.

Aluko has published seven novels, the subject matter of which falls into two broad phases: the colonial and the post-colonial. His first novel, *One Man, One Wife* (1959), satirizes African Christian converts who condemn all aspects of their cultural heritage. The image of the one-eyed pastor David recalls Kurtz's painting in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902) and expresses the idea of the blind leading the blind. *Kinsman and Foreman* (1966), like AYI KWEI ARMAH's *Fragments* (1970), highlights the encumbrances of the African extended family system in contemporary society. *Chief, the Honourable Minister* (1970) explores a recurrent theme in African and Caribbean literature – the betrayal of the neo-colonial politician and the disillusionment that follows political independence. The problem of adaptation often leads Aluko's protagonists to a sad ending.

Many stylistic elements from the Yoruba oral tradition give Aluko's fiction the flavour of local-colour writing. He places his characters on different language levels; in *One Man, One Matchet* (1964) the range includes the meaningless bombast of Royanson, the oily grandiloquence of Benjamin Benjamin and the educated, ornate style of Gorgeous Gregory. In the mouth of Alaiye in *His Worshipful Majesty* (1973), language still retains its poetic and magical power. Pidgin English is used profusely by slum dwellers in *Wrong Ones in the Dock* (1982). His latest novel, *Conduct Unbecoming*, was published by Heinemann in 1993.

A critical realist like V. S. NAIPAUL, Aluko practises the 'truth of fact' theory of literary representation. Unlike Naipaul, however, satire in Aluko's skilful hand does not degenerate into abuse, nor criticism into cynicism. Aluko imbues his characters – even the mischievous and the treacherous – with abundant ardour.

A powerful humanist-satirist, Aluko captures the different colours and shades of Nigerian life in transition from the indigenous mode of existence, with all its trammels of ignorance and superstition, to the modern. He places special emphasis on education; however, Western education fails to obliterate the primacy of indigeneity in his African élite. Some of these élite still patronize native medicine while others cherish chieftaincy titles. Like CHINUA

ACHEBE, Aluko depicts both positive and negative sides of both African culture(s) and Western civilization, and strongly supports the preservation of ennobling African customs and traditions.

Simplicity of style, linearity of plot structure, topicality of theme – for example, agitation for creation of more states in *A State of Our Own* (1986) – humorous characters and catchy titles characterize Aluko's prose fiction and possibly account for its great popularity in Nigeria among the general readership and school students.

Further reading

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O. R. Dathorne, *The Black Mind* (1974).

OLUSEGUN ADEKOYA

Amadi, Elechi (1934–)

Nigerian novelist, dramatist, essayist

Born in Aluu, near Port Harcourt, Nigeria, he attended University College, Ibadan, where he graduated in physics and mathematics (1959). This scientific education may account for Amadi's descriptive precision and fidelity to the schematized presentation of fictional materials. For many years he was also associated with the military, both as a soldier and civilian functionary in Nigeria's military administrations; this fraternity with military culture may explain why his fictional and non-fictional views are usually candidly expressed and why his major male characters are strikingly martial in temperament. Amadi's humanism, however, remains largely intact; his life and publications mark him as an educator and writer. His published works include four novels (*The Concubine*, 1966, *The Great Ponds*, 1969, *The Slave*, 1978, and *Estrangement*, 1986); four plays (*Isiburu*, 1973, *The Dancer of Johannesburg*, 1977, *Peppersoup*, 1977, and *The Road to Ibadan*, 1977); a memoir (*Sunset in Biafra*, 1973); and a book of essays (*Ethics in Nigerian Culture*, 1982).

One of the fictional legacies for which Amadi is known is his credible portrayal of closely-knit post-colonial African communities. His first three novels deal with romance, religions, superstitions, family and intercommunal feuds and communalist values that characterized most African communities before colonial contact. Even

Estrangement, set in Nigeria during and immediately after the Nigerian Civil War, draws its greatest appeal from events set in a rural environment. Amadi's novels and plays also reveal him as a 'male feminist' of the traditional African society – he presents his female characters with penetrating insight and sympathy, bestowing them with a disarming zest for life, a touching concern for humane values and an inclination towards an independent life resistant to the chauvinism of their male counterparts.

Amadi's major works evoke a strong feeling of the defencelessness of human beings in the face of the supernatural. Even though his male characters are usually valiant warriors, wrestlers and strong-willed men, and his women characters are playful, loving, intelligent and self-willed, there are always in these works invisible figures lurking in the shadows, ironic twists lying in wait, hopes bound to be thwarted, and inscrutable forces undermining humanity's determination to control its destiny. Even in the plays, all comedies in terms of mode and dénouement, life's journey does not always lead to freedom. Amadi's views in his memoir and essays confirm that he is a lover of humanity, but that he is disenchanted with humanity's antics and with forces to which great power and authority are entrusted.

Amadi acknowledges that he read much of Thomas Hardy, and some critics have argued that the latter's philosophic pessimism infected Amadi's work. It should be noted, however, that the rural worlds of Amadi's novels have similarities with those of his contemporaries CHINUA ACHEBE, CHUKWUEMEKA IKE, NKEM NWANKWO, JOHN MUNONYE, ONUORA NZEKWU and FLORA NWAPA, among others, with whom he shares a similar background. Perhaps they all draw from a common social anthropology, history and literary sensibility.

Further reading

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AFAM EBEOGU

Amanuddin, Syed (1934–89)

Indian poet

Born in Mysore, India, he was educated at the University of Mysore and at Bowling Green State

University, Ohio, USA. He taught English at Osmania University, Hyderabad, India, and later at Bowling Green and at Morris College, South Carolina, USA. He was a long-time resident of South Carolina – he lived in the USA from 1967 until his death – and often appeared on South Carolina educational television as a writer and scholar. Although Amanuddin published two volumes of critical essays, various plays and a novel, he was primarily a poet – the dozen volumes of poetry testify to his major quest, which, in the words of one critic, was for ‘a perfect spiritual and human liberty with fewer prejudices, falsehoods, and sins of humanity’. His poetry includes: *The Forbidden Fruit* (1967); *The Children of Hiroshima* (1967); *Poems of Protest* (1972); *The Age of Female Eunuchs* (1974); *Adventures of Atman: An Epic of the Soul* (1977), which is included in his volume *Poems* (1984); and *Challenger Poems* (1988), containing three poem sequences – ‘Challenger Poems’, ‘Bhopal Cantos’ and ‘Hiroshima and After’ – and the epic ‘The Master’. An intense mode of artistic inclusiveness ranging from mysticism to social protest, and a ceaseless seeking for the essential human experience, even in the local and the immediate, inform his entire work.

Amanuddin’s verse is remarkable for its daring and innovative diction. Living abroad helped him to look with greater objectivity upon his experience – as Indian and as poet. In his major poems *Adventures of Atman: An Epic of the Soul* and ‘The Master’, his struggle is to unlock the mysteries of humanity, nature and the universe, and their interrelationships with God (whom he terms the Ultimate Consciousness).

Amanuddin inherited the two dominant modes in the history of Indian poetry in English: the sublime, as in the poetry of SRI AUROBINDO and RABINDRANATH TAGORE, and the equivocal and post-independence mode, ironic and conversational, as in the poetry of NISSIM EZEKIEL and P. LAL. However, his poetry lacks the spiritual amplitude and the visionary depth of Aurobindo, and often fails to achieve the subtlety and conscious artistry of Ezekiel.

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S. MURALI

Amerindians in Caribbean Literature

Since American Indians disappeared from most of the Caribbean islands long before a written indigenous literature began, the relevance of their culture to Caribbean writing is largely confined to works set in the mainland territory of Guyana. Amerindian characters in Caribbean writing appear mainly in historical fiction such as the Jamaican H. G. DE LISSER’s *The Arawak Girl* (1958). The temptation for writers of such fiction is to make the Amerindian character a noble savage whose values contrast with the savagery of the European conquerors. However, in *Another Life* (1973), by the St Lucian DEREK WALCOTT, a passage occurs that is functionally too complex to attract such criticism. Here, the Caribs’ suicidal leap from a cliff at Sauteurs in Grenada to avoid enslavement by the French is seen as both heroic and wasteful, as an instance of universal heroism and tragedy (since the Caribs are identified with the Spartans at Thermopylae), rather than as an exotic basis for political criticism. Amerindian myth occasionally appears in the poetry of the Guyanese MARTIN CARTER, notably in ‘Weroon Weroon’ (from *Poems of Succession*, 1977), where the poet imagines his death in the persona of an Amerindian paddling his canoe towards heaven.

Because most of the population of Guyana inhabits the coastal plain and has little contact with the Amerindians – most of whom live in the interior – there is more opportunity than usual for the formation of racial stereotypes. The stereotype of the Amerindian is made up of the qualities of silence or inscrutability, strength and cunning. In *Children of Kaywana* (1952) by EDGAR MITTELHOLZER, the half-Amerindian woman Kaywana is a figure of great strength who becomes the ancestress of the racially mixed van Groenwegels. The similarity between the names ‘Kaywana’ and ‘Guiana’ suggests that she symbolizes both the family’s roots in the land and the aboriginal people, and is thus much more symbol than woman. However, Mittelholzer is less interested in contrasting natural virtue with civilized vice than in tracing inherited strength and weakness through Kaywana’s descendants.

In JAN CAREW’s *The Wild Coast* (1958) and WILSON HARRIS’s *Palace of the Peacock* (1960) and *The Secret Ladder* (1963), Amerindian women

again possess the stereotypical qualities of silence and inscrutability. ROY HEATH's novel *Orealla* (1984) presents an Amerindian man in much the same way. While inscrutability is appropriate in *Palace of the Peacock* because the character is also a goddess, the realism of Carew's novel makes Dela, the 'child of silence', more obviously a racial stereotype. In *Palace of the Peacock* the search for the Amerindian 'folk' is very similar to the search for the Australian heartland in PATRICK WHITE's *Voss* (1957) or the search for the heart of Africa in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902). In all these cases the aboriginal people have a special relationship with the land, which later immigrants must emulate. In Conrad's novella, however, this relationship is a source of horror while in both *Voss* and *Palace of the Peacock* it is a prelude to necessary renewal.

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JEFFREY ROBINSON

Anand, Mulk Raj (1905–)

Indian novelist, short-story writer, art critic

Born in Peshawar (now in Pakistan) to a Hindu coppersmith family, he read philosophy at the University of Punjab, India, and at the University of London, England. Upon his return to India in 1932, he lived for some time in GANDHI's Sabar-mati Ashram, where he wrote the first draft of *Untouchable* (1935). While in London, Anand became interested in Indian art, avant-garde movements, and left-wing politics. Later, he joined the International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War. Returning permanently to India in 1945, he founded, in 1946, the art magazine *Marg*, which he edited for thirty years. After divorcing his first wife, Kathleen Van Gelder, an actress, in 1948, he suffered a nervous breakdown, which probably made him turn inwards and resulted in the first of his ongoing series of autobiographical novels: *Seven Summers* (1951) and *The Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953), in which the hero has a nervous breakdown. The rest of Anand's career has

been marked by prolific writing and active association with numerous literary and cultural associations in India and abroad, including the World Peace Council, the Asian Writers' Conference and the Afro-Asian Writers' Bureau. He has also worked as Tagore Professor of Art and Literature, Punjab University, as honorary president of Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, and as visiting professor at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla. Among his distinctions are the International Peace Prize (1962), Padma Bhushan (1967) and the Sahitya Akademi Award (1971).

Anand's fiction has been shaped by what he calls 'the double burden on my shoulders, the Alps of European tradition and the Himalaya of my Indian past'. Though alive to the finer and enduring aspects of the Indian tradition, he is also a stern critic of its fossilization and obscurantism. His fervent socialist faith and his vision of a modern egalitarian society have been mainly derived from European thought. However, he owes as much to the Indian Muslim poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal and to Bhai Vir Singh, 'the bard of Punjab', as to Tolstoy, Victor Hugo and perhaps Dickens.

Anand's numerous novels and short-story collections form an extensive fictional chronicle marked by his eclectic humanism, his zeal for social reform and his humanitarian compassion for the downtrodden. These themes receive perhaps their best fictional treatment in his first novel, *Untouchable*, which describes an eventful day in the life of Bakha, a young sweeper-outcaste. Unsparing in its realism but objective in approach and restrained in treatment, this compact novel is generally free from the sentimentality, verbosity and looseness of some of his later works. *Coolie* (1936) and *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) deal with another segment of the underprivileged: the landless peasant. The range and scope of Anand's fiction widened to include themes barely suggested in *Untouchable*: rural versus urban India and colonial race relations. *Coolie* is the pathetic odyssey of Munoo, a rustic orphan transplanted in an urban setting, with fatal consequences. The novel has an almost epic quality, but is marred by a crusading zeal that often distorts action and character. More disastrously affected by these flaws, *Two Leaves and a Bud* recounts the tragedy of Gangu, a Punjabi peasant lured to a tea plantation in Assam, where he is bullied, starved, and

killed by a British official who tries to rape his daughter.

The Village (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1940) and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), an ambitious trilogy dealing with Lal Singh, a young Punjabi peasant, is a qualified success. *The Village* is a triumph of realistic portraiture of rustic life, and *Across the Black Waters* is perhaps the only major war novel in Indian-English literature, inviting comparison on the grounds of honesty and compassion with E. M. Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* and Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. But *The Sword and the Sickle*, a rather confused book about a confused hero, lacks a firm centre. It shows the hero returning home from a German prison, hob-nobbing with Communists, and ending up in prison again. The cheap irony with which both Communism and Gandhism are treated here deprives Lal Singh's quest of seriousness. *The Big Heart* (1945), Anand's last novel before Indian independence (1947), recounts the tragedy of a young coppersmith who unsuccessfully tries to champion modernity in a traditional society.

After independence, Anand began publishing a series of autobiographical novels. Of the proposed seven parts, the first, *Seven Summers*, is an engaging fictional account of his childhood, material from which was later re-worked into the more directly autobiographical *Pilpali Sal* (1985). *Morning Face* (1968; 1971 Sahitya Akademi Award), *Confession of a Lover* (1976), *The Bubble* (1984) and *Little Plays of Mahatma Gandhi* (1991) – the first section of the fifth volume, *And So He Played His Part* – have appeared so far in the series, which closely follows the course of Anand's career from childhood onwards. Their rich autobiographical content has endowed the novels with immediacy and vividness, and the entire series, when completed, promises to be an impressive fictional chronicle about a crucial period in modern Indian life.

Notable among the remaining novels are *The Private Life of an Indian Prince*, Anand's only novel with an aristocratic protagonist and a work that has met with a mixed reception, and *The Old Woman and the Cow* (1960; also published as *Gauri*, 1976), a spirited study of the transformation of a docile rustic girl into a rebel. Far less successful are *The Road* (1961), a rehash of the *Untouchable* theme, *Death of a Hero* (1963), dealing rather superficially with a Kashmir freedom

fighter, and the sentimental novella *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts* (1939).

Anand's short-story collections include *The Lost Child and Other Stories* (1934), *The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories* (1944), *The Tractor and the Corn Goddess and Other Stories* (1947), *Reflections on the Golden Bed and Other Stories* (1953), *The Power of Darkness and Other Stories* (1959), *Lajwanti and Other Stories* (1966) and *Between Tears and Laughter* (1973). *Selected Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand* (1977), edited by M. K. NAIK, is a representative selection.

Anand's short stories are remarkable for their range and variety, not only in mood, tone and spirit, but also in locale, characters, form and style. The village and the city are almost equally represented, and the characters are drawn from all strata of society. The various forms drawn upon are the fable, the parable, the folk tale, the bardic narrative and sometimes even the well-made story. Stories such as 'The Lost Child', in which the traumatic experience of a child separated from its parents at a country fair symbolizes a universal human plight, and 'Birth', which testifies to the extraordinary courage and strength a young peasant woman derives from her staunch religious faith in her hour of trial, are imaginative tales with a lyric awareness. Starkly realistic studies of men and women crushed by overwhelming forces include 'Lajwanti' and 'The Cobbler and the Machine'; Anand's acute awareness of the clash between tradition and modernity is revealed in stories such as 'The Power of Darkness' and 'The Tractor and the Corn Goddess'; feudalism and capitalism are pilloried in 'A Kashmir Idyll' and 'The Price of Bananas' respectively; 'The Tamarind Tree' and 'The Thief' offer subtle psychological studies, while uproarious farce enlivens 'The Barber's Trade Union' and 'The Liar'.

As novelist and short-story writer, Anand stands out among his contemporaries though the vast range of his work, his wealth of living characters, his ruthless realism and his fervent championship of the underprivileged. His style at its best is redolent of the Indian soil and experimental in its bold importation into English of words, expletives, turns of expression and proverbs drawn from his native Punjabi and Hindi. His chief limitations are sentimentality, a weakness for preaching and a penchant for verbosity leading to occasionally slipshod expression. Although his work is uneven, he remains a major novelist and short-story writer.

Anand's very recent novels betray a sad decline in the quality of his creative imagination. *Nine Moods of Bharat: Novel of a Pilgrimage* (1998) reads more like a dull travel-diary than a novel. The style is extremely loose and slipshod, a failing from which this author's latest work, *Reflections on a White Elephant* (2002), also suffers. The 'Elephant' of the title becomes a pawn in the conflict between religious fundamentalism and liberalism. The putative theme, however, loses its edge because both are presented as equally odious. *Things have a way of working out* (1998) and *Tales told by an idiot* (1999) are both old wine with new labels; the stories here have already appeared in the one collection or another earlier.

Apart from the autobiographical *Apology for Heroism* (1946), which evocatively traces his mental development, and *Conversations in Bloomsbury* (1981), Anand has also written extensively on art in *Persian Painting* (1930), *The Hindu View of Art* (1933), *Lines Written to an Indian Air* (1949) and several other studies. As an art critic he has achieved more as a knowledgeable popularizer than an original thinker. His literary criticism, marked by gusto, includes *The Golden Breath: Studies in Five Poets of the New India* (1933), *Homage to Tagore* (1946), *The King-Emperor's English* (1948), *Roots and Flowers* (1972) and *Author to Critic: Letters of Mulk Raj Anand to Saros Cowasjee* (1973).

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 P. K. Rajan, *Mulk Raj Anand: A Revaluation* (1994).

M. K. NAIK

Anantanarayanan, M. (1907–)

Indian novelist

Born in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India, to an upper-middle-class Brahmin family, he entered the Indian civil service. His only novel, *The Silver Pilgrimage* (1961), is slender but hilariously erudite,

a forerunner in the Indian sub-continent of the post-modern novel that has become popular since SALMAN RUSHDIE's *Midnight's Children* (1981). It mixes pastiche, chronicle, parody, farce and the picaresque. The novel is set in medieval India, as traversed by a Sri Lankan, Prince Jayasurya, and his intellectual companion Tilaka (the pilgrimage to Kashi undertaken on the advice of Sage Agastya, one of the many bearing that hallowed name); it re-creates the various facets of life on the Indian sub-continent with a tongue-in-cheek solemnity.

The theme of the resilience of the Hindu religion – its incredible range of manifestations, from superstition to metaphysics, the inclusive ideal of the Indian way of life – is explored through a chequered narrative mode that is a feat at once of realism and of refined farce. Wearing his scholarship gracefully and lightly, Anantanarayanan parodies a number of ancient and medieval Indian discourses such as the folk tale, folk and mystical poetry in Tamil, court language, philosophical and metaphysical debates between rival sects, spiritual initiation and necromancer's seance.

The most marked feature of *The Silver Pilgrimage* is its nonchalant shifts from the sublime to the ridiculous and vice versa, which enable the author to hold up a post-modern mirror to Indian culture. Its technical virtuosity and sophisticated treatment of realistic narrative mark the novel as a pioneer in the genre of discontinuous, parodic fiction exploiting pastiche. It may be compared to Angus Wilson's adroit attempt in *No Laughing Matter* (1967) to structure his chronicle of British social history from Edwardian to post-colonial times in terms of several dramatic modes from naturalism to the absurd. In both, the critique of the author's own culture is offered through a brilliant and humane farce. Both Anantanarayanan and Wilson have a greater variety of narrative techniques and are less glaringly discontinuous in projecting reality than Rushdie in *Midnight's Children*.

Further reading

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C. T. INDRA

Andersen, Johannes Carl (1873–1962)

New Zealand historian, ethnologist

Born in Jutland, Denmark, and taken to New Zealand before the age of two, he found his Danish heritage too attenuated for literary development and 'English' themes lacking cultural resonance in New Zealand. Like several of his 'native-born' contemporaries, Andersen turned to indigenous subjects. His first substantial work, *Maori Life in Ao-tea* (1907), a prose characterization of traditional Maori society, draws upon Maori materials in what J. O. C. Phillips has described as 'an effort to provide an instant history and mythology in a new and unlettered land'. Andersen maintained this approach during the next forty years with such works as *Myths & Legends of the Polynesians* (1928), *Maori Place-Names, Also Personal Names and Names of Colours, Weapons and Natural Objects* (1942), and *The Maori Tohunga and His Spirit World* (1948). His celebration of indigenous flora and fauna is exemplified by *Bird-Song and New Zealand Song Birds* (1926). Important writers of the next generation scorned these facile attempts to create an autochthonous literature. More significantly, apart from a handful of ethnographic studies that were authorized by Maori, Andersen's works, and many similar efforts by other writers, may now be seen as a form of colonization through cultural appropriation. Though this process took place in all settler societies, it appears to have been a more extensive practice in New Zealand than elsewhere.

Further reading

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PETER GIBBONS

Anderson, Barbara (1926–)

New Zealand short-story writer, novelist

Born in Hastings, New Zealand, and brought up in Hawkes Bay, she was educated in New Zealand

(BSC, Otago University, 1947; BA in Creative Writing, Victoria University, 1984). Anderson became an internationally recognized fiction writer in her sixties. She is a master of irony and the ridiculous in everyday life, and is adept at capturing various New Zealand social and speech patterns. Compassion tempers the comedy in her work.

I Think We Should Go Into the Jungle (1989) was short-listed for both the 1989 Wattie Award and the 1990 New Zealand Book Awards. The novel *Girls High* (1990) is a series of linked stories. Subsequent collections of discrete short stories are *The Peacocks and Other Stories* (1997) and *Glorious Things and Other Stories* (1999).

Anderson's first traditional novel, *Portrait of the Artist's Wife* (1992, Wattie Award), spans forty years with settings in Hawkes Bay, Wellington, London and Europe and deals with the role of art in New Zealand society. *All the Nice Girls* (1993) is about naval wives in 1960s New Zealand. Subtle humour and a divided focus mark *The House Guest* (1995) as a departure from her earlier work. *Proud Garments* (1996) deals with the complexities of married love in Auckland, New Zealand, and Milan. An amateur cowboy film is the framework for an exploration of characters' dreams and desires in *Long Hot Summer* (1999). Drama of a more serious nature takes place in *The Swing Around* (2001), set in Asia.

One of Anderson's unpublished plays won the J. C. Reid award in 1985, and several have been broadcast.

CHRISTINA STACHURSKI

Anderson, Ethel (1883–1958)

Australian poet, novelist, short-story writer

Born in Leamington, England, she was a fifth-generation Australian. She lived with her husband in India and England, before returning to Australia in 1926. Her serious work came late in life. It includes essays: *Adventures in Appleshire* (1944), *Timeless Garden* (1945); short stories: *Indian Tales* (1948), *The Little Ghosts* (1959); an episodic novel: *At Parramatta* (1956); poetry: *Squatter's Luck and Other Poems* (1942), *Squatter's Luck and Other Bucolic Eclogues* (1954),

Sunday at Yarralumla: A Symphony (1947); a libretto: *The Song of Hagar to the Patriarch Abraham* (1957); and biography: *The Joy of Youth: Letters of Patrick Hore-Ruthren* (1950).

Anderson's work is characterized by its pictorial quality, sensuousness, daring experimentation, formal variety and breadth of cultural reference. A compilation of her writing – *The Best of Ethel Anderson* (1973), edited by John Pringle – and the Penguin reissue in 1985 of *At Parramatta*, her *roman à tiroir*, are hopeful signs of a deserved critical revival.

The magic-realist mode of *Indian Tales* and *At Parramatta*, where the historical element is suggestive and allegorical, licenses Anderson's interest in 'the dangerous edge of things' – here sexual love and the power relations between the sexes. In *At Parramatta*, ghost story, fairy tale, melodrama and the darker folk tale are ironically combined to undercut Genesis, the Decalogue, the High Church of England and St Paul. (Mrs McCree regrets that Horace did not write an epistle to St Paul.) Despite male pride, anger, envy, sloth, gluttony, avarice and lust, airily displaced on to women, all ends well, with women ensuring the fecundity of the land and its denizens.

In her introduction to *Squatter's Luck* Anderson saw Australians as having 'attributes more Attic than English'. This sequence domesticates classical bucolics in Australia, where the man-on-the-land baffles seasonal extremes to achieve a brief pastoral idyll before the advent of war.

The more ambitious *Sunday at Yarralumla*, in its excavation of the past and celebration of a particular significant place, deserves recognition as a precursor of such 'mapping' poems as GEOFFREY LEHMANN's *Ross' Poems*, Laurie Duggan's *The Ash Range* and poems of LES MURRAY. One poem, 'Afternoon in the Garden':

...let the sun stand still...
I, evoking pictures from the past,
Do again what lordly Joshua did

sums up Anderson's characteristic resistance to transience.

Further reading

Befilia Foot, *Ethel and The Governors' General: A Biography of Ethel Anderson (1883–1958) and Brigadier-General A. T. Anderson (1868–1949)* (1992).

CAROL FRANKLIN

Anderson, Jessica (1923–)

Australian novelist

Born and educated in Brisbane, Australia, she was not widely acclaimed as a writer until the publication of her prize-winning novel *Tirra Lirra by the River* in 1978. Prior to this she published three novels – *An Ordinary Lunacy* (1963), *The Last Man's Head* (1970) and *The Commandant* (1975) – and was a successful script-writer for radio. She has lived in Sydney for most of her adult life, perhaps sharing with Nora, the protagonist of *Tirra Lirra*, the conviction that Sydney is 'the only place where I've felt at home'.

Ambivalence about place and the journey motif recur throughout Anderson's work. Her preoccupation with place is often expressed in terms that characterize post-colonial writing more generally – for instance, the ambiguous relationship between Europe and the settler colony, and the significance of the house as a metaphor for settlement. Alrene Sykes argues that, in its exploration of these issues, Anderson's work bears comparison with HENRY HANDEL RICHARDSON's Richard Mahony trilogy. In *Tirra Lirra by the River* Nora makes the traditional voyage back to the motherland, a spiritual and geographic progression moving from the periphery to the metropolis: Brisbane/Sydney/London/Sydney and, finally, back to Brisbane, which, in old age, she sees with new eyes as 'home' rather than a place of exile. In this novel Tennyson's poem 'The Lady of Shalott' is appropriated and re-written. As in the poem, mirrors, the river and the tower are important motifs, and the role of the artist and artistic creation is a central concern.

In both *Tirra Lirra by the River* and *The Impersonators* (1980; published in the USA and England as *The Only Daughter*, 1985), expatriation is explored not only in character and action but also in open debate. Binary oppositions – centre and periphery, old and new, home and away – are resolved in both these novels as the Australian protagonists come to accept the country and the culture to which they are born.

The short fictions of *Stories from the Warm Zone and Sydney Stories* (1987) are interesting for their explorations of the oppositions between different regions – the sub-tropical Brisbane, remembered in a series of stories about girlhood, and the contemporary urban metropolis of Sydney.

Anderson's writing about Brisbane bears comparison with recent writings by THEA ASTLEY and JANETTE TURNER HOSPITAL. The Brisbane stories foreground the intersections of colonialism and gender apparent elsewhere in Anderson's writing: women are presented as being in a kind of double exile, outsiders to language. This is also taken up in the historical novel *The Commandant*, a fiction about the penal settlement at Moreton Bay on the Brisbane River under the command of Patrick Logan in the 1830s. The brutality of the penal colony dominates the narrative, in which women, convicts, Aborigines and ultimately the commander himself are incarcerated. This novel presents the process of colonization in one of its ugliest and most destructive manifestations.

Further reading

Alrene Sykes, 'Jessica Anderson: arrivals and places', *Southerly* 46 (1986).
Elaine Barry, *Fabricating the Self. The Fictions of Jessica Anderson* (1992).

GILLIAN WHITLOCK

Anggraeni, Dewi (1945–)

Australian writer, journalist

Born in Jakarta, Indonesia, of Indonesian and Chinese background, Anggraeni settled in Melbourne in 1970. She gained an MA from the University of Indonesia and a Diploma of Education from La Trobe University, Melbourne. She has taught English as a Second Language with the Adult Migration Education Services, and has worked as the Australian correspondent for a number of major Indonesian publications, in particular *The Jakarta Post* and *Tempo*, a news and current affairs magazine. She writes in both English and Indonesian, and all her English-language novels have subsequently been translated and serialized in Indonesian magazines.

Her first novel, *The Root of All Evil*, was published in 1987. She has subsequently published three other novels, *Parallel Forces* (1988), *Journeys Through Shadows* (1998) and *Snake* (2003), as well as two collections of stories, *Stories of the Indian Pacific* (1992) and *Neighbourhood Tales* (bilingual, 2001). Her

stories, essays and poems have appeared in a number of anthologies and periodicals, both in Australia and in Indonesia.

Anggraeni's fictional terrain is the ground between cultures: difference as well as connection, misunderstanding but also genuine communication. Her characters, like herself, are cultural 'go-betweens' who discover the possibilities, and the costs, of entering into relationships – personal, social, sexual – outside the comfort zone of their own communities. She describes her manner of moving between cultures in the following terms:

... when we speak of crossing cultures, we should not picture someone moving from one place across to another. When I move from one culture to another, it is never a clean break. I don't change into a completely different person, but gain a further degree of mental agility and a deeper understanding of human emotions.

Her work is finely tuned to what she calls the different 'cultural sensitivities' of Indonesia and Australia, and to the need, both in fiction and journalism, to find 'culturally correct' ways of approaching her topics, especially in sensitive areas such as politics and sexual behaviour.

In her most recent novel, *Snake*, Anggraeni explores the contribution of Chinese-descent communities to the national cultures of Malaysia and Indonesia.

Further reading

Dewi Anggraeni, 'From Indonesia to Australia and back: cultural sensitivities', in Bruce Bennett, Jeff Doyle and Satendra Nandan (eds), *Crossing Cultures: Essays on Literature and Culture of the Asia-Pacific* (1996).

WENCHE OMMUNDSEN

Angira, Jared (1947–)

Kenyan poet

Born in the Siaya district of Kenya and educated at Maseno and Shiwo la Tewa and at the University of Nairobi, where he earned a degree in commerce. Among the major poets in East Africa, Angira perhaps has followed an individual path; his poetry is distinct through its personal, sometimes

aggressive tone. But this anger and exasperation underscribe the will for change (societal, political) that postulates Angira's poetry. 'I have to confront the world without end and see how to endure all in the spirit of forgetting all past and present bad things.' Angira writes in a clear idiom, using a medium range between the lyrics of popular local tunes and the more academic Western tradition. His first two volumes, *Juices* (1970) and *Silent Voices* (1972), offer a selection of brief poems, with very short lines, in his characteristic understated, elliptic mode. The rhythm is effortless, the singing voice easy on the ear. Angira's themes are general, his imagery organic; his views are presented without sentimentality or clichés. *Soft Corals* (1973) attempts longer forms and lines, and his social concerns give an urgency to the tone of the poems. Poetic monologues create a variety of characters in shorter versions of the East African 'song' tradition. *Cascades* (1979) is a mature collection of dreamy poems about sea and harbour. The topic is well suited to the melancholy mood of the songs; musical and religious references are summoned by titles such as 'Cantata' and 'Canticle'. In the more political *The Years Go By* (1980) his tone is more acerbic and bitter, didactic or explicit. Some of the poems in the selection *Tides of Time* (1996) add wit and humour to his tonal repertoire. Perhaps best known for his topical polemic verse, Angira is particularly at ease in an intimate range, not yet very common in African poetry, exploring the vision of an ordinary man who claims no privileged poetic position, but who, like Don Quixote:

stumbles ahead
Into the unknown.

J. BARDOLPH
RAOUL J. GRANQVIST

Anthologies (Australia)

Innocent gatherings of literary blooms or powerful instruments of canon formation? Early anthologies in Australia embrace the former model, though not always with the enthusiasm for colonial metaphors of *Hash: A Mixed Dish for Christmas, with Ingredients by Various Australian Authors* (1877), edited by Garnet Walch. Clearly addressed as entertainment to the 'common reader', this none the less manifested the financial

incentive that anthologies offer serious writers: MARCUS CLARKE and TASMA were among its contributors.

Douglas Sladen, the first scholarly anthologist of Australian poetry, published *A Century of Australian Song* in England in 1888. While acknowledging the thematic importance of 'the bush', he neglected the work of the *BULLETIN* poets, unaware that their rural-based social radicalism was to dominate the definition of Australian-ness for several decades. Retrospectively emphasized in RUSSEL WARD's *The Penguin Book of Australian Ballads* (1964), the *Bulletin* ethos probably had its last active poetic manifestation in Marjorie Pizer's *Freedom on the Wallaby: Poems of the Australian People* (1953). The 1993 *Penguin Book of Australian Ballads*, edited by Philip Butters and Elizabeth Webby, casts its net more widely, as does *The Poets' Discovery: Nineteenth-Century Australian Verse* (1990), edited by Richard D. Jordan and Peter Pierce.

The publishing firm Angus & Robertson took up the local task of defining Australian poetry with Bertram Stevens's *Golden Treasury of Australian Verse* (1906, 1909, 1912), following it with George Mackaness's *The Wide Brown Land* (1934) and *Poets of Australia* (1946, revised as *An Anthology of Australian Verse*, 1952), *Poetry in Australia* (1964) edited by T. Inglis Moore and DOUGLAS STEWART, and Stewart's re-working of *The Wide Brown Land* (1971). Oxford University Press, on the other hand, initially conflated colonial cousins in Walter Murdoch's *An Australasian Anthology* (1924), revised and extended as *A Book of Australian and New Zealand Verse* (1950), edited by Walter Murdoch and ALAN MULGAN. They shifted focus with JUDITH WRIGHT's 1956 *A Book of Australian Verse* (revised 1968). This was followed by JAMES MCAULEY's *Map of Australian Verse: The Twentieth Century* (1975), LES A. MURRAY's *The New Oxford Book of Australian Verse* (1986; 3rd edn, 1996), MARK O'CONNOR's *Two Centuries of Australian Poetry* (1988), Peter Porter's *Contemporary Australian Poetry* (1990), and John Leonard's *Australia Verse: An Oxford Anthology* (1998) and *New Music: An Anthology of Contemporary Australian Poetry* (2001).

These anthologies, along with the versions of *The Penguin Book of Australian Verse*, edited by John Thompson, KENNETH SLESSOR and R. G. Howarth in 1958 and by H. P. Heseltine in 1972 and 1981, established a fairly consistent group of

poets; in effect, a canon. Dissent was predictable. *New Song in an Old Land: Australian Verse* (1943; rev. 1954), edited by REX INGAMILLS, voiced the JINDYWOROBAK MOVEMENT's challenge to a cultural dependence on England, nationalist concepts of 'a new country' and settler ignorance of the spirituality of Aboriginal relationships with the land.

The 1970s saw different demands for political and stylistic innovation. Early contenders such as *Applestealers* (1974), edited by Robert Kenny and Colin Talbot, and THOMAS SHAPCOTT's *Contemporary American and Australian Poetry* (1976) were overshadowed by JOHN TRANTER's tendentious *The New Australian Poetry* (1979). This reflected a Sydney dominance matched in prose by the 'new' post-modern fiction of *The Most Beautiful Lies* (1977), edited by B. Keirnan. FRANK MOORHOUSE, a major contributor to that collection, had edited the 1973 *Coast to Coast*, last in the series of fiction anthologies produced by Angus & Robertson from 1941 onwards. His *State of the Art: The Mood of Contemporary Australia in Short Stories* appeared in 1983 and another of the Sydney group, Michael Wilding, edited *The Oxford Book of Australian Short Stories* in 1994.

Like poetry, anthologies of Australian fiction tended initially to aim for an English readership, sometimes quaintly, as in *Coo-ee: Tales of Australian Life by Australian Ladies* edited in 1891 by Mrs Patchett Martin, sometimes seriously, as in the World's Classics Series inclusion of *Australian Short Stories* edited by Walter Murdoch and Henrietta Drake-Brockman (1951). As with poetry, anthologizing of fiction from the 1960s onwards became both more confident in and relaxed about nationality. H. P. Heseltine's *Australian Idiom: An Anthology of Contemporary Prose and Poetry* (1963), for instance, is less narrowly nationalistic in its range than earlier anthologies such as A. A. PHILLIPS's *An Australian Muster* (1946) and Colin Roderick's *Australian Round-Up: Stories from 1790 to 1950* (1953).

The 1980s saw the emergence of survey collections intended to be both comprehensive and definitive, with fiction represented in *Australian Short Stories* (1983) selected by Kerryn Goldsworthy, *The Australian Short Story: An Anthology from the 1890s to the 1980s* (1986) edited by Laurie Hergenhan (revised in 1992 as *The Australian Short Story: A Collection 1890s–1990s*), and *The Penguin Best Australian Short Stories* (1991, 2nd

edn, 2000), edited by Mary Lord. These, with *The Penguin Century of Australian Stories* edited by Carmel Bird in 2000, provide an extensive overview of the genre. *The Oxford Anthology of Australian Literature* (1985), edited by Leonie Kramer and A. Mitchell, extended comprehensiveness to include poetry, fiction and drama. Its chronological organization by genre and author and its strongly evaluative stance contrasts with the thematically organized and more inclusive *Macmillan Anthology of Australian Literature* (1990), edited by Ken Goodwin and Alan Lawson.

As the volume of Australian writing grew, specialist anthologies of various kinds emerged to meet demands for more inclusive coverage. Period-specific anthologies other than those already noted include *The Penguin Book of Modern Australian Poetry* (1991) edited by John Tranter and Philip Mead, and *The Penguin Book of Nineteenth Century Australia Literature* (1993) edited by Michael Ackland, as well as more narrowly-focused collections such as *Contemporary Classics 65–95: The Best Australian Short Fiction 1965–1995* (1996) edited by Don Watson, or even *The Best Australian Stories 2001* (2001) edited by Peter Craven.

Thematic anthologies with a broad base include collections such as *An Anthology of Australian Religious Verse* (1986) edited by Les A. Murray, and *The Oxford Book of Australian Religious Verse* (1994) edited by Kevin Hart; *The Oxford Book of Australian Love Poems* (1993, 1996) edited by Jennifer Strauss, and *Australian Love Stories* (1996) edited by Kerryn Goldsworthy. War is the theme of *Clubbing of the Gunfire: 101 Australian War Poems* (1984) edited by Chris Wallace-Crabbe and Peter Pierce, and *We Took Their Orders and Are Dead*, the 1971 anti-Vietnam War anthology compiled by Shirley Cass, Ros Cheney, DAVID MALOUF and MICHAEL WILDING, while a more contemporary thematic interest in Asia emerges in *Hotel Asia: An Anthology of Australian Literary Travelling to Asia* (1995) edited by Robin Gerster. Further examples of thematic anthologies are *The Pacific Book of Australian Science Fiction* (1968) edited by John Baxter, *Dead Witness: Best Australian Mystery Stories* (1989) edited by Stephen Knight, and *The Oxford Book of Australian Ghost Stories* (1995) edited by Ken Gelder – although it could be argued that these belong to the rarer species of genre anthology exemplified by Philip Neilsen's *The Penguin Book of Australian Satirical Verse* (1986).

With respect to canonization, regional and social groups, notably Aborigines, women and non-British immigrants, complained vigorously of exclusion. There are a considerable number of regional anthologies, but they tend to show less stylistic and thematic variation than those based on difference of race and gender and are not detailed here. KEVIN GILBERT's *Inside Black Australia* (1988) was the first mainstream anthology of Aboriginal poetry, although inclusion of Aboriginal poems had marked anthologies of the 1980s. RODNEY HALL claimed this as a radical departure for his *Collins Book of Australian Poetry* (1981), but the first Aboriginal poems (untranslated) had appeared in 1905 – surprisingly – in A. B. PATERSON's *The Old Bush Songs. Dreaming Down-under*, an anthology of prose and poetry, was edited by Jack Dunn and Janeen Webb in 1998, but in general most of the growth in Aboriginal writing to date has been in the form of individual publication.

Women writers complained that their representation in 'definitive' anthologies had actually declined by the 1960s and 1970s from that in early anthologies such as Sladen's, and that it did not correspond to their inclusion in journals and the less formal anthologies of poetry societies and competitions. Kate Jennings's *Mother I'm Rooted* (1975) heralded several alternative-press women's anthologies; *The Penguin Book of Australian Women Poets*, edited by Susan Hampton and Kate Llewellyn, followed in 1986, with the prose *Penguin Anthology of Australian Women's Writing* and *Her Selection: Writing by Nineteenth Century Australian Women*, edited respectively by Dale Spender and Lynne Spender, in 1988. A degree of poetic canonical status might be considered achieved with *The Oxford Book of Australian Women's Verse* (1995) edited by Susan Lever.

While the multicultural programmes of *Joseph's Coat* (1985) edited by PETER K. SKRZYNECKI, and Penguin's *Australian Writing Now* (1988) edited by ROBERT ADAMSON and MANFRED JURGENSEN, included Aboriginal writing along with immigrant writing, women sought separate publication here also, as in *Beyond the Echo: Multicultural Women's Writing* (1988) edited by S. Gunew and J. Mahyuddin. Meanwhile, despite the presence of writers of Asian origin, systematic presentation of Australian writing as part of wider regional literature is rare. Publications include the FAW's *Span: An Adventure into Asian and Australian*

Writing (1958) edited by Lionel Wigmore, *An Asian PEN Anthology* (1960) edited by F. J. Jose, and *South Pacific Stories* (1980) edited by Chris Tiffin and Helen Tiffin. In the apparently inexorable march of anthologizing, this may be a growth area. So too may be the writing of those who believe themselves marginalized by their sexuality: *Gay and Lesbian Writing: An Anthology* was edited by Robert Dessaix in 1993.

Anthologies of Australian drama appear much later than those of prose and poetry, and share in the genre's general history of sporadic publishing. The best-known early collection is *Best Australian One-Act Plays* (1937) edited by William Moore and T. Inglis Moore. All four anthologies of the decade between 1934, when the Melbourne Dramatists' Club published *Eight Plays by Australians* (no editor), and 1944, when *Six Australian One-Act Plays* (no editor) was published by Mulga Productions, Sydney, were devoted to the one-act play.

The series projected by Eunice Hanger's *Australian One-Act Plays: Book One* (1962) did not eventuate at the time, although it was taken up from 1979 to 1995 by Heinemann. Hanger went on to publish *Khaki, Bush, and Bigotry: Three Australian Plays* (1968). Anthologies published overseas include Penguin's *Three Australian Plays* (1963, no editor), *Plays by Buzo/Hibberd/Romeril* (1970, no editor), and *Australia Plays* (1989) edited by Katharine Brisbane. Brisbane's 2000 edition of *Plays of the 60s* was, however, published locally. In 1975 Alrene Sykes followed the example of Leslie Rees's *Australian Radio Plays* (1946) with *Five Plays for Radio: Nightmares of the Old Obscenity Master and Other Plays* (1975). Sykes played a major editorial role in the Contemporary Australian Plays series produced during the 1970s by the University of Queensland Press – including *Five Plays for Stage, Radio and Television* (1977) and *Three Political Plays* (1980). Two anthologies from Currency Press show both continuity, with *Seven One-Act Plays* (1983) edited by Rodney Fisher, and change, with the emergence of Aboriginal dramatists in *Plays from Black Australia* (1989) edited by JACK DAVIS, Eva Johnson, Richard Walley and Bob Maza. Drama collections sharing the tendencies in the anthologizing of other genres are Liz Jones's *The La Mama Collection: Six Plays for the 1990s* (1997), which is focused not only on period but on a particular experimental theatre located in Melbourne; *Around the*

Edge: Women's Plays (1992) edited by Roxxie Bent and Teresa Crea, and Bruce Parr's *Australian Gay and Lesbian Plays* (1996).

Further reading

- E. Morris Miller, *Australian Literature from Its Beginnings to 1935*, vol. 2 (rev. 1975).
 Elizabeth Webby, 'Australian short stories from *While the Billy Boils* to *The Everlasting Secret Family*', *Australian Literary Studies* 2 (1981).
The Campbell Howard Index of Australian Plays 1920–1955, compiled and edited by Jack Bedson and Julian Croft (1993).
 Heinz Schumann-Zeggel, *Black Australian Literature: A Bibliography of fiction, poetry, drama, oral tradition and non-fiction 1900–1991* (c. 1997).

JENNIFER STRAUSS

Anthologies (Canada)

In a country where monographic publication has often been difficult, expensive, and no guarantor of public recognition, anthologies have played a key role in identifying authors, maintaining their visibility, and establishing the dominant literary canon. Robert Lecker's *English-Canadian Anthologies: An Enumerative Bibliography* (1997) identifies some 2,000 separate publications dating from 1837 to 1997. The majority of Canadian anthologies focus on specific regional, thematic and/or generic concerns. These include predictable subjects such as Canadian poetry from each of the world wars, regional interests as represented in volumes such as *The Atlantic Anthology* (1959) and *Vancouver Short Stories* (1985), and less-expected titles such as *Best Mounted Police Stories* (1978). In a country as large and as sparsely populated as Canada it is not surprising that since the 1920s close to one-third of the anthologies have collected writing from a specific city, province or geographical area. Many budding authors first appear in the various anthology series issued by literary societies or branches of the Canadian Authors' Association, such as the *Alberta Poetry Year Book* (1929–80) and the *Saskatchewan Poetry Book* (1950–).

The earlier Canadian anthologies, primarily of poetry, published from the middle of the nineteenth century until about 1935, are characterized by a principle of inclusiveness. Eager to demonstrate that there was indeed a viable Canadian

literature, their editors cast a broad net. The arrangement of the poems in the first of these volumes, Revd E. H. Dewart's *Selections from Canadian Poets* (1864), reveals its editor's priorities, with 'Sacred and Reflective' verse preceding that identified as 'Descriptive and National'. Dewart's introductory essay, which proclaims that 'A national literature is an essential element in the formation of national character', has itself been canonized as a classic plea to Canadians to recognize and value their local authors. Greater optimism was possible twenty-five years later when W. D. Lighthall's *Songs of the Great Dominion: Voices from the Forests and Waters, the Settlements and Cities of Canada* (1889) was published in London, England, as a companion volume to Douglas Sladen's *A Century of Australian Song* (1888). Lighthall's opening sections, 'The Imperial Spirit' and 'The New Nationality', reflect the growing alignment between nationalism and imperialism that characterized much Canadian writing around the turn of the century; his introduction declares, 'Australian rhyme is a poetry of the *horse*; Canadian, of the *canoe*.' A similar imperialist motive underscores WILFRED CAMPBELL's selections for the first *The Oxford Book of Canadian Verse* (1913).

During the opening decades of the twentieth century, most national literary anthologies, such as John Garvin's *Canadian Poets* (1916; rev. 1926) and Albert Durrant Watson and Lorne Pierce's *Our Canadian Literature: Representative Prose and Verse* (1922), continued to offer a wide sampling of Canadian writing. Their projected audience was the general reader, and their effect was to develop what Alan C. Golding (following Alistair Fowler) calls an accessible canon. However, J. E. Wetherell's *Later Canadian Poems* (1893), which concentrates on seven currently prominent male poets (with six women added in the appendix as a brief afterthought), anticipated the shift in editorial practice that would become increasingly prevalent in literary anthologies compiled from the late 1920s onwards. Generally speaking, editors showed less interest in identifying an accessible canon than in creating a selective canon, their anthologies now serving an ideological purpose more specific than the articulation of an aesthetically conservative cultural nationalism. In the hands of RAYMOND KNISTER, who edited *Canadian Short Stories* in 1928, and the six poets represented in *New Provinces* (1936) – F. R. SCOTT, A. J. M. SMITH, E. J. PRATT,

A. M. KLEIN, Robert Finch and Leo Kennedy – the anthology functioned as a manifesto of modernism. The importance of *New Provinces*, edited by Smith and Scott, which sold just 82 copies within the first year of publication (ten to Scott), has been constructed retrospectively by the country's modernist critics.

The most influential figure to use anthologies to develop a selective canon based on modernist values has been A. J. M. Smith, whose three editions of the *Book of Canadian Poetry* (1943, 1948, 1957), followed by his 1960 edition of *The Oxford Book of Canadian Verse*, established the pantheon of early and modern poets who would dominate the Canadian literature curriculum as the study of Canadian literature gained acceptability within the academy. In their application of modernist principles to Canadian authors, Smith and fellow anthologist RALPH GUSTAFSON (in his five versions of *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse*: 1942, 1958, 1967, 1975, 1984) favoured an austere virility and anti-romantic aesthetic (in Smith's well-known phrase, 'a contemporary and cosmopolitan literary consciousness'), one of whose effects was to devalue and decanonize many previously admired women writers, including Ethelwyn Wetherald, SUSIE FRANCES HARRISON and Florence Randall Livesay, and to limit recognition of their own female contemporaries. So stable has been the canonic structure erected by Smith that MARGARET ATWOOD's *New Oxford Book of Canadian Verse in English* (1982) adds only one new poet, Robert Hayman (1575–1629) to the entire pre-1950 period.

The extent of Smith's influence can best be measured in the pedagogical anthologies that began with Carl F. Klinck and R. E. Watters's *Canadian Anthology* (1955; rev. 1966, 1972) and continued to structure much of the post-secondary teaching of Canadian literature in the 1980s and early 1990s (Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman, *Literature in Canada*, 1978; Russell Brown and Donna Bennett, *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*, 1982, rev. and abridged 1990; Robert Lecker and Jack David, *The New Canadian Anthology*, 1988). Despite the efforts of a few scholars to reconstruct Canada's cultural past, these mainstream anthologies scarcely alter Smith's original selection of pre-modern and modernist Canadian poets. Rather, their selections reinforce NORTHROP FRYE's view that 'the central Canadian tragic theme' is 'the indifference of nature to human values', which is in turn based

on the notion (as expressed in 1965 by Desmond Pacey) that 'The Canadian imagination thus far is mainly a function of a landscape and a climate, and only secondarily of a society.'

The modernist effort to counter the romantic nationalism of earlier Canadian anthologies resulted in an academic canonical rigidity that has in turn incited several waves of anthology editors to challenge the quest for unified cultural expression that marks most survey anthologies. This attack comes from many different directions. The explicitly left-wing vision of John Sutherland's original assault on Smith's privileging of 'cosmopolitan' over 'native' values was argued in his preface to his counter-anthology, *Other Canadians* (1947); it was revived in the 1970s and 1980s in N. Brian Davis's two volumes, *Poetry of the Canadian People*, largely culled from old labour newspapers, and in the collections of workers' poetry edited by Tom Wayman. The proliferation of anthologies of women's writing that began during the mid-1970s attempts to rectify the historical suppression of women authors. Regional anthologies and a growing number of English-language anthologies of writers from specific ethnic groups, including blacks, Asian Canadians and Native Canadians, challenge the notion of a centralized national literature. Anthologies of Native Canadian literature include *I Am an Indian* (1969), edited by Kent Gooderham; *Achimoona* (1985), a collection of short fiction; *All My Relations: An Anthology of Contemporary Native Fiction* (1990), edited by THOMAS KING; and *Writing the Circle: Native Women of Western Canada* (1990), edited by Jeanne Perreault and Sylvia Vance. As Canadian literature has become increasingly diversified, its anthologies have become more specialized. Wayne Compton edited *Bluesprint: Black British Columbian Literature and Orature* (2001), and Jeannette Armstrong and Lally Grauer edited *Native Poetry in Canada: A Contemporary Anthology* (2001). Moreover, anthologies of avant garde writing continue to assail the preferences of survey anthologists for familiar works and authors. During the heady publishing years of the 1970s and early 1980s, so disparate were the theoretical positions of modernist editors of short-story anthologies, who were rooted in the conventions of realism, and those of post-modernist editors proclaiming the uncertainty of language, that critic W. H. New described the literary scene as the battleground of the Wars of the Anthologies.

Just as anthologies served as the medium through which modernism came to dominate the criticism and canonization of Canadian writing during the middle years of the twentieth century, so is post-modernism gaining acceptability as the mode of the late 1980s and 1990s through anthologies, edited in some cases by the country's leading post-modernist authors. These include GEORGE BOWERING's *The Contemporary Canadian Poem Anthology* (1983), MICHAEL ONDAATJE's *The Long Poem Anthology* (1979), DENNIS LEE's *The New Canadian Poets, 1970–1985* (1985), Geoff Hancock's collection of stories, *Magic Realism* (1980), and the annual anthologies of stories issued by Oberon Press and Coach House Press.

Anthologizing Canadian plays began only in the twentieth century. The best-known early collections are the two-volume *Canadian Plays from Hart House* (1926–27), edited by Vincent Massey, and *Six Canadian Plays* (1930), edited by HERMAN VOADEN. Other significant anthologies include *A Collection of Canadian Plays*, 5 vols (1972–78), edited by Rolf Kalman; *Encounter: Canadian Drama in Four Media* (1973), edited by Eugene Benson; *West Coast Plays* (1975), edited by Connie Brissenden; *Popular Performance Plays of Canada*, 2 vols (1976), edited by Marian Wilson; *Prairie Performance: A Collection of Short Plays* (1980), edited by Diane Bessai; and *Twenty Years at Play: A New Play Centre Anthology* (1990), edited by Jerry Wasserman. *Canada's Lost Plays*, 4 vols (1978–82), edited by Anton Wagner, brings together representative English-Canadian and French-Canadian plays from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. Three anthologies of Canadian plays that seek to establish a canon are *Major Plays of the Canadian Theatre 1934–1984* (1984), edited by Richard Perkyns; *The Penguin Book of Modern Canadian Drama* (1984), edited by Richard Plant; and *Modern Canadian Plays* (1985), edited by Jerry Wasserman.

Further reading

- A. J. M. Smith, 'The confessions of a compulsive anthologist', *Journal of Canadian Studies* 11 (1976).
 Carole Gerson, 'Anthologies and the canon of early Canadian women writers', in Lorraine McMullen (ed.) *Re(Dis)covering Our Foremothers* (1990).

CAROLE GERSON

Anthologies (Caribbean)

Anthologies have done much to give Caribbean literature a sense of itself. Early anthologies such as NORMAN CAMERON's *Guianese Poetry: 1831–1931* (1931) and J. E. CLARE MCFARLANE's *A Treasury of Jamaican Poetry* (1950) restricted their attention to the writing of particular territories. By 1950, however, although the various literatures were yet to see themselves as one, political developments were promoting the concept of interrelationship. The magazines *Bim* in Barbados and *Kyk-over-al* in Guyana published writers from Barbados and Guyana, together with those from Trinidad, St Lucia and Jamaica. The Pioneer Press, which had published such distinctly Jamaican books as *14 Jamaican Short Stories* (1950), also issued *Caribbean Anthology of Short Stories* (1953). In 1957 *Kyk-over-al* published an issue, *Anthology of West Indian Poetry*, to commemorate the new West Indian federation. With a similar objective, *Caribbean Quarterly* published a similarly-titled anthology as a special issue for 1958.

In the 1950s the idea of a Caribbean literature was reinforced by the dramatic explosion of Caribbean writing published in London. Anthologists lost no time in presenting the literature of the Caribbean to audiences in London and New York. Both G. R. Coulthard's *Caribbean Literature: An Anthology* (1966) and Barbara Howes's *From the Green Antilles: Writings of the Caribbean* (1966) include writing, not only from the English territories, but also from the Spanish and French in translation.

Caribbean anthologists then began to produce books meant for both foreign and local audiences. ERROL HILL edited several collections of Caribbean plays such as *Caribbean Plays* (vol. 1, 1958; vol. 2, 1965), *Three Caribbean Plays* (1979) and *Plays for Today* (1985); ANDREW SALKEY edited *West Indian Stories* (1960) and *Breaklight: An Anthology of Caribbean Poetry* (1971); and JOHN FIGUEROA published *Caribbean Voices: An Anthology of West Indian Poetry* (vol. 1, 1966; vol. 2, 1970). Figueroa also edited *An Anthology of African and Caribbean Writing in English* (1986). Paula Burnett edited the near-definitive *Penguin Book of Caribbean Verse in English* (1986).

There are also children's anthologies of Caribbean literature. Since the 1960s these have secured a more substantial place in school syllabuses and include *The Sun's Eye: West Indian*

Writing for Young Readers (1968), edited by Anne Walmsley, and *West Indian Poetry: An Anthology for Schools* (1971), edited by Kenneth Ramchand and Cecil Gray. These anthologies emphasize the work of a group of writers who were being canonized as major authors: EDGAR MITTELHOLZER, GEORGE LAMMING, SAMUEL SELVON, ROGER MAIS, JOHN HEARNE, WILSON HARRIS, V. S. NAIPAUL, DEREK WALCOTT and E. K. BRATHWAITE. Some anthologists question this canon, including Sebastian Clarke, whose *New Planet: Anthology of Modern Caribbean Writing* (1978) omits the 'big' names in favour of such writers as Faustin Charles and Lindsay Barrett. Stewart Brown, in *Caribbean New Wave: Contemporary Short Stories* (1990), gives prominence to younger writers such as JAMAICA KINCAID and OLIVE SENIOR.

Anthologies have also helped introduce Caribbean writing to different countries. In 1960 *The Tamarack Review's The West Indies* brought names such as Walcott and Lamming to the attention of Canadian readers. In 1983 *Pacific Quarterly Moana* performed a similar service in New Zealand with its special issue, *One People's Grief: Recent Writing from the Caribbean*. Various literary journals in the USA have also devoted all or part of individual issues to anthologies of Anglophone Caribbean writing, among them *The Greenfield Review*, *The Graham House Review* and *The Mississippi Review*. *Obsidian III* devoted an issue to 'New Jamaican Writing.'

As anthologies proliferated many became more specialized. The increasingly important work of women writers was underlined by PAMELA MORDECAI and MERVYN MORRIS in their *Jamaica Woman: An Anthology of Poems* (1980), and by Pamela Mordecai and Betty Wilson in *Her True-True Name: An Anthology of Women's Writing from the Caribbean* (1989). Frank Birbalsingh, in *Jahaji Bhai: An Anthology of Indo-Caribbean Literature* (1988), pays tribute to the Indian contribution to Caribbean life. Reinhard Sander's *From Trinidad: An Anthology of Early West Indian Writing* (1978) draws attention to a fascinating but little-known period of literary ferment. Other anthologies devoted to the writing of individual countries include Pamela Mordecai's *From Our Yard: Jamaican Poetry since Independence* (1987) and Rooplall Monar's *Mosaic: A Collection of Poems by Guyanese Writers* (1998). The increasing critical attention being given to oral or performance poetry is reflected in *Voiceprint: an*

Anthology of Oral and Related Poetry from the Caribbean (1989), edited by Stewart Brown, Mervyn Morris and Gordon Rohlehr, and Kwame Dawes's *Wheel and Come Again: an Anthology of Reggae Poetry* (1998).

CYRIL DABYDEEN's *A Shapely Fire: Changing the Literary Landscape* (1987), which contains work of Caribbean writers in Canada, and JAMES BERRY's *News for Babylon* (1984), a collection of writing by Caribbean poets in England, as well as E. A. Markham's *Hinterland: Caribbean Poetry from the West Indies and Britain* (1989), drive home such profoundly Caribbean themes as journeying and homelessness. They widen the scope of Caribbean literature while blurring the lines that separate Commonwealth nations.

The more important anthologies of the 1990s include Ramabai Espinet's *Creation Fire: a CAFRA Anthology of Caribbean Women's Poetry* (1990), Anthony Kellman's *Crossing Water: Contemporary Poetry of the English-Speaking Caribbean* (1992), *The Heinemann Book of Caribbean Poetry* (1992), edited by Ian McDonald and Stewart Brown, GRACE NICHOLS's *A Caribbean Dozen: Poems from Caribbean Poets* (1994) and *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories* (1999), edited by Stewart Brown and JOHN WICKHAM.

ANTHONY BOXILL
EDWARD BAUGH

Anthologies (East Africa)

The large number of anthologies in English published in East Africa since 1965 bears proof of the region's creative activity and of the ability of East African writers to master the English language in articulating their African experience. A number of crucial themes, developed and re-defined by later East African writers, found expression with the publication of short stories, one-act plays, poetry and essays in *Origin East Africa: A Makerere Anthology* (1965), edited by David Cook. (Most of its contributions are from Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda.) These themes explore questions about the kind of society to be built from the ruins of colonialism, about the role of the élite in society, and about urbanization and the problems that result from it. The selections in Cook's anthology suggest a Negritudist outlook and the

consequent nostalgic portrayal of the African past, but this is balanced by the sense of enthusiasm and hope that characterized East African writing following independence (Uganda in 1962, Kenya in 1963, Tanzania in 1964 and Mauritius in 1968).

Major East African writers established their careers in the anthologies of the 1960s and 1970s. The work of such writers as PETER NAZARETH, NGUGI WA THIONG'O, Jonathan Kariara, Elvania Zirimu, AUSTIN BUKENYA, Richard Nitru and Chris Wanjala appeared in the anthologies *Drum Beat: East African Poems* (1967), edited by Lennard Okola, and *Introduction to East African Poetry* (1976), edited by Jonathan Kariara and Helen Kitonga.

Anthologies of poetry, which comprise the majority of East African anthologies, include *Just a Moment, God! An Anthology of Prose and Verse from East Africa* (1970), edited by Robert Green, and *Poems from East Africa* (1971) and *Growing Up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools* (1989), both edited by DAVID RUBADIRI. The poems of Rubadiri's second anthology are arranged to cover seven subjects: love, identity, death, village life, separation, power and freedom. Everett Standa's 'I speak for the bush', for example, depicts the cultural alienation of Africans who attempt to appear 'modern' by apeing Western ways. Although some of the poems in this anthology are written by non-East Africans, they graphically depict African experience. Eric Ng'maryo of Tanzania and Stella Ngatho and Henry Barlow of Uganda are three of the poets represented whose creative use of language is remarkable.

Other poetry anthologies include *Attachments to the Sun* (1976), edited by Dougall Blackburn, Alfred Horsfall and Chris Wanjala; *Boundless Voices: Poems from Kenya* (1988), edited by Arthur I. Luvai, which introduces such young East African poets as Loice Abukutsa and Z. Osore, whose writing is informed by African oral traditions; *An Anthology of East African Poetry* (1988), edited by A. D. Amateshe; and *Tender Memories: Poems and Short Stories* (1989), edited by Arthur I. Luvai, W. Kabira and B. Bhuluka. *Our Secret Lives* (1990), edited by Wanjiku Mukabi *et al.*, is an anthology of poems and short stories by East African women. The British Council in Nairobi has published several anthologies of Kenyan schoolchildren's poems, including *Youthful Voices* (1992), *Search for a New Tomorrow* (1993) and *The Secrets of Wisdom* (1994).

Anthologies of East African oral literature include *The Heroic Recitations of the Bahima of Ankole* (1964), edited by Henry Morris – mainly praise poems from Uganda; *Akamba Stories* (1966), edited by John Mbiti – fables and tales from the Akamba people of Kenya; *Agikuyu Folk Tales* (1966), edited by Njumbo Njururi – stories and legends from the Agikuru (Kikuyu) people of Kenya; *Keep My Words: Luo Oral Literature* (1974), edited by Adrian Roscoe; *Kenyan Oral Narratives: A Selection* (1985), edited by Waryiku Mukabi Kabira and Kavetsa Adagala; and Bolo Odago's *Yesterdays Today* (1986). These materials are slowly influencing East African writers as they seek an authentic African form and subject-matter.

East African short stories have been collected in *An Anthology of East African Short Stories* (1987), edited by Valerie Kibera, in *The Winner and Other Stories*, (1994), edited by the Kenya Institute of Education, and in *The Coming of Power and Other Stories* edited by Jonathan Kariara. Short stories by women writers prove popular in anthologies, as evidenced by *Words from a Granary* (2001) edited by Violet Barungi.

East African drama has been collected in *Short East African Plays in English* (1968), edited by David Cook and Miles Lee, in *Short African Plays* (1972), edited by Cosmo Pieterse, containing plays by Kuldeep Sondhi of Kenya (*The Magic Pool*) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (*This Time Tomorrow*), in *Drama Festival Plays* (1986), edited by Dougall Blackburn and Wasambo Were Arnold, and in *An Anthology of East African Plays* (1991), edited by Kasigwa N. Barnabas.

EGARA KABAJI

Anthologies (Hong Kong)

Largely as a result of bi-lingual readings and festivals organized by local poets, most anthologies are of poetry only. With few exceptions, Chinese poets in translation comprise almost half of each anthology.

Prior to the 1990s, the only significant anthology in English was *Hong Kong: Images on Shifting Waters* (eds Joyce Hsia and T. C. Lai, 1977), which featured several noteworthy poets, including LOUISE HO and Edmund Blunden.

In the 1990s, poet Andrew Parkin at Chinese University compiled several poetry anthologies,

including *From the Bluest Part of the Harbour* (1995) as well as two volumes from a reading series, *Tolo Lights* (1993–1995). Other anthologies published out of festivals and readings include *Vs: Twelve Hong Kong Poets* (1993), *A Collection of Poems: Hong Kong in the Decimal System and HK 1997* (1997), *Dialogue Among Civilizations through Poetry: Hong Kong Poetry Readings* (2001) and *Outloud: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry from Outloud Readings* (2002). *Vs* and *Outloud* predominantly include poets writing in English.

One anthology from Oxford University Press includes a significant amount of prose: *Hong Kong: Somewhere Between Heaven and Earth* (ed. Barbara-Sue White, 1996), a historical compilation mainly of work by British expatriates. Other anthologies of prose and drama published by university presses are exclusively literature in translation.

City Voices: An Anthology of Hong Kong Writing in English is a two-volume series of literature from post-war years to the present (eds Michael Ingham and XU XI, 2002–3), which encompasses prose, poetry and drama, exclusively written in English, and features work by over 70 authors including several new voices. To date, it is the most comprehensive anthology of literature in English from and of Hong Kong.

Some anthologies that feature translated indigenous work are *Hong Kong Stories: Old Themes New Voices* (ed. Eva Hung, 1999); *A Place of One's Own: Stories of Self in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore* (eds Kwok-Kan Tam, Terry S. H. Yip and Wimal Dissanayake, 1999); *Hong Kong Collage: Contemporary Stories and Writing* (ed. Martha P. Y. Cheung, 1998); *Contemporary Chinese Drama*, which includes plays from Hong Kong (eds Martha P. Y. Cheung and Jane Lai, 1997); and *Contemporary Women Writers: Hong Kong and Taiwan* (ed. Eva Hung, 1990).

XU XI

Anthologies (India)

P. LAL's *Modern Indian Poetry in English: An Anthology and a Credo* (1969; 2nd edn, 1971) set the tone for many of the anthologies of Indian literature in English that followed. The 'credo' of its sub-title refers to personal statements by the selected poets on why they wrote in English. Lal

marshalled these statements together for his own war against those who attacked him, and other poets, for writing in English. His combative introduction and the poets' often pugnacious statements were meant to silence their critics.

The critics have fallen silent, but many of the anthologists that followed, even when very critical of Lal, have retained his combative stance. Saleem Peeradina's *Contemporary Indian Poetry in English: An Assessment and Selection* (1972; repr. 1977) whittles Lal's 132 poets down to fourteen, simultaneously attacking Lal for encouraging mediocrity. R. PARTHASARATHY's *Ten Twentieth-Century Indian Poets* (1976; repr. 1978, 1988, 1989, 1992), KEKI N. DARUWALLA's *Two Decades of Indian Poetry (1960–1980)* (1980), Vilas Sarang's *Indian English Poetry Since 1950* (1989), and ARVIND KRISHNA MEHROTRA's *The Oxford India Anthology: Twelve Modern Indian Poets* (1992) all contain critical assessments of the poets included. The asperity of some of the assessments has led to a debate on whether anthologies are the proper place for them. Mehrotra's *Twenty Indian Poets* (1990), an anthology for school-leavers and first-year college students, includes a poem by SAROJINI NAIDU on the grounds that students should learn to recognize a bad poem.

Both Naidu and SRI AUROBINDO, a revolutionary turned spiritual teacher and poet, came under fire from Lal, and practically every subsequent anthologist has dismissed them. But they have shown surprising resilience, cropping up in Makarand Paranjape's *Indian Poetry in English* (1993), an anthology that seeks to correct both the inclusiveness of Lal and the exclusiveness of most subsequent anthologists. GAURI DESHPANDE's *An Anthology of Indo-English Poetry* (1974), PRITISH NANDY's *Indian Poetry in English: 1947–1972* (1972), *Indian Poetry in English Today* (1973) and *Strangertime: An Anthology of Indian Poetry in English* (1977) also have a certain catholicity in common, but unlike Paranjape's anthology they restrict themselves to the 'moderns' – those who did their best writing during and after the 1950s.

Paranjape goes so far as to question the very concept of modernity in Indian poetry written in English, implying that there is a link between the earliest known poets, such as HENRY LOUIS VIVIAN DEROZIO, and the poets writing today. He stretches the point further in *An Anthology of New Indian English Poetry* (1993), categorically stating that modernism is dead. Paranjape's very concept of

modernism is debatable and there is little to show that the new poets are free of it, but his original approach has at least led to SHAHID SUHRAWARDY, a forgotten poet whom he has sought to reinstate in the canon.

Debates raised by the anthologists are naturally about the choice of poets and a poet's choice of poets, since practically all the anthologists are poets. (A notable exception is V. K. Gokak, whose *The Golden Treasury of Indo-Anglian Poetry, 1825–1965*, 1970, as its title suggests, suffers from a certain late Victorian Romanticism.) More significant are debates arising out of regional loyalty – anthologists are accused of having a Bombay bias or a Calcutta bias, or, since a great deal of poetry is being written there, an Orissa bias. There certainly is some truth in the accusations.

Also, the omnipresent twenty poets (give or take a few) that feature in all the anthologies published since Peeradina's (except for the Paranjape anthology, which features young poets) have made readers feel that there is not very much new contemporary work of significance and that it is time to cease publication of so many anthologies. But with courses in Indian literature gaining ground in some universities, publishers have sensed a captive market for textbooks and it is unlikely the flow will stop.

K. Ayyapa Paniker's *Modern Indian Poetry in English* (1991) and KAISER HAQ's *Contemporary Indian Poetry* (1990) are important for different reasons. The first, published by the Sahitya Akademi, the official Academy of Literature, signals official recognition of a poetry that was nationally derided thirty years ago. The second is the first substantial anthology of Indian poetry to be published in the West (by Ohio State University Press, USA).

Meenakshi Mukherjee's *Let's Go Home and Other Stories* (1975; repr. 1977, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1992), an anthology that features fourteen writers, appears to be the only anthology of Indian short stories written in English. Anthologies of plays, short or full-length, fare even worse – there are none. The clear lead that anthologies of poetry have over anthologies of short stories and plays, however, should not be taken to mean that poetry is the mode Indians prefer. Though this was once widely believed, the new wave of fiction following SALMAN RUSHDIE's *Midnight's Children* (1981) has belied such a claim. On the evidence of the current crop of short stories and plays, anthologies in both areas will not be long in coming.

Nineteen ninety-seven, the 50th year of Indian Independence, produced a controversial anthology, *The Vintage Book of Indian Writing (1947–1997)*, edited by Salman Rushdie and Elizabeth West. The controversy was sparked by Rushdie's statement in his Introduction that 'the prose-writing – both fiction and non-fiction – created in this period by Indian writers *working in English* [Rushdie's italics] is proving to be a stronger and more important body of work than most of what has been produced in the 16 "official languages" of India, the so-called "vernacular languages", during the same time ...' He also pointed out that the editors' decision to exclude English-language poets from the anthology was because they felt that 'with a few distinguished exceptions (Arun Kolatkar, A. K. Ramanujan and Jayanta Mahapatra), to name just three, [the poets] did not match the quality of their counterparts in prose.'

Other collections of prose that appeared in 1997 were special issues of *Granta*, edited by Ian Jack, *London Magazine*, edited by Alan Ross, and *The New Yorker*, edited by Bill Buford. Some interesting specimens of nineteenth-century and twentieth-century non-fiction prose are included in *The Picador Book of Indian Writing* (2001), edited by Amit Chaudhuri. This anthology recognizes the fact that literary production in India's regional languages is as good as, or better than, what is written originally in English. Almost half the pieces are translated from Indian languages such as Kannada, Tamil and Hindi, though Chaudhuri's own mother tongue Bengali predominates. *Womens' Voices* (2002), edited by EUNICE DE SOUZA, contains 'selections from 19th and early 20th century Indian writing in English'. Since it covers a period usually neglected by anthologists, it contains a lot of work previously inaccessible to the general reader.

Despite the severe exclusion of poetry from these collections – there is one short poem by VIKRAM SETH in the special issue of *Granta* – anthologies of verse continue to dominate the scene. *Nine Indian Women Poets* (1999), edited by Eunice de Souza, includes work by established poets such as SUJATA BHATT, KAMALA DAS and Imtiaz Dharker, as well as by lesser-known poets such as Smita Agarwal and Melanie Siligardo. *A New Book of Indian Poets in English* (2000), edited by G. K. Kottoor, is a catholic collection of 68 poets with no discernible bias on grounds of age or region, while *Reasons for Belonging* (2002), edited by Ranjit Hoskote, has work by fourteen poets, the oldest of

them born in 1959 and the youngest in 1971. Seven of the fourteen poets live in Bombay or have lived in Bombay for long periods of time.

Body Blows: Women, Violence and Survival (2000) is an anthology of three feminist plays by Manjula Padmanabhan, Dina Mehta and Poile Sengupta, with an introduction by the eminent Tamil writer C. S. Lakshmi.

Gay and lesbian writing appeared in separate anthologies in 1999. *Yarana*, edited by Hoshang Merchant, is a selection of gay writing, both verse and prose, and *Facing the Mirror*, edited by Ashwini Sukhtankar, features lesbian writing, again in verse and prose. Both collections include a few translations and would normally come under the category of 'mixed' anthologies – collections of work written originally in English in translation, the norm favoured by Indian editors. The gay and lesbian collections are mentioned here because they are anthologies that break new ground.

ADIL JUSSAWALLA

Anthologies (Malaysia and Singapore)

Anthologies of Singaporean literature in English were published during the initial burst of creative writing of the 1950s, following the establishment of an English Department in what was then the University of Malaya in Singapore.

A collection of campus poetry entitled *Litmus One: Selected University Verse: 1949–1957* (1958) led the way. Edited by the Raffles Society of the University of Malaya, it attempted to provide a platform for local poetry in English. The Raffles Society followed this a year later with Herman Hochstadt's compilation of campus fiction, *The Compact: A Selection of University of Malaya Short Stories, 1953–1959*. Notable among the writers to emerge in the 1950s and whose work appeared in these university publications were the poets WONG PHUI NAM, EDWIN THUMBOO, EE TIANG HONG and Tan Han Hoe. After a lull in the publication of anthologies, T. Wignesana edited *Bunga Emas: An Anthology of Contemporary Malaysian Literature (1930–1963)* (1964). The collection included the work of Chinese, Tamil and Malay writers as well as that of writers in English. Among the more

prominent contributions were poems by Wong Phui Nam, Oliver Seet and Tan Han Hoe.

In the 1970s there was a spate of anthologies: *The Flowering Tree: Selected Writings from Singapore and Malaysia* (1970), *Seven Poets: Singapore and Malaysia* (1973) and *The Second Tongue: An Anthology of Poetry from Malaysia and Singapore* (1976), all edited by Edwin Thumboo. The work of established figures such as LIM THEAN SOO, Wang Gungwu and Thumboo were presented together with that of younger writers such as Wong May, CECIL RAJENDRA, CHANDRAN NAIR, GOH POH SENG, MUHAMMAD HAJI SALLEH and Lee Tzu Pheng. Two years later, Chung Yee Chong, Geraldine Heng and KIRPAL SINGH were represented in *Articulations: An Anthology of Poems*, edited by Kirpal Singh. Another poetry collection, *Five Takes*, published in 1974, included pieces by ARTHUR YAP, Yeo Bock Cheng, ROBERT YEO, Sng Boh Khim and Chung Yee Chong.

A collection of women's fiction, *The Sun In Her Eyes: Stories by Singapore Women* (1976), edited by Geraldine Heng, launched the work of Nalla Tan, STELLA KON, Theresa Lim, Tan Lian Choo, Rebecca Chua and others. A more wide-ranging anthology of local literature, *Singapore Writing* (1977), was edited by Chandran Nair. The collection brought together important new work by such Malay and Chinese writers as A. Ghani, S. N. Masuri, Meng Yi, Wong Yoon Wah and Yu MoMo, as well as pieces by such English-language writers as Chandran Nair, Dudley de Souza and Angeline Yap. Robert Yeo edited *Singapore Short Stories* (1978) and *ASEAN Short Stories* (1981). Malaysian short fiction was collected in *Twenty-Two Malaysian Stories* (1968) and *Malaysian Short Stories* (1981), both edited by LLOYD FERNANDO.

Anthologies of the 1980s and early 1990s were dominated largely by the hitherto relatively under-represented genre of drama. A series entitled *Prize-winning Plays*, edited by Robert Yeo, was published in four volumes between 1980 and 1981. The best plays selected from a government-sponsored competition were published in each volume. Ronald Alcantra, Elizabeth Su and Dorothy Jones were some of the playwrights included. A series of five volumes of *Prize-winning Plays* emerged between 1986 and 1991. Edited by different individuals (Max Le Blond, Arthur Lindley and Thiru Kandiah), these volumes presented the playscripts of younger dramatists such as Tan Tarn How,

Eleanor Wong, CHRISTINE LIM, OVIDIA YU, Daniel Koh and Desmond Sim.

The *Asean* anthologies of poetry, fiction and drama have been appearing since 1985. These volumes, edited by a committee of writers, are sponsored by inter-governmental cultural institutions and are for institutional distribution. Though comprehensive in terms of genres and communities represented, they are hampered by a lack of public availability.

Poetry and prose returned with a vengeance in the 1990s with two anthologies: *Words for the 25th: Readings by Singapore Writers* (1990), edited by Edwin Thumboo, an occasional collection celebrating Singapore's independence day; and *Voices of Singapore: Multi-Lingual Poetry and Prose* (1990), edited by Anne Pakir, a volume providing a multicultural perspective. The Tamil poet/dramatist Elangovan, the fiction writer PHILIP JEYARATNAM, as well as a number of National University of Singapore writers, are among those represented in these two collections.

Just as Thumboo's *The Second Tongue* had defined the broad parameters of poetry for the 1970s and 1980s, Mohd Quayum's *In Blue Silk Girdle* (1998) defined the parameters of short fiction for the 1990s. The collection reveals thematic daring and freedom, and subtle, teasing use of English. The anthology represents the major writers of Singapore and Malaysia and provides a rich canvas for the depiction of realities lived and imagined.

More than Half the Sky (1998), edited by Leong Liew Gook, contains some fascinating writings by women, while *From Boys to Men* (2003), edited by Koh Buck Song and Umej Bhatia, provides insights into a seldom-discussed aspect of Singaporean life (National Service – compulsory for all male Singaporean citizens).

The new millenium brought the publication in Singapore of a fascinating anthology of poems, *No Other City* (2000). Boldly envisioned and intelligently edited by two of the country's most promising young poets – Alvin Pang and Aaron Lee – the collections sets out to 'make statements' about living in a highly urbanized world. Two other recent anthologies are notable. *Love Gathers All* (2001) contains a wide selection of romantic/love poems from the Philippines and Singapore, and *Do Not Judge a Book by its Cover* (2000) is a collection of poetry, prose and drama from new and established writers that challenges received

norms and values. But perhaps the most significant anthology to appear in recent years in the Singapore–Malaya region is *The Merlion & the Hibiscus* (2001), edited by Mohn Quayum, Dipika Mukerjee and Kirpal Singh, a collection of outstanding short stories. This is the first such collection from the region to be published by Penguin Books, providing wide international circulation. Another Penguin volume, Kirpal Singh's *The Penguin Anthology of Southeast Asian Verse*, is forthcoming.

Anthologies aimed at the school market and consisting of poetry, short fiction or drama have made their appearance from time to time, edited by various hands. It is likely that, with the burgeoning of new writers and with the increased emphasis on support for the arts in Singapore, more anthologies of all categories are likely to be published in the near future.

DUDLEY DE SOUZA
KIRPAL SINGH

Anthologies (New Zealand)

Despite the formal colonization of New Zealand by British settlers as early as the 1840s, nineteenth-century anthologies of New Zealand literature in English were few and unimportant. *New Zealand Verse* (1906), edited by W. F. Alexander and A. E. Currie, was the first significant collection of New Zealand poetry. While some poems in this collection deal with the experience of emigration, few reflect on the particular experience of life in the new colony. The distinction of the new land was found in its scenery and in Maori legends. Some early anthologies, such as *The Oxford Book of Australasian Verse* (1918), edited by Walter Murdoch, regarded New Zealand as an Australasian colony, and it was not until the volume's fourth edition, *A Book of Australian and New Zealand Verse* (1950), that New Zealand poems were separated from Australian poems. Though partly the result of an English attitude to the Antipodes, this combination of the two countries did reflect the popularity in New Zealand of some Australian balladeers.

Later anthologies published before 1945 were distinctly backward-looking and conscious of Britain. Quentin Pope's *Kowhai Gold* (1930) and C. A. Marris's *Lyric Poems 1928–1942* (1944)

contain poems almost uniformly sentimental and shallow. *New Zealand Short Stories* (1930) was the first collection of stories. The editor, O. N. Gillespie, seems to have chosen stories to describe New Zealand for English readers, though most were written for local or at least antipodean publication, several coming from the Sydney weekly *BULLETIN*. The connection with Australia did not last much beyond this time. A recognition of contemporary New Zealand social conditions did occasionally appear in five collections of one-act plays edited by Victor Lloyd (1933–36).

The long-held notion that 'New Zealand literature' began in the 1930s needs some qualification, but later anthologies lend it support. The influential anthology that defined a new beginning in poetry was ALLEN CURNOW's *A Book of New Zealand Verse 1923–45* (1945). It introduced a new canon that has since been added to, but which otherwise has been only slightly modified, and it printed fuller selections from fewer poets. In a long and important introduction, Curnow pointed to the insecurity and rootlessness of New Zealanders. The most widely distributed of all anthologies, Curnow's later *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse* (1960) overshadowed the perhaps less tendentious *An Anthology of New Zealand Verse* (1956), edited by Robert Chapman and Jonathan Bennett.

As its title suggests, FRANK SARGESON's collection of stories *Speaking for Ourselves* (1945) introduced a new attitude to the short story, but it was the inclusion in the World's Classics series of DAN DAVIN's *New Zealand Short Stories* (1953) that ensured that volume's worldwide appeal. Oxford University Press was to add to *New Zealand Short Stories* each decade, bringing readers up to date with a second (1966), third (1975) and fourth (1984) series of stories, edited by C. K. STEAD, VINCENT O'SULLIVAN and Lydia Wevers, respectively; all have thoughtful introductions.

Curnow's anthologies were superseded, but his judgements were not significantly revised, by O'Sullivan's *An Anthology of Twentieth Century New Zealand Poetry* (1970; 3rd rev. edn, 1987). A new generation of poets scarcely represented in Curnow's 1945 collection appeared in Charles Doyle's *Recent Poetry in New Zealand* (1965), and there are still newer generations in Arthur Baysting's *The Young New Zealand Poets* (1973), Mark Pirie's *New Zealand Writing: The NeXt [sic] Wave* (1998) and, edited by contemporaries looking

back to their youth, *Big Smoke: New Zealand Poems 1960–1975* (2000), edited by Alan Brunton, MURRAY EDMOND and MICHELE LEGGOTT.

Since the 1970s anthologies of poems and, particularly, short stories have become numerous and often illustrate particular kinds of writing. There is work drawn from a single periodical, for example, *Landfall Country: Work from Landfall 1947–1961* (1962), edited by CHARLES BRASCH, *N. Z. Listener Short Stories* (1977), edited by BILL MANHIRE, and *Under Review: A Selection from New Zealand Books 1991–1996* (1997) edited by LAURIS EDMOND, Harry Ricketts and Bill Sewell. Anthologies for secondary schools, well exemplified by Helen Hogan's *Nowhere Far from the Sea* (1971), are later labelled 'for young adults', for example, OWEN MARSHALL's *Letters from Heaven* (1995). For younger children there are Dorothy Butler's *The Magpies Said* (1980) and *The Puffin Treasury of New Zealand Children's Stories* (1998), edited by Jenni Keestra. *New Zealand Farm and Station Verse 1850–1950* (1950), edited by Airini Woodhouse, is regional in that it collects verse that describes rural and especially sheep-farming life from first-hand knowledge. More overtly regional is *From the Mainland: An Anthology of South Island Writing* (1995), edited by Lawrence Jones and Heather Murray. Trudie McNaughton's *Countless Signs: The New Zealand Landscape in Literature* (1986) and *Lake Mountain Tree: An Anthology of Writing on New Zealand Nature & Landscape* (1998) edited by Philip Temple reflect a degree of conservation consciousness appropriate to their later date.

Writing by Maori in English was first substantially represented by WITI IHIMAERA and D. S. Long's *Into the World of Light* (1982). The ambitious *Te Ao Marama: Contemporary Maori Writing* (1992–6), selected and edited by Ihimaera, is a five-volume anthology of both imaginative and non-fiction writing. Huia has published *Huia Short Stories* at two-yearly intervals since 1995. Drama is collected in *He Rou Hou: 5 Plays by Maori Playwrights* (Playmarket, 1991) and *Ta Matou Mangai* (1999), edited by HONE KOUKA. The South Pacific is represented in *Nuanua: Pacific Writing in English since 1980* (1995), edited by ALBERT WENDT.

The late 1970s and the 1980s were particularly marked by volumes devoted to women's writing. Verse was collected in *Private Gardens: An Anthology of New Zealand Women Poets* (1977), edited by Riemke Ensing, and short stories in

Shirley Temple Is a Wife and Mother: 34 Stories by 22 New Zealanders (1977), edited by Christine Cole Catley. More recent work is represented in *Women's Work: Contemporary Short Stories by New Zealand Women* (1985), edited by Marion McLeod and Lydia Wevers (published in England as *One Whale Singing; and Other Stories from New Zealand*, 1986), and *Yellow Pencils: Contemporary Poetry by New Zealand Women* (1988), edited by Lydia Wevers. Gay and lesbian writing is collected in *Eat These Sweet Words: The New Zealand Anthology of Lesbian and Gay Poetry*, edited by Sue Fitchett *et al.*, and *When Two Men Embrace*, edited by Jonathan Fisher (both 1999).

The very large but unfocused *The Oxford Book of New Zealand Writing since 1945* (1983), edited by MacDonald Jackson and Vincent O'Sullivan, surveyed the period following Curnow's and Sargeson's collections, and introduced a remarkable run of large general anthologies. *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse* (1985), edited by IAN WEDDE and Harvey McQueen, is characterized by a preference for the longer poem and is notable for its inclusion, in chronological position, of poems in Maori (with translations). Miriama Evans joined Wedde and McQueen to choose recent verse in Maori for similar inclusion in *The Penguin Book of Contemporary New Zealand Poetry* (1989). *The Penguin Book of Contemporary New Zealand Short Stories* (1989), edited by Susan Davis and Russell Haley, offers forty-five stories from a period of ten years. From Oxford came *The Oxford Book of New Zealand Short Stories*, edited by Vincent O'Sullivan (1992) and *An Anthology of New Zealand Poetry in English* (1997), edited by JENNY BORNHOLDT, GREGORY O'BRIEN and Mark Williams. Other general collections include Marion McLeod and Bill Manhire's *Some Other Country: New Zealand's Best Short Stories* (1984, rev. 1992, 1997), C. K. Stead's contentious *The Faber Book of Contemporary South Pacific Stories* (1994), and, most popular of all, Bill Manhire's *100 New Zealand Poems* (1993).

JOHN THOMSON

Anthologies (Pakistan)

Although random selections of Pakistani English literature have appeared from time to time in

various journals and books, only five anthologies can be considered as seminal to any selection of the work. Of these, four present only poetry and one is an anthology of prose and poetry.

First Voices: Six Poets from Pakistan (1965), edited by SHAHID HOSAIN, includes poems written before and after 1947 by AHMED ALI, ZULFIKAR GHOSE, Hosain, Riaz Qadir, TAUFIQ RAFAT and SHAHID SUHRAWARDY. In his introduction, Hosain denies that the anthology offers 'a Pakistani version of negritude', but claims the presence of 'a uniquely Pakistani flavour'. *Pieces of Eight: Eight Poets from Pakistan* (1971), edited by Yunus Said, contains poems by Zulfikar Ghose, M. K. Hameed, Shahid Hosain, Adrian Husain, Nadir Hussein, Salman Tariq Kureshi, KALEEM OMAR and Taufiq Rafat. In his introduction, Said finds 'the landscapes and responses' in the poems to be Pakistani. *Wordfall: Three Pakistani Poets* (1975), edited by Kaleem Omar, includes work by Taufiq Rafat, MAKI KUREISHI and Kaleem Omar. There is no preface, but the back cover blurb denies the poets were a 'school', while suggesting that they shared certain qualities and subjects. *Pieces of Eight* and *Wordfall* contain only poems written after 1947.

The Blue Wind: Poems in English from Pakistan (1984), edited by Peter Dent, is the only anthology of Pakistani work to have appeared in England. It includes poems by DAUD KAMAL, Adrian Husain, Mansoor Y. Sheikh, Salman Tarik[q] Kureshi and ALAMGIR HASHMI. In his introduction Dent states: 'One commends these writers without reservation: they are no "backwater", but *mainstream* and affording us all valid and fruitful directions.'

The first-ever anthology of Pakistani literature, *Pakistani Literature: The Contemporary English Writers*, edited by Alamgir Hashmi, first appeared in 1978 and contains work by ten Pakistani writers. (The second edition, with corrections and additions, was published in 1987.) The poetry and prose selections (fictional and non-fictional) all date from the post-1947 period. The poets included are Zulfikar Ghose, Ahmed Ali, Daud Kamal, Athar Tahir, Maki Kureishi, Shahid Hosain, Taufiq Rafat, Alamgir Hashmi and Kaleem Omar; the prose writers included are Ahmed Ali, Athar Tahir, Zulfikar Ghose and Shuaib Bin Hasan. Carlo Coppola and Beatrice Stoerk contribute articles (on poetry and fiction respectively) to the criticism section.

Growing general and academic interest in the literature has led to more selections since the 1990s. *A Dragonfly in the Sun: An Anthology of Pakistani Writing in English* (1997), edited by Muneeza Shamsie, covers 'a wide selection of good representative poetry, fiction and drama' from published sources. Another voluminous anthology edited by Shamsi is *Leaving Home: Towards a New Millennium. A Collection of English Prose by Pakistani Writers* (2001). More fresh, experimental work in poetry by new or young writers is found in *An Anthology* (1997), introduced by Maya Jamil. *Postindependence Voices in South Asian Writings* (2001), edited by Alamgir Hashmi, Malashri Lal and Victor Ramraj, contains recent creative work by Pakistani authors as well as criticism about Pakistani literature.

ALAMGIR HASHMI

Anthologies (Philippines)

Philippine Prose and Poetry (1927), edited by the Philippines' Bureau of Education, is an early anthology of essays, short stories, plays and poems. *Dear Devices* (1933), edited by Antonio Estrada, Alfredo Litiato and Francisco Icasiano, is considered the first general anthology of Philippine essays in English.

Following the Second World War came a resurgence in creative writing in the Philippines. *Guerilla Flower* (1946), collected and edited by guerrillero Juan L. Raso, portrays vivid pictures of the trying experiences of those who did not surrender but continued fighting the enemy until victory and liberation. *Heart of the Island: An Anthology of Philippine Poetry in English* (1947), edited by MANUEL VIRAY, was followed by *Philippine Poetry Annual 1947–1949* (1950), also edited by Viray. Jean Edades edited two volumes of plays – *Short Plays of the Philippines* (1940) and *More Short Plays of the Philippines* (1947), the former appearing in several editions. The plays portray the life and struggles of the common people in towns and barrios.

Philippine Cross Section (1950), edited by anthologists Maximo Ramos and Florentino B. Valeros, contains twenty-five short stories (nine from before the Second World War and sixteen from the post-war period). As suggested by the title, the events and scenes represent a cross-section

of Filipino life and places. *Philippine Writing* (1953), edited by T. D. Agcaoili, contains short stories and poetry by 50 outstanding Filipino writers in English. Intended for classroom teaching, the book is designed to strengthen love of country.

Philippine Contemporary Literature in English and Pilipino (1962), edited by Asuncion David-Maramba, devotes a large portion to Philippine writing in English. It includes short stories, poems, essays, plays, speeches, literary criticism and column writing. *Philippine Harvest* (1964), edited by Maximo Ramos and Florentino B. Valeros, is a collection of short stories, poems, essays and biographical studies by well-known writers and is designed to make Filipino readers aware of their rich heritage. *Equinox I* (1965), edited by F. SIONIL JOSÉ, includes mainly young writers to give them more exposure. *New Writing from the Philippines* (1966), edited by Leonard Casper, is a critical analysis and anthology of works of outstanding Filipino creative writers in English.

Philippine Literature in English (1973), edited by Esperanza V. Manuel and Resil B. Mojares, contains short stories, poems, plays and essays. It also gives a brief history of Philippine literature and concludes that 'the most dynamic writing fields are those in English and Tagalog'. *The Development of Philippine Literature in English Since 1900* (1975), edited by Richard V. Croghan, divides Filipino writing in English into three periods – early (1900–30), middle (1930–60) and modern (1960–75) – and provides an introduction for each.

A Survey of Filipino Literature in English (1987), by academicians Josephine B. Serrano and Trinidad M. Ames, is a collection of short stories, poems, essays, and one contemporary play grouped into three periods, with introductions and suggested readings. The periods are the Apprenticeship Period (1910–35), the Emergence Period (1935–45) and the Contemporary Period (1945–).

Discovering New Horizon: Anthology of Chinese Filipino Literature in English (1989), edited by Andrew Arriola and Grace Pe, is a collection of short stories, poems and essays which tackle the experiences and struggles of the Chinese Filipinos in the Philippines.

Man of Earth: An Anthology of Filipino Poetry and Verse from English 1905 to the Mid-50s (1989), edited by Gemino Abad and Edna Manlapaz, is the first of a three-volume collection of poems written

from English, was followed by *Native Clearing: Filipino Poetry and Verse from English Since the 50s to the Present* (1993), and *A Habit of Shores: Filipino Poetry and Verse from English, 60s to the 90s*, by the same editors. All three volumes together cover almost a century of poetry in the country.

Habilin: Antolohiya ng Katha Para sa Pam-bansang Kasarinlan (1991), edited by Rolando Fulleros Santos and Rolando Tolentino, puts together the works of a group of young writers who envision an imperialist-free Philippines. This was followed by *Impetu: Pangalawang Antolohiya ng Katha*, edited by Romulo Baquiran, Joi Barrios and Honorio Bartolome de Dios, which came out in the same year. *Sigwa: Isang Antolohiya ng Maikling Kuwento* (1992), edited by Mila Carreon Laurel, aims to stir the readers' revolutionary spirit through literature, and the development of a national culture without colonial and feudal interventions.

Brown River, White Ocean: An Anthology of Twentieth Century Philippine Literature in English (1993), edited by Luis Francia, makes available some of the significant short stories and poems of the period.

Literary criticism flourished in the twentieth century. *Feminist Readings of Philippine Fiction: Critique and Anthology* (1994), edited by Sylvia Ventura Mendez, has three major divisions. The first traces the rise of feminist consciousness and how women are repressed in fiction, the second examines the representation of women by male fictionists, and the last summarizes the critiques of the first two parts.

Ladlad: An Anthology of Philippine Gay Writing (1994), edited by Neil Garcia and Danton Remoto, is a collection of poems, stories, essays and plays revolving around gay experience in the Philippines. This was followed by a second volume, *Ladlad2: An Anthology of Gay Writing* (1996), by the same editors.

The Ravens 2: An Anthology (1996), edited by Elmer Ordoñez, is a collection of short fiction, essays, poems, plays and memoirs, written in both Filipino and English, which appeared in leading Philippine magazines like the *Literary Apprentice*, *Sunday Times*, *Philippine Graphic* and *Sun Star*, among others.

In 1998 the National Commission for Culture and the Arts funded the publication of *Fern Garden: An Anthology of Women Writing in the South* (1998), edited by poet Merlie Alunan. As the

title suggests, the literary works of women writers from the southern part of the country are put together in this work.

Bangon: Antolohiya ng mga Dulang Mapanghimagsik (1998), edited by Glecly Atienza, Bienvenido Lumbea and Galileo Zafra, gathered two hundred representative revolutionary plays from the different regions of the country, written from 1967 to 1977. *Philippine Theatre: History and Anthology* (1999), edited by Nicanor Tiongson, is a five-volume work that introduces the principal forms of Philippine theatre from the pre-colonial time to the present. The five volumes are *Rituals, Dances and Playlets*, *Sinakulo*, *Sarswela and Drama* and *Modern Plays*.

The Best Philippine Short Stories of the Twentieth Century (2000), edited by critic ISAGANI CRUZ, presents 50 award-winning English short stories. The anthology brings together some of the significant writers in Philippine literary history. The authors come from the different regions of the country. The following year, *Harvest and Other Stories* (2001), edited by Edna Zapanta Manlapaz, was published. It is a collection of 53 extant short stories written by women.

ESTRELLITA V. GRUENBERG

Anthologies (South Africa)

British forces occupied the Cape, South Africa, in 1795 and, after a brief interregnum, took permanent possession in 1806. The arrival of approximately 5,000 British settlers in the Eastern Cape in 1820 greatly increased the English-speaking population, with a concomitant increase in English cultural activities. In 1828 R. J. Stapleton produced the first slim anthology of South African literature in English, *Poetry of the Cape of Good Hope*, culled from local newspapers and journals. The first substantial collection, Alexander Wilmot's *The Poetry of South Africa* (1887), was largely derivative in style and colonial in sentiment. Promising new voices were included in E. H. Crouch's *Treasury of South African Poetry and Verse* (1907); however, it was F. C. SLATER's *The Centenary Book of South African Verse* (1925) that drew attention to an emerging indigenous tradition.

Slater's *The New Centenary Book of South African Verse* (1945) was superseded by an

adventurous post-war selection edited by Roy Macnab and Charles Gulston: *South African Poetry: A New Anthology* (1948). The latter collection was also the first to feature the work of a black poet, H. I. E. DHLOMO. More selective, but covering developments over 150 years, was GUY BUTLER's *A Book of South African Verse* (1959), which pointed towards a 'canon' of established poets. JACK COPE and Uys Krige covered a wider spectrum in *The Penguin Book of South African Verse* (1968), including Afrikaans as well as black poetry in translation. A similar holistic approach, though marred by imbalances, has been followed in *SA in Poësie/SA in Poetry* (1988), edited by Johan van Wyk *et al.*, and in STEPHEN GRAY's *Penguin Book of Southern African Verse* (1989).

Michael Chapman's *A Century of South African Poetry* (1981) had a major impact, reflecting both historical trends and the emergence of important new black poets. Black poets had been previously featured in selections such as Cosmo Pieterse's *Seven South African Poets* (1971) and JAMES MATTHEWS's *Black Voices Shout!* (1974); the 1980s saw a proliferation of locally published anthologies, including *The Return of the Amasi Bird: Black South African Poetry 1891–1981* (1982), edited by Tim Couzens and Essop Patel, and *Voices from Within: Black Poetry from Southern Africa* (1982), edited by Chapman and ACHMAT DANGOR. Poetry anthologies have largely succeeded in escaping censorship, and volumes such as the bilingual *I Quabane Labantu: Poetry in the Emergency/Poësie in die Noodtoestand* (1989), edited by Ampie Coetzee and Hein Willemse, and Ari Sitas's *Black Mamba Rising* (1986), featuring 'South African Worker Poets in the Struggle', have given the disenfranchised a local voice and audience. More narrowly focused are Stephen Gray's *Modern South African Poetry* (1984), Nohra Moerat's *Siren Songs: An Anthology of Poetry Written by Women* (1989), and Cecily Lockett's feminist collection *Breaking the Silence: A Century of South African Women's Poetry* (1990).

The focus in short-story anthologies shifted from pioneering tales of adventure and encounters with 'savage Africa' to the study of human relationships in an often-hostile environment; from the 1970s, however, anthologists began concentrating on the injustices of apartheid and on socio-political realities. An early, largely Eurocentric collection is E. C. Parnwell's *Stories of Africa* (1930). Most subsequent anthologies were aimed at the schools

market; however, *Veld-Trails and Pavements; An Anthology of South African Short Stories* (1949), edited by H. C. BOSMAN and C. Bredell, and RICHARD RIVE's volume of stories by black writers, *Quartet: New Voices from South Africa* (1963), deserve mention. Jean Marquard's *A Century of South African Short Stories* (1978) provides a comprehensive overview, whereas Stephen Gray's *The Penguin Book of Southern African Stories* (1985) offers a more challenging survey. Narrower in scope are: Mthobi Mutloatshe's *Forced Landing. Africa South: Contemporary Writings* (1980), and MBULELO MZAMANE's *Hungry Flames and Other Black African Short Stories* (1986), both focusing on black writers; Gray's *Modern South African Stories* (1980); Norman Hodge's *To Kill a Man's Pride and Other Stories from Southern Africa* (1984); and Michael Chapman's *The 'Drum' Decade: Stories from the 1950s* (1989). Feminist selections have been compiled by Ann Oosthuizen (*Sometimes When It Rains: Writings by South African Women*, 1987), Lindiwe Mabuza (*One Never Knows: An Anthology of Black South African Women Writers in Exile*, 1989), and Annemarié van Niekerk (*Raising the Blinds: A Century of South African Women's Stories*, 1990). E. M. Macphail's *Hippogriff New Writing 1990* (1990) is among several recent publications offering a platform for new talent.

Until recently, few anthologies of South African plays had appeared (apart from collections of one-act plays intended for schools). One of the earliest, *Six One-Act Plays by South African Authors* (1949, no editor), remains of literary-historical interest; more recent selections reflecting a renaissance in South African theatre in the 1970s include Ernest Pereira's *Contemporary South African Plays* (1977), Gray's *Theatre One* (1978) and *Theatre Two* (1981), and Robert Kavanagh's *South African People's Plays* (1981). These were followed by Temple Hauptfleisch and Ian Steadman's *South African Theatre: Four Plays and an Introduction* (1984), which juxtaposes Afrikaans, English, 'black' and 'alternative' dramas; *Market Plays* (1986), edited by Gray, containing contemporary works staged at Johannesburg's Market Theatre; and Duma Ndlovu's substantial volume *Woza Afrika!* (1986).

Anthologies covering several genres, including non-fiction, have been appearing since 1930; post-war selections include Roy Macnab's *Towards the Sun: A Miscellany of Southern Africa* (1950), *South*

African Writing Today (1967), edited by NADINE GORDIMER and LIONEL ABRAHAMS, and Gray's *Writers' Territory* (1973). Afrikaans writers in translation are included in ANDRÉ BRINK and J. M. COETZEE's *A Land Apart: A South African Reader* (1986), while David Bunn and Jane Taylor present South African art and writing 'in a state of emergency' in *From South Africa: New Writing, Photographs and Art* (a special issue of *Tri Quarterly*, 69, Spring/Summer 1987). More specialized miscellanies include Mothobi Mutloatse's *Reconstruction: 90 Years of Black Historical Literature* (1981) and, edited by Susan Brown *et al.*, the feminist publication *LIP from Southern African Women* (1983). Topics such as exploration, hunting and folklore have supplied material for popular anthologies, and selections of critical essays are making a regular appearance.

The post-1994 period has seen the appearance of a number of new anthologies of South African writing in English. Leon de Kock and Ian Tromp's *The Heart in Exile: South African Poetry in English, 1990–1995* (1996) is an attempt to take account of the poetry of this transitional phase, while Michael Chapman's *A New Century of South African English Poetry* (2002) is an extensive reworking of his earlier anthology of this title and remains probably the most comprehensive and important anthology of South African English poetry.

Short story anthologies of this period include Stephen Gray's *The Penguin Book of Contemporary South African Short Stories* (1993) and his extensively revised and highly successful selection of southern African prose, *Writers' Territory* (1973; rev. edn 1999). Denis Hirson and Martin Trump produced *The Heinemann Book of South African Short Stories: From 1945 to the Present* (1994) alongside Robin Malan's *Being Here: Modern Short Stories from Southern Africa* (1994) and Andries Walter Oliphant's collection of the stories of emerging South African authors, *The Change of Seasons and Other Stories* (1995). David Medalie's *Encounters: An Anthology of South African Short Stories* (1998) was followed by Craig MacKenzie's *Transitions: Half a Century of South African Short Stories* (1999), which takes in some of the key South African stories of the second half of the twentieth century. A major anthology of recent years is Gray's *The Picador Book of African Stories* (2000).

Post-1994 anthologies of South African drama include Gray's *South Africa Plays* (1993), a selection of well-known South African plays, Robin

Malan's *The Distance Remains and Other Plays* (1996), containing a mix of established and emerging South African playwrights, and Kathy Perkins's *Black South African Women* (1999), which, its title notwithstanding, contains plays by both men and women from various cultural backgrounds.

Further reading

'Anthologies', in David Adey *et al.* (eds), *Companion to South African English Literature* (1986).

ERNEST PEREIRA
CRAIG MacKENZIE

Anthologies (Sri Lanka)

Early anthologies aimed at introducing Sri Lankan writing in English, Sinhalese and Tamil to overseas readers. Christopher Reynolds's *An Anthology of Sinhalese Literature up to 1815* (1970) is a UNESCO publication as is his *An Anthology of Sinhalese Literature of the Twentieth Century* (1987); both present Sinhala literature in English translation. Michigan State University's Asian Studies Center published 'The Poetry of Sri Lanka' in the *Journal of South Asian Literature* 12 (1976) – a volume entirely devoted to Sri Lankan poetry – with an informative introductory essay by editor YASMINE GOONERATNE. Of the 70 poems published, 61 are written in English. 'Sinhala and Tamil Writing' (from Sri Lanka) in the *Journal of South Asian Literature* 22 (1987), edited by Ranjini Obeyesekere, published English translations of Tamil and Sinhala prose and verse. Gooneratne also edited *Stories from Sri Lanka* (1979) – fourteen of the eighteen stories were written in English – and *Poems from India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore* (1979) – the Sri Lankan poems are all by writers in English. *An Anthology of Modern Writing from Sri Lanka* (1981), edited by Ranjini Obeyesekere and Chitra Fernando, contains original fiction and poetry in English and translations from Sinhalese.

A comprehensive approach in terms of trends and themes is evident in anthologies compiled by D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke; his *Modern Sri Lankan Stories* (1986) and *Modern Sri Lankan Poetry: An Anthology* (1987) cover the work of three decades – from the 1950s to the 1980s – accurately reflecting

not only individual achievements but a crucial era of writing in English. *An Anthology of Contemporary Sri Lankan Poetry in English* (1988) and a companion volume of short stories (1990), edited respectively by Rajiva Wijesinha and Ashley Halpé, followed.

Modern Sri Lankan Drama (1991), edited by Goonetilleke, is the only anthology to cover this particular area, while his *Penguin New Writing in Sri Lanka* (1992) is the only anthology to include fiction and poetry in all three major languages of the island – Sinhalese, Tamil and English.

Vijitha Fernando's translation of Sinhala stories by twenty-five authors, *Women Writing* (2000), skillfully captures individual styles.

A Lankan Mosaic (2002), edited by Ashley Halpé, M. A. Nuhman and Ranjini Obeyesekere, presents translations of thirty-three Sinhala and Tamil short stories.

The success of Goonetilleke's *Penguin New Writing in Sri Lanka* prompted the publication of his *Penguin Book of Modern Sri Lankan Stories* (1996). Goonetilleke's deft selection illuminates the power of colonial tensions, ethnic conflict and the 1988 insurrection to govern personal feelings and action.

The aim of portraying Sri Lanka through 50 pieces of creative writing – poems, short stories and excerpts from novels – to throw light on the social, political and economic aspects is appropriate to the Golden Jubilee Independence Anniversary Anthology, *Sri Lankan Literature in English 1948–1998* (1998), also edited by Goonetilleke.

LAKSHMI DE SILVA

Anthologies (West Africa)

Ethnological imperatives

Whether considered in terms of the inclusion of West African works in larger anthologies, or of the anthologizing of all West African writing, the role of anthologies in West Africa began as ethnological scholarship serving political arguments. European colonizers needed ethnological profiles of conquered peoples for formulating colonial policies, while European philanthropists and African nationalists deployed them to counter racial myths created to justify slavery and colonialism. (See FOREIGN WRITERS (WEST AFRICA).) There is thus a direct progression from the Abbé Grégoire's

influential 1808 anthology of black intellectuals – *De la littérature des nègres*, which included work by West African-born Olaudah Equiano and Ignatius Sancho (1729–80), 'who had distinguished themselves in science, arts or literature' – to the mid-twentieth-century literary nationalism of CHINUA ACHEBE, who initially employed fiction to demonstrate that Africans 'were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy... poetry [and] dignity' (in 'The Role of a Writer in a New Nation', *Nigeria Magazine* 81, 1964), and Cameroonian prince Dika Akwa. Akwa compiled an anthology of Cameroonian proverbs, *Bible de la sagesse bantou* (1955), to argue philosophical analogies between the proverbs and the thoughts of European philosophers such as Marx, Bergson and Nietzsche. Such ethnological bias later contributed immensely to Western treatment of post-colonial literatures as merely ethnological gateways into the black man's mind.

Early West African anthologies had a predominantly ethnic focus and were loosely organized collections of all kinds of writing, including complete short works as well as extracts from longer works. Predictably, the two world wars encouraged outbursts of anthologizing fervour, with special attention to such cultures as the Ashanti, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani, who had offered large-scale military resistance to European conquest. Robert S. Rattray's *Hausa Folklore: Customs, Proverbs, etc.* appeared in 1913, *Ashanti Proverbs* in 1916, and *Akan-Ashanti Folk-Tales* in 1930. William Henry Barker's *West African Folk-Tales* appeared in 1917. By the 1950s, European ethnological interests converged with resurgent African nationalism. Seeking to demonstrate indigenous civilizations' glorious achievements, West Africans produced anthologies of their people's folklore with missionary zeal. However, Europeans remained active, and both sides often collaborated. Donald St John Parsons edited two volumes of North Ghanaian legends (*Legends of North Ghana*, 1958, and *More Legends of North Ghana*, 1960), while Ulli Beier produced anthologies of traditional Yoruba poetry (*Yoruba Poetry: An Anthology of Traditional Poems*, 1970, and, with Bakare Gbadomosi, *Yoruba Poetry*, 1959, and *Ijala: Animal Songs by Yoruba Hunters*, 1967). Alta Jablow's *An Anthology of West African Folklore* appeared in 1962, but Ruth Finnegan's *Limba Stories and Storytelling* (1967) represents the first sustained and consistent effort made by a major scholar to

treat oral forms as serious literature in their own right. In francophone states, cultural nationalism was invigorated by the Négritude movement's effective integration of racial ideology, ethnology and aesthetics. Traditional Senegalese narratives were anthologized by such writers as Bernard Dadié, Fily-Dabo Sissoko, Birago Diop and Jean Copans throughout the 1960s. The decade closed with the publication of the first of Neil Skinner's three-volume *Hausa Tales and Traditions* (1969), a compendium of various literary forms as well as historical narratives, religious material and official correspondence collected by Major Edgar, a British administrative officer in northern Nigeria between 1905 and 1927.

European-language writings

Anthologies of European-language literatures emerged with the literature itself. Not surprisingly, the first of these, *African New Writing* (1947, no editor cited), presented the first products of the 'Scribblers' Club', founded in Nigeria by a British Council official. It is essentially an anthology of six West African writers, with a South African Zulu included to support fashionable Western stereotypes, approvingly quoted in the foreword, contrasting the 'statuesque and simple Zulu' with 'the Negro brimming over with side-plots and character'. Conversely, the first major anthology in Négritude territories was Léopold Sédar Senghor's indigenous initiative, *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache* (1948), additionally famous for Jean-Paul Sartre's introductory essay, 'L'Orphée noir', which gave its title to the anglophone journal *Black Orpheus*. Another decade elapsed, however, before such anthologies became regular, with the publication of *An Anthology of West African Verse* (1957), edited by Donatus Ibe Nwoga.

The anthologies were generally national or even regional rather than ethnic, as in the case of Frances Ademola's *Reflections: Nigerian Prose and Verse* (1962; 2nd edn, 1965), with a foreword by frontline nationalist Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe; A. D. Banks-Henries's *Poems of Liberia (1836-1961)* (1966); A. C. Brench's *Writing in French from Senegal to Cameroon* (1967); Ime Ikiddeh's *Drum Beats: An Anthology of West African Writing* (1968); and Abiola Irele's *Lectures Africaines: A Prose Anthology of African Writing in French* (1969), with French texts and English commentary.

Various writers' associations, professional associations, cultural institutions and government agencies also played major roles in the development of anthologies. Their activities often reflected mid-century West African realities in which governments' ideological positions affected the intellectual and cultural climate. This largely explains the prominent roles in Ghana of literary clubs, the Association of Writers, and the Association of Teachers of English, under Kwame Nkrumah's ideologically articulate leadership. These organizations encouraged budding writers through creative writing competitions and offered outlets through the publication of anthologies such as *Talent for Tomorrow. An Anthology of Creative Writing from the Training Colleges of Ghana* (1966), edited by E. C. Sangster and C. K. A. Quashie, and *The New Generation: Prose and Verse from the Secondary Schools and Training Colleges of Ghana* (1967), edited by Margaret E. Watts. A notable equivalent outside Ghana was Martin Banham's *Nigerian Student Verse, 1959* (1960), a selection of verse previously published in *The Horn* magazine, University College, Ibadan. Governments also promoted literary works on radio, some of which were later anthologized. *Voices of Ghana: Literary Contributions to the Ghana Broadcasting System, 1955-57*, edited by Henry Swanzy, was published in 1958.

Particularly important since the 1960s are the anthologies produced to counter foreign school anthologies – those compiled by non-Africans and whose contents oriented African pupils away from local realities and tended to reinforce Europeans' negative myths about Africans. Students' aesthetic, cultural and historical appreciation of such works was aided by the addition of pedagogical introductions, annotations, critical and explanatory notes, classroom-type questions and biographical sketches. Representative examples are Donald St John Parsons's *Our Poets Speak: An Anthology of West African Verse* (1966), with an introduction by West Indian scholar O. R. Dathorne; Paul Edwards's *West African Narrative: An Anthology for Schools* (1966), comprising both stories written in English and translations from indigenous languages and French; and Donatus Nwoga's *West African Verse: An Annotated Anthology* (1967), still widely used in West African schools.

Anthologists since the 1970s have continued the tradition of making their works responsive to their societies' quest for self-definition. WOLE SOYINKA's

Poems of Black Africa (1975) accordingly abandons the customary sectional organization of anthology materials, preferring themes as the organizing principle. Journals such as *Okike: An African Journal of New Writing* (1971–) continue to promote creative writing and periodically anthologize such writing, notable successes being *African Creations* (1982), introduced by E. N. Obiechina, and *Rhythms of Creation* (1982), selected and introduced by D. I. Nwoga, anthologies of prose and poetry, respectively, celebrating the journal's tenth anniversary in the early 1980s.

Nevertheless, economic deterioration and control of publishing by Western interests are transforming the West African literary scene by subjecting literary production to foreign patronage and coercion. Thus, after successfully publishing its poetry anthology *Voices from the Fringe* (1988), edited and introduced by Harry Garuba, the Association of Nigerian Authors needed a British Council subsidy to publish its drama anthology, *5 Plays* (no editor cited), in 1990. The 1980s and early 1990s witnessed an ominous trend for Western publishers who, exploiting the current vogue for gendered literature, sponsor 'feminist' anthologies that may actually reflect not the contributor's autonomous inspirations but the interplay of the sponsor's commercial and ideological programmes. In so far as this trend, illustrated by Charlotte Bruner's *Heinemann Book of African Women's Writing* (1993), encourages creative diversity, it has its merits.

The 1990s and the new millennium witnessed a revival in locally published anthologies, produced by African academics or by West African writers' associations. Of particular importance are the increasing numbers of anthologies containing new work by women writers (see FEMINISM (WEST AFRICA)). Anthologies published since the mid-1990s include *The Potter and Other Stories* (1994) and *Breaking the Silence* (1996).

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CHIDI OKONKWO

Anthony, Frank Sheldon (1891–1927)

New Zealand short-story writer, novelist

Born at Poverty Bay, New Zealand, he grew up on a South Taranaki farm and left home in 1909 to work as a deck hand on coastal steamers and international sailing ships. At the outbreak of the First World War, Anthony went to England and joined the Royal Navy as a gunner. Injured in the Battle of Jutland, he was invalided home, where he purchased a small farm in Central Taranaki. Most of Anthony's fiction is centred on his experience of struggling to make his farm viable. Before moving to England in 1924, he wrote at least three novels and sixteen 'Me and Gus' stories. Two novels, *Follow the Call* (1936) and *Windjammer Sailors*, were serialized in the *Weekly Press*, the latter during 1924; the 'Me and Gus' stories appeared in weekly papers during 1923 and 1924 and were collected as *Me and Gus* (1938) and *Gus Tomlins, together with the Original Stories of 'Me and Gus'* (1977).

Celebrated for their use of vernacular speech, rural setting and comic realism, Anthony's sketches resemble those of STEELE RUDD and HENRY LAWSON in Australia, and the work of his favourite writer, Mark Twain. Anthony's Gus Tomlins is a comic inverse of a cultural stereotype, the capable do-it-yourselfer. The stories about Gus reflect the social and emotional patterns that characterize nationalist rural-centred writing in Australia and New Zealand. A minor writer, Anthony is nevertheless significant as a genre writer, his ironic sketches replicating many of the sexual ambiguities and cultural myths found in the work of major figures such as Lawson or FRANK SARGESON.

LYDIA WEVERS

Anthony, Michael (1930–)

Trinidadian novelist, historian

Born in Mayaro, in rural southeastern Trinidad, he attended elementary school there and in San Fernando, Trinidad's southern city, where in 1944 he entered the Junior Technical School as a trainee mechanic. Two years later Anthony was apprenticed at the foundry in nearby Pointe-à-Pierre. In 1954 he emigrated to London, England, intent on developing his writing career, and there met and

in 1958 married Yvette Phillip, a fellow Trinidadian. In 1968 the family moved to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where for two years he served as cultural officer in the Trinidad and Tobago Embassy. Returning to Trinidad, Anthony worked as a journalist for two years before spending sixteen years as cultural officer in the ministry of education. He was twice a resident member of the international writing programme at the University of Iowa, USA. His work, comprising six novels, short stories and historical writings, draws substantially on his personal experiences. For his literary achievements Anthony was honoured in 1979 with the Hummingbird Gold Award, and in 1988 he received the City of Port of Spain Award for his contributions to history and literature.

The first phase of Anthony's work, embracing his major fiction, effectively ends with *Streets of Conflict* (1976), though *All That Glitters* (1981) also belongs to it. Characterized by disguised eclectic autobiography, these works focus the developing consciousness of young protagonists, setting them in the landscape, society and ethos of rural Trinidad of the 1930s and 1940s. They offer period portraits that help reconstruct the neglected past, such as that of the selfless elementary schoolteachers so fundamental to the flowering of the country's first crop of intellectuals (projected through the motif of the portrait of the writer as a schoolboy) and the society's emerging ethnic pluriverse.

The second phase of Anthony's writing, beginning with *Profile Trinidad: A Historical Survey from the Discovery to 1900* (1975), consists mainly of historical and cultural writings, originating in but outlasting his work as cultural officer. Its range includes a re-focused history of country, city, towns and villages, the reclamation of the land's unsung heroes, and a chronicle of carnival. Later works in this area are his *Historical Dictionary of Trinidad and Tobago* (1997) and *Anaparima: The History of San Fernando and Its Environment* (2001).

Both phases share the common objective of celebrating the physical, cultural and historical landscape of Trinidad and Tobago. In Anthony's first three novels – *The Games Were Coming* (1963), *The Year in San Fernando* (1965) and *Green Days by the River* (1967) – and in the earlier short stories, a somewhat pointillistic proliferation of details of local colour, human

and physical, consolidates this landscape. This enables the fiction to anticipate the later historical-cultural writings in engendering a potential for elevating national consciousness and pride; the integration of vernacular usages reinforces this. Being essential elements of the decolonization process, antecedent to and characteristic of the early stages of post-colonial experience, these features establish for Anthony a place in anti-colonial discourse. Its most explicit rendering is in stories such as 'Sandra Street' (in *Cricket in the Road*, 1973), somewhat critically in the uneven *Streets of Conflict*, and in *King of the Masquerade* (1974), *All That Glitters* and *The Chieftain's Carnival and Other Stories* (1993). Moreover, his major fiction highlights everyday, uneventful, marginalized, usually rural lives, clothed in the warmth, foibles and venalities of their humanity, the muted criticism of the mores sustaining and sustained by them outweighed by their dignity of personhood.

If Anthony's work does not provide the social and political analysis typical of Caribbean anti-colonial and post-colonial literature, his tranquil prose and the limited perspective of the young protagonists do not conceal from the adult reader the disturbing relevance of those issues. Such larger concerns are indeed signified through an inescapable sub-text, in which adult behaviour and relationships and society's mores provide the parameters of the major themes.

Male–female contestation is one example. Men stake out as inviolate male space what should be shared space. In 'The Village Shop' (*Cricket in the Road*) and *The Year in San Fernando* the female self is diminished by an ethos that enforces economic female dependency, and in *The Games Were Coming* the puritanical, exploited Sylvia must negotiate social survival by becoming the blasé exploiter. In *Streets of Conflict* callous and exploitative males are counterbalanced by a mutually accommodating relationship between a more refined, sensitive man and a strong, intelligent woman.

Further reading

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ARTHUR D. DRAYTON

Antoni, Robert (1958–)

Trinidadian novelist

He was born on 7 May 1958 in Detroit, Michigan, where his Trinidadian parents lived while his father interned as a general surgeon. In 1960 his family moved to Freeport, Grand Bahama, where his father began a general practice. There he, his brother and sister grew up listening to the stories of Trinidad related by his mother's father and his father's mother, who lived with them. His maternal grandfather, born into destitution though the family were originally estate owners, eventually became a successful entrepreneur. Antoni's paternal grandmother, widow of a small cocoa estate owner, raised eight children mostly by her wits; she has become the most prominent voice in his writing.

Antoni went to the USA at age fourteen to enter high school, then to Duke University where he entered the pre-medical programme. At age 19 he was seriously injured in a water-skiing accident. When he recovered, he decided, to his family's surprise, to become a writer. (Antoni had demonstrated few literary leanings before that point.) He returned to Duke, switched majors, and obtained a BA in English Literature (1981), followed by an MA at Johns Hopkins (1982), then an MFA (1984) and finally a PhD (1990) from the Writers' Workshop, University of Iowa. His PhD dissertation was *Divina Trace* (published 1991, and awarded a Commonwealth Writers' Prize for First Book in 1992). After graduate school, Antoni moved to Barcelona, where he met his wife Ana. They moved to Miami in 1992, where he taught creative writing and literature at the University of Miami until 2001. He and his family currently live in Barcelona.

Divina Trace retells the myth of Magdalena in seven different ethnic versions. Multiple voices and identities depict creolization in the sense of ambiguity, ambivalence and multiple levels of meaning. In *Blessed Is the Fruit* (1997) the dual narratives of landowner and servant intersect and interweave in the book's centre, where the significant placement of a 'glass' page (like the mirror in *Divina Trace*) speaks to the author's post-modern playfulness. *My Grandmother's Erotic Folk Tales* (2001) is a collection of outrageous, exaggerated, interlocking stories related by grandmother to grandson. In all these works – located in the fictional island of Corpus Christi, an amalgamation of his actual and

vicarious Caribbean experiences – Antoni weaves a richly imaginative, magical realist world, full of narrative voices that are vivid, contradictory, irreverent and unabashedly creole in sound, capturing the music and rhythms of oral dialect tales.

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KIM ROBINSON-WALCOTT

Anyidoho, Kofi (1947–)

Ghanaian poet, critic, translator

Born in Wheta, in the Volta Region, to a family of traditional Ewe poets, he attended Accra Teacher Training College and Winneba Advanced Teacher Training College. He went to the University of Ghana and got a BA Hons in English and Linguistics in 1977, and has an MA (1980) in folklore from Indiana University and a PhD (1983) in comparative literature from the University of Texas, Austin. Since his return to Ghana, he has taught at the University of Ghana, where he has been Director of the School of Performing Arts (1992–98) and Head of the Department of English (1998–2002). Anyidoho has been very active in public life and has held many honorary positions within literature, culture, and the arts. He was appointed a member of the Ghana National Commission on Culture in 2001.

Anyidoho's volumes of poetry in English include *Elegy for the Revolution* (1978), *A Harvest of Our Dreams* (1984), *Earthchild, with Brain Surgery* (1985), *Ancestrallogic & Carinneanblues* (1993), and *PraiseSong for the Land* (2002). He has also written much Ewe poetry which he not only puts on the printed page, but records onto tapes and CDs, thus keeping a vibrant oral tradition

alive. Anyidoho's poetry, whether written in English or Ewe, is steeped in Ewe tradition, and he uses the traditional rhythms and metaphors, the traditional forms and symbolisms, to recreate contemporary literary work within this mould. For Anyidoho, poetry is performance.

Anyidoho has won international recognition for his poetic work: the Davidson Nichol Prize for Short Story and Verse (1976), the Langston Hughes Prize for Short Story and Verse (1977), the BBC Arts in Africa Poetry Award (1981), the Golden Jubilee Distinguished Scholar Award for Outstanding Contributions to African Literature, from the Faculty of Arts, University of Ghana – among many others.

The structural and poetic underpinnings of his work are elaborated in his PhD thesis *Oral Poetics and Traditions of Verbal Art in Africa*, and in his book *The Pan-African Ideal in Literatures of the Black World* (1989).

The themes of his poetry are found in contemporary post-independence Ghanaian political life, in the ideals and hopes of pan-Africanism, and in his personal voyage into himself. The disillusionment of the 1970s National Redemption Council under Colonel Acheampong, its incompetence, its corruption, its stifling of human rights, are recurrent themes in *Elegy for the Revolution*. *A Harvest of Our Dreams* is a lament of exile and exclusion and the longing for home. *Earthchild, with Brain Surgery* is Anyidoho back home in Ghana coming to terms with Ghana and yet another revolution. In *Ancestrallogic & Caribbeanblues* Anyidoho makes a journey 'into our past in order to come to terms with our future'; he looks at himself and the African outside Africa and as an outsider in Africa. *Praisesong for the Land* is a mature Anyidoho taking stock of his life and his dreams.

Apart from his poetic work he has published extensively worldwide as a scholar in journals and books.

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KARI DAKO

Arcellana, Francisco (1916–2002)

Filipino short-story writer

Born in Manila, the Philippines, and raised in the working-class district of Tondo, he wrote a moderate number of short stories between the mid-1930s and the mid-1960s. Never a highly prolific writer, he preferred to revise and refine his stories. Critic Leonard Casper has observed in his *New Writing from the Philippines: A Critique and Anthology* (1966) that with Arcellana 'revision becomes genuine revision ... so that through other stories with nearly identical themes and situations he writes more and more variations on the original'. Three collections of Arcellana's stories have been published: *Selected Stories* (1962), *15 Stories* (1973), *The Francisco Arcellana Sampler* (1988); and he also edited *PEN Short Stories* (1962). In recognition of lifetime achievement, the Philippine government awarded him the title of National Artist.

Arcellana's recurrent themes involve deeply felt emotion. Most often, pathos is the controlling emotion, but he is equally able to make bathos serve his larger purpose, which is to illuminate the human psyche. An example of the bathetic mode is *Trilogy of the Turtles* (*15 Stories*), a story that recounts the intensity of a young man who is baffled by his inability to tell a young woman of his love for her.

The story 'The Mats' (*Selected Stories* and *15 Stories*), on the other hand, focuses on a father who, having come home from a business trip, unrolls sleeping mats that he has bought for each member of the family. After everyone has received a mat, he unrolls one for each of his three children who have died and calls out their names. To the rekindled grief of his wife, who begs him not to go on, he replies, 'Is it fair to forget them?' Seen from the point of view of the remaining children, this story exposes the unspoken wounds that divide people. More than a decade later, Arcellana returned to the depiction of this family in 'The Flowers of May' (*15 Stories*). Here it is the

mother who wishes to remember her daughters with a simple gesture – three lilies for the family altar. And here it is the father who protests. For the children gathered around them, and for the reader, there is the realization that death is not a beautiful thing.

Much of Arcellana's fiction reveals a playful otherworldliness. In the middle section of 'Trilogy of the Turtles' (15 *Stories*), a child listens so intently to the silent laughter of a turtle that he fails to see the lights of an oncoming train. Afterward, the turtle silently weeps. In 'Thy Kingdom Come' (15 *Stories*), a writer yearns to meet Jesus, not for the conventional reasons but so that he can write his biography. 'A Marriage Was Made' (15 *Stories*) depicts a couple who have eloped with the unrealistic notion (in the Philippines) of living on the husband's meagre income as a writer.

Arcellana influenced an entire generation of Filipino writers, through both his own fiction and his book reviews, and especially as a teacher of creative writing and founding director of the Creative Writing Center at the University of the Philippines.

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ROGER BRESNAHAN

Archibald, Douglas Rupert (1919–)

Trinidadian dramatist

Born in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, he was educated at Queen's Royal College (1928–35). He joined the Trinidad Light Infantry (1938–40), worked for the Trinidad Government railways (1935–41, 1946–48), studied civil engineering (bachelor of engineering, 1946) at McGill University, Montreal, Canada, and was a civil engineering consultant until 1983. Archibald was a founding member of the Readers' and Writers' Guild of Trinidad and Tobago (1948–54), president of the Historical Society of Trinidad, and

tutor in creative writing at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine (in 1971, 1973 and 1975).

The author of two series of radio plays, 'That Family Next Door' (broadcast 1973) and *Island Tide* (1972; broadcast 1973), and a novel, *Isidore and the Turtle* (1977), Archibald is one of the founders of modern Caribbean drama who moved beyond writing one-act to full-length plays. His plays for the theatre carefully delineate character and use relationships between men and women, adults and youth, to show how the degeneration, decay and collapse of the society established by the white plantocracy were followed by disorder and poverty; youth, for example, lack direction and turn towards violence. *Junction Village* (1958), a folk comedy that was a success in London, England, in 1955, is set during a wake for the supposed death of the elderly Grannie Gumbo. It contrasts her energy, passion and trickery with the loneliness of the old men and the foolishness and violence of the younger men. *Anne-Marie* (1967), produced at the West Indian Festival of the Arts in 1958, uses four white and three non-white characters to show the collapse of the traditional plantocracy at the end of the nineteenth century. In *The Bamboo Clump* (1967) the owner of a house is ignored while his children drift towards failure. *The Rose Slip* (1967), set in the barrack yards of the urban poor, uses lonely old men and aimless, violent youths to show the hopeless life of an underclass unable to feed its children. *Old Maid's Tale* (1965), concerning the romantic fantasies of the last of the Macdougals (representative of the old white order), was followed by *Island Tide* (1972), *Defeat with Honour* (1977) and 'Back of Beyond' (premiered 1988).

BRUCE KING

Arguilla, Manuel E. (1910–44)

Filipino short-story writer

Born in Nagrebcan, Bauang, La Union, Philippines, to Ilocano peasants Crisanto Arguilla and Margarita Estabillo, he spent his childhood years in his birthplace. He moved to Manila, where he obtained his bachelor of science degree (1933) from the University of the Philippines. Arguilla became a teacher and later worked with the Bureau of Public Welfare. He married Lydia Villanueva – a short-story writer, poet and essayist. During the Pacific War, he joined the guerrilla movement, was

arrested by the Japanese in February 1944 and executed, probably in August of that year.

Arguilla collected the best of his short stories, which had previously appeared in magazines, in one volume entitled *How My Brother Leon Brought Home a Wife and Other Stories* (1940); it won first prize in the Commonwealth Literary Contest. In his anthology *The Development of Philippine Literature in English* (1975), Richard V. Croghan writes: 'It is the general opinion today that Arguilla wrote some of the finest Filipino short stories in English. His portrayal of the Ilocano peasant life is unsurpassed.' Edward J. O'Brien included Arguilla's 'Midsummer' in his 1936 *Yearbook of the American Short Story*, ranking it the best of the year's crop. A. V. H. Hartendorp, editor-publisher of the pre-war *Philippine Magazine*, wrote:

Arguilla has remained among the most forthrightly Filipino, using English almost as if it were a Philippine dialect – so adequate he finds it for his purpose. His work affords new proof of the singular adaptability of that great world language, which the Filipino writers are further enriching by new human as well as philological elements ... His work is as salty as the breezes that blow over the Ilocos, as human as the smell of the armpits of some of his characters, as deep as the rumblings in the cavernous bellies of his carabaos.

Two posthumously published books by Arguilla, which he co-authored with his wife Lydia, have been published: *Philippine Tales and Fables* (1952) and *Stories of Juan Tamad* (1965). The first book combines tales and fables told to Arguilla and his wife in their youth by their elders. The stories revolve around the supernatural, tales of enchantment, superstitions and creatures of darkness, among others. The second book, *Stories of Juan Tamad*, collects eight of the adventures and misadventures of the most popular numbskull hero of the Philippines.

ESTRELLITA V. GRUENBERG

Armah, Ayi Kwei (1939–)

Ghanaian novelist, essayist,
short-story writer

Born to Fante-speaking parents in Takoradi, Ghana (formerly the British colony of the Gold Coast), he was educated at Achimota College,

Accra, and, on an American scholarship, at Groton School, Massachusetts, and Harvard University. The first twenty years of Armah's life coincided with the growth of Ghana into Africa's first independent state and at the time of his departure for the USA, two years after independence, the ideals of nationalism and Nkrumahist socialism were at their height; the betrayal of and subsequent disillusionment with these ideals in the 1960s were to colour all of his early fiction. Armah's desire to write from an African base has taken him, in the capacity of translator, teacher and editor, to a number of African countries, including Algeria, Tanzania, Lesotho and Senegal, where he has lived since 1982.

Armah writes insistently, and often obsessively, about Africa's continuing oppression under the 'mystification' of independence and its entrapment in a cycle of neo-colonial dependency. Influenced by Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Armah's first two novels, *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) and *Fragments* (1970), emphasize the sterility, corruption and economic stagnation of an indolent ruling bourgeoisie. Armah's writing presents a country where little or no local wealth is created and where the craving for Western commodities leads inevitably to embezzlement of municipal funds and to bribery and fraud on a national scale. These novels depict a modern urbanized Africa trapped in a materialist malaise and caught, culturally, in a trance of whiteness, in which everyone from the government politician to the lowliest clerk apes European manners, dress and speech, and aspires to Western patterns of acquisitive consumerism and privilege. In *Fragments* the colonial dependency complexes, crises of confidence and cultural cringes which are familiar features of Commonwealth writing – particularly of the white Commonwealth of Canada and Australia – are given spectacular African expression in the form of a modern cargo-cult mentality. The novel's indigenous artists are racked by self-distrust and go overseas in search of foreign approval; local folk-myths are perverted into insidious neo-colonial propaganda by television technocrats angling for foreign foundations. In Armah's third novel, *Why Are We So Blest?* (1972), Western luxury, bourgeois class pyramids and white mistresses infiltrate the fabric of African revolution. In his sixth novel, *Osiris Rising* (1995), two centuries of colonial indoctrination present major obstacles to a group

of college lecturers who attempt to seed a long-term social revolution in Africa through educational reform.

In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, the legacy of decades of consumption without production issues, symbolically, in mountains of undisposed-of filth and waste in streets and latrines. In the lurid, surreal finale, set during the anti-Nkrumah coup of 1966, the corrupt fallen politician Koomson is imaged as the nation's collected excrement, evacuated through the public latrine hole and carried off by the novel's anonymous hero in the role of communal latrine man. Koomson is also, by implication, both the accumulated ills of the moribund Nkrumah regime that must be expelled before a new era can begin and the unexpurgated evils of Africa's colonial and pre-colonial history in which post-colonial corruption is rooted. There is a touch of Dickens in Armah's exuberant hyperbole, and of Rabelais in his indefatigable scatology, but also a vividly poetic sense of history and heritage comparable with that of other black Commonwealth writers such as WILSON HARRIS and GEORGE LAMMING. In *Why Are We So Blest?* the oppressive power of the past and the Commonwealth writer's penchant for allegory are once more in evidence, this time in the racial stereotypes of colonial history which penetrate even the intimacies of private relationships. In this novel Africa's molestation by Western imperialism is telescoped into the fatal attraction of a naive Ghanaian student to a psychopathic white American girl, resulting in the bizarre metaphoric transposition of the West's devouring of Africa's material resources into a corresponding draining of black sexual energy by white women.

In *Two Thousand Seasons* (1973) and *The Healers* (1978) Armah experiments with strange and arresting new literary forms, bursting the bounds of historical realism and moving into the terrain of myth, legend and racial memory. *Two Thousand Seasons* uses simulated oral narrative and a pluralized communal voice to present a thousand years of migratory Akan history, though this 'history' draws not upon specific tribal memories but on the hypothetical race-consciousness of a fictitious pan-African brotherhood and the dogma of a pristine, indigenous, pre-colonial African 'Way'. The group experience is now paramount and the novel's characterization implicitly reproves the alienated, individualistic perspectives of Armah's first three novels. The reader is addressed by an anonymous,

timeless (and racially chauvinistic) 'We' that speaks for the whole social body during its wanderings across history in pursuit of its racial destiny. *The Healers* refracts some of the historical myths of *Two Thousand Seasons* through the specific episode of the fall of the Ashanti empire, and ends with the enforced re-gathering of the world's black peoples in white captivity, ironically seen to portend their eventual reunification.

The abstract communalist rhetoric and cultural polemics of these two books are put on a more concrete and contemporary footing, and their guerilla and healing conclaves updated to late-twentieth-century teachers and curriculum reformers, in *Osiris Rising*, published after a seventeen-year break in Armah's writing. In this novel Armah explores the real, albeit limited, options for radical group initiatives, including the revolutionizing of teacher-training programmes and revision of school syllabuses, that are open to modern Africa's most creative and inventive thinkers. In their attempts to liberate African intelligence from Eurocentric learning models and cure an errant modern Africa of its distrust in its own indigenous forms and values, the novel's academic luminaries, like the heroes of the previous two books, look for inspiration to the African past: in this case, to the continent's cult secret societies of astronomers, builders and artists, and their clearly defined commitment to social change, and to the reinstatement of Ancient Egypt at the centre of African historical and cultural studies (the novel is a modern political reworking of the regenerative Osiris myth). Egyptological iconography and Egypt's centrality in black African history are much more in evidence in Armah's seventh novel, *KMT: In the House of Life* (2000). In this work the hieroglyphic excavations of a quartet of African researchers are used to present the continent's history as a single continuous stream sourced in the Nile Valley and, more ominously, as a succession of educational betrayals and mystifications by the knowledge monopolies of corrupt Pharonic priesthoods, Islamic scribes, traditional griots and racist colonial ideologues.

The visionary mythologized history of Armah's last four books and their exercises in racial retrieval link them with Negritude writing, and *Two Thousand Seasons* has been compared by critic Robert Fraser to one such francophone text, Malian Yambo Ouologuem's *Le Devoir de violence* (1968), published in 1971 as *Bound to Violence*,

translated by Ralph Manheim. Their pursuit of racial heritages, black aesthetics and authentic ethnic world-views are common themes in Commonwealth writing of the black diaspora. They appear in such widely different contexts as the later fiction of George Lamming, the travelogues of V. S. NAIPAUL, the metaphysics of WOLE SOYINKA's *Myth, Literature and the African World* (1976), and, on a more popular level, black American writings like Alex Haley's *Roots* (1976).

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DEREK WRIGHT

Asare, Bediako (1930–)

Ghanaian novelist

Born in the Gold Coast (now Ghana), he trained and worked as a journalist with various newspapers in Ghana before moving to Tanzania in 1963. His fictional works are not well known in Ghana, partly because his subjects are not typically Ghanaian, and he is often mistaken for ASARE KONADU, a writer of popular literature. However, Asare's novels, *Rebel* (1969) and *The Stubborn* (1976), which explore the theme of social change, follow a trend in Ghanaian writing of the mid-1960s.

Rebel vividly recalls NGUGI WA THIONG'O's *The River Between* (1965). It contrasts Ngurumo, Asare's fictional protégé and champion of a new order and values, with the fetish priest Mzee Matata (much like Ngugi's thoroughly negative Kabonyi), who advocates a return to traditional ways. The strength of *Rebel* lies in its well-paced, suspenseful, descriptive narrative; however, it appears that the plot is ready-made as Asare seems eager to resolve issues in favour of Ngurumo.

The Stubborn deals specifically with conflict between youth and their elders and, generally, with the problems of modern living. The protagonist,

Okello, rebels against parental authority and leaves for Nairobi with Sanga, a delinquent. The plot follows the course of popular literature that represents the city as a magnet that draws and frustrates young people. Okello, however, redeems himself and becomes a distinguished doctor. Artistically, the transformation of the protagonist is sudden and apparently designed to underscore the author's homily about the need to submit to parental control. The plot seems to come to a natural conclusion, but the novelist overextends it. When Okello, in defiance of his parents, marries the manipulative Emma (a relationship that immediately ends in a divorce court) the resolution seems *déjà vu*.

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CHRIS KWAME AWUYAH

Ashton-Warner, Sylvia (1908–84)

New Zealand novelist

Born in Stratford, Taranaki, New Zealand, she was educated there, and at teachers' colleges in Wellington and Auckland, New Zealand. With her husband, she taught in primary schools in remote areas of Hawkes Bay, Bay of Plenty, and East Cape, as well as in Taranaki and Wanganui. Ashton-Warner was an educational innovator who taught predominantly Maori children in small rural communities and utilized her personal theory of a 'key vocabulary', which she saw as capable of unlocking the learning potential of her students. This encouragement of learning through creative individuality, attempted among the most underprivileged communities, is recounted in her first novel, *Spinster* (1958). Between 1960 and 1979 Ashton-Warner went on to produce a number of works of fiction as well as accounts of her work as a teacher. *Incense to Idols* (1960), *Bell Call* (1964), *Greenstone* (1966) and *Three* (1971) are novels, while her teaching experiences are recalled and explained in *Teacher* (1963), *Myself* (1967) and *Spearpoint: 'Teacher' in America* (1972). An autobiography, *I Passed This Way*, was published in 1979. Ashton-Warner won much attention for her

work as an educator, particularly in the USA, where most of her books were published.

C. K. STEAD's essay in his *In the Glass Case* (1981) provides an important assessment of Ashton-Warner's work, while the story of her struggle to be taken seriously as both writer and educator is documented in Lynley Hood's biography *Sylvia!* (1988).

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MARY PAUL

Astley, Thea (1925–)

Australian novelist

Born in Brisbane, Australia, she grew up in Queensland, teaching English in Queensland country schools and, for a lengthy period, at Macquarie University in Sydney. Her experience of small country towns and their narrow-minded prejudice provided material for many of her novels, including *Girl with a Monkey* (1958), *A Descant for Gossips* (1960) and *An Item from the Late News* (1982). In her later work Astley moved to political spheres: in *Beachmasters* (1985), which is set during the struggle of a Pacific island for independence, and in *It's Raining in Mango* (1987), which debunks self-important family sagas by examining the lives of victimized people within the panorama of white history in Australia.

Astley's long career as a writer – twelve novels to date – offers a reflection of the great changes in Australian writing and social opinion since the 1950s. Her early works attack complacent Australian social attitudes in a relatively conventional way, but by the late 1960s she was influenced by PATRICK WHITE to experiment with structure and style. *The Acolyte* (1972), for example, has been compared to White's *The Vivisector* (1970), while her *The Slow Natives* (1965) has a structure similar to White's *Riders in the Chariot* (1961). In the short-story collection *Hunting the Wild Pineapple* (1979), and in *It's Raining in Mango*, Astley found an understated style that nevertheless allows full force to her wit and ironic vision. These works

about north Queensland country towns form a kind of 'discontinuous narrative' by following the fortunes of a group of related people. They can be compared to the work of Canadian writer ALICE MUNRO in collections such as *Lives of Girls and Women* (1971), though Astley's writing retains an impersonal quality, and even at her most sympathetic she maintains a distance from her characters – often through a virtuoso performance of verbal games.

Behind all of Astley's work, even at its most verbally complicated, is a sense of moral outrage at the way institutions and powerful men crush women, children, Aborigines or outsiders. Critic Pam Gilbert has argued that Astley's frequent choice of male protagonists is the result of her experience in the male world of the university and her recognition of male power within both the community and literary circles. Margaret Smith suggests that this use of male characters, like DORIS LESSING's occasional choice of male protagonists, is a way of evading the prejudices and assumptions inevitably attached to the female character, and J. M. Couper posits the idea that in Astley's novels there is a third sex – the androgynous outsiders who gain her sympathy.

Astley's Catholic background is important in discussions of the sex of her characters; her preoccupation with the world of men and with their institutional power sometimes focuses specifically on the Catholic priest and the invisibility of women to the Catholic hierarchy. In this respect, her writing may be compared to that of Irish women writers, such as the early work of Edna O'Brien. Astley often takes an ambivalent attitude to Catholicism – some of her moral outrage seems to come from a Catholic tradition of social concern, yet this outrage is also directed at the self-centred and inhumane attitudes of some of her Catholic characters. Her attitude to homosexuality, too, fluctuates between a sympathy for the outsider and a wariness of unconventional sexuality.

Astley is a social satirist who manages to address both the power relations within the family group and the wider political sphere. However, her brilliant satire can rest on a simplification of social complexity and, paradoxically, on an apparent intolerance for unconventional behaviour, as in her unsympathetic depiction of the hippies in *Hunting the Wild Pineapple* and *It's Raining in Mango*. Her novels might be compared with MARGARET ATWOOD's witty attacks on social

assumptions, and her anger at hypocrisy often creates a similar confusion about the author's attitude to reform and change. But though her novels bridle against injustice and selfishness, Astley keeps a suspicious distance from feminism and other seemingly radical solutions. Her novel *Reaching Tin River* (1990) renders the familiar first-person 'woman in search of herself' novel in Astley's cynical and ironic style.

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SUSAN LEVER

Atwood, Margaret (1939–)

Canadian novelist, poet, short-story writer, critic

The second of three children born to Carl Atwood and his wife, Margaret Killam Atwood, she spent her childhood years in Ottawa, Canada, the city of her birth, and in the northern woods of Ontario and Quebec. Her father, an entomologist, often took his family on field trips, producing in Atwood an early and abiding interest in the wilderness – the setting of her second novel, *Surfacing* (1972). In 1946 the family settled in Leaside, a suburb of Toronto. The contrasts between its Christian, middle-class morality and its blatant materialism define the spiritual wasteland through which many of Atwood's characters pass on their way from childhood to maturity.

In 1957 Atwood entered Victoria College, University of Toronto, graduating with honours in 1961. In 1962 she received her MA in English from Radcliffe College, USA, going on to further graduate work at Harvard University, 1962–63 and 1965–67.

Since 1973 she has lived with Canadian novelist and cultural activist Graeme Gibson. They have one daughter, Eleanor Jess, born in 1976. They now reside in Toronto. Atwood has been writer-in-residence at universities in Canada, the USA and Australia. In 1986 she occupied the Berg Chair at New York University and has taught at many universities including the University of British Columbia, the University of Alberta, Sir George

Williams (now Concordia) University, Montreal, and York University, Toronto. She was chair of the Writers' Union of Canada (of which she was a founding member), 1982–83, and president of the Canadian Centre of International PEN, 1984–86. She continues to be an effective spokesperson and energetic activist on behalf of Canadian writers and writing, and of women's rights, Native rights and the environment.

Atwood's first published work was *Double Persephone* (1961). Her second, *The Circle Game* (1966), won a Governor General's Award for Poetry. She has published more than a dozen collections of poetry and two volumes of *Selected Poems* (1976, 1986). *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970) is an extrapolation in verse from *Roughing It in the Bush*, SUSANNA MOODIE's account of her years as a settler in Upper Canada during the 1830s. Moodie gave up her youth, her children and her place in society to an implacable wilderness she ultimately came to love. Under Atwood's hand, Moodie's final thoughts – long after death – are vehement prayers against the ruinous civilization her sacrifice has spawned. This is quintessential Atwood – terse, evocative, intellectually unforgiving.

The title sequence in *Two-Headed Poems* (1978) was written at a time when it seemed Quebec might secede from Canada. It depicts the troubled nation as Siamese twins joined at the head, each twin desperate to be an individual, but each caught in the other's identity.

Atwood is properly vehement in her insistence that the narrative voice in her writing is not her own. It belongs, book by book, to the characters inside each work. Most are women who have lost their sense of self and of place. They look, but cannot find themselves in the reflecting surfaces around them. But the surfaces in Atwood's writing are more than mere reflectors. They are also shells and skins – potential hiding places for one's true identity. What you do not see in the mirror may be squirming beneath the glass.

What most of the characters in Atwood's novels are seeking is a fresh beginning. In *The Edible Woman* (1969), Marian McAlpin finds herself adrift in a consumer society that threatens to engulf her. Faced with the prospect of marriage, she begins to understand that, being a woman, she is the stuff upon which such a society feeds and survives, and that marriage – in itself a staple of the consumerist society – is a kind of sexist cannibalism.

Suicide is contemplated by leading characters in several Atwood novels – including *Surfacing* and *Life Before Man* (1979). Although it is seldom the answer they ultimately accept, the ritual gestures – the running of baths, the flirting with knives – are symbolic of the various states of self-abnegation these women must pass through in order to be reborn. In *Lady Oracle* (1976), a novel of dazzling comic invention, the narrator is a novelist whose life has become intolerably complicated by fame and by the trap of sameness in her creative activity. She pretends to kill herself in order to be reborn without having to actually die. The ruse works, but her new life becomes almost as unbearable as her old.

In *Bodily Harm* (1981) and *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) – winner of a Governor General's Award – Atwood brings her themes of identity and survival together in stories that unfold in a context of politics and ideologies. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, the narrator is the victim of a society in which women are completely subjugated by the state. Here, Atwood has focused not only the best of her considerable talents as a writer, but the best also of her philosophical insights and political skills.

Cat's Eye (1988), while not in the absolute sense an autobiographical novel, is certainly the story of its author's time and place in twentieth-century history. A novel of 'emotion recollected in tranquillity', it centres on a middle-aged painter, Elaine Risley, who returns to Toronto for a retrospective of her work. As she journeys through memories of fifty years, told with a mellowness new in Atwood's work, Risley's paintings reflect key points in her life and art. This is Atwood's finest novel in terms of her control of the work's time structure; the weaving of past and present is seamless – one might usefully compare this aspect of the novel with that of ALISTAIR MACLEOD in his novel *No Great Mischief* (1999).

Alias Grace (1996) and *The Blind Assassin* (2000) mark a new departure in Atwood's work, in that they are primarily historical novels, meticulously researched; the former deals with the events surrounding a murder that took place in Ontario, Canada, in 1843, the latter concerns an Ontario family in the period between the First World War and the end of the twentieth century. Atwood first encountered the story of Grace Marks, the protagonist of *Alias Grace* who is accused of murder, in Susanna Moodie's *Life in the Clearings* (1853). The multiple points of view offered by the various historical accounts of the crime must have

attracted Atwood, whose work is so often concerned with the elusive nature of reality. And the central question posed by the novel – is Grace Marks a victim or a *femme fatale*? – is also central to Atwood's work. *The Blind Assassin* verges on the epic in its account of the disintegration of the Chase/Griffen families, which is set against the historical background of the First and Second World Wars, the Depression, the Spanish Civil War, and the maiden voyage of the *Queen Mary*, among other such historical events. The title of the novel is that of a Sci-Fi novella being written by a character in the novel which mimics the main action in its story of betrayal and war.

Atwood seems equally as adept in the short-story form as in the novel form. Her writings here include *Dancing Girls* (1977), *Bluebeard's Egg* (1983), *Wilderness Tips* (1991) and *Good Bones* (1992).

She is also an accomplished literary and political critic, as may be seen in her *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972), *Second Words* (1982), *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature* (1995) and *Negotiating with the Dead A Writer on Writing* (2002). Her writing here on women's issues and cultural integrity is particularly valuable, having much in common with the writings of Australian critic and essayist GERMAINE GREER. She shares Greer's sense of creative openness about feminist politics and cultural survival. Atwood also shares the thematic territory explored by the Caribbean-born JEAN RHYS, whose stories and short novels centre on the sexual 'imperialism' of men. Atwood's poetry, however, has more in common with the work of her American rather than her Commonwealth contemporaries. This may have more to do with sharing a physical landscape than with a shared political stance. Atwood has much in common, too, with her Canadian contemporary MARIAN ENGEL, whose novels *The Honeyman Festival* (1970) and *Bear* (1976) are different reflections on themes and landscapes explored by Atwood simultaneously in *Life Before Man* and *Surfacing*.

Whatever traditions are shared by Atwood's writings, they do not include the traditions that dominated Canadian writing prior to her own arrival on the scene. In that sense, her work remains unique. The intensity of its focus is its salient quality. Its greatest strength lies in its seductive but entirely deceptive subjectivity. Hooking her readers on the irresistible lure of the

first person singular, she has managed to disseminate an objective view of modern life that is among the most challenging in present-day writing.

Her work has won a multitude of Canadian and international awards; both *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Cat's Eye* were short-listed for the Booker Prize, which she won for *The Blind Assassin*. *Alias Grace* won the Giller Award. She is a Companion of the Order of Canada (1981) and a Member of the Order of Ontario (1990). Her books have been translated into more than sixteen languages.

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TIMOTHY FINDLEY
EUGENE BENSON

Aurobindo, Sri (1872–1950)

Indian philosopher, poet

He was born Aurobindo Ghose in Calcutta, India. The younger brother of MANMOHAN GHOSE, he attended school at Darjeeling. His father, Dr Krishnadhan Ghose, an Anglophile, sent his son to England in 1879. Better known by his honorific title, Sri Aurobindo, Ghose had a brilliant academic career at St Paul's, London, and King's College, Cambridge, and won several prizes and a scholarship. Although he passed the Indian Civil Service examination with credit, he decided not to enter government service and returned to India in 1893, joining the Baroda State Service. While working in the Maharajah's College at Baroda, Sri Aurobindo quickly mastered Sanskrit and Bengali. He began writing for the journal *Indu Prakash* and became interested in yoga and politics. Sri Aurobindo entered active politics in 1906, taking charge of the National College at Calcutta and the daily *Bande Mataram*, the organ of the Nationalists in the Congress. His powerful journalism and outspoken speeches espousing freedom provoked the government; he was also believed to be behind the activities of those preaching open revolution against the British raj. Arrested in 1908

in connection with a bombing in Muzzaferpore, he was kept in solitary confinement for a year. A historic trial followed and he was acquitted and released in 1909.

In the solitary cell Sri Aurobindo had a vision of the all-pervading Divine. On his release he devoted himself to yoga, drawing his inspiration from the *sanatana dharma*, the religion of ancient India, and living for the next four decades as the head of a community of spiritual seekers in Pondicherry. He also edited the magazine *Arya* (1914–21) for six years and wrote extensively on philosophy, literature and sociology. He composed plays, lyrics and an epic in English, *Savitri* (1954).

On 24 November 1926 Sri Aurobindo experienced the descent of a new power of consciousness and went into seclusion, though he continued to write and correspond with his devotees until his death. His was a remarkable life of action and contemplation, and today Aurobindo's devotees are found all over the world. He left behind a considerable mass of writing and is certainly the central pillar of Indian writing in English. Even his philosophical and political writings are redolent with literary allusions from both Occident and Orient, and are rich in metaphor and diction. He was an inspired translator from Sanskrit into English. Apart from numerous passages from the epics, he rendered into English selected hymns from the Vedas, several Upanishads and Kalidasa's play *Vikramorvasiyam*.

Sri Aurobindo began writing poetry while an undergraduate; some of these early poems can be found in his first publication, *Songs to Myrtilla and Other Poems* (1895). *Urvastie* (1896) and *Love and Death* (1899) are narrative poems that bring back the legendary past of India, when gods walked on earth. *Baji Prabhou* (1910) immortalizes a heroic incident in Maratha history. To this early period belong such insightful poems as 'Who', 'The Mahatmas' and 'In the Moonlight', which seek to understand the mystery of creation.

Once established in Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo began his extensive study of the Vedas and the Upanishads. His Vedantic outlook informs the 60 sonnets and other lyrics that he wrote in the 1930s and 1940s. He experimented with classical metres, and one of his poems in hendecasyllabics, 'Thought the Paraclete', has been widely admired. He sought to use the hexameter in English and wrote the spiritual narrative *Ahana* (1915) in rhymed hexameter. A more ambitious attempt was

to write a whole epic in hexameter. Although *Ilion* (1957) was not completed, the existing nine books reveal his mastery of classical prosody, his imaginative use of the English language, and a pervasive Greek atmosphere. *Ilion* covers the last day of the Trojan war, and the Indian Queen Penthesilea plays a key part in the developing tragedy.

The practice of yoga undoubtedly contributed to Sri Aurobindo's prolificness. A deeper mystic note is evident in such richly metaphoric poems as 'The Tiger and the Deer' and 'Rose of God'. Although Aurobindo seems to have been drawn deeply into spiritual worlds, he continued to keep in constant touch with current events all over the globe. When Hitler's armies were overrunning western Europe in 1940 and the future of civilization seemed bleak, he threw his force behind the Allies and wrote the powerfully articulated poem 'The Children of Wotan'. The dreadful possibilities of the splitting of the atom were recorded in a sonnet, 'A Dream of Surreal Science'. His *Collected Poems* (1972) contains more than 200 poems, short and long.

Sri Aurobindo's treatise, *The Life Divine* (2 vols, 1939–40), which, in his words, is 'the work of intuition and inspiration' based on his spiritual experience, posits his philosophy of evolution. He describes a phenomenal lapse from undivided to divided existence – a veil separates the Mind from Supermind. If humanity and earth-nature are to change decisively, he writes, the veil must be removed so that the supramental consciousness can act on earth-nature and replace ignorance with spiritual knowledge. Sri Aurobindo's other major philosophical works are *The Synthesis of Yoga* (1914–18, published in *Arya*) and *Essays on the Gita* (1922). His writings on sociology include *The Human Cycle* (1949) and *The Ideal of Human Unity* (1919). His *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (1953) gives a comprehensive view of India's literary, philosophical, cultural and artistic heritage; it is a classic of compression.

Sri Aurobindo's poetic masterpiece is *Savitri*. Though it was published in its entirety only in 1954, it had been in the making for nearly half a century. Indian myths and legends held a great fascination for Aurobindo, and the secular legend of Savitri came closest to his heart. He returned to the legend from time to time, progressively setting out his philosophy of the divine life received from his practice of yoga. He realized that such mystic poetry would not be understood easily: '*Savitri*

is the record of a seeing, of an experience which is not of the common kind ... there must be a new extension of consciousness and aesthesis to appreciate a new kind of mystic poetry.'

The nucleus of this epic testament is the tale found in Vyasa's *Mahabharata*. Aswapathy, King of Madra, is childless and undergoes austerities for eighteen years. By the grace of the Goddess Savitri, he is gifted with a daughter whom he names Savitri. When she grows up into a wonderful young woman, she chooses as her husband Satyavan, the exiled prince of Shalwa. Despite Rishi Narad's prophecy that Satyavan has but one year to live, she marries him and goes to live with him in the forest. When four days remain before the prophesied end of Satyavan's life, Savitri vows to save him. On Satyavan's death, she follows the god of death and engages him in conversation. Pleased with her sweet, truthful and sincere speech he grants her several boons, including the life of Satyavan.

One of Sri Aurobindo's early versions of *Savitri* has only two books, each of more than 1,000 lines. However, the enlightenment Aurobindo gained in 1926 led to the introduction of many new elements, including yoga. For more than two decades he continued to revise the poem, and at the time of his death the epic was all but complete. Subtitled 'A Legend and a Symbol', *Savitri* is now a modern English epic in twelve books of forty-nine cantos, encompassing some 24,000 lines.

Sri Aurobindo's epic introduces three major expansions of the original theme. Aswapathy's eighteen-year austerities become his yoga. The fifteen cantos of the Book of the Traveller of the Worlds describe in vivid particularity Aswapathy's spiritual journey. He descends to the worlds below, which are mapped out in psychological terms, traverses the grim spaces of infernal night, and then ascends on the wings of willpower to the Heavens of the Ideal. Entering the Centre of Silence within, he meets the Divine Mother, who assures him that an incarnation would descend to the earth to help humanity ascend upward in evolution.

The second expansion occurs in the description of Savitri's vow preceding the fateful day of Satyavan's death. Aurobindo sought to uncoil the significances of the vow in terms of Savitri's yoga. Her aim is to change the decree of Fate, to break through to a new dispensation. Since the sorrow and darkness threatening her life with Satyavan are symptomatic of the present human destiny, she wishes to track them to their source and master them. In the

spiritual and psychological realms within her she encounters several possibilities – the triple soul forces, for instance – but the chief need is the total power of the soul, which she gains by achieving a great calm, the ‘Superconscious’ high retreat’.

Sri Aurobindo presents the final movement in Vyasa’s tale as the Book of Eternal Night, the Book of Double Twilight, and the Book of Everlasting Day. Savitri faces Death unflinchingly even as Death tries threats and appeasement to make her go away. Savitri is not deceived, and when her words are disregarded by Death’s sophistry her inner light explodes in a glorious blaze and her cosmic vision destroys Death. In the final temptation the Supreme Divine offers the young couple paradisaic felicity, but Savitri rejects the gift, for ‘earth is the chosen place of mightiest souls; earth is the heroic spirit’s battlefield’. She returns to earth with Satyavan and the epic concludes in an atmosphere of expectancy of the greater dawn of a divinized life.

Of the symbol behind the legend Sri Aurobindo said: ‘Satyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of death and ignorance; Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save.’ The divine word (mantra) is crucial to Aurobindo’s aesthetic. The canto ‘The Kingdoms and Godheads of the Greater Mind’ describes the planes above the mind in vivid detail and how they all – higher mind, illumined mind, intuition and overmind – influence human activities at the mental and vital planes. The supermind gives rise to the mantric utterance. If one could practise the intense concentration of yoga, one could reach to these higher planes of consciousness and bring power to bear on the work in progress. Aurobindo himself seems to have succeeded in achieving this at different times, as *Savitri* contains some of the most superb passages in modern Indian poetry written in English.

Sri Aurobindo was not only a significant poet but also a fine critic of poetry. His *The Future Poetry* (1953) is a fascinating adventure in creative understanding; it tells readers of the ‘poetic’ view of life, which is a ‘soul-view’ as traced in the inner evolution of English poetry. Aurobindo felt that the poetry of the future would be sustained by five powers: truth, life, beauty, delight and the spirit. His own heroine, Savitri, is an assurance of this possibility because, in her, earth and heaven meet, truth blazes forth to destroy ignorance, and life is enriched by beauty, delight and the spirit’s ways.

Sri Aurobindo wrote five full-length plays, most of which were published posthumously. The theme of *Perseus the Deliverer* (1907) is taken from Greek mythology, that of *Rodogune* (1958) from Syrian history. *Vasavadutta* (1957) is inspired by an Indian legend, *The Viziers of Bassora* (1957) is indebted to *The Arabian Nights* and *Eric* (1960) draws on Scandinavian sagas. All of these are Elizabethan in cast and redolent with Shakespearean echoes. Aurobindo’s own philosophy of human evolution provides the plays’ basic strength.

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PREMA NANDAKUMAR

Australia

Geography

The Mercator projection, with its elongation of land near the poles and its normally lowered equator, diminishes the apparent relative size of Australia. The total Australian land mass consists of almost 7.7 million square kilometres, the vast majority of it constituted by a single island, almost four thousand kilometres across, straddling the Tropic of Capricorn. It is in land mass the sixth largest nation in the world.

It is also one of the driest: for 70 per cent of its area the annual evaporation is greater than the rainfall. Ninety per cent of the population is concentrated in two strips of coastline, where the rainfall is moderate: from north of Brisbane around to Adelaide, and the much smaller strip around Perth. These strips are heavily populated with cities and medium to large towns, for Australia is a highly urbanized country.

Aboriginal population

The Australian Aborigines, apart from some of the Arnhem Land and island people, assume in their myths that the land is without beginning and that

they are descended from spirit beings who roamed the land. White anthropologists believe that the first Aboriginals reached Australia forty or fifty thousand years ago, during the last ice age. The Aboriginal population at the beginning of white settlement consisted of several hundred clans, each with its own territory and its own language. The people lived on many sites during a yearly cycle, following game and the availability of nuts, roots, seeds and other food. Governor Arthur Phillip, extrapolating from the population around Botany Bay, estimated an Aboriginal population of one million, but he was unaware of the variability in climatic conditions across the continent. Twentieth-century estimates of the Aboriginal population in 1788 varied between 300,000 and 750,000. White settlers shot and poisoned Aboriginals, and introduced deadly diseases to the population, reducing it to about 300,000 – but it is now rising in number.

White settlement

White settlement began in 1788 with the arrival of eleven ships under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip to establish a settlement at Botany Bay. He did in fact establish it at Sydney Cove in Port Jackson, a little to the north. Most of his company were convicts, sent to Australia to alleviate the overcrowding of English prisons. Other considerations may have been the British Navy's need for flax and timber, the protection of the tea trade with China, and a concern to exclude the French from colonizing the land.

Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) was established as a subsidiary convict settlement in 1803, Moreton Bay (Brisbane, now the capital of Queensland) as another in 1824. The Swan River settlement (Perth, the capital of Western Australia) was a company scheme for immigrants who were offered free grants of land in 1829; convicts were brought in to increase numbers from 1850. The Port Phillip district (now Melbourne, the capital of Victoria) was occupied by free settlers, chiefly from Tasmania, in the 1830s. The site of Adelaide (South Australia) was settled by immigrants under the control of a company in 1836.

Since the beginnings of white settlement the constituency of the population has frequently been in a state of flux. The transport of convicts lasted for 80 years and totalled 162,000. Most convicts remained in the colonies; some were pardoned or

given tickets-of-leave before the expiration of their sentences. By the end of transportation, however, the convicts and emancipated convicts had long been substantially outnumbered by free settlers, though an awareness of the convict origins of settlement, now regarded more with pride than with shame, persists to this day. Sympathy for those on the wrong side of the law is also evident in the mythification of bushrangers (see NED KELLY). Free or greatly subsidized migration schemes encouraged migration from Britain until the late 1960s. After the Second World War the national government scheme was extended to migrants from continental Europe, who were needed to supplement the labour force.

In 1850 the total white population was about 400,000. The gold rushes in the second half of the century produced a startling increase in population, to four million in 1905. A corresponding increase occurred in the proportion of the population born in Australia. It reached just over 50 per cent in 1871, 69 per cent twenty years later, 77 per cent at Federation in 1901.

The effects of the second major wave of migration, following the Second World War, can be understood from a few salient statistics. In 1947, after a period of negligible migration, 90 per cent of the population had been born in Australia (though over a third of that number would have had at least one parent born outside Australia); this is the highest native-born figure ever achieved. The figure is now below 80 per cent and is expected to drop below 75 per cent within another thirty years. Anglo-Celtic origin accounted for almost 90 per cent of the population in 1947, less than 75 per cent at the time of writing, and a projected 65 per cent within thirty years. Emigration from Europe after the Second World War pushed the percentage of the population born in continental Europe from under 9 per cent in 1947 to over 18 per cent in 1986; it is expected to fall slightly in the next thirty years. The proportion of the population born in Asia was less than 1 per cent in 1947, 4.5 per cent in 1986, and is likely to rise to over 12 per cent in the next thirty years. The Middle Eastern component has remained steadier, though it is rising: from 1.5 per cent in 1947 to over 2 per cent at the time of writing, and a projected nearly 3 per cent in thirty years. The proportion and range of this immigration is paralleled by immigration during some of the boom decades of the nineteenth century, particularly those due to the gold rushes. The total

non-Aboriginal population of Australia reached seven million in 1939; the total population (including Aborigines) reached some nineteen million in 2000.

Until the late 1960s the most common Australian attitude to immigration was akin to the USA's notion of the melting pot. Since then – and parallel to a change in the USA itself – the notion of multiculturalism, as in Canada, has become the official bipartisan government policy. The languages of migrant communities have been cultivated – in some cases as the medium of instruction in the initial years of primary school – and ethnic links with other countries have been encouraged. Correspondingly, Aboriginal Australians have increasingly asserted pride in their ancestry and derided the former assimilationist policies.

The emergence of so-called 'race politics' in the 1990s has led to significant political debates over ethnic migration, the mandatory detention of asylum seekers (the 'boat people'), and Aboriginal self determination. The Mabo decision of the High Court in 1992 legally recognized that Aboriginal title to the land had not been extinguished by Crown annexation. The 1997 report into the Stolen Generation attempted to recognize the suffering visited upon Aboriginal people as a result of the policy between 1910 and 1970 of forcibly removing Aboriginal children from their parents and raising them in foster homes and institutions.

Constitution

The Australian Constitution united the six states (and territories) in the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901; the federal parliament consists of two houses, the House of Representatives, elected in single-member constituencies, each with approximately the same number of voters, and the Senate, elected by proportional representation in multi-member state-wide constituencies, each state being allotted an equal number of elected representatives. Australia is still constitutionally a monarchy, with Elizabeth II as Queen of Australia; most real powers as head of state reside with the governor general, though holders of that office are appointed (and could be removed) by the Queen on the advice of the Australian government. Emotional and legal ties with Great Britain have gradually been eroded. In the early 1940s Australia turned to the USA for defence aid; in the last two decades it has turned increasingly to Asia as a trading partner. Australia

may well become formally a republic before the twenty-first century is far advanced.

The two major political parties in federal politics (and in almost all the states) are the Australian Labour party (originally a union and workers' party formed in 1891) and the Liberal party (formed from a set of other conservative groups by Robert Gordon Menzies in 1945). The Liberal party often governs in coalition with a smaller conservative party, the National party, previously known as the Country party. More radical groups on the left (for example, the COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA and its various offshoots) or the right (the New Guard and the League of Rights) have had almost no electoral success. Women continue to be grossly under-represented in parliaments, governments, the judiciary and the public service.

Governments influenced by the Labour party were instrumental in introducing (as in New Zealand) a substantial number of social programmes in the early years of the century. They included the old-age pension (1900 in New South Wales and Victoria, Commonwealth 1909), invalid pensions (1910 Commonwealth), maternity allowance (Commonwealth 1912), widow's pension (New South Wales 1926, Commonwealth 1942), child endowment (New South Wales 1927, Commonwealth 1941), unemployment benefits (Queensland 1923, Commonwealth 1945). Health and hospital benefits were introduced in stages after the Second World War.

Economy

In 1890 Australians earned the highest *per capita* income in the world, chiefly as a result of exports of wool, wheat, mutton, beef, gold, silver and copper. From early in the twentieth century, however, it was overtaken by other countries better placed to add value to raw materials; it now lies no higher than sixteenth. Agriculture suffered during the twentieth century by over-reliance on irrigation, with the consequent production of high levels of soil salinity. Minerals, particularly coal, remain a large contributor to export income.

Culture

Unlike the USA, Australia was not influenced in its settlement by the search for a religious or political New World. Its official white religion

(Anglicanism) was resented from the beginning by many of the convicts, particularly Irish Roman Catholics (see IRELAND AND IRISH VALUES IN AUSTRALIA). Sport in a multitude of national and local competitions undoubtedly provides a substitute for religious enthusiasm in contemporary Australia. Art galleries, theatres (for drama, opera, ballet and light opera), 'entertainment centres' (large, barn-like buildings for popular music performers) and a great variety of community arts also attract very large attendances.

Like several other countries, Australia is reputed to have the largest *per capita* book-buying habits in the world. Since the 1960s even capital-city bookshops have followed the book-stocking habits previously confined to rural newsagents, in which cooking, gardening, do-it-yourself, coffee table and sporting books outnumber fiction, and poetry is hard to find at all. (But see AUSTRALIA COUNCIL and the LITERATURE FUND (AUSTRALIA) for information about support for writers and other artists.)

Military affairs

Although Australia has had almost no contact with enemy forces on its own soil, Australians have been ready to enlist in foreign wars. Sixteen thousand volunteered for the Boer War (compared, for example, with 6,000 Canadians). In the First World War, the landing and evacuation at Gallipoli south of the Dardanelles in 1915 is still honoured as a courageous feat of arms in Australia and New Zealand (whose forces were combined as the ANZAC – Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – under British command). Out of a population of five million, 417,000 Australians enlisted; 59,000 were killed and about 174,000 wounded, the casualty rate being substantially higher than for British forces. The Second World War, the Korean War and the Vietnam War (during which a massive protest movement against conscription occurred) also drew major contributions from Australia. Small contingents were also sent in support of coalition forces in the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003. (See WAR LITERATURE (AUSTRALIA).)

Armed clashes on Australian soil have involved only small numbers. Many clashes were between Aborigines and white settlers, the best-known probably being the Myall Creek massacre in northern New South Wales in 1838, when more than thirty Aborigines were brutally murdered. Gold-miners who barricaded themselves in a

stockade at Eureka in Victoria in 1854 to protest against the licensing system and anomalies in land tenure and the franchise were rapidly overcome by a company of military and police. The incident of the Eureka stockade and the flag flown on that occasion have often subsequently been adopted by radicals and republicans, including strikers. Jail terms, punitive fines and physical violence have been used against strikers during some of the major strikes in Australia, including the maritime strike of 1890, the shearers' strikes of the 1890s, the northern coalfields lockout (1929) and the national coal strike (1949).

The entry on MATESHIP provides an explanation of Australian attitudes to comradeship in work, sport, war and literature.

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KEN GOODWIN
CHRISTOPHER LEE

Australia Council

A statutory authority of the Australian government, it was established in 1975 to perform the following functions: to promote excellence in the arts; to provide and encourage opportunities for persons to practise the arts; to promote the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the arts; to promote the general application of the arts in the community; to foster the expression of a national identity by means of the arts; to uphold and promote the rights of persons to freedom in the practice of the arts; to promote the knowledge and appreciation of Australian arts abroad; to promote incentives for, and recognition of, achievement in the practice of the arts; to encourage the support of the arts by the states, local governing bodies and other persons and organizations; and to furnish advice to the government of the Commonwealth, either of its own motion or upon request made to it by the minister, on matters connected with

the promotion of the arts or otherwise related to performance of its functions.

The Australia Council took over the structure and activities of the Australian Council for the Arts (founded in 1968 and expanded in 1973). In its consolidation process the Australia Council and its predecessor inherited the work of the Commonwealth Literary Fund (1908–72), which was the federal government's first arts support programme. With a yearly parliamentary appropriation now in excess of A\$76 million (1999–2000), the Council has become a crucial sponsor of arts activities.

It originally consisted of a governing council and several art-form boards, but in 1996 a major restructuring was made which downgraded the individual boards to 'funds' and reorganized some of their activities; more importantly, the restructure increased the funds employed by the governing council from 4 per cent to 23 per cent of total grant allocations. The current individual funds are: Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander Fund; Community Cultural Development Fund; Dance Fund; Literature Fund; Major Organizations Fund; Music Fund; New Media Arts Fund; Theatre Fund; and Visual Arts/Crafts Fund. The share of funding for Literature over the last decade has remained approximately the same in money terms, A\$4.2 million (approx).

Monies now administered by the central council itself are for Audience Development and Advocacy; Policy Communications and Planning; and Government Initiatives. This very considerable change in the balance of funding reflects a policy shift, away from individual creation and performance to promotion and general arts advocacy.

H. C. Coombs was the Council's first chair, and until 1996 his successors were distinguished leaders in Australia's cultural development: Peter Karmel, GEOFFREY BLAINEY, Timothy Pascoe, DONALD HORNE, RODNEY HALL, and Hilary McPhee. Since the 1996 restructure the position of chair of the Australia Council has been occupied by incumbents with a business or arts administration background.

THOMAS SHAPCOTT

Australia in Canadian Literature in English

MARIAN ENGEL's novel *No Clouds of Glory!* (1968) sets out the anxieties of the critic, Sarah, who probes the relations between Australia and

Canadian literatures: 'Those of us who operate from bastard territory, disinherited countries and traditions, long always for our nonexistent mothers. For this reason, I deviled five years – six? when did I start? how many? – in the literature of Australians and Canadians, hoping to be the one to track her down.' To think about these two literatures in relation to each other sharpens the sense of exile and dispossession for Sarah. Neither traditional criticism, which directs her to 'transcendent' and 'universal' values and to the English canon, nor nationalist criticism can activate the kind of lateral thinking that makes the comparison possible. As an 'Austcan' critic, Sarah is confronted by literary and critical traditions that 'fail' to accede to the comforting chronological and evolutionary metaphors. She is faced with the task of seeking a new language, a new myth of location. To speak her illegitimacy she needs to find a new way of being 'at home', which for her will involve a turning away from the lineal, the central, the authoritative concepts that initiate her discourse of despair. She pursues, then, what we would now refer to as a post-colonial imagination and discourse, a way of speaking out from illegitimate territories.

Engel's novel is a modern statement of what was for a long time a characteristic effect of bringing Australia into the Canadian frame of reference: an apparently central and original English tradition is invoked. The comparative sense of Australia and Canada as sharing what critic R. E. Watters called a kind of 'original relation' has a long but discontinuous history. In fact, the early colonists had a strong sense of a 'shared condition' among the settler colonies. The empire was administered by a highly mobile corps of officers and administrators who shared a familiar world of social privilege throughout the British colonies. Among the settlers the Australian–Canadian comparison usually worked to Canada's advantage. So, for instance, in *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836) CATHARINE PARR TRAILL consoles herself that, for all the difficulties of backwoods life, things must surely be worse at Botany Bay. (In fact, a relative of Traill's, W. H. Traill, was editor and proprietor of Australia's *BULLETIN* from 1881 to 1886.) The moral hierarchy implied by Traill (free settler, penal settlement, plantation economy) was the basis of an impression that lingered throughout the period of settlement of Canada as the appropriate location for the middle-class settler, leaving it to

Australia to be 'the workingman's paradise'. No doubt impressions of the institutional nature of early Australian settlement were also reinforced when some of the 1837 Quebec rebels were transported to Tasmania. Antoine Gérin-Lajoie's poem 'Un Canadien Errant' (1844) represents this exile.

In the literary sphere there was by the 1880s a marked sense of these two colonies as having comparable 'frontier' literatures. Douglas Sladen's *A Century of Australian Song* (1888) and William D. Lighthall's *Songs of the Great Dominion* (1889) were published as companion volumes in Great Britain. Australian and Canadian poetry, in this British series, were sibling rivals competing for the attention of the 'parent' culture. Lighthall characterizes these as literatures of a 'fresh world': 'The romantic life of each Colony has a special flavour – Australian rhyme is a poetry of the horse; Canadian of the canoe.' Both Lighthall and Sladen locate the two national literatures within the supranational culture of empire. Both editors deliberately selected poems that presented 'fresh' pictures of the unfamiliar rather than poems of formal or intellectual pretence. Other connections emerge in journalistic writings of this period. GILBERT PARKER began his career in Australia in the 1880s while working for the *Morning Herald* in Sydney. His writings from this period were published as *Round the Compass in Australia* (1892). The editor of the *Bulletin's* famed Red Page, A. G. STEPHENS, looked to Canada directly for a comparison for the national(ist) literature he had done so much to develop in Australia in the 1890s. Canadians, he discovered on his travels through Canada in 1892–93, found the verse of HENRY LAWSON 'disgustingly rough'. As John P. Matthews was later to argue in *Tradition in Exile* (1962) – the first sustained comparative study of Australian and Canadian literatures – the literary development in these two cultures has taken markedly different paths.

During the 1950s it was the bringing together of Australian and Canadian literatures in an institutional context that became a crucial precursor of Commonwealth literary studies. The Australian critic Brian Elliott was the first serious advocate of a comparative approach to the two literatures, although he located them as two dominion traditions in relation to Great Britain. The Humanities Research Council of Canada (HRCC), chaired by A. S. P. Woodhouse, set up the Dominions Project in 1950–51 to foster comparative cultural and

literary studies of Canada and Australia. A number of academic exchanges were part of this programme, which, through the participation of A. N. Jeffares, was a precursor of the Commonwealth Fellowship programme, later set up at the University of Leeds. A number of leading Canadian critics – Claude Bissell, R. E. Walters, Desmond Pacey, R. L. McDougall, EARLE BIRNEY – who travelled to Australia as part of this project later went on to establish key centres for research in Canadian literature. It was under the auspices of this programme that John Matthews, supervised by Claude Bissell, University of Toronto, wrote *Tradition in Exile*. By the time a 1964 University of Leeds Conference identified 'Commonwealth literature' as a literary entity, the Australian–Canadian comparison already had a significant critical history and a major book-length study to its credit. From this seedbed came the hypothesis that one of the most fruitful ways of learning about colonial literatures is by comparing them with other literatures that have developmental factors in common. The particular contours of the Australian–Canadian comparison were explored at the Badlands conference convened by Australian Alan Lawson and Canadian Charles Steele at Calgary in 1986; in R. McDougall and G. Whitlock, *Australian/Canadian Literatures in English: Comparative Perspectives* (1987); and in Terry Goldie's book *Fear and Temptation* (1989), which considers images of the indigene in Canadian, Australian and New Zealand writing.

Since 1976 the Canada–Australia Literary Prize has increased mutual literary awareness by a series of exchanges that have taken a number of Canadian writers to Australia, and vice versa. In 1981 Kevin Roberts edited a journal dedicated to the Australian–Canadian connection, *True North/Down Under: A Journal of Australian and Canadian Literature*, published by Eletheria Press, British Columbia. The journal, which was shortlived, set out to promote, review, survey and foster 'worthwhile writing' from the two nations. Roberts argued that Australians and Canadians should know each other's writings better than they do because the 'similarities in heritage and cultural background suggest a reciprocity of experience and a common language'. Along with courses that include Australian writing in the curriculum in Canada, and vice versa, the journal is further evidence of the strong sense of inter-relationship that existed between these 'bastard territories'. Finally, the journal *Australian*

and *New Zealand Studies in Canada*, established in 1989 at the University of Western Ontario, Canada, under the editorship of Thomas Tausky, promotes an ongoing connection between Australasian and Canadian critics and writers.

A thorough bibliography of references to Australia in Canadian literature is yet to be undertaken; however, what is significant is the increased frequency of these references along with the development of Commonwealth and post-colonial studies and the institutional initiatives – courses and visitors' programmes for both critics and writers. Mutual awareness is stronger than ever before. Australia enters Canadian literary texts in a number of ways. Among the earliest examples is Benjamin Doane's travel journal, *Following the Sea* (1987), which includes a good description of a visit to Sydney in 1847. Even earlier is THOMAS McCULLOCH's *Letters of Mephibosheth Stepsure* (1821–23), which refers to emigrating to Botany Bay, Australia. In a more recent example HUGH MacLENNAN begins his novel *Two Solitudes* (1945) with an Australia-shaped cloud that hovers ominously over Montreal, symbolizing the kind of monolithic nationalist sentiment that must be avoided if the Canadian mosaic is to survive. ROBERT KROETSCH, Betsy Warland, DAPHNE MARLATT, Betsy Struthers, Douglas Barbour and P. K. PAGE have all written about Australia in their poetry after visits there. In prose, Australia enters the Bragg and Minna stories in TIMOTHY FINDLEY's *Stones* (1990) and ALICE MUNRO's short story 'Bardon Bus', in *Moons of Jupiter* (1982). Canadian JACK HODGINS's novel *Innocent Cities* (1990) is set partly in nineteenth-century Victoria, Australia. This novel is a landmark in other ways – it was recently published by an Australian publisher, the University of Queensland Press. Finally, Australia and Canada are both deeply implicated in the fiction of JANETTE TURNER HOSPITAL, a writer who inhabits and writes from both of these terrains.

GILLIAN WHITLOCK

Australian Eco-novel

It is a commonplace that Australian literature is intimately associated with land and nature, but the ecological novel is a recent feature in Australian writing. Nineteenth-century novels by HENRY KINGSLEY and ROLF BOLDREWOOD focus on

ecological processes characterized by extremity and threat – fires, droughts, floods – that often have a sacramental function, wedding the settler to the land through sacrifice and endurance. In JOSEPH FURPHY's *Such is Life* (1903), set in the Riverina, a climatically harsh environment grounds the black comedy and existential anxiety of the novel, as it does in the short fiction of HENRY LAWSON. A different modality of nature can be seen in the dark romanticism of MARCUS CLARKE's convict novel *For the Term of His Natural Life* (1870–72), where the gloomy Tasmanian wilderness stands in for the midnight of Rufus Dawes's (and the colonial) soul. In these works the natural is antagonistic, hovering between menace and indifference, and prone, as in the stories of BARBARA BAYNTON, ETHEL TURNER's *Seven Little Australians* (1894), and HENRY HANDEL RICHARDSON's *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* (1930), to capricious acts of violence. In the early twentieth-century land saga novels, the exploitative land-user was seen as sinning against modesty and humility, not the ecosystem.

None of these works assert that primacy of the found, non-human world that most ecocritics hold as being definitional of environmental texts. The first novels that can be genuinely said to do this emerged in the 1930s, when El Niño droughts and land clearing caused catastrophic soil erosion and dust storms in the major Australian cities. In XAVIER HERBERT's *Capricornia* (1938) and ELEANOR DARK's *The Timeless Land* (1941) there is a conscious recognition of the consequences of human change in the environment as well as other conceptual awarenesses associated with modern ecology, such as balance, complex interdependence and sustainability – and their opposites. It is a notable feature of each novel that environmental destruction is closely linked with the cultural destruction of Aboriginal people.

Ecological concerns waned in the immediate post-war years whilst a Lawsonian metaphysics of land found a modernist inflexion in the novels of PATRICK WHITE and RANDOLPH STOW. Nuclear threat was famously addressed in Nevil Shute's *On the Beach* (1957), but it was the 1960s counterculture that swept environmental concerns into political prominence. Anti-development sentiments as well as a more detailed depiction of the biota became more frequent in the novels of the 1970s, notably Herbert's *Poor Fellow My Country* (1975) and in the work of THEA ASTLEY and DAVID FOSTER. Patrick

White's *A Fringe of Leaves* (1976) grew from his involvement in the campaign against sand-mining on Fraser Island led by JUDITH WRIGHT, who, though not a novelist, is the key literary figure in post-war Australian environmentalism.

A significant paradigm shift occurred in the 1980s with the rise of Green politics in Australia and the protests to save the Franklin river and the Daintree rainforest. That decade saw novels corresponding to its major ecological concerns, including whaling in TIM WINTON's *Shallows* (1984), logging in JAMES MCQUEEN's *Hook's Mountain* (1982), pollution in PETER CAREY's *Bliss* (1981), and nuclear testing in Dorothy Johnston's *Maralinga My Love* (1988). The late 1980s gripped by millennial anxiety saw post-apocalyptic science fiction novels like GEORGE TURNER's *The Sea and Summer* (1987) and GABRIELLE LORD's *Salt* (1990). Science fiction has also been prominent in a new shift in the Australian eco-novel, which might be termed 'post-natural', or equally 'post-human', because it is concerned with the dissolution of these two central categories. Genetic engineering, cloning, sentient animals and mutation are explored in TERRY DOWLING's *Rynosseros* (1990), Tess Williams's *Map of Power* (1996) and GREG EGAN's *Teranesia* (1999). Outside of this genre but perhaps the most penetrating and unsettling consideration of the post-natural is Julia Leigh's novel about the thylacine, *The Hunter* (1999).

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TONY HUGHES-D'AETH

Autobiography

See LIFE WRITING.

Avison, Margaret (1918–)

Canadian poet

Born in Galt, Ontario, Canada, she was educated at the University of Toronto (BA, 1940). Employment as a social worker in Toronto kept her in touch with the city and its needy.

Avison's poetry includes *Winter Sun* (1960), *The Dumbfounding* (1966), *Sunblue* (1978), *No Time* (1989), *Selected Poems* (1991) and *Not Yet but Still* (1997). Both *Winter Sun* and *No Time* won Governor General's Awards. *Winter Sun* is a highly wrought work with full reverberations of the English literary tradition. The title's image informs the 'outdoor chill, some stoney wonder' of the book's terrain with its pre-baptismal light – precious as far as it goes, though turning sunward in a well of dayshine is the spring the poet waits for. Hope is what Avison writes about implicitly in the collection: the hope of regeneration, rescue or restoration. Creation is exiled from the Garden; how shall it find its way back, the poet inquires. To 'persist in penetrating further' (than stone), or to 'dare the knowledge', she writes, is a daredevil business, but if eschewed, then 'the long years' march deadens ardour'.

For Avison, light is usually the touchstone of renewal. Stone is a recurring symbol of space, and space is shorthand for the scientific account of cosmology that leaves out God the actor and God's proscenium arch, the world. The salient image of *Winter Sun* is the earth as ludicrous ball, with its creatures:

slung by the feet
in the universe.

The voice is generalizing, cosmic.

Much is made of Avison's 'the optic heart must venture: a jail-break/and re-creation': imagination, the poetic act, is supposed the redeemer of an otherwise wintry-forlorn world. But Avison is not so exclusive as this suggests. If the saving act does not include the 'clerk . . . in all his lustreless life', she will have none of it. The kind of act that in Avison's view will redeem is captured by the recurring image of someone plonking out a tune on a wonky piano:

Don't you suppose
anything could start it?
music and all?
some time?

The 'it' is kingdom come, which to embrace
our world would have to stretch and swell with
strangeness.

Avison identifies with the man (the dog, the pigeon) in the street, but while throughout *Winter Sun* she speaks for the cement-bound, she seldom speaks from the personal or lyric 'I'. Not until *The Dumbfounding* does she use an intimate voice.

Although Avison had been associated with the group of poets that included Charles Olson, Robert Duncan, Robert Creeley and Denise Levertov, her content – Christian conversion and conviction – led in a different direction. She had grown up familiar with the Christian terrain, but familiarity did not preclude the sudden surrender of conversion. In the eponymous ‘The Dumbfounding’, she rehearses her discovery that the way leads, after all, not *to* the Garden but:

through the garden to
trash, rubble, hill ...

She seeks to share her evangelical ‘head over heels’ experience of the face of Love. She often resorts to plonking quatrains – by hymn out of ballad – to tell her good news; this is particularly evident in *Sunblue*. She often uses conversation as a device. She continues her use of nature imagery, those slices of nature one can see between high-rises. Increasingly, her purpose is to unleash the godly metaphor in the natural phenomenon.

Hope now turns explicit:

“Hope is a dark place that does not refuse
fear?” True

‘Seal’, a word from which one could unpack the whole of Avison, comes into its own in her post-conversion writing, liberation. Always there, hinting at ambivalences, it prefigured in *Winter Sun* its role in *The Dumbfounding* and *Sunblue* as the symbol of Christ’s tomb and of Christian liberation. As with the theme and image of ‘seal’, so ‘still’: it has always been there, but it pervades *No Time*, where it intones an answer to the problem posed by the book’s title. Hope enmeshed with fear clusters in poems near the book’s end; yet the poem ‘Nostrils’ moves through comic anxiety to an untypically buoyant expectation of heaven. Finally:

I see that I have used
the holy given as
my way of refuge

sums up Avison’s relation to nature and neighbour, and her struggle always more perfectly to embody Christian hope and love.

Further reading

David Kent, ‘*Lighting up the terrain*’: *The Poetry of Margaret Avison* (1987).

MIA ANDERSON

Awards (Australia)

Literary awards in Australia were made sporadically by both government and private patronage during the nineteenth century, but in 1908 the recently-formed Commonwealth government inaugurated the Commonwealth Literary Fund, initially to provide ‘literary pensions’; after the Second World War it was greatly expanded to include fellowships and publishing assistance. Since 1973 the Literature Board (LITERATURE FUND from 1996) of the AUSTRALIA COUNCIL has been the country’s principal funding agency for awards: more than 50 per cent of its annual budget has gone to individual writers through a range of grants. Occasional Churchill Fellowships are awarded by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust. Anzac Fellowships are awarded by the New Zealand government (including to Australians), and grants to individual writers by several of the Australian state governments have increased over the years.

Literary prizes proliferated in Australia in the 1970s and 1980s. The National Book Council Annual Book Awards, called the Banjo awards after poet A. B. PATERSON, were a major feature from 1974 until 1996, when they ceased. The Children’s Book Council’s annual awards, which began about the same time, continue to flourish and are highly respected among educationists and booksellers. The New South Wales Premier’s Literary Awards were inaugurated in 1979, with generous cash prizes in several genres, and were the incentive for similar prizes in the other states. These awards carry considerable prestige and attract wide publicity for authors short-listed or awarded prizes.

The oldest and most publicly controversial Australian award for fiction is the Miles Franklin Award for a published novel – first given in 1957 to PATRICK WHITE’s *Voss*; this was preceded by the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal – first awarded in 1928 to MARTIN BOYD’s *The Montforts* – and now administered by the Association for the Study of Australian Literature. The Grace Leven Poetry Prize, first awarded in 1947 – to Nan McDonald’s *Pacific Sea* – retains its prestige but has no longer any significant cash value. The Melbourne Age Book of the Year Awards, begun in 1974, are awarded for fiction and non-fiction. The Fellowship of Australian Writers in Victoria administers a series of annual literary awards, the

chief being the Christopher Brennan Award for poetry.

The Australian-Vogel Award for an unpublished manuscript (fiction or biography) began in 1980 and has become one of the most celebrated literary awards in Australia, chiefly because so many of its recipients have gone on to become major figures in Australian literature. This award has significantly influenced the reception now accorded 'first novels' in this country.

The most original, and perhaps most revered, literary award in Australia is the Patrick White Award, begun in 1974 after White was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. It is for 'writers who have been highly creative over a long period, but have not received adequate recognition of their work'. Recipients have been: CHRISTINA STEAD, DAVID CAMPBELL, JOHN BLIGHT, SUMNER LOCKE ELLIOT, GWEN HARWOOD, RANDOLPH STOW, BRUCE DAWE, DAL STIVENS, BRUCE BEAVER, MARJORIE BARNARD, ROSEMARY DOBSON, JUDITH WRIGHT, JOHN MORRISON, WILLIAM HART-SMITH, ROLAND ROBINSON, THEA ASTLEY, ROBERT GRAY, DAVID MARTIN, PETER COWAN, AMY WITTING, DIMITRIS TSALOUMAS, Elizabeth Riddell, ELIZABETH HARROWER, VIVIAN SMITH, ALMA DE GROEN, GERALD MURNANE, TOM SHAPCOTT and GEOFFREY PAGE.

THOMAS SHAPCOTT

Awards (Canada)

Canada currently offers a variety of awards for writers working in virtually every genre. The most prestigious among them are the Governor General's Awards, which were established in 1937 by the Canadian Authors' Association but have been administered and funded since 1959 by Canada's principal funding agency for awards, the CANADA COUNCIL. The 'GG's' are presented annually for outstanding achievement in the categories of drama, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, children's literature, translation and book design. Two awards of \$10,000 each are made in each of these seven categories, one for English-language and one for French-language works. The Council also administers the annual \$50,000 Molson Prize, which recognizes outstanding achievement in the arts and in the humanities or social sciences. In addition,

the Council offers specific prizes for books that promote cultural understanding between Canada and other countries. Another significant cash award is the Giller Prize, established in 1994 in memory of Canadian journalist Doris Giller for the best novel or collection of short stories in English. The first winner was M. G. VASSANJI in 1994 for *A Book of Secrets*.

The Canadian Authors' Association now administers its own Literary Awards, funded by Harlequin Enterprises. A silver medal and cash prize of \$5,000 are awarded annually in each of the four categories of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama. The Association also sponsors the annual Vicky Metcalf Short Story Award, a cash prize of \$1,000 for the best short story for children published in an anthology or magazine.

Several Canadian booksellers and publishers sponsor their own literary awards. The Canadian Booksellers' Association prizes cover the range of the publishing industry from authorship to book sales. Their \$2,000 Ruth Schwartz Children's Book Award is notable for its final jury composed entirely of children. The awards sponsored by the Coles bookstore chain also recognize achievement in authorship, sales and publishing. Rather than presenting cash prizes to the winners, Coles makes donations on their behalf to agencies promoting writing and literacy in Canada. The largest Canadian award for a first novel is sponsored jointly by the bookstore chain of W. H. Smith and the literary magazine *Books in Canada*. Winners of this annual \$5,000 prize include MICHAEL ONDAATJE, CLARK BLAISE, JOY KOGAWA and Heather Robertson. One of the most unusual sponsorship teams on the awards scene is the partnership of the *Financial Times* of Canada and the accounting firm of Coopers and Lybrand of Canada, who offer the National Business Book Award, valued at \$10,000 for first prize and \$5,000 for second prize.

Often, prizes are associated with the œuvre of a particular author, such as the STEPHEN LEACOCK Award for humour (\$2,500 and a silver medal) or the Journey Prize established by James Michener in 1988 for the best short fiction published in a Canadian literary journal. The \$10,000 award for the author and \$2,000 award for the publisher of the winning story are funded by Canadian royalties from Michener's novel *Journey*. The MARIAN ENGEL Award (\$10,000) was established in 1990 for outstanding prose work by a woman. The first

winner was CAROL SHIELDS. Awards have also been established in honour of W. O. MITCHELL (for a body of outstanding work by a Canadian author who has also served as a mentor to other writers – \$15,000, first awarded in 1998) and TIMOTHY FINDLEY (for a male writer in mid-career – \$15,000, first awarded in 2003).

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio sponsors an annual literary competition, which awards a first prize of \$3,000 and second prize of \$2,500 in each of the categories of radio plays, poetry and short stories.

In addition to these national awards, most of the provinces present their own literary prizes. Among the most notable of these are the QSPELL (Quebec Society for the Promotion of English Language Literature) Prize, the British Columbia Book Prizes, and Ontario's \$10,000 Trillium Book Award and the Toronto Book Awards. Ontario also offers the Chalmers Canadian Play Awards for the most outstanding scripts written by Canadian playwrights and produced within the past year in the metropolitan Toronto area. The Chalmers Award, created in 1972 by an endowment from Toronto businessman Floyd S. Chalmers and administered by the Ontario Arts Council, is currently valued at \$8,000, to be divided among a winner and up to four finalists. In 1982 the Ontario Arts Council added the Chalmers Canadian Children's Play Award, valued at \$5,000, to be divided among the winning playwright and one or more runners-up.

D. A. HADFIELD
L. W. CONOLLY

Awards (India)

India's Sahitya Akademi, an autonomous organization established by the Government of India on 12 March 1954, functions as the national academy of letters. It sets high literary standards, fosters and coordinates literary activities in all Indian languages, and promotes through them all the cultural unity of the country. It is also responsible for administering the Akademi's prestigious literary awards, one each in all the Indian languages. Two other literary awards, the Jnanapith Award and the Saraswati Samman, are more prestigious; only one writer, among all the Indian languages, is honoured every year, but writers in English are not

eligible. However, the Crossword Book Award is exclusively for works in English.

Besides the fifteen languages enumerated in the Constitution of India – Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu – Sahitya Akademi also recognizes Dogri, English, Konkani, Manipuri, Maithili, Nepali and Rajasthani as languages in which its programmes may be implemented. These programmes include: literary seminars and conferences; publication of journals, bibliographies, dictionaries and monographs related to Indian literature; translation of Indian and foreign classics; and annual awards to books of outstanding literary merit by Indian nationals, first published during the preceding five years in any of the twenty-two recognized languages. Translations, anthologies, abridgements, edited or annotated works are not eligible for these awards. Since 1989, however, the Akademi has instituted a separate prize for translation of creative and critical works. R. PARTHASARATHY, the poet, won this award in 1995 for his translation of an ancient Tamil classic.

The first Akademi Award for a work in English was given in 1960. No awards were given in the years 1955, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1995 and 1997. The award-winning books in English are:

- 1960 R. K. NARAYAN, *The Guide* (1958), a novel.
- 1963 RAJA RAO, *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), a novel.
- 1965 Verrier Elwin, *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin* (1964), an autobiography.
- 1967 BHABANI BHATTACHARYA, *Shadow from Ladakh* (1966), a novel.
- 1969 Niharranjan Ray, *An Artist in Life* (1967), a study of RABINDRANATH TAGORE.
- 1971 MULK RAJ ANAND, *Morning Face* (1968), an autobiographical novel.
- 1975 NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI, *Scholar Extraordinary: The Life of Professor the Rt. Hon. Friedrich Max Müller* (1974).
- 1976 Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: 1889–1947* vol. 1 (1975), a biography.
- 1977 CHAMAN NAHAL, *Azadi* (1975), a novel.
- 1978 ANITA DESAI, *Fire on the Mountain* (1977), a novel.
- 1979 Rama Mehta, *Inside the Haveli* (1977), a novel.

- 1980 K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, *On the Mother: The Chronicle of a Manifestation and Ministry*, Vol. 1 and 2 (2nd rev. edn, 1978), a biography of Mira Alfassa, known as 'The Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry'. (The first, much smaller edition was published in 1952.)
- 1981 JAYANTA MAHAPATRA, *Relationship* (1980), poems.
- 1982 ARUN JOSHI, *The Last Labyrinth* (1981), a novel.
- 1983 NISSIM EZEKIEL, *Latter-Day Psalms* (1982), poems.
- 1984 KEKI N. DARUWALLA, *The Keeper of the Dead* (1982), poems.
- 1985 KAMALA DAS, *Collected Poems* (1984).
- 1986 NAYANTARA SAHGAL, *Rich Like Us* (1985), a novel.
- 1987 SHIV K. KUMAR, *Trapfalls in the Sky* (1986), poems.
- 1988 VIKRAM SETH, *The Golden Gate* (1986), a novel in verse.
- 1989 AMITAV GHOSH, *The Shadow Lines* (1988), a novel.
- 1990 SHASHI DESHPANDE, *That Long Silence* (1988), a novel.
- 1991 I. ALLAN SEALY, *The Trotter-Nama* (1988), a novel.
- 1992 RUSKIN BOND, *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra* (1992), short stories.
- 1993 G. N. Devy, *After Amnesia: Tradition and Change in Indian Literary Criticism* (1992); this award, the first for literary criticism, gave rise to much controversy.
- 1994 DOM MORAES, *Serendip* (1990), poems.
- 1996 SUNETRA GUPTA, *Memories of Rain* (1992), a novel.
- 1998 MAHESH DATTANI, *Final Solutions and Other Plays* (1994).
- 1999 A. K. RAMANUJAN, *Collected Poems* (1995).
- 2000 Kiran Nagarkar, *Cuckold* (1997), a novel.
- 2001 Rajmohan Gandhi, *Rajaji: A Life* (1997), a biography.
- 2002 AMIT CHAUDHURI, *A New World* (2000), a novel.

Recently Crossword, a chain of bookstores in India, has instituted annual awards, one for

fiction originally written in English and one for translation into English from an Indian language. Among the authors who have won the Crossword Book Award are Vikram Seth (for *An Equal Music*, 1997), I. Allan Sealy for *The Everest Hotel: A Calendar* (1998), and Jamyang Norbu for *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999).

RAMESH MOHAN
SHYAMALA A. NARAYAN

Awards (New Zealand)

The longest-established New Zealand literary award is for children's literature. The Esther Glen Award, named after the pioneer New Zealand writer for children, ESTHER GLEN, was established in 1945 by the New Zealand Library Association. From its foundation, a high standard was demanded, and in its first twenty years it was awarded only five times; with the flowering of New Zealand children's literature in recent years it has now become an annual event. The Library Association also administers two parallel prizes, the Russell Clark Award for illustrations to children's books and an award for children's non-fiction. In 1991 the more recently established Children's Book Awards, administered by the Booksellers' Association and the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council with commercial sponsorship, offered \$4,000 NZ for a winning story book and \$2,000 NZ each to the author and illustrator of a winning picture story book.

The Wattie Book of the Year award, sponsored by a food manufacturing company and administered by the Book Publishers' Association, had the highest public profile of any New Zealand literary award since its establishment in 1968, the short-list being heavily promoted by publishers and book-sellers. The three judges appointed each year were expected to take into account literary merit, production and 'public impact' – the latter to ensure that the award was not given to an esoteric work difficult to promote. There were no genre categories so that very disparate works competed. First, second and third places in 1991 were worth \$20,000 NZ, \$10,000 NZ, and \$5,000 NZ.

Literary merit is the sole criterion for three of the four categories in the New Zealand Book Awards, established in 1976 and funded and administered by the Literature Committee of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council. These are for poetry, fiction and non-fiction. The fourth category, for book production, was introduced in 1980. Like the Wattie award, the New Zealand Book Awards are competitive and entries are required. The prize for each category in 1991 was \$5,000 NZ. The Literature Committee also gives an annual Award for Achievement 'in recognition of the contribution to New Zealand literature of an individual writer, an editor, an anthology, or a book'.

Among privately sponsored awards are three biennial awards, offered by the Bank of New Zealand, for unpublished short stories: the BNZ Katherine Mansfield Award, the BNZ Novice Writers' Award – for a writer who has had no previous work published – and the BNZ Young Writers' Award for secondary school pupils. Several other awards for short stories are offered by commercial firms and newspapers with commercial sponsorship.

With funding from the Literature Committee, the writers' organization New Zealand PEN offers annual awards for the Best First Book of Fictional Prose, the Best First Book of Non-fiction and the Best First Book of Poetry. There are special awards available for playwrights, travel writers and historians, and literature is among the arts eligible for the largest of New Zealand's arts awards – the Turnovsky Prize, given by a privately funded endowment trust and worth \$40,000 NZ in 1991. The first recipient of the prize, in 1984, was JANET FRAME.

New Zealanders are eligible for several prizes awarded elsewhere. LAURIS EDMOND and ALLEN CURNOW have both won the Commonwealth Prize for Poetry, and KERI HULME the Booker Prize for her novel *The Bone People* (1983). (See also PATRONAGE (NEW ZEALAND).)

The Wattie Book Awards became known as the Goodman Fielder Wattie Book Awards, then the Montana Book Awards, which merged with the New Zealand Book Awards to form the Montana New Zealand Book Awards in 1996. ELIZABETH KNOX's *The Vintner's Luck* won the Tasmanian Pacific Region Prize in 2001. PATRICIA

GRACE's *Dogside Story* won the fiction section of the 2001 Kiriyama Pacific Rim Book Prize.

DENNIS McELDOWNEY
CHRISTINA STACHURSKI

Awards (Philippines)

Probably the earliest public recognition given to Philippine writers in English was the 'honour roll' of short stories that poet, fictionist and critic JOSE GARCIA VILLA began publishing in 1926. Villa encouraged literary experimentation and a departure from the classic form exemplified by the fiction of Guy de Maupassant, O. Henry and Edgar Allan Poe. Villa's honour roll was modelled after that of Edward O'Brien, who published a list of 'Distinctive Short Stories in American Magazines' in his yearly anthology *The Best Short Stories*. In 1937, because the Philippines was still a USA Commonwealth nation, the stories of Philippine writers ESTRELLA ALFON, MANUEL ARGUILLA, Consorcio Borje, N. V. M. GONZALEZ and Daniel Fresnosa were included in this list.

Villa's honour roll was published in the *Philippines Free Press* magazine, which also published an anthology of Villa's selections. In 1929 the magazine itself began giving cash awards to the best stories it had published within the year. Garcia Villa's 'Mir-i-nisa' was the first winner. The magazine has since tried to continue this competition, although it has been occasionally interrupted by political upheaval, such as the Second World War and the martial law period between 1972 and 1986, when most magazines and newspapers were closed down.

A counterpoint to Villa's stress on aestheticism was represented by the 1940 Commonwealth Literary Awards, which were cash prizes given for socially conscious literature. The competition was divided into four categories: the novel, short story, poetry, and the essay. Characters in the fictional works were drawn from the peasant and working classes; poetry had a patriotic theme, with the hardwood molave as the central metaphor for the Philippine character of strength and resilience. Salvador P. Lopez's *Literature and Society* (1940) urged writers to infuse their works with a social consciousness; thus he defined a theory of

literature that has since been a dominant influence in Philippine letters.

The most prestigious literary awards are the Don Palanca Memorial Awards, sponsored by a private foundation that provides the cash prizes. The awards began in 1950 with the short-story category. They have since increased to include seven other genres: the novel (held every three years), poetry, three-act play, one-act play, essay, children's story and teleplay. Judges consist of literature professors, critics and writers. During the 1950s and 1960s, the judging for the Palanca Awards was heavily influenced by the standards of American New Criticism. The first Palanca Award was given to the short story 'Clay', by Juan Gatbonton, who used symbolic representation to characterize the colonial nature of the Philippine-American relationship.

Very similar to the Palanca Memorial Awards is the government-sponsored Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) literary competition. It began in 1969 with a playwriting contest, and in subsequent years included other categories: epic narrative, short story, novel, essay, biography, criticism and play adaptation. Under a new government administration in 1986, the contest became open only to works written in Filipino, the national language. The competition ended in 1992 for lack of funds.

The *Graphic* magazine's short-story contest was short-lived, beginning in 1970 and ending in 1972. However, the high political content of the winning entries was a portent of the cultural revolution that Ferdinand Marcos's martial law sought to abort. *Focus*, a magazine approved by the martial law administration, ran a yearly contest for the short story, essay and poetry from 1973 to 1983. Craft was the primary concern, and an apolitical content characterized the works published in this magazine.

In the 1960s awards for lifetime achievement in literature were the Republic Heritage Award and the Pro-Patria Award for Literature. Since 1988 the Writers' Union of the Philippines has accorded the same recognition to writers, who receive a trophy called 'Ang Manunulat' ('The Writer'), sculpted by an established artist. The awardees are nominated by writers' and artists' organizations, academic institutions and individual writers. Among the awardees in English are essayist CARMEN GUERRERO-NAKPII, fiction writer FRANCISCO ARCELLANA, fiction writer EDILBERTO TIEMPO and poet and fiction writer EDITH LOPEZ TIEMPO.

In 1981 the Manila Critics Circle established the National Book Awards for publishers and books. Winners, who receive a trophy, have included alleged former head of the Communist Party Jose Maria Sison (for his prison poems), Charlson L. Ong (for his short stories about the Chinese Filipinos, *Man of the East and Other Stories*, 1990), and GEMINO ABAD and Edna Z. Manlapaz (for editing the most extensive anthology of Philippine poetry in English, *Man of Earth: An Anthology of Filipino Poetry and Verse from English, 1905 to the mid-50s*, 1989).

Awards that Philippine writers share with those of other Southeast Asian Nations are the SEA WRITE Awards, which are given in Bangkok, Thailand, in the presence of the Thai royalty, and the Ramon Magsaysay Awards.

ROSARIO CRUZ LUCERO

Awards (Singapore)

The major literary awards in Singapore are the Book Awards, presented by the National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS) every two years since 1976. These awards are for published works in English, Chinese, Tamil and Malay written by Singaporeans and permanent residents in Singapore or abroad; there are awards for prose, poetry, drama, non-fiction and children's books. The NBDCS awards had a relatively low profile until 1992, when GOPAL BARATHAM rejected his prize for *A Candle or the Sun* (1991), alleging that the judging was unfair.

The most financially valuable award is the Singapore Literature Prize, which was first presented to SUCHEN CHRISTINE LIM for her novel *Fistful of Colours* (1992) in 1992. The annual contest is co-sponsored by EPB Publishers and Singapore National Printers and is organized by the NBDCS. The contest for unpublished work only alternates between prose (short stories and novels) in one year and drama and poetry the next.

Singapore's former ministry of culture, in association with the national daily newspapers, first organized an annual short-story competition in 1982. Cancelled in 1988, it was revived in 1992 and renamed the Golden Point Award. Now a biennial contest, it is co-organized by the National Arts Council and Singapore Press Holdings. Cash

prizes are awarded in each of the four language streams.

New dramatists had been identified since the 1980s through the Shell short play competition and the National University of Singapore, but the contest is no longer held.

Regionally, works by Singapore authors are eligible for the Southeast Asian Write Award given by Thailand every year since 1979 to honour a body of work by one author chosen from each of the four language streams.

Singapore authors can also vie for the annual Commonwealth Writers Prize awarded in the Southeast Asia and South Pacific region.

KOH BUCK SONG

Awards (South Africa)

The first literary award in South Africa, the Hertzog Prize, established in 1914, was intended to foster literary works in the relatively new language of Afrikaans. While this article focuses on literary awards for works written in English, the trend at present in South Africa, with its small reading public, is towards establishing awards that include works in indigenous languages, for example, the Skotaville Bertrams VO award (established in 1990), which is open to all South Africa's languages and was won by Gladys Thomas for *Avalon Court* (1992).

One of the richest literary prizes available in South Africa, the CNA Literary Award, established in 1961, is sponsored by a stationery and fancy-goods chain-store, the Central News Agency. Superseded in monetary value in 1990 by the N-Net Book Prize, the CNA award is twelve years older than Britain's Booker McConnell award. Past winners of the CNA Prize include ALAN PATON for *Apartheid and the Archbishop* (1973) and JACK COPE for *The Rain-Maker* (1971). J. M. COETZEE won in 1983 for *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983). One of the more successful literary periodicals, *New Contrast*, created the Arthur Nortje Memorial Award, which was won in 1991 by poets Lynne Dryer and John Eppel.

The 1993 CNA Literary Award went to Tim Couzens for his biographical work, *Tramp Royal: The True Story of Trader Horn* (1992). In 1994, IVAN VLADISLAVIĆ was the recipient for his novel *The Folly* (1993). In 1995 Nelson Mandela's *Long*

Walk to Freedom (1994) was the winner, while in 1996 it went to Margaret McCord for her biographical work, *The Calling of Katie Makanya* (1995). This was the last CNA Award, and brought to an end South Africa's richest and longest-running literary award.

Succeeding the CNA Award as one of South Africa's premier prizes is the *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Award, sponsored by South Africa's largest weekly newspaper. In 1993 Tim Couzens's *Tramp Royal: The True Story of Trader Horn* (1992) was the recipient, while in 1994 it went to *Return to Paradise* (1993), by BREYTEN BREYTENBACH. Other recent winners include, in 1996, Margaret McCord, *The Calling of Katie Makanya* (1995); and, in 1999, Antjie Krog (*Country of My Skull*, 1998) and Stephen Clingman (*Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*, 1997). In 2000 the award went to Anthony Sampson for *Mandela: The Authorised Biography* (1999).

The M-Net Book Prize (1989), at present the largest prize, worth 50,000 SAR, is sponsored by the sole subscription television service for works written in the two official languages, English and Afrikaans. *A Cageful of Butterflies* (1989), by children's author Lesley Beake, won in 1990. Another children's novel, a fantasy entitled *The Man Who Sharled at Flowers* (1991), by Tony Spencer-Smith, won in 1991. Eligible works must have a strong narrative content and some financial viability.

The 1994 M-Net Book Prize was won by Justin Cartwright for *Masai Dreaming* (1993). Other winners include, in 1995, Mark Behr for *The Smell of Apples* (1995); in 1997, ZAKES MDA for *Ways of Dying* (1995); and, in 1998, Ken Barris for *The Jailer's Book* (1996).

In the past, some local publishing houses have sponsored awards, but more recently it has been large business concerns that have provided the funds, with academics, writers and members of the media acting as judges. Insurance giant SANLAM sponsors its own awards for works in both official languages by established or aspiring authors writing in the fields of biography, travel, nature conservation or culture. Past winners include *The Mind of South Africa* (1990) by Allister Sparks, correspondent for the *Washington Post* and *The Observer*, and the poet Francis Faller, whose anthology *Verse-Over* (1991) 'constantly challenges the relationship between private life and public event'. Runner-up in 1992 was Shaun de Waal's short story

'Stalwart' (published in *Firetalk* 2 1993), in which he draws upon his experiences in exile as he 'examines the conflict of personal needs, and the sacrifices that have been made for the struggle against apartheid – and whether they were made for political or personal reasons'. John Conyngham's novel *The Arrowing of the Cane* (1986) won in 1989.

In 1993 the SANLAM Literary Award went to E. M. Macphail for her novel *Mrs Chud's Place* (1992). The 1994 award went to poets TATAMKHULU AFRIKA and Arja Salafranca for their unpublished joint collection 'Turning Points' and 'A Life Stripped of Illusions'. Other recent winners of the award include, in 1995, Zakes Mda, *She Plays with the Darkness* (1995); in 1997, DON MACLENNAN, *Solstice* (1997), and, in 1998, Pamela Jooste, *Dance with a Poor Man's Daughter* (1998). In 2000 Tatamkhulu Afrika was again a recipient for his poetry manuscript 'Mad Old Man under the Morning Star'.

OLIVE SCHREINER lends her name to an English Academy of Southern Africa award. Among the winners are Sheila Fugard for *The Castaways* (1972), OSWALD MTSHALI for *Sounds of a Cowhide Drum* (1971) and LIONEL ABRAHAMS for *Journal of a New Man* (1984).

In 1964 the winner of the Thomas Pringle Prize was South Africa's 1991 Nobel Literature laureate NADINE GORDIMER, for a short story. Gordimer pledged a part of her million-dollar (US) Nobel prize to the Congress of South African Writers, which has sponsored awards honouring, among others, ALEX LA GUMA, BESSIE HEAD, Gordimer and Mankayi Sontonga.

From a South African perspective, the other significant recent award was the 1999 Booker Prize given to J. M. COETZEE for his novel *Disgrace* (1999). In 2003 Coetzee was also awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

ANNE WARRING
CRAIG MacKENZIE

Awards (West Africa)

Literary awards in Ghana include the Ghana Book Award, instituted in 1977. Alongside a monetary award, this prize is accompanied by a citation. The Ghana *Observer* short-story competition offers three

awards for short stories ranging in length from 1,000 to 1,500 words. The Valco Fund Literary Award comprises five annual awards given for drama, fiction and poetry. Ghana's journalists administer the Ghana Union of Journalists Poetry Award.

The Ivory Coast's Prix Littéraire Mobil was instituted in 1980 and carries a financial award in CFA. It is awarded for a novel or collection of short stories (published or unpublished) by an author from the Ivory Coast.

Nigeria offers a large number of literary awards. They include the Association of Nigerian Authors Award, instituted in 1983. The three awards for prose, drama and poetry are worth \$200 (US) each.

The ANA/MATATU prize, instituted in 1995, is worth \$200 (US). It is given for the best work in children's literature. The Cadbury Poetry Prize, instituted in 1989, is worth \$500 (US). The Spectrum Prize for the best first work of fiction was instituted in 1990; it is worth \$200 (US).

The Oyo State ANA Prize, instituted in 1991, comprises four awards for prose, poetry, Yoruba prose and Yoruba poetry. Each award is worth \$100 (US).

In Senegal, the Senghor Foundation International Literary Prize is an annual award for a work of fiction or poetry written or translated into French. It is worth CFA one million.

The Prix el Hadj Ahmadou Ahidyo is offered in Cameroon.

Further reading

James Gibbs, *A Handbook for African Writers* (1986).

WALE OKEDIRAN

Awoonor, Kofi Nyidevu (1935–)

Ghanaian poet, dramatist, novelist, critic

Born in the Volta Region of Ghana, he was awarded a BA in English (1960) from the University College of Ghana, an MA (1968) from the University of London, and a PhD (1972) from the State University of New York, Stony Brook. From 1961 to 1964 he was editor of the literary magazine *Okyame*, and then served (1964–67) as head of the Ghana Film Corporation. From 1968 to 1975 he taught at the State University of New York, Stony Brook. Upon his return to Ghana in 1976 he was appointed professor at the

University of Cape Coast. Awoonor became a diplomat in 1983 and served as Ghana's ambassador to the United Nations from 1990 to 1994 after serving as Ghana's ambassador to Cuba from 1988 to 1990.

Awoonor's major poetic works are *Rediscovery and Other Poems* (1964), *Night of My Blood* (1971), *Ride Me, Memory* (1973), *The House by the Sea* (1978), *Guardians of the Sacred Word: Ewe Poetry* (1974) – translations of traditional Ewe poetry – and *Latin American and Caribbean Notebook* (1992).

Awoonor has written two plays, published in *Ancestral Power and Lament* (1970), and two novels: *This Earth, My Brother* (1971) and *Comes the Voyager at Last* (1992).

Breast of the Earth: A Survey of the History, Culture and Literature of Africa South of the Sahara (1975) is a critical survey of old, oral and contemporary written literature of Africa and the 'self-discovery' inherent in these discourses. Awoonor also deals with socio-political issues in his writing; *Ghana, a Political History* (1990) is a personal re-appraisal of Ghanaian history. *Africa, the Marginalized Continent* (1994) is a collection of essays on the socio-economic and political dilemmas of the continent.

Recurrent themes in Awoonor's creative writing are pan-Africanism, the dilemma of the African caught between a superimposed alien culture and his own traditional values, the spiritual relationship of the African with his people, and Awoonor's roots with Ewe literature and culture.

Often considered controversial for reading too closely to Apaloo, the famous traditional Ewe poet, for his unorthodox interpretation of Ghanaian history, and for his view on some traditional religious practices, Awoonor is still recognized as a major Ghanaian literary figure.

Further reading

- Ken Goodwin, *Understanding African Poetry: A Study of Ten Poets* (1982).
- Kofi Anyidoho, 'Kofi Awoonor and the Ewe tradition of songs of abuse (Halo)', in Lemuel Johnson et al. (eds), *Towards Defining the African Aesthetic* (1982).
- Isaac I. Elimimian, 'Kofi Awoonor as a poet', in Eldred Jones (ed.), *African Literature Today* 18 (1992).
- Edward Sackey, 'Comes the Voyager at Last', in Kofi Anyidoho and James Gibbs (eds), *FonTomFrom: Contemporary Ghanaian Literature, Theatre and Film* (2000).

Robert Fraser, 'Latin American and Caribbean Notebook', in Kofi Anyidoho and James Gibbs (eds), *FonTomFrom: Contemporary Ghanaian Literature, Theatre and Film* (2000).

KARI DAKO

Ayyar, A. S. Panchapakesa (1899–1963)

Indian novelist, dramatist, short-story writer

Born near Palghat, India, he was educated in Trivandrum and Madras. He went to England in 1919 for higher studies at Oxford University and became a lawyer. Ayyar was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1933. Following an appointment in the Indian Civil Service, he became justice of the Madras High Court (1948–59). Ayyar's some twenty-seven published works include novels, plays, short stories, literary criticism, religious works, jurisprudence, travelogue, biography and autobiography. He also translated classical drama and poetry from Sanskrit into English.

Ayyar's travelogue, *An Indian in Western Europe* (vol. 1, 1929; vol. 2, 1930), consists largely of humorous reflections on his youthful encounters abroad. His autobiography, *Twenty-Five Years a Civilian* (1962), is charged with considerable irony. In one anecdote, a proud Englishman is reminded of the comparative youth of Mother England – India, the colonial daughter, is senior by four thousand years. Ayyar was a Caliban who turned out to be more than a match for the Anglo-Indian Prospero. Ayyar's intellectual independence during the days of the raj proved costly, however, and he had to wait until after India's independence to be elevated to the High Court.

Ayyar is thus typical of the early post-colonial writer, who sees himself as an intruding disciple of the imperial paragon. There is something in him of the acolyte's anxiety to deserve and then excel the master. The insecure colonial maverick finds an opportune legacy in Sanskrit literature. In Ayyar's case, it was in the work of the ancient dramatist Bhasa. He translated two of Bhasa's plays and wrote a biography of this literary ancestor for the Indian Men of Letters series. These exercises in Indology also inspired three volumes of religious writing: *Brahma's Way* (1935), *A Layman's*

Bhagavad Gita (1946) and *Sri Krishna, the Darling of Humanity* (1952).

As a follower of English writing on India, Ayyar was well aware of the need for social reform. This is evident in his first collection of plays, *The Slave of Ideas and Other Plays* (1941). The plays are a satire on his countrymen who are enslaved, not by foreign but by native ideas of expediency contingent on superficial modernity and insensitive traditionalism. In *Sita's Choice* (in *Sita's Choice and Other Plays*, 1935) Ayyar attacks the prejudice against the remarriage of widows. *A Mother's Sacrifice* (1937) is a protest against the exploitation of lower castes. *In the Clutch of the Devil* (1926) vehemently denounces the popular religious practice of offering human sacrifices to propitiate a bloodthirsty deity. *The Trial of Science for the Murder of Humanity* (2nd edn, 1942) is a naive but passionate attempt to resolve the dilemma of the modern Indian faced with the prospect of abandoning traditional superstitions only to be decoyed into a scientific wasteland.

Ayyar's novels, written in the late 1940s and early 1950s, have historical settings and are his best-known works. *Baladitya: A Historical Romance of Ancient India* (1930) is about a Gupta king who resisted Hun invaders during the sixth century. *Three Men of Destiny* (1939) is

the story of Alexander the Great, but gives equal importance to Alexander, Chandragupta and Chanakya. *The Legions Thunder Past* (1947) fictionalizes Alexander the Great's campaigns. *Chanakya and Chandragupta* (1951) is a refined version, excluding Alexander's adventures. In all these novels, India appears to fall prey to foreign invaders when there is disunity among native rulers.

As in his plays, there is no attempt to experiment with technique in any of Ayyar's novels or in the numerous short stories collected in ten volumes. Ayyar has a weakness for indulging in tedious descriptions and superfluous details. The most unlikely characters in his fiction quote Shelley, Byron and Browning. All his characters speak similarly and use Ayyar's version of the King's English. A collection of essays, *Rambles in Literature, Art, Law and Philosophy* (1958), and a monograph, *The Contribution of Hindu Law to World Jurisprudence* (1941), also appeared during the latter part of his life.

Further reading

K. P. K. Menon, *A. S. P. Ayyar* (1990).

MOHAMED ELIAS

B

Badami, Anita Rau (1961–)

Indian novelist

Born in Rourkela in the northeastern state of Orissa, India, she moved regularly as a child due to her father's job as a railway engineer. Educated at a series of Catholic schools and the University of Madras, where she earned a BA in English, she later studied journalism and creative writing. Married to an Indian, she moved to Canada with her husband and son in 1991. She has worked as a journalist and has published short fiction as well as two novels, *Tamarind Mem* (1996), which attracted considerable praise from reviewers, and *The Hero's Walk* (2000), which won the 2001 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for the Canada/Caribbean region and the Marian Engel Award.

Tamarind Mem focuses on the relationship between a mother and her daughter and their very different memories of a shared past. Through the memories of the Saroja, the Tamarind Mem, so-called because of her sour tongue, and her daughter Kamini who has emigrated to Canada, Badami considers such issues as the clash between generations and the changing opportunities for women in India.

In *The Hero's Walk*, Sripathi's world is abruptly turned upside down when he receives a telephone call telling him that his estranged daughter, Maya, and her Canadian husband have been killed in a car crash, leaving him responsible for a granddaughter he has never met. The novel, set against the background of a rapidly changing Southern India, is as much about how Sripathi and his family deal with seven-year-old Nandana's arrival as it is about how the orphaned girl copes with her new life in India. The heroism of these most unheroic of

characters lies in their ability to leave the past behind; Badami's achievement is to portray epic events through their very ordinary lives.

With these two novels, Badami has secured herself a solid place amongst the writers of the Indian diaspora.

RALPH J. CRANE

Bail, Murray (1941–)

Australian novelist, short-story writer

Born in Adelaide, Australia, he has lived in India (1968–70) and in Europe – especially England (1970–74). Aspects of this period are recorded in *Longhand: A Writer's Notebook* (1989). Since the mid-1970s he has lived in Sydney.

Contemporary Portraits and Other Stories (1975) was also published in London as *The Driver's Wife and Other Stories* (1986). In 'A, B, C ... Z', Bail cites William James: 'the word "dog" does not bite'. Such linguistic reflexivity informs Bail's *ficciones*. One can say of his 'contemporary portraits' what William H. Gass claims Gertrude Stein perceived in Cézanne's portrait of his wife – that 'the reality of the composition had superseded the reality of the subject'.

In the story 'Zoellner's Definition', Zoellner is 'suddenly filled with profound melancholy and pointlessness'. Similarly, Bail's first novel, *Homesickness* (1980), which won a National Book Council Award and the Melbourne Age Book of the Year Award, is pervaded by melancholy. Although the major bias of Australian writing has until recently been realist, empiricist and historicist, there is no such bias to *Homesickness*. The

novel follows a group of middle-class Australian tourists visiting museums in Europe, Africa and North and South America. It is pervaded by a sense of loss, absence and sadness. How can these tourists ever come 'home', it asks, for they have been transformed in their consciousness. Like Baudelaire's soul, they may find that they are home nowhere.

Bail's reading is eclectic, principally American (North and South) and European (Flaubert, Proust, Herman Broch, George Steiner), and he is a passionate reader of dictionaries. But his fiction is essentially concerned with 'Australian-ness', as *Holden's Performance* (1987), with its 'hero' named after a well-known Australian make of car, bears out. Critic Helen Daniel characterizes this novel as 'a poignant meditation on an Australian geometry of place and consciousness, of time and space ... a kind of psychogeometry of Holden which is also a measuring of an Australian identity, "This problem of emptiness in vast space"'.

In 1998 Bail published *Eucalyptus*, a novel which won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and the Miles Franklin Award. *Eucalyptus* is a formally innovative book that layers different forms of narrative so as to draw attention to the importance of story to our ways of thinking and organizing the worlds we live in. Throughout, there is a gentle, occasionally whimsical, sense of irony, which assists the comparative treatment of systems of thought and their human as well as social and political consequences. In keeping with his earlier work, the author subtly enlarges the referential possibilities of his local narratives until they resonate with allegorical possibility. Bail's style thus serves as a foil and vehicle for his characteristic questioning of the relationship of language and identity, discourse and reality. The formal innovations enable a number of the traditional thematic preoccupations of the post-colonial novel to be brought into their relation with international philosophic preoccupations and pressing contemporary Australian themes.

Bail has also written a study (1981) of the Australian painter Ian Fairweather; he edited *The Faber Book of Contemporary Australian Short Stories* (1988); and in 2000 he published another collection of short stories, *Camouflage*.

DON ANDERSON
CHRISTOPHER LEE

Baird, Irene (1901–81)

Canadian novelist

Born in Carlisle, England, she emigrated to Vancouver, Canada, in 1919. After moving to Victoria, British Columbia, in 1937, she wrote her first novel 'with one hand on the typewriter and one hand in the kitchen sink'. A pastoral romance, *John* (1937) idealizes its British hero, John Dorey, closing with an elegiac tribute: 'to the name of Dorey; in obscurity ... at home or abroad – *sound and clean and true!*' *Waste Heritage* (1939), Baird's most memorable work, is radically different from *John*. Based on personal observations of the unemployed sit-down in Victoria in 1938, the novel is aptly described in the words of one of its characters as 'a kind of social document ... that will bring before the nation this whole problem of unemployment that is festering on its body like a bloody sore'. *Waste Heritage* captures the raging despair of its central character, Matt Striker. Like the hero in Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, Striker is a victim bound by pity to his mentally confused comrade, Eddy. His girlfriend, however, is utterly unlike Steinbeck's stereotypical female. Too little developed to be compared to CHRISTINA STEAD's heroines, Hazel is none the less a strong-minded, independent woman. In this portrayal, as in her sympathy for the plight of the unemployed, Baird was ahead of her time. Despite good reviews, *Waste Heritage* was out of print by 1942 and was largely ignored until its reissue in 1973.

With the outbreak of war, Baird turned to patriotic themes, writing columns for the Vancouver *Sun* and the *Daily Province*, a series of radio talks, published as *The North American Tradition* (1941), and a documentary novel, *He Rides the Sky* (1941), based on letters from a pilot killed in 1940.

In 1942 Baird began a five-year stint with the Canadian National Film Board in Ottawa. She then entered the federal civil service, rising to become senior information officer and chief of information services while continuing to write lectures, articles and poems, chiefly on the North. She retired to England in 1967, where she published *The Climate of Power* (1971), a somewhat melodramatic study of the political backroom. She returned to Victoria in 1973.

HILDA L. THOMAS

Baldwin, Shauna Singh (1962–)

Canadian/Indian novelist

Born in Montreal, she grew up in Delhi, India, where she went to school and college. She returned to Canada in the early 1980s and now lives in Milwaukee in the USA with her Irish-American husband. She has worked as an independent radio producer and an information technology consultant. Her short fiction has been published in magazines in the USA, Canada and India, and she is the author of two books, *English Lessons and Other Stories* (1996) and *What the Body Remembers* (1999), winner of the 2000 Commonwealth Writers Prize for the Canada/Caribbean region.

In various ways the fifteen stories in *English Lessons and Other Stories*, which focus on the lives of Sikh women in India and North America, are all about cultural displacement. They range from 'Rawalpindi 1919', which considers a son's impending departure for England through the eyes of his mother, to an attack on cultural insensitivity in 'Montreal 1962', and the brilliant subversion of patriarchal authority in 'English Lessons'.

What the Body Remembers invites comparison with KHUSHWANT SINGH's classic Partition novel, *Train to Pakistan* (1956). Set largely in the Punjab during the years 1928 to 1947, Baldwin's novel is a multi-layered saga of a Sikh family set against the historical backdrop of India's struggle for independence and the subsequent partition of the sub-continent. The events of the novel revolve around the Punjabi zamindar, Sardarji, and his two wives, Satya and Roop, whose domestic battles parallel the battles that are dividing India. But it is the mutilated body of Roop's sister-in-law, Kusum, which speaks the loudest about gender and the nation state, the hatred between the communities (Sikh and Muslim), and what Sikh women have suffered at the hands of their own menfolk, who, like Kusum's father-in-law, believe that, 'for a good-good women, death should be preferable to dishonour'; before the Muslims desecrated her body, Papaji had killed her for izzat.

Baldwin is also the co-author of *A Foreign Visitor's Survival Guide to America* (1992), a work of non-fiction.

Further reading

Seema Malik, 'Body as Object: A Reading of *What the Body Remembers*', in Rajul Bhargava

(ed.), *Indian Writing in English: The Last Decade* (2002).

RALPH J. CRANE

Ballantyne, David (1924–86)

New Zealand novelist, journalist

Born in Auckland, New Zealand, he was raised in Rotorua, Hicks Bay, and Gisborne. He worked as a journalist in Auckland and Wellington from 1943 to 1955, spent 1955–66 in Fleet Street, London, England, and then returned to the *Auckland Star*, where he remained until his retirement in 1984.

Ballantyne's career as a novelist was a broken one, primarily because his fiction never received the critical recognition and financial reward that it deserved. His first novel, *The Cunninghams* (1948), modelled on the work of James T. Farrell, is perhaps the best New Zealand novel of the 1940s with its scrupulously realistic portrayal of a New Zealand family during the Depression. It was well received in the USA, but not in New Zealand. When his next three novels were all refused by publishers, Ballantyne put aside novel-writing and took up writing drama for television to supplement his journalism.

Ballantyne resumed the publication of fiction in 1963 with the first New Zealand printing of *The Cunninghams* and with the publication of a collection of short stories, *And the Glory*, and his second novel, *The Last Pioneer*. The third novel, *A Friend of the Family*, appeared in 1966, followed by his finest novel, *Sydney Bridge Upside Down* (1968). The story of 'all the terrible happenings up the coast that summer', told by a dangerously disturbed pre-adolescent protagonist, ranks with IAN CROSS's *The God Boy* (1957) and JANET FRAME's *Owls Do Cry* (1957) as among the best New Zealand novels of growing up, although it has received almost no critical attention.

Discouraged, Ballantyne did not return to fiction until 1978 with *The Talkback Man*, followed by *The Penfriend* (1980). These final two novels mark a distinct change in direction in his work; they deal with contemporary New Zealand society (including such phenomena as racial tensions, talkback radio and drug smuggling) and involve sophisticated narrative games.

Despite the efforts of C. K. STEAD and Patrick Evans to call attention to Ballantyne's work, his

fiction remains relatively unrecognized. However, his strong narrative gifts and his sharply drawn pictures of a changing New Zealand society may make his work last longer than that of some of his initially better-known contemporaries.

Further reading

Patrick Evans, 'David Ballantyne and the art of writing in New Zealand', *Islands* 31–32 (1981).

LAWRENCE JONES

Bandele, Biyi (1967–)

Nigerian poet, playwright, short-story writer, novelist

Trying to 'place' Biyi Bandele's diverse, original, multi-layered body of work has exercised critics ever since he began to make an impact on the British literary scene in the early 1990s. Sometimes described as 'a modern Beckett' or as a 'Magic Realist', Bandele has been exploring an area inhabited by AMOS TUTUOLA, Jack Kerouac, SALMAN RUSHDIE, WOLE SOYINKA, BEN OKRI, Jonathan Swift, Tom Sharpe and many others.

Born of Yoruba parents in Kafchan, Northern Nigeria, Bandele was brought up in a home where *orisha* were acknowledged, in a which the muez-zin's call could be heard, and from which Bandele's mother went to a Seraphim and Cherubim Church, while the young Biyi was sent to a Roman Catholic school. A precocious child, Bandele apparently knew that he wanted to be a writer at the age of ten, and won a short-story competition at fourteen. He then 'diluted' his education and by sixteen was responsible for a chain of betting shops with a turnover of £250,000 a week. This sensational career move has prompted pen-portraits with such titles as 'Plain tales of the betting shops' and 'a gentle man with a violent past'.

After a period of study at Obafemi Awolowo University in the 1980s, Bandele made his literary breakthrough when he was awarded prizes in literary competitions in 1988 and 1990. These led him to visit the United Kingdom, and he has since built his career from a London base, working with UK companies (including Told by an Idiot, Wild Iris, Tricycle Theatre and Talawa), and having his plays performed at prime venues for the alternative, non-commercial theatre, such as The Traverse in Edinburgh, and The Bush, The Gate, and the

Royal Court, all in London. Exposure brought him to the attention of mainstream organizations, and enabled him to consolidate his position within the increasingly vigorous discipline of intercultural theatre. Recent successes have included touring productions of his dramatization of CHINUA ACHEBE'S *Things Fall Apart* (1997) and of his adaptation, to a Northern Nigerian setting, of Federico Garcia Lorca's *Yerma* (2001). Between these two projects, he won praise for his approach to Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, (Stratford 1999), which took up the challenge of dramatizing both parts of the novel and created the basis for a well-received ensemble production.

As a writer, Bandele explores different forms, and he could be considered as a poet, journalist and a writer for radio, the screen and television. However, it is as a novelist and playwright that he demands attention here. His ambitions and versatility as a prose writer can be seen in *The Man who came in from the Back of Beyond* (1992) and *The Sympathetic Undertaker and Other Dreams* (1993), in which the post-colonial interacts with the post-modern. The narratives recall Dylan Thomas's choice of adjectives to describe Amos Tutuola's work: 'thronged, grisly and bewitching'.

Bandele's two early plays, *Rain* (1988) and *Howling*, seem to be reworked in the *Two Horsemen* (1994), which was hailed as exciting, enigmatic and disturbing. The texts that consolidated his reputation were *Death Catches the Hunter*, *Resurrection* (or *Resurrection in the Season of Longest Drought*) and *Marching for Fausa* (1993). It is helpful to note that *Death* was prompted by an extraordinary report in a Nigerian newspaper about a religious leader who was torn to pieces by a lion in a zoo when following 'divine instructions' to re-enact the story of Daniel in the lions' den. *Resurrection* carries a subtitle from Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests* that draws attention to Bandele's respect for the older Nigerian dramatist and emphasizes his recognition that his theatre must comment on developments in independent Africa. Bandele's unflinching observation of the bizarre chaos into which Nigeria has sunk comes through clearly both in that play and in a later political satire, *Marching for Fausa*, originally presented under the title Telani's Graffiti.

The year 1999 saw the première of *Happy Birthday*, *Mister Deka D* and the publication of Bandele's celebration of South London's diversity,

The Street. The former reflected a move back to the fragmented confusion of earlier experiments with Absurdism, while the latter, which subsequently provided the basis for a stage play (*Brixton Stories*, 2001), reflected more of his strengths, including his humour and his idiosyncratic responsiveness to the contradictions of life.

JAMES GIBBS

Bandler, Faith (1918–)

Australian novelist

She was born at Tumbulgum, Murwillumbah, New South Wales, Australia. She is the daughter of Wacvie Mussingkon (Peter Mussing), a 'Kanak' from the New Hebrides who was kidnapped by slave traders in 1893 to work in the Queensland canefields. In *Wacvie* (1977), *Marani in Australia* (1980, with Len Fox), and *Welou, My Brother* (1984), Bandler re-creates her father's story and that of other South Pacific islanders pressed into slavery (technically indenture) in Australia in the last decades of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century.

Bandler has also been particularly active in Aboriginal and Islander political struggles. In 1956 she co-founded the Aboriginal Australian Fellowship, and in 1967 was New South Wales director of the referendum campaign that led to equal citizenship for Aborigines under the Australian Constitution. She was an executive member for many years of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Declining an MBE (Member of the British Empire) in 1976, she stated 'I cannot accept an award from an empire that kidnapped my father and enslaved him in a "blackbirding" operation that was one of the most iniquitous blots in Australian colonial history', but she did accept membership in the Order of Australia in 1984. *The Time Was Ripe* (1983), edited with Len Fox, captures something of these political battles.

Wacvie, like Jamaican ORLANDO PATTERSON's *Die the Long Day* (1972), is a historical novel of black slavery, but in this instance it is situated in the Queensland canefields. Abducted from his Ambryn home, Wacvie is forced to labour in atrocious conditions. He eventually escapes but, like Bandler's father (who took up farming in

northern New South Wales), he is permanently exiled in an alien country. In *Welou, My Brother* the classic colonial–post-colonial dilemma over white education is explored. Like NGUGI WA THIONG'O's *Weep not, Child*, ERNA BRODBER's *Myal* and JAMAICA KINCAID's *Lucy*, Bandler's novel 'debates' the contradictory impulses generated by the prospect of white education: the twin dangers of ideological interpellation and loss of community values against the possibilities of economic and political empowerment within a numerically dominant white community.

Further reading

'Faith Bandler', in Martin Duwell and Laurie Hergenhan (eds), *The ALS Guide to Australian Writers: A Bibliography 1963–1990* (1992).

HELEN TIFFIN

Bangladesh

Geography

The People's Republic of Bangladesh became a sovereign state on 16 December 1971; from 14 August 1947 to 15 December 1971 it was known as East Pakistan. A large South Asian nation with an area of 144,000 square kilometres and a population of more than 110 million, it exists in the largest delta in the world, formed by the Ganges–Brahmaputra–Meghna river system. The country is bounded by India to the west and north, by India and Burma to the east, and by the Bay of Bengal to the south. Eighty-five per cent of the land is a low, flat alluvial plain criss-crossed by some 230 large and small rivers whose total length is about 24,000 kilometres. The only significant uplands are in the north-east and south-east – on account of the Assam Range on the Shillong Plateau and the tertiary folds branching off the Himalayas – with average elevations of 244 metres and 610 metres respectively.

The average annual temperature ranges between 24.4 degrees Celsius and 26.7 degrees Celsius. Annual rainfall varies from 120 centimetres in the west to 250 centimetres in the south-east, and to 570 centimetres in the north-east. Winters are generally dry and pleasant, with temperatures around seventeen degrees Celsius. Summer temperatures rise to thirty-seven degrees Celsius. Humidity can be as high as 98 per cent.

Rain, cyclones, tidal waves and sea storms occasionally come together, causing great havoc.

History

The earliest inhabitants are believed to have been Austro-Asians, who were joined later by the Dravidians, Aryans, Mongols and Abyssinians, among others. Later, certainly, the Muslims of Arab, Turkish, Afghan and Persian origins entered the region, first as religious preachers and traders, then as rulers. Whether independent or answerable to the imperial court at Delhi, Muslims held sway from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Bengali folk poetry flourished during this period and the earlier Sanskritized models were increasingly discarded. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Bengal, under the Mughals, moved towards Persian and Urdu as state languages and also began to develop, with poets such as Daulat Kazi and Sayyid Alaol, a syncretistic tradition that would later see further heights in the work of Kazi Nazrul Islam (1899–1976), Bangladesh's national poet. (In the same spirit, a poem by RABINDRANATH TAGORE has become Bangladesh's national anthem.)

Extremely crucial to Bangladeshi national self-realization and identity through this entire process is the Bangladeshi people's love of their land and traditions, no less than their love for the Bengali language, which they began to see as being undermined by the state as early as 1952; the Bengali-vs-Urdu claims led to conflict on the streets of Dhaka on 21 February 1952. Ironically, it was in Dhaka that the All-India Muslim League, the political party that struggled for and won Pakistan, was founded in 1906. Bengali Muslims were also in the forefront of the Pakistan Movement in the 1940s. At the end of British rule in the sub-continent, the region became part of Pakistan. But following sharp political, economic and administrative differences with the dominant West Pakistan, a mass revolt and armed struggle finally led to independence in 1971.

Language and religion

Bengali resistance to domination by outsiders has a very long history, made possible by the unity of language and a culture largely ethnically homogeneous – no less that 97 per cent of the population

speaks Bengali (Bangla). About 87 per cent of the population is Muslim, with 12.1 per cent Hindus, 0.6 per cent Buddhists, 0.3 per cent Christians and 0.4 per cent others. Tribal ethnic populations are marginal in terms of political influence. English is used widely. In addition to eighteen daily newspapers in Bangla, there are seven that are published in English. English remains an essential skill among the upper strata of society and the professions, but it is no longer the strong cultural medium that it was during the country's Pakistan years (1947–71).

The Bangla artistic and cultural scene, however, is quite lively. Michael Madhusudan Dutt (1824–73), born in what is today Bangladesh, had given up poetry in despair because of the negative social incentives and literary discouragements that he had to face writing in English. His solution, like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's (1834–94), was to turn to the mother tongue. Colonial East Bengal was not much different, in this respect, from Bangladesh, which relies substantially and rather single-mindedly on domestic cultural resources. A more open economy and relative stability and prosperity in the first decade of the twenty-first century will likely encourage even greater interaction with South Asian neighbours and the world at large.

Economy

The country's national resources include gas, limestone and some coal and oil. The economy is planned and administered through five-year plans. The annual growth rate in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) towards the end of the 1980s was about 6 per cent, but was much lower in the 1990s. Agriculture accounts for 46 per cent of GDP and 73 per cent of total employment. Raw jute, jute goods, tea, frozen foods and ready-made garments are the main exports. Food, manufactured goods, machinery and medicine are the main imports. The country has many jute, textile, fertilizer and paper mills. More industry is being installed. In 1993 the industrial sector contributed approximately 9.5 per cent of GDP.

A good network of roads, railways and waterways exists, but during the dry months alternative transportation must be found for the riverine routes. The country needs irrigation during the dry winter months, as it must drain the arable land (66 per cent of the total area) during the monsoon.

Per capita income is very low. The incidence of poverty, unemployment, disease and homelessness is high. Inflation is approximately 10 per cent. But the country is grappling with some of its major problems in a planned approach and has set itself specific goals: to attain self-sufficiency in food; to increase the literacy rate, which is over 30 per cent at present; to increase the science and technology inputs in education; to reduce the rate of population increase, which is about 2 per cent per annum; to review nationalization policies, open the economy to foreign capital, and encourage industrialization; to provide universal vaccination, health coverage and housing (including the 85 per cent of the population currently living in villages); and generally to raise the standard of living through integrated social and economic development programmes.

Politics

Bangladesh's political system has gradually settled into the parliamentary form of government, and the idea of government accountability to the people has begun to take root. Such issues as human rights and women's rights are being addressed. Recent land and administrative reforms, rural development schemes and the cooperative movement are likely to bear fruit. A grass-roots democracy may indeed be brought about by taking the government to the doorstep of the village communities and allowing them to take their own decisions.

Bangladesh is also active in the world community. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was the result of Bangladesh's initiative. The country is also a member of such international organizations as the United Nations, the Commonwealth of Nations and the Group of 77. With her extensive experience of natural disasters, the country recently offered its expertise concerning flood control to the USA.

Bangladesh is a strikingly green, homogeneous and tightly packed country with a very fertile land and impressive variety of fauna and flora. Folk traditions, music, dance, poetry and drama flourish. Football is a favourite sport. Volleyball, kabadi, badminton, cricket and hockey are also popular. The land of the Sundarbans and the Royal Bengal Tiger is full of natural colour; its energetic and spirited people are engaged in building themselves a secure and happy country.

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ALAMGIR HASHMI

Baranay, Inez (1949–)

Australian novelist

She was born in Naples, Italy, to Hungarian parents who migrated to Australia in 1950. Her work is often concerned with tourism and travel in Asia-Pacific nations. Her novels include the savvy urban commercial blockbuster, *Sheila Power: An Entertainment* (1997); the linked series of novellas about tourism/travel, *The Edge of Bali* (1992); *Pagan* (1990), an historical novel based on Rosaleen Norton, the reputed witch of Kings Cross who was attributed with causing the public disgrace of internationally renowned conductor Eugene Goossens in Sydney in the 1950s; and *Between Careers* (1989), a novel about prostitution and writing and the relations between sexuality and creativity. *The Saddest Pleasure* (1989) is a collection of short stories, travel diaries and a novella. *Rascal Rain: A Year in Papua New Guinea* (1994) is an autobiographical account of the year Baranay spent with Australian Volunteers Abroad at the Enga Women's Council. This book met with some controversial reception, to which Baranay wrote a reply about the inadequacies of post-colonial theory for a writer.

Baranay's short stories have been anthologized and she also writes reviews and articles for newspapers and journals. She contributed an essay, 'You Don't Whinge', to *Beyond the Echo: Multicultural Women's Writing* (1988), edited by Sneja and Jan Mahyuddin, and 'Living Alone: The New Spinster (Some Notes)' to *Telling Ways: Australian Women's Experimental Fiction* (1999), edited by Sneja Gunew and Anna Couani, but she resists the implications of being positioned

primarily as either ‘multicultural’ or a woman writer, and continually explores different writing genres and styles. Baranay is passionate about living a life of writing and is often involved with teaching and facilitating writing groups and university creative writing programmes. She is a dedicated yoga practitioner and Iyengar teacher. Baranay is writing a PhD thesis on creative processes and the relations between yoga and writing, in tandem with a new novel *Neem Dreams*, set in India around issues of development and healing, globalization and environmental activism.

Further reading

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ALISON BARTLETT

Baratham, Gopal (1935–2002)

Singaporean short-story writer

A neurosurgeon by profession, he was born in Singapore and received his early education at St Andrew’s School. He graduated from the University of Singapore in 1960 and went on to specialize in neurosurgery in the UK. He lived and practised in Singapore.

Baratham began experimenting with short fiction in his school years, but his first collection, *Figments of Experience*, was not published until 1981. This was reissued in 1988 as *Love Letter and Other Stories*, the year in which *People Make You Cry and Other Stories* was published. His stories were collected in *The City of Forgetting* (2001).

‘Roses in December’ (broadcast on the World Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation and published in *People Make You Cry*) is a wry, poignant rendering of the last days of an elderly man, crippled by a stroke and watched over by anxious relatives. The story focuses on his discovery, in familiar household smells and especially in the aromas of various objects in an old wooden family chest (for example, the fragrance of a sandalwood fan that belonged to his dead wife), of the

still-vital correlatives of a life fully and sensuously lived. The story ends as the man drags himself to the chest; he dies as he inhales its odours, most alive and life-affirming at the moment of his passing.

‘Roses in December’ is a useful entry into Baratham’s fictional world. His stories are characterized by an uncompromisingly secular and humanistic celebration of ordinary life in all its contrarities. There is the awareness, as expressed by the narrative voice in ‘Vocation’, that ‘suffering [is] the only constant feature of experience’ and that death awaits us all; yet life is to be affirmed in all its experiential variety and concreteness, as the old man of ‘Roses in December’ so touchingly demonstrates.

Characters who represent a nexus with the supernatural are dubious, ineffectual – the Swami of ‘People Make You Cry’, Father Rodrigues of ‘The Wafer’ – or, like Father Noonan in ‘Dutch Courage’, sustained more by their sense of human solidarity with and responsibilities in the human world than by faith in the hereafter. The old man in ‘Roses in December’, for example, does not reach for religion as he nears death. In the words of Krishna, the central character in ‘People Make You Cry’, for all its vicissitudes the world is ‘too beautiful to need the supernatural’. Moreover, the stories lovingly explore the ironies of love relationships or take delight in the adventures and misadventures of sexual liaison and sexual initiation (for example, ‘The Gift of Sara Richardson’). In this connection, the stories are particularly noteworthy in the Singaporean context for the frankness, in dialogue and narratorial comment, of their treatment of sexual themes.

A number of the stories are particularly interesting in dealing with the human comedy of cross-cultural encounter. Events are usually refracted through the consciousness of an English-educated, and to some extent detribalized, Tamil Singaporean returning to confront relatives and the world he left behind. The results are hilarious and often trenchantly perceptive studies of human foibles (‘Welcome’ and ‘Wedding Night’, for example).

Baratham also published three novels: the controversial *A Candle or the Sun* (1991), an incisive critique of urban values in Singapore; *Sayang* (1991), one of the most sexually explicit novels ever published in the region; and a thriller, *Monrise, Sunset* (1995).

F. M. G. (MAX) LE BLOND
KIRPAL SINGH

Barker, Lady Mary Ann (1831–1911)

English/New Zealand children's writer,
memoirist

She was born Mary Ann Stewart in Spanish Town, Jamaica, to Walter George Stewart, colonial secretary of Jamaica. She was educated in England, married Colonel Sir George Barker, and followed him to India after the Relief of Lucknow (1857). Colonel Barker died in the same year, and she returned to England, where she met and married Frederick Broome, a New Zealand sheep farmer. She was later Lady Broome.

Barker's writings record a feminine viewpoint on the growth of the British Empire. Largely autobiographical, her work is shaped with considerable artistry. In New Zealand she wrote *Station Life in New Zealand* (1870) and *Station Amusements in New Zealand* (1873), giving spirited accounts of the three years she and her husband spent on a Canterbury sheep station in the 1860s. The couple returned to England, where Barker edited a magazine, *Evening Hours*, and was appointed principal of the first national school of cooking. Her children's stories, *Stories About* (1871), which echo in their title the Peter Parley series, *Stories About America*, was the first children's book to relate non-fictional anecdotal animal stories.

Frederick Broome's appointment as colonial secretary in Natal, South Africa, resulted in Barker's *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa* (1877), as much a classic in South Africa as *Station Life in New Zealand* has become in New Zealand. After a period in Mauritius, Broome was appointed governor of Western Australia, and Barker's *Letters to Guy* (1885) describes an interesting period of development in that state.

BETTY GILDERDALE

Barnard, Marjorie Faith (1897–1987)

Australian short-story writer, novelist,
historian, critic

She was born and educated in Sydney, Australia, and spent her life in New South Wales. While at the University of Sydney she became friends with

fellow history student FLORA ELDERSHAW, with whom she collaborated as M. Barnard Eldershaw; together they produced nine books between 1929 and 1947 – five works of fiction and four of non-fiction – culminating in the novel *Tomorrow and Tomorrow* (1947).

Barnard became a librarian, an occupation that she found lacking in stimulation; although her resources allowed her to resign in 1935 to live as a full-time writer, she resumed library work in 1942. In the last decade of her life she won numerous awards for her contribution to Australian literature, including the Order of Australia (1981), the Patrick White Award (1983), the New South Wales Premier's Special Award (1984), and an honorary Doctorate of Letters from the University of Sydney (1986).

A House is Built (1929), M. Barnard Eldershaw's prize-winning first novel, was followed by *Green Memory* (1931), *The Glasshouse* (1936), and *Plaque with Laurel* (1937), all concerned in some way with women's lives and their place in society. The 1930s were the most fruitful period for Barnard and Eldershaw; they not only published fiction but also a critical work, *Essays in Australian Fiction* (1938), dealing with the early history of Australia.

The collaboration virtually ended during the Second World War when Flora Eldershaw moved to Melbourne; *Tomorrow and Tomorrow*, the last M. Barnard Eldershaw book to appear, was written mainly by Marjorie Barnard. The novel, didactic in purpose, has two time frames; Knarf, an Australian of the twenty-fourth century, writes a novel in which he attempts to reconstruct life as it would have been in twentieth-century Australia. The book was intended to be 'an essay in perspective and a dramatization of the forces at work in our society'. Censored before publication in 1947, the original manuscript, with the full title restored, was published in 1983 as *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*.

Barnard produced work under her own name: history, *Macquarie's World* (1941) and *A History of Australia* (1962); short stories; and *Miles Franklin: A Biography* (1967). *The Persimmon Tree and Other Stories* (1943) displays another facet of her writing; she called her short stories 'indulgences' and referred to them as 'the most private sector of my literary output'. Unlike the novels with their larger concerns, the stories focus on the solitary individual who experiences either a rare

moment of illumination or, more often, painful revelation. In their emphasis on personal relations, the stories are reminiscent of E. M. Forster; Barnard's colours are muted, her brush strokes delicate, the overall feeling is one of desolation, as expressed in the last line of 'The Party': 'It was being alone that was so terrible.' *But Not for Love, Stories of Marjorie Barnard and M. Barnard Eldershaw*, edited by Robert Darby, was published in 1988.

The range of Barnard's work extends from an awareness of the way life is shaped by external events – evident in the novels and indicative of the historian's trained imagination – to the intensely intimate, symbolist nature of her stories. In her letters, Barnard reveals a mind of great critical discrimination, whether she be discussing her own work in progress or commenting on the work of others. Whatever she read was given serious and judicious consideration.

Further reading

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PATRICIA EXCELL

Bascom, Harold A. (1951–)

Guyanese dramatist, novelist

He was born at Vergenoegen, on the east bank of Guyana's Essequibo River. His first novel, *Apata* (1986), was short-listed for the Guyana Prize for Literature in 1987; two of his thirteen plays, 'Family Budget' (premiered 1989) and 'Philbert and Lorraine' (premiered 1992) were also short-listed for the same prize.

Apata, engaging and fast-paced, is developed from the true story of a fugitive hunted and killed by British Guiana colonial police and creates a sense of outrage against the fate of the underprivileged in a social order ruled by class and colour. The hero, a brilliant boy destroyed by these forces, is the folk hero/villain like the legendary Jamaican 'Rigin' reincarnated in the Perry Henzell–TREVOR RHONE film *The Harder They*

Come (1972); the novel recalls the styling of JOHN HEARNE.

Bascom's greatest national impact was in the theatre, as writer-director of his Ira Aldridge Workshop and Ambience Productions. He deals with local issues – the street life, language and problems of the grass-roots – in the manner of the Jamaican popular topical-issue theatre of the 1970s and 1980s of Ed 'Bim' Lewis, Ginger Knight, Carmen Tipling and Trevor Rhone. 'Philbert and Lorraine', Bascom's best theatrical achievement to date, sees him moving away from the popular writer of stagey melodramas and 'soap operas' in which crowd-pleasing gimmicks interfered with tragic statement and robbed him of much critical recognition. Bascom has grown into a more mature dramatist while still concentrating on domestic settings. His popular plays and their sequels helped to change local Guyanese theatre from a small post-colonial middle-class activity to a commercial theatre involving all classes.

After winning the National Academy of Performing Arts Award for Best New Guyanese Play in 1988, and the Theatre Arts Award for Best Guyanese Play in 1989, Bascom set about revising earlier scripts, including a 1992 restaging of two of his better dramas 'Tessa Real Girl' (premiered 1990; revised 1992) and 'The Barrel' (premiered 1987).

AL CREIGHTON

Basu, Romen (1923–)

Indian novelist, short-story writer, poet

Born in Calcutta, India, into a family of poets and creative writers, he is the author of fourteen novels, four collections of short stories and six volumes of poetry. He moved to the USA in 1948, after his university education, at the age of twenty-five. An economist by training and profession, Basu worked for the United Nations for nearly thirty-five years. Although his various official assignments kept him out of India for a long time, he has retained a deep concern for his country and people. His prolific literary output reveals his earnest commitment to the social and political problems of contemporary India.

Basu's works include the short-story collection *Canvas and the Brush* (1971), the novels *A House*

Full of People (1968), *Your Life to Live* (1972), *A Gift of Love* (1974), *The Tamarind Tree* (1975), *Candles and Roses* (1978), *Portrait on the Roof* (1980), *Sands of Time* (1985), *Outcast* (1986), *Hours Before Time* (1988), *Blackstone* (1989), *The Street Corner Boys* (1992), *My Own Witness* (1993), *Torn Apart* (1997) and *Breach of Faith* (2002). *Wings at a Distance* (1988) is the most significant of his poetry collections.

Basu's work must be read as a part of the resurgence of a strong current of social awareness in early twentieth-century India, when the Indian world-view was being gradually qualified by a developing humanistic concern and social criticism. His work belongs to the tradition of the Indian social novel that developed through the writings of Bankim Chandra, RABINDRANATH TAGORE and Prem Chand, although it lacks the vigour and the emotional depth of the regional novel. Basu's novels constitute a sort of social history, tracing various socio-political movements that affected Indian life in the first half of the twentieth century – colonial rule, the collapse of Indian traditional family structures, the disappearance of subsistence economy, the EAST–WEST ENCOUNTER, the Indian national movement, post-independence political upheavals, the spread of Communism and the rise of radical revolutionary movements.

Basu's fictional work falls into two phases: in the early phase, his focus is on individual experience and he shows an almost obsessive preoccupation with the theme of marital and family strife. *Your Life to Live* and *A Gift of Love* probe the psychological conflicts that accompany a marriage outside one's caste and community. Basu unequivocally upholds the innate strength of a Hindu marriage in *Candles and Roses*, where he writes that a Hindu marriage 'is not for one life but eternity'. *Portrait on the Roof*, however, demonstrates that true love cuts across the barriers of caste, colour and creed. The novelist has an ambiguous attitude to his subject and this results in a general confusion affecting his handling of plot and character. These novels are flawed by contradictions, inconsistency, improbabilities and shallow characterization.

The second phase, a more fruitful one, marks the shift of focus to larger social and political issues, and Basu performs much better as he begins to fictionalize actual historical events to

tell realistic tales of Bengali rural life. *Outcast*, artistically the most satisfying of Basu's novels, offers a vivid account of the strict caste structure in Hindu society, unfolding a tragic love tale against that background. This novel succeeds where others fail because its structure is tight and varied and the action is depicted vividly.

Blackstone and *The Street Corner Boys* mark a steady maturation in Basu's artistry and these may well come to be regarded as his most significant works. *Blackstone*, a powerful political novel dealing with the outbreak of the Naxal movement in the 1960s in Bengal, tells an unvarnished tale of human suffering in modern India. *The Street Corner Boys*, a novel of ideas, has for its theme the spread of Communism in eastern India. The text becomes the context for a critical analysis of the socio-political implications of Communism for the common individual. The author conclusively suggests apolitical humanism as a more desirable alternative. *My Own Witness* is about events in the Punjab after the unfortunate Operation Blue Star, when the Indian army stormed the Golden Temple, while the Kashmir problem forms the backdrop of *Torn Apart*. The historical perspective gives these novels greater credibility and dignity.

Basu's poetic work as evidenced in *Wings at a Distance* is rather slim and adds little to his literary reputation. But his short stories, many collected in *Canvas and the Brush*, show greater technical sophistication and subtler narratorial skill. He is at his best in stories such as 'Gun smoke in Phonexia', 'Schefflera' and 'Christmas Party', where he deals with the little ironies of life, choosing expatriate experience as his background. While elegant prose, analytical perception of socio-political reality, accuracy and detail of observation and mature social vision are among Basu's strengths, inadequate attention to details of plot, failure to tap the resources of myth, and a lack of emotional depth in characterization constitute his weaknesses.

Further reading

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C. VIJAYASREE
SHYAMALA A. NARAYAN

Baugh, Edward Alston Cecil (1936–)

Jamaican poet, critic

He was born in Port Antonio, Jamaica, and educated at the University of the West Indies when it was still a college of the University of London, England, located in Jamaica. He graduated with a BA in 1957 and completed an MA in English at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada, in 1959. His PhD in English was obtained at the University of Manchester, England, in 1964. Since 1965 Baugh has taught in the English department of the University of the West Indies, first at the Cave Hill campus in Barbados and subsequently at the Mona campus in Jamaica. Baugh was promoted to professor in 1978, and has served in executive positions on several academic and literary bodies. He has been, for example, a member of the adjudicating panel for the Commonwealth Poetry Prize and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. He retired from the University of the West Indies in 2001.

Baugh is also one of the foremost critics of Caribbean literature. *Critics on Caribbean Literature* (1978), which he edited, is a landmark anthology of criticism on major Caribbean writers, and his *Derek Walcott: Memory as Vision* (1978) confirms his insight in championing a future winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Further criticism by Baugh of Caribbean and post-colonial literature has appeared in many journals. He is also a poet whose work has appeared in periodicals and anthologies, such as *The Penguin Book of Caribbean Verse in English* (1986), edited by Paula Burnett, and the *Heinemann Book of Caribbean Poetry* (1992), edited by IAN McDONALD and Stewart Brown.

Baugh's volume of poems, *A Tale From the Rainforest*, appeared in 1988. In language that is both urbane and demotic, his poems express an educated commentary on racial and political problems inherited from Caribbean and colonial history. In one poem, for instance, Baugh employs Standard English to discuss a sophisticated debate about political commitment in art, while in another he uses Jamaican Creole, just as deftly, to dramatize raw feelings of resentment. A second volume, *It Was the Singing* (2000), includes *A Tale from the Rainforest*, and adds poems that, like the title poem 'It Was the Singing', are steeped in a subtle

blend of compliance and resistance that marks so much of Caribbean culture.

FRANK M. BIRBAL Singh

Baughan, Blanche Edith (1870–1958)

New Zealand essayist, poet, travel writer

Born in England, she graduated from the University of London with a BA in classics. Baughan supported women's suffrage, did welfare work in London's East End, and published *Verses* (1898). She emigrated to Akaroa, New Zealand, in 1900 and worked as a housekeeper on a Banks Peninsula farm and published *Reuben and Other Poems* in 1903. With *Shingle-Short and Other Verses* (1908) she extended her repertoire of poems about back-blocks pioneering, narrated by characters ranging from a sharp-witted granny to a haunted murderer. Her verse narratives, particularly the dramatic monologues of *Shingle-Short and Other Verses*, offer a kind of *Winesburg, Ohio* of colonial experience that is eminently readable and reflects her preoccupation with pioneer voices. A long verse drama, 'The Paddock', is remarkable for its entirely female cast, one of whom is Maori. *Brown Bread from a Colonial Oven* (1912) presents sketches of settlement in prose format. *Poems from the Port Hills* (1923) is Baughan's last poetry collection and shows evidence of her interest in Eastern religion. Illness in 1909–10 affected Baughan's impetus to verse; she turned successfully to writing books of scenic description that were collected as *Studies in New Zealand Scenery* (1916).

A long-standing commitment to prison reform led Baughan to found in 1924 the New Zealand branch of the Howard League for Penal Reform; under the pseudonym T. L. S. she co-authored *People in Prison* (1936) with F. A. de la Mare.

MICHELE LEGGOTT

Bautista, Cirilo F. (1941–)

Filipino poet, short-story writer

Born in Luzon, the Philippines, and educated at the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Saint Louis University Graduate School, Baguio, and

the State University of Iowa, USA, he won early recognition for his poetry and prose written in English and Filipino. Currently professor of literature at De La Salle University, Manila, Bautista brought together some of his long-standing preoccupations with language and social meaning in *Breaking Signs: Lectures on Literature and Semiotics* (1990). A highly regarded and original writer and thinker with an international reputation, Bautista has published many articles on Philippine literature in English; in 1970 he declared: 'Philippine poetry in English is a bastard; it was begot in an instance of passion by an overzealous father and a mother who knew no better; it probably does not realize where it is going.'

Bautista's major work in English is an impressive and resonant epic trilogy, *The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus* – *The Archipelago* (1970), *Telex Moon* (1980) and *Sunlight on Broken Stones* (1999). The trilogy takes various forms, and offers, in Bautista's words, 'a poetical-historical interpretation of the evolution of the Filipino Soul'. *The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus* engages with the spirit of Rizal as a central consciousness. *The Archipelago* is an overview of Spanish settlement in the Philippines up to the founding of Manila and reaching forward to the death of Rizal. *Telex Moon*, a densely written, sardonically playful poem, critiques the colonial past, but avoids the limitations of overt politicism for an intenser metaphysical focus. *Sunlight on Broken Stones* engages with the Marcos regime and later contemporary society in a philosophical perspective where the creative writer is a historian bringing to life the complex forces and motives of historical events and personages. The complete trilogy was published in 2001.

Bautista's short stories and poetry, which are experimental but also acutely aware of tradition, emerge from a passionate relationship with his country and its people and are shaped by a concern with universal ethical and aesthetic values. His first collection was *The Cave and Other Poems* (1963); later publications in English include *Charts: New Poems* (1973) and the prose *Stories* (1990). *Boneyard Breaking: New Collected Poems* was published in 1992, and a volume of literary theory, *Words and Battlefields: A Theoria on the Poem*, appeared in 1998.

ELIZABETH PERKINS

Baxter, James Keir (1926–72)

New Zealand poet, dramatist

Born in Dunedin, New Zealand, to a self-educated farmer and the daughter of a university professor, he established himself as the most precocious and promising figure in New Zealand poetry with his first collection, *Beyond the Palisade* (1944). Recovery from alcoholism and conversion to Roman Catholicism were in his view more important to his later development than his sporadic and undistinguished academic record. Returning to Dunedin from Wellington in 1966, Baxter held a university writers' fellowship for three years, leading to a highly prolific period in which most of his plays and an increasing volume of poetry were composed. Most of Baxter's last years were spent in an isolated community that he founded at Jerusalem, a village and former Maori mission station on the Wanganui River.

Baxter's early stylistic eclecticism reflects a young writer skilfully experimenting with forms ranging from the Tennysonian to the contemporary British, but with sufficient tonal and thematic consistency to present an individual voice speaking with considerable clarity. The mood surrounding the natural romantic subject matter has generally been interpreted as regretful, but there is also a prospective direction to many of the poems, a questioning of the land that would become a major focus of subsequent volumes. *Blow, Wind of Fruitfulness* (1948) and *The Fallen House* (1953) combine the enigma of a sense of colonial placelessness with the role of boy-as-discoverer; the recurrent theme is that of loss, which some critics have read as a search for a lost Eden. Technically, this period shows Baxter using much less Latinate diction and developing a trait that would continue throughout his poetry – the audacious use of heavy monosyllabic spondaic phrasing, often bound together with assonance.

The vicissitudes of Baxter's life in the 1950s accounted for the varying quantity of his literary output and its sporadic changes of tone. The 1947 'Songs of the Desert' – first published in *The Night Shift: Poems on Aspects of Love* (1957), co-authored with Charles Doyle, LOUIS JOHNSON and KENDRICK SMITHYMAN – established a position of alienation that would recur in his work for two decades; images of living in a 'sunk land' or on a

‘barbarian coast’ beside a ‘cannibal sea’ or ‘barren waves’ reflect the ‘menopause of the mind’ that Baxter connected with both boyhood isolation and the struggle for sobriety. The perception of alienation is dominant in *Pig Island Letters* (1966), where the poet still shows little sense of social integration. In other poems of the 1960s, however, Baxter increasingly acknowledges not only a land, but also a society around him, and he becomes overtly a social critic. Though the Vietnam War would initiate Baxter’s most directly polemical poetry, his earlier work on social themes reflects his religious conversion and also a gradual alignment with his father’s pacifist stance in the First World War.

Semi-dramatized human subjects, such as urban bushranger figures exalted for their anti-social heroics, had appeared in Baxter’s poetry since his period of heavy drinking, but these were used in an anecdotal or celebratory way. Such poems express a side of Baxter that was never subdued – the anti-establishment figure who constantly defied institutions, employers, universities and officialdom, reflecting the influence of Scottish poet Robert Burns and Australian colonial writers. In the 1960s such defiance co-existed in Baxter’s poetry with a more thoughtful criticism, but found an easy outlet in his numerous plays for stage and radio, eventually published as *Collected Plays* (1982). His demarcation of genres was emphatic: theatre was the domain of ‘human stupidity’, while more serious religious, social and philosophical issues belonged to poetry. His single novel, *Horse* (1985), unequivocally evokes the world of human stupidity.

Some of Baxter’s plays are largely the slapstick of the student revue. In most, however, the vicissitudes of human frailty are structured within a (sometimes modernized) version of Greek myth or within inverted New Testament archetypes populated by an alcoholic sub-culture, so that a group of drunks may be caught up in a contemporary passion and crucifixion situation. Several plays develop characters from Baxter’s ballads or anecdotal verse.

Returning to Dunedin in 1966 meant renewed contact with the land Baxter had wrestled with in adolescence, populated not only by boyhood and student memories, but also by various remaining friends and relatives. This intensified a new kind of treatment of human material in his poetry – the poem as a re-animated family photograph or as

a fractional section of legendary or historical time; in this Baxter acknowledged an affinity with American Robert Lowell’s *Life Studies* (1959). For several years Baxter’s Rimbaud imitations and imaginary re-creations of the pioneering circumstances of ancestors had anticipated this development, but it was his discovery of the potential of the unrhymed run-on couplet that gave him the perfect vehicle for the measured wryness of his later poems.

Baxter had used this form occasionally since 1958, but it was only in his final phase – and particularly within the sonnet structure – that it became predominant in his work. He was using the form extensively in 1968 when, after his university fellowship, he remained in Dunedin writing articles for a Catholic magazine; he wrote that he had accepted ‘God’s bribe’ and had become ‘His singing eunuch’. Such was the context of his sudden calling (in a dream, he alleged) to live at Jerusalem. Abandoning domesticity and embracing Franciscan austerity with a commitment to squalor that his verse celebrated, he immersed himself in Maori culture and wrote the remarkable sequences published as *Jerusalem Sonnets: Poems for Colin Durning* (1970), *Jerusalem Daybook* (1971) and *Autumn Testament* (1972). This isolation, very like that of his boyhood, provided a grounding for a revalidation of the themes of his earlier work, and the social, religious and intellectual freedom allowed the questioning, diversity and cultural hybridization reflected in the sonnets. These poems constitute Baxter’s last major work before his death and, like all his best work, are generated out of paradox, displacement or disorientation. Like the Franciscan rule that Baxter embraced with varying degrees of rigour, the sonnet is a form that he selected to fight against; the poems echo with the cries of the disciplined Baxter demanding answers from eternity. Since 1996 several important editions, including previously unpublished work, have been edited by Paul Miller.

Further reading

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Frank McKay, *The Life of James K. Baxter* (1990).
The Road to Jerusalem (1997, film on video).

HOWARD McNAUGHTON

Baynton, Barbara (1857–1929)

Australian novelist, short-story writer

Born in Scone, New South Wales, Australia, she set most of her fiction in the Upper Hunter River district of her younger life – HENRY LAWSON country. Baynton's writing, begun in the 1890s, displeased A. G. STEPHENS for not conforming to the *BULLETIN* ethos, and only one of her stories ever appeared there, editorially bowdlerized. Baynton published verse, some journalism and three incidental stories, but her reputation is based securely on the six stories that appeared first in *Bush Studies* (1902), and, increasingly, on *Human Toll* (1907), her only published novel.

Invariably compared with Lawson, Baynton said of him in *Home* (September 1920), 'I remember thinking, after reading *While the Billy Boils*, that here for the first time a man had shown that the Bush was worth writing about.' The use of 'man' is significant, as her perspective on the bush differs markedly from his, her stories resisting underlying concepts in Lawson's. She uses such familiar motifs as the bush woman, MATESHIP, alcohol, dogs and the 'hatter'/misogynist in critically transformative ways that often carry gender-related reversals of value. The stories in *Bush Studies* involve archetypal bush experiences with sympathetic and unsympathetic bush characters of both sexes. Visually powerful, these ironic stories display a remarkable range of dialogue, humour and literary complexity. Several stories illustrate the fact that, in LOUISA LAWSON's words, in the outback 'man is king and force is ruler'. *Bush Studies* can instructively be read beside KATHERINE MANSFIELD's New Zealand 'bush woman' stories – 'The Woman at the Store' (1912), 'Millie' (1913) – for their shared questioning of the masculinist bush ethos.

The notion of the bush is conceptually important, but not monolithic. The township is equally important. Baynton explores unsentimentally what Henry Lawson, in 'The Star of Australasia' (1896), called 'the living death in the lonely bush, the greed of the selfish town'. But the problem is not the bush itself: extreme isolation merely licenses whatever evil exists in people, what Lawson, in 'Crime in the Bush' (1898), called the 'mental darkness' and 'monotony ... which darkens the mind'.

Baynton is a modernist in style and outlook, using sophisticated narrative techniques. In

contrast to Lawson's characteristic 'personal' narrative voice, Baynton's is authorially detached, at a transitional stage towards the full polyvocality of free indirect discourse. A feature of Baynton's modernism is the psychological intensity with which inner states are conveyed empathetically, yet through objective technique: in 'Scrammy' two extremes of sensibility co-exist – the hatter and Scrammy; in 'Bush Church' the vulnerability of the poor selectors, whose vulgar ignorance renders others vulnerable, is given equal status with the mental agony of their victims – the grazier couple and the clergyman. Outstanding as an example of prolonged dissection of mental states under physical stress – terror, thirst, increasing hallucination – is the final chapter in *Human Toll*. The handling of this as a psychological episode (Ursula lost in the bush) is original and unsurpassed until HENRY HANDEL RICHARDSON's *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* (1930).

Human Toll gains in literary value when read against William Satchell's *The Toll of the Bush* (1905), a romantic pioneering story with elements typical of contemporary New Zealand and Australian fiction. Both employ Victorian romance elements and the plot machinery of melodrama (withheld letters, lost inheritance, lecherous preachers, marriage to the wrong person), but, naturalizing them in a post-colonial context, Satchell endorses them, while Baynton deconstructs them as do both MILES FRANKLIN's *My Brilliant Career* (1901) and JOSEPH FURPHY's *Such is Life* (1903). Baynton satirizes morality, the church, mateship, virtue rewarded, while simultaneously revaluing stock Australian colonial literary motifs, giving readers a female *Bildung* variant in which 'true love' is tested in a colonial outback setting. It is the greed and lust of people that take the toll, not the bush.

Serious criticism dates mainly from the 1980s after the publication of *Barbara Baynton*, edited by S. Krimmer and A. Lawson (1980), which contains the first reprint of *Human Toll*. A further reissue of *Bush Studies* appeared in 1989. The first articles on *Human Toll* appeared in 1989.

Further reading

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CAROL FRANKLIN

Beaglehole, John Cawte (1901–71)

New Zealand historian

Born and educated in Wellington, New Zealand, he travelled to the UK where he earned a PhD in history at the University of London (1929). Returning home during the Depression years of the early 1930s, he was at first denied university posts because of his supposed radical opinions, but eventually became professor of Commonwealth history at Victoria University, Wellington. Beaglehole's interests were wide: his works include *New Zealand: A Short History* (1936) and two histories of university institutions – *The University of New Zealand* (1937) and *Victoria University College: An Essay Towards a History* (1949). He was a distinguished prose stylist and a writer of a volume of discursive philosophical poetry, *Words for Music* (1938). He was also a talented typographical designer. Increasingly, like several distinguished Australian and New Zealand contemporaries, Beaglehole's work focused on early European incursion into the Pacific, which he saw as a heroic enterprise rather than as the 'fatal impact' of Alan Moorehead's view. Work, begun with *The Exploration of the Pacific* (1934) and *The Discovery of New Zealand* (1939), culminated in his massively authoritative edition for the Hakluyt Society of *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery* (4 vols, 1955–74). Beaglehole rescued Cook's rough vigour and integrity from the gentility of his eighteenth-century editors and unravelled Cook's writings from those of his fellow voyagers, which had often been merged by editors. Beaglehole also edited *The 'Endeavour' Journals of Joseph Banks 1768–1771* (2 vols, 1962). The admirable (and wholly admiring) *The Life of Captain James Cook* (1974), with its detailed knowledge of eighteenth-century seamanship, navigation and the philosophical concerns of the time, was a fitting conclusion to his work. Beaglehole and the physicist Ernest Rutherford are the only New Zealanders to have been awarded the British Order of Merit.

Further reading

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DENNIS McELDOWNEY

Bean, C. E. W. (1879–1968)

Australian historian

Born Charles Edward Woodrow Bean, at Bathurst, New South Wales, Australia, he was educated in England, where he was called to the bar in 1903. Returning to Australia, Bean's experiences on the country legal circuit led to his estimation of western New South Wales as 'the real Australia', and of the wool industry as the creator of 'some of the outstanding national types'. Thus he foreshadowed his influential interpretation of involvement in the First World War as leading directly to the birth of Australian nationhood.

On the recommendation of A. B. PATERSON Bean joined the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1908. His articles on the outback were published as *On the Wool Track* (1910). When war began, he was chosen by fellow journalists as official Australian war correspondent. He wrote *What to Know in Egypt* (1915), a not notably successful guide for soldiers about the venereal and other risks of that country. Wounded at Gallipoli, Bean compiled and astutely promoted *The Anzac Book* (1916) from contributions by soldiers. Bean formulated the notion of an *Official History* – not completed until 1942 – as 'the only memorial which could be worthy' of these serving men. Notwithstanding that belief, it was largely at his initiative that the Australian War Memorial in Canberra was begun.

As he had borne a legend of the Australian bush back to its urban citizens, so Bean's was the pivotal role in the definition of the martial and national legend of Anzac (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps). He returned to Turkey in 1919 to answer questions concerning the topography and enemy tactics. This expedition eventually produced *Gallipoli Mission* (1948), a work that pioneered interest in tourism to this site of battle. The *Official History of the War of 1914–1918*, of which Bean wrote six volumes and edited eight more, is a massive achievement which has no parallel in other Commonwealth literatures. No official history was written for New Zealand, for example'. G. W. L. Nicholson's *The Canadian Expeditionary Force* (1962) completed the work of Fortescue Duguid. John Buchan wrote *The History of the South African Forces in France* (1920) in addition to his multi-volume history of the war. But none had Bean's front-line experience, nor his commitment to writing military history from accounts of men in

the line. His enduring love of England did not hinder his career as a creator and celebrant of Australian patriotism.

PETER PIERCE

Beaver, Bruce (1928–)

Australian poet

He was born in Manly, New South Wales, Australia, and this area has become the background for much of his writing. Although he is acknowledged to be one of the most important and influential poets of his generation, his influence has been mainly upon younger contemporaries, most notably those writers who were jolted by the Vietnam War and who sought American rather than English or European models. From the age of seventeen Beaver suffered from a manic-depressive condition that was stabilized only in the late 1970s. After working as a proofreader on a Sydney newspaper for many years he received an invalid pension; he has lived in Manly since the 1970s.

Beaver's early publications include *Under the Bridge* (1961), *Seawall and Shoreline* (1964) and *Open at Random* (1967). But it was his book-length sequence *Letters to Live Poets* (1969) that thrust his work onto the central stage of contemporary Australian poetry. These *Letters* explore a broad range of poetic styles and references, and their wit, honesty and anti-lyrical tenor combine with a wide-ranging intellectual curiosity to project Beaver as a forceful and energetic poet. Beaver's antecedents in Australian poetry are apparent – they range through CHRISTOPHER BRENNAN, R. D. FITZGERALD, JOHN BLIGHT and FRANCIS WEBB to VINCENT BUCKLEY and PETER PORTER – but his own consolidation in *Letters to Live Poets* of particular inheritances achieved the synthesis that made this book a landmark. It won the Grace Leven Poetry Prize, the Poetry Society of Australia Prize and the Captain Cook Bicentennial Prize for Poetry (all in 1970).

Lauds and Complaints (1968–1972) (1974) is in many ways a more astonishing achievement. In scope and emotional risk-taking it stretches the boundaries already established, and it is in this work that Beaver's essentially religious or spiritual dimension is most ardently articulated, though by 'religious' one must understand a pluralist concept

of being and a non-Christian ethos. The influence of Eastern philosophies (perhaps through the writings of Jung) combines in Beaver's work with a powerful search for identification with fellow 'seekers', who may well be such European creative forces as Friedrich Hölderlin, Rainer Maria Rilke or Gustav Mahler.

The succeeding books, *Odes and Days* (1975) and *Death's Directives* (1978), consolidate the language and the poetic world Beaver created for himself in *Lauds and Complaints*. In *As It Was* (1979) Beaver found a remarkably engaging yet rich way of approaching autobiographical material. This book, which won him the Patrick White Award, balances an existential hurt and gloom with the self-confidence of affirmative insight. Its very informality and seemingly digressive delight in small details is its great achievement.

Selected Poems appeared in 1979, followed by a curious book of prose pieces or prose-poems, *Headlands* (1986). These travel pieces pursue the anecdotal debate with the reader, but there is a disturbing sub-text of old manic-depressive tension.

Charmed Lives (1988) is a triumphant and extraordinary book. It offers something of the surprise, energy and discovery of the poet's earlier major collections. It is in four sections, the two inner ones being closer to the earlier work, though reinforcing the sense of a creative artist in full command of his material. But the external sequences are what make *Charmed Lives* extraordinary. The first of these, 'R. M. R. A Verse Biography of Rainer Maria Rilke', is a set of twelve poems, the most detailed and distinguished study in Beaver's output of a fellow creative artist. The final sequence, though, 'Tiresias Sees', is the book's triumph, and perhaps the triumph of Beaver's own poetic career. He subsumes himself within the androgynous character of the Greek sage in a wonderful, salacious and irreverent set of eighteen virtuoso variations. If one had thought that T. S. Eliot exhausted the Tiresias theme, Beaver's sequence pushes that aside to strut, prance, lurch, slither and coerce us into this ultimate dance, a defiance in the face of death, and a jig to the xylophone of one's own rib cage and other delectable parts.

In 1990 Bruce Beaver was awarded the Special Prize from the New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards, a tribute to his sustained creative literary contribution. *New & Selected Poems*

1960–1990 was published in 1991, *Anima and Other Poems* in 1994 and *Poets & Others* in 1999.

Further reading

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THOMAS SHAPCOTT

Bedford, Jean (1946–)

Australian novelist, short-story writer

Born in Cambridge, England, she emigrated to Australia with her parents in 1947. She grew up in rural Victoria and trained as a teacher at Monash University. She spent 1971–72 in Papua New Guinea, where she met her future husband, PETER CORRIS. On returning to Australia, Corris encouraged her to write stories based on her childhood. Published as *Country Girl Again* (1979), these discontinuous narratives were criticised for not offering women positive role models, but Bedford argued convincingly that she was celebrating the courage of rural working-class women.

This concern with the lives of the rural poor fuelled her first novel, *Sister Kate* (1982), based on the unfortunate life of NED KELLY's sister. While reference is made to the bushrangers' talk of declaring a republic, the focus is on the persecution of poor Irish settlers by the colonial establishment and the impossibility of women achieving independence within a patriarchal system.

Consistent with Bedford's wish to write women back into history, her later novel, *If with a Beating Heart* (1993), reconstructs the life of Claire Clairmont, an associate of Shelley and Byron.

Much of Bedford's writing is taken from life: her stories in *Colouring In* (1986) are semi-autobiographical, and the novel *Love Child* (1986) was triggered by her mother's life. *A Lease of Summer* (1990) is set in Papua New Guinea prior to Independence but, despite Bedford's criticism of white ignorance and the effects of Christianity and an Australian education on aspiring Indigenous leaders, the novel is centred on the sexual adventures of the expatriate community.

Heterosexual love preoccupies Bedford: what love is, why it goes wrong, and how women become trapped in patterns of self-destructive behaviour. She criticises the romantic dreams that

were fed to her generation and praises women's friendships as a source of strength. Her work has been compared to that of HELEN GARNER, although she cites FRANK MOORHOUSE and JEAN RHYS as the strongest influences on her subject-matter and approach.

Bedford is also the author of a series of novels about a female detective.

ELAINE LINDSAY

Bekederemo, John Pepper Clark (1935–)

Nigerian poet, dramatist, critic

Widely known as J. P. Clark, he was born at Kiagbodo village near Warri in the Delta State of Nigeria, to Chief Clark Fuludu Bekederemo and his wife, Poro Amakashe Adnoi Clark, an Urhobo princess. He has Ijo and Urhobo ancestry through his father and mother respectively, and in the 1980s he adopted the name Bekederemo, which he describes as his 'family name'. Bekederemo earned his BA in English (1960) from University College, Ibadan.

While a research fellow at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Bekederemo met Ebun Odutola, a Yoruba from Ijebu Ode, later a professor and the director of the Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of Lagos. Married in 1964, the couple collaborated to found in 1982 the PEC Repertory Theatre in Lagos, of which Bekederemo is the artistic director.

As an undergraduate, Bekederemo recorded several wide-ranging educational successes. He edited the student union journal *The Beacon* (1956–), and through the encouragement of his teacher, Martin Banham, founded the influential magazine *The Horn* (1957–). His colleagues who published in *The Horn*, or who were closely associated with it, included CHRISTOPHER OKIGBO, Aig Higo, WOLE SOYINKA, Abiola Irele, Mac Akpoyaware and Pius Oleghe.

Bekederemo has held various appointments: he was features editor of the *Daily Express* (Lagos); held a fellowship at Princeton University, USA, as a Parvin scholar (from which came his satirical travelogue *America, Their America*, 1964); was a research fellow at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan; and was appointed professor

of English in 1972 by the University of Lagos at the age of thirty-eight, the first African of his generation to be thus recognized.

Bekederemo has generally enjoyed adulation from serious critics of African literature. Critic R. N. Egudu notes that Bekederemo's 'interest is in the problems of human beings everywhere'; Dan Izevbaye avers that he is 'interesting not only for the quality of his poetry, but for his historical importance as one of the first poets to begin writing the type of verse that should eventually lead to the foundation of a national tradition of Nigerian poetry'.

Bekederemo's major fortes are drama and poetry. His interest in the theatre began at the University of Ibadan, where in 1963 he first recorded Okabou Ojobolo's version of *The Ozidi Saga* – an epic poem in the Ijaw oral tradition – which Bekederemo translated and published in 1977. While his early but less successful plays, *Song of a Goat* (1961), *The Masquerade* (1964) and *The Raft* (1964), are derivative of the Greek classics in which the protagonist is doomed by powerful forces over which he has little or no control, Bekederemo's later and more effective dramas, notably *Ozidi* (1966) and *The Boat* (1981), are cast in the indigenous African culture, particularly that of the Ijo region. Interestingly, much like his Nigerian contemporary Soyinka, Bekederemo's major strength as a playwright is his ability to explore the theme of African-ness.

Apart from its effective fusion of the political and the mythic, *Ozidi* is a typical African drama; it is rich in mime, musical composition and dance, set against a background of rites and rituals, water spirits, the gods and dead ancestors. Witty and ironic, the play has a poetic quality that enhances its theatricality.

The Boat is Bekederemo's first venture into prose drama. Although lacking the aura and dramatic intensity of *Ozidi*, it is also rooted in African cultural tradition. Like *Ozidi*, the tragic history of the hero is one of a rise and fall; here, too, the familiar myths of the interrelationship between god and humanity, humanity and fate, life and its vicissitudes are interwoven with amazing dexterity.

Bekederemo's poetry is even more successful than his drama, for here the entire universe is his topos where he records his emotions and experiences, grappling with the human condition in all its urgency. Compared to his African contemporaries who are often characterized as the 'conscious

internationalists' – LENRIE PETERS, GABRIEL OKARA, Christopher Okigbo and DENNIS BRUTUS – Bekederemo is the most topical and expansive. In his major poetic works – *Poems* (1961), *A Reed in the Tide* (1965), *Casualties: Poems 1966–68* (1970), *State of the Union* (1985) and *Mandela and Other Poems* (1988) – he draws his imagery from native and modernist traditions. He has stated that he sometimes wonders 'what in my make-up is "traditional" and "native" and what "derived" and "modern"'.

The success of Bekederemo's poetry can also be viewed in the way in which he harmonizes heterogeneous themes: art, love, politics, war and peace, culture and tradition predominate. Among his most successful individual lyrics are 'Night Rain', 'Song' and 'Out of the Tower', which explore the eerie landscapes of water, wind and land *vis-à-vis* private predicament. When read individually and against a backdrop of his entire verse, their effect is one of realism and contemporariness.

The future direction that Bekederemo's poetics may take is found in the general tenor of *State of the Union* and *Mandela and Other Poems*. In these works – unlike such earlier volumes as *Poems* and *A Reed in the Tide*, which are heavily influenced by the prosody of G. M. Hopkins, and by W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound – the diction is remarkable for its earthiness and originality of form. Here, too, the poet primarily addresses public issues, empathizing with the downtrodden of society while effectively satirizing those who cause their misfortune. Bekederemo can be seen in these later works in light of what NORTHROP FRYE characterizes as the 'Utopian writer' whose business, he says, is 'communicating a vision to his readers, not sharing a fantasy dream with them'.

Bekederemo has also established himself as one of Nigeria's most vocal and relevant artists and as a perceptive and sensitive critic; his *The Example of Shakespeare* (1970) expresses his views on the nature of poetry, drama and contemporary society. Although he officially retired from academic life in 1980, he continues to articulate his commitment to African intellectualism. In the 1980s he held visiting professorial appointments at several institutions, including Yale and Wesleyan universities in the USA. In 1991 he won the Nigerian National Merit Award, for excellence in the Arts and Sciences in Nigeria, and in the same year he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the

University of Benin. Two volumes of his works were published in 1991: *The Ozidi Saga* and *Collected Plays and Poems, 1958–1988*. His play about the economic exploitation and devastation of the Niger Delta region, *All For Oil*, was published in 2000.

Further reading

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Isaac I. Elimimian, *The Poetry of J. P. Clark Bekederemo* (1989).

ISAAC I. ELIMIMIAN

Belgrave, Valerie (1949–)

Trinidadian novelist

Born in San Juan, Trinidad, she graduated from Sir George Williams (now Concordia) University, Montreal, Canada, in 1971 with a BA in literature and art. Belgrave currently works as an artist and fabric designer in Trinidad.

Belgrave's novel, *Ti Marie* (1988), is set in sixteenth-century Trinidad – a time of great turmoil – when the island was passing from Spanish to British rule. The central story in the complex plot tells of the love affair between the beautiful mulatto woman Marie Hélène (the *Ti Marie* of the title) and Barry, a dashing young Englishman. Earlier Caribbean novelists writing about the slave era, such as EDGAR MITTELHOLZER in *Children of Kaywana* (1952), have sensationalized the violence of the period. As a 1989 review in *The Trinidad and Tobago Review* noted, Belgrave has written a story to be read as entertainment, 'in a spirit of romance ... coming from a position of strength, of conviction of black equality, and victory of global humanism'.

The historical background has been well researched, and the interacting social, national and racial groups on the island are portrayed with assurance. Although the characters themselves tend to be stereotypes and the island is used mainly as a decorative backcloth, the novel succeeds in its confessed intention to entertain. The first edition of *Ti Marie* was quickly reprinted. It was followed by further novels – *Sun Valley Romance* (1993) and *Tigress* (1996) – and a play, 'Night of the Wolf', first performed in 1991.

Further reading

Lyn Innes, 'Ti Marie by Valerie Belgrave', *Wasafiri* Spring (1990).

Madeline Coopsammy, 'Ti Marie by Valerie Belgrave', *Caribe* August (1990).

LOUIS JAMES

Ben-Abdallah, Mohammed (1944–)

Ghanaian dramatist

A significant presence in the Ghanaian theatre since the mid-1960s, Mohammed Ben-Abdallah was born in Kumasi and educated there, in Accra and at Legon, before leaving for the United States. He returned to Ghana in 1982 with a PhD in playwriting and spent ten years in government. The National Theatre in Accra, built to a Chinese design, and various film projects sponsored by the National Commission on Culture date from this period. Ben-Abdallah has since returned to teaching at the School of Performing Arts.

Ben-Abdallah's international reputation relies on a vision of the theatre deeply imbued with the thinking of Franz Fanon, and on two collections of plays. His scripts include *The Slaves* (1971 – dates indicate first productions), *The Alien King* (1971), *Verdict of the Cobra* (1972), *The Trial of Mallam Ilya* (1983), *The Fall of Kumbi* (1989), *The Witch of Mopti* (1989) and *The Land of a Million Magicians* (1993). The dramas represent a search for a form of total, African theatre, and are diverse in origin. For example, Ben-Abdallah draws on history (*The Slaves*), on family stories (*The Witch of Mopti*), and on the work of Bertolt Brecht (*The Land of a Million Magicians*). The last is typical in exploring narrative techniques and creating a piece of total theatre that makes a contribution to political debates.

Ben-Abdallah has worked slowly in the past. For example, *Mallam Ilya* was written and rewritten between 1969 and 1976, before being produced in 1983. During the 1990s he toiled over a play set in Egypt, sometimes referred to as *Song of the Pharaoh: The Life and Times of Akhnaten, the Heretic Pharaoh*. This was still awaited in the new millennium.

Further reading

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African Theatre: Playwrights and Politics (2001).

JAMES GIBBS

Bennett, Alvin Gladstone (1918–)

Jamaican novelist, poet

Born in Falmouth, Trelawney, Jamaica, he served as a ship's purser for several years before settling in England in 1954 and becoming a social worker. In 1982 he emigrated to Canada. Since the early 1950s Bennett has written regularly for *The Daily Gleaner* and other Jamaican newspapers. His feature columns and poetry are characterized by his mastery of irony, humour and acerbic comments on the affairs of God and humanity. Several of his short stories were broadcast by the British Broadcasting Corporation during the 1960s and 1970s. Bennett's experience as a social worker is directly related to the themes of his first novel, *Because they Know Not* (1958).

The experiences of the novel's protagonist reflect the struggles and triumphs of Caribbean immigrants to Britain in the 1950s. Bennett's effectively ironic and searching analysis reveals the pitfalls of the colonial experience. Thematically, the work recalls SAM SELVON's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), though Bennett's prose, as a whole, can be best compared with that of his friend ROGER MAIS.

Bennett's mastery of irony as a structured aesthetic device is more clearly seen in his second novel, *God the Stonebreaker* (1964), whose character Granny B. (generally known as G. B.) is a classic figure of Caribbean literature. She is scheming, manipulative and insensitive, but pathetic. As in *Because they Know Not*, Bennett uses satire to expose the ills of society while expressing a degree of humanism that is rarely evident in contemporary Caribbean fiction. Bennett's linguistic versatility is such that he fully exploits a wide range of semantic possibilities while exploring the ontological depths of his characters and their context. Bennett's acerbic wit is never turned against belief itself but it is the hypocrites and charlatans who attract his ire. In his poetry as in his prose he has exposed the vulnerability of

Jamaican society in which the social hunger of the wretched is confronted with the literal interpretations of sacred texts and the emptiness of hope. The strength of Bennett's work is that, though the prevailing setting is in Jamaica, much of what he writes rings true for the rest of the Caribbean.

Bennett's standard English prose is deliberately sophisticated in syntax and style, contrasting admirably with the social situations described and the Jamaican language that is interspersed. Very often it is in the semantic gap that resides the irony of his discourse. Similarly, though Bennett's poetry collection *Out of Darkness* (undated) displays a degree of irreverence similar to that of his novels, the poems are conservative and traditional in structure.

F. I. CASE

Bennett, Louise (1919–)

Jamaican poet, short-story writer

Born in Kingston, Jamaica, she attended St Simon's College and Excelsior High School, Kingston, and Friends' College in St Mary, Jamaica. Awarded a British Council scholarship in 1945, Bennett was trained in drama at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England. From 1955 to 1959, as drama officer with the Jamaica Welfare Commission, she researched Jamaican folk culture.

Bennett began writing 'dialect verses' in the late 1930s. She recited at concerts, and her first collection of poems, *(Jamaica) Dialect Verses*, appeared in 1942. In 1943 Jamaica's leading newspaper, *The Daily Gleaner*, began to publish a weekly column of her poems. Though there were, and are, dissenting voices about the artistic merit of Bennett's poetry, the public in general has been supportive. Serious consideration of her work began only in the early 1960s and culminated with the publication of the collection *Jamaica Labrish* (1966), a comprehensive anthology of her work. Bennett has since published *Anancy and Miss Lou* (1979), a collection of her Anancy stories, and *Selected Poems* (1982), designed to encourage detailed literary study.

Although Bennett's work is often enhanced by her own expert performance, her writing offers the reader considerable rewards. Some

critics argue, however, that only in performance are her talents truly realized. Her available recordings include *Yes, M'Dear: Miss Lou Live* (1984), *Bre' Anancy & Miss Lou* (1991), *Miss Lou's Views* (1991) and a video, *Miss Lou and Friends* (1991).

The Bennett poem is normally, almost invariably, a dramatic monologue in Jamaican Creole, employing a version of the ballad quatrain, but her verses are not constrained by the metrical restrictions of the model. They carry the rhythms and, in performance, the variations of tone and pitch of Jamaican speech. The dramatic monologue is a form that encourages irony – Bennett's work is pervasively ironic.

In a typical poem, 'No Lickle Twang', a Creole-speaking mother expresses disappointment that her son, after spending six months in the USA, has returned with none of the expected status symbols to show he has been away – he has no fashionable foreign clothes, no gold teeth, no gold chain, and, most disappointing of all, no American accent. The persona of the poem deems it better to be impressive than to be intelligible – a comment not only on attitudes to language but also on colonial reverence for whatever comes from abroad.

Through the comedy, beyond the laughter, there is an ongoing social critique in Bennett's work. Her writings evaluate. They pillory pretension and self-contempt. They ridicule class and colour prejudice; they criticise people ashamed of being Jamaican or ashamed of being black. They respect, but sometimes criticise, the values and perceptions of the ordinary Jamaican, the 'small man' struggling in systems he does not yet control. What is implied in Bennett's Anancy stories and in her creative radio commentaries ('Miss Lou's Views') is consistent with the values in the poems. She celebrates Jamaican culture, often incorporating the metaphoric richness and wisdom of Jamaican proverbs.

Before Bennett, CLAUDE McKAY and others had attempted to write effectively in Creole; except perhaps for Edward Cordle of Barbados, no Caribbean poet prior to Bennett managed to seem authentic. Bennett's achievement has cleared the way for many other writers, especially performance poets such as PAUL KEENS-DOUGLAS, MIKEY SMITH and MUTABARUKA, who have frequently acknowledged her influence.

Further reading

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MERVYN MORRIS

Benson, Mary (1919–2000)

South African biographer, novelist, autobiographer

She was born in Pretoria, South Africa, into a typical white, middle-class South African family. She left South Africa as a teenager, identifying fully with the colonial conception that 'true' civilization was to be found in Europe and North America. But while working in London, England, Benson read ALAN PATON's *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1948), which shattered her complacency and began her long career as a committed spokesperson for, and writer on, Southern African humanitarian and racial issues. During the 1950s she worked as secretary to the Treason Trial Defence Fund. In 1965 Benson reported for the London *Observer* on political trials in the Eastern Cape. The following year she was banned and placed under house arrest and, unable to publish her writings or to be quoted in South Africa, she went into exile in London.

Benson's achievement was to document the history (both national and individual) of Southern Africa at a time when colonial control was at its most absolute. Her biography *Nelson Mandela* (1986; revised 1990) formed part of an ongoing exercise in reconstruction as Benson attempted to recover and reassert silenced voices. Her history of the African National Congress, *The African Patriots* (1962; reissued in 1966 and 1985 as *South Africa: The Struggle for a Birthright*), and her biographies *Albert Lutuli of South Africa* (1963) and *Tshekedi Khama* (1960) were published at a time when their subjects were banned, silenced, imprisoned or banished.

Much of Benson's work records and reveals lives and histories that would otherwise have been lost. Thus, many of her projects focused on publicizing the violation of human rights inherent in the apartheid system: her radio plays for the British Broadcasting Corporation include 'Nelson Mandela and the Rivonia Trial' (broadcast 1972) and 'Robben Island – A Place of Martyrs'

(broadcast 1976). She edited *The Sun Will Rise: Statements from the Dock* (1974; repr. 1981) – testimonies of prisoners in political trials – and she also adapted tapes of Winnie Mandela's life as *Part of My Soul* (1985; first published in German in 1984), edited by Anne Benjamin.

Benson's work reveals her essentially liberal-humanist stance, and her depictions of public figures tend to exemplify attitudes and ideals that she herself valued rather than provide rigorous interrogations of character. Her biography of Mandela, for instance, concentrates on discrediting the demonized image of him favoured by the former South African authorities by locating Mandela's story within the tradition of the 'Jim-comes-to-Jo' burg' fictive convention, thus making his story uncontentious and familiar.

Benson's autobiography, *A Far Cry: The Making of a South African* (1989), centres on an investigation of what it means to be South African. Like Helen Joseph in her autobiography *Side By Side* (1986), Benson defines herself primarily through her public activities. She relies heavily on her interaction with well-known public figures to give shape and purpose to her life. In contrast, her autobiographical novel *At the Still Point* (1969), while revealing a clear political agenda, gives space, behind the thinly veiled fictionality, for more intimate, personal concern.

Further reading

Michael Chapman, 'A certain responsibility: interview with Mary Benson,' *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* 1 (1991).

DIANNE STEWART

Berry, James (1924–)

Jamaican/British poet, short-story writer

He was born in Jamaica and grew up there, but left to work briefly in the USA before emigrating to the UK in 1948. The poems in his first collection, *Fractured Circles* (1979), chart the life of Caribbean immigrants in the London of the 1950s: the hustle for work and warmth, the petty and not-so-petty racism, and a sense of a betrayal by the 'mother country'. But his poems of that period also catch, uniquely, the spirit of adventure and elation

that the 'country bwoy' making life in the big city retained, despite all the aggravation.

Even in the early poems, the persona's language establishes a distinctive 'way of saying' that is both Berry's individual voice and a whole culture's cadence. Berry has been at the forefront of the struggle to validate and honour the language that people of Caribbean origin in Britain actually speak, including its capacity to adapt and to accommodate new experience. In several poems in the wonderfully evocative 'Lucy's Letters' sequence – in which Lucy, a long-time exile from Jamaica, writes home to her friend Leela, who has never left the village – the creolized voice of West Indian London becomes both the medium and the message.

The Lucy poems – included in his second collection, *Lucy's Letters and Loving* (1982) – often move towards conclusions that take the form of Jamaican proverbs. Berry has since adapted other traditional Caribbean forms and has taken energy from the folk beliefs of the region, particularly the Anancy stories. Of his several Anancy poems, Berry's interest in that tradition is best focused in his collection of tall tales, *Anancy Spiderman* (1988) and *First Palm Tree: An Anancy Spiderman Story* (1997).

Berry's respect for the region's folk culture has led him to investigate its roots in an African past still 'submerged' in Caribbean consciousness. Early poems such as 'Black Study Students' responded to the energy that the communal rediscovery of African history released, while others, such as the cathartic 'Reclamation', from the collection *Chain of Days* (1985), chart a personal rite of passage. A concern with Africa and a concomitant political awareness inform all Berry's later work and underpin his pivotal role as a cultural activist. His anthologies of poetry by 'Westindian-British' (his term) writers – *Bluefoot Traveller* (1976) and *News for Babylon* (1984) – provide important platforms for writers who might otherwise have remained unheard. In *Around the World in Eighty Poems* (2002) Berry collects a range of international poems for children. Other works for children include *Don't Leave an Elephant to Go and Chase a Bird* (1996) and *Isn't My Name Magical? Sister and Brother Poems* (1999).

The various aspects of Berry's cultural work interrelate; his collection of stories *A Thief in the Village* (1989) largely emerges from memories of his own childhood in Jamaica, stirred, possibly, by

his work in schools. The collection's widespread use within the mainstream British school system reinforced Berry's overall cultural project to the extent that, in the introduction to his collection of poems, *When I Dance* (1988), he could remark that 'the old excluding culture' was finally beginning to change, to accommodate and value a voice like his that could celebrate, without romanticizing, the experience of Caribbean people in Britain. The poems in *When I Dance* confidently assert:

Nobody else makes the words
I shape with sound when I talk.

STEWART BROWN

Besong, Bate (1954–)

Cameroonian dramatist and poet

Born in Calabar, eastern Nigeria, of Cameroonian parentage, Besong was educated at the Universities of Calabar and Ibadan. After holding teaching posts in Nigeria and Cameroon, in 1997 he joined the English Department of the newly-formed University of Buea, western Cameroon, where he teaches Drama. Besong's poems have been collected in *Polyphemus Detainee and Other Skulls* (1980) and *Just above Cameroon* (1998). Highly contestatory, many of these poems address the political and socio-economic injustices of the Cameroonian state. In this, Besong allies himself with the work of the novelist Mongo Beti, whose stance he has often defended. Together with Bole Butake, Besong is recognized as perhaps the most significant Cameroonian dramatist of English expression. His plays include *The Most Cruel Death of the Talkative Zombie* (1986), *Beasts of No Nation* (1990), *Requiem for the Last Kaiser* (1998) and *Change Waka and His Man Sawa Boy* (2001). In all these plays – which, like those of Butake, have been produced under difficult political circumstances – Besong works on a large-scale canvas, employing crowd scenes, vivid, sometimes tumultuous stage action and lengthy monologues in his depiction of the manoeuvres of authoritarian régimes and popular resistance to these. In their frank depiction of brutal repression these plays share something in common with WOLE SOYINKA's *A Play of Giants* and *King Baabu*. Besong's stagecraft and his language are, however, all his own: volatile and fractured to the point of frenzy,

rendering his theatre some of the most controversial in contemporary Africa.

CHRIS DUNTON

Best, Elsdon (1856–1931)

New Zealand ethnologist

He was born at Porirua, near Wellington, New Zealand, and as a young man developed an interest in the Maori people and their customs. From 1895 Best held a variety of minor government posts in the Urewera district and took the opportunity to collect ethnographic information about the local Tuhoe people. During fifteen years of intermittent fieldwork among this tribe – he later spent shorter periods with other Maori communities – Best acquired fluency in the Maori language and access to a wealth of traditional lore, much of which he reported in articles in both learned journals and newspapers. Appointed ethnologist to the Dominion Museum in 1910, his primary concern thereafter was the publication of definitive ethnographic works to preserve in print the cultural residues of a 'dying race'. In addition to a substantial publication on Tuhoe tribal lore and genealogies, *Tuhoe: The Children of the Mist* (2 vols, 1925), Best compiled ten large monographs, including *The Stone Implements of the Maori* (1912), all written in an engagingly trenchant style; he summarized his researches in a standard ethnography, *The Maori* (2 vols, 1924).

If Best's work marks the finest achievement of those numerous autodidacts who found intellectual stimulation through contemplation of the indigenes, it also exhibits the more problematic characteristics of such discourse – esoteric knowledge desacralized through transmission in print; the paternalism of sympathetic portrayals of the 'primitive' culture; the projection of European intellectual fancies upon the data; and the concern with the 'ancient' Maori rather than with the contemporary people. What Best produced was not so much *The Maori As He Was* (1924), but the Maori as he wanted them to have been. As Ranginui Walker has observed, the 'expropriation of knowledge and its transformation from the spoken to the written word is just one of the many facets of colonization'.

Further reading

M. P. K. Sorrenson, *Maori Origins and Migrations: The Genesis of Some Pakeha Myths and Legends* (1979).

PETER GIBBONS

Bethell, Mary Ursula (1874–1945)

New Zealand poet

Born at Horsell, Surrey, England, she emigrated with her parents to Rangiora, Canterbury, New Zealand, in 1881, then divided much of her life between the two countries before finally settling at 'Rise Cottage' on the Cashmere Hills, Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1924 – the setting of her first volume of poems, *From a Garden in the Antipodes* (1929). In the intervening years Bethell had been educated in New Zealand and England, studied painting and music in Switzerland, spent some time in an Anglican women's community in London (the 'Grey Ladies'), and devoted much of her life to social work among working-class families in London and Christchurch.

In her later life Bethell was a highly innovative New Zealand landscape poet who rejected exotic colonial pictorialism, turning instead to a plain (often ironically understated) language, in unrhymed lines of variable length, that conveyed deep personal feeling about the themes that mattered most to her: the transience of life, the insecurity of the colonists' tenure of land and history, the arrogance of much that passed as rational or scientific progress, and the difficulties and triumphs of religious faith and vision. In one of her best-known poems, 'Pause', she observes the elemental grandeur of the distant Southern Alps and contrasts it with her fragile garden enclosure on the Cashmere Hills.

In two later volumes, *Time and Place* (1936) and *Day and Night: Poems 1924–35* (1939), Bethell attempted a more complex, often elegiac mode of meditative utterance – more literary, perhaps, but always strongly rooted in observations of the Canterbury landscape and mountains. This mode was strongly influential on younger poets such as CHARLES BRASCH and JAMES K. BAXTER. ALLEN CURNOW saw Bethell as an important figure in the transition of New Zealand poetry from 'colonial' to 'modern' in the 1920s and 1930s. More recently,

emphasis has fallen on the relevance of her personal and domestic perspectives, informed by 'alert irony', to a line of women's poetry that includes that by ROBIN HYDE, JANET FRAME, FLEUR ADCOCK and ELIZABETH SMITHER. Bethell's last, unfinished sequence, 'By the River Ashley', which returns to the landscape of her Rangiora childhood, shows this intimate, personal mode at its most accomplished.

Further reading

M. H. Holcroft, *Mary Ursula Bethell* (1975).

TERRY STURM

Bhatnagar, Om Prakash (1932–2001)

Indian poet, critic

Born in Agra, India, he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Literature degree from the World University, New York, USA, in 1979. He taught at Vidarbha Ayurved Mahavidyalaya College of Amravati University, India, where he was head of the post-graduate department until 1992. Bhatnagar published seven volumes of poetry – *Thought Poems* (1976), *Feeling Fossils* (1977), *Angels of Retreat* (1979), *Oneiric Vision* (1980), *Shadows in Floodlights* (1984), *The Audible Landscape* (1986) and *Cooling Flames of Darkness* (2001). He edited *Intercontinental Poetry* (1979), *New Dimensions in Indo-English Poetry* (1980) and *Rising Columns: Some Indian Poets in English* (1983).

The traditional themes and elevated thoughts so characteristic of Indian poets were not Bhatnagar's primary concern; he was more interested in humanity and the environment. Metaphorical issues do colour some poems, as in 'Of Self and True Self', and he also treats such themes as love and death. But his poetry's chief characteristic is its social concern.

In *Thought Poems* and *Feeling Fossils*, the darkness of Bhatnagar's vision is due to human sorrow, pain, pride, desire, hypocrisy and moral depravity. But darkness, Bhatnagar suggests, will eventually give way to the dawn. His love poems are unusually intellectual and lacking in passion. Bhatnagar seems not to distinguish between love and sex; in this respect he differs from

SHIV K. KUMAR and KAMALA DAS, in whose work sexuality plays a prominent role.

Angels of Retreat and *The Audible Landscape* present a more optimistic view of life. Ironic in their treatment of modern intellectual trends, these two volumes offer qualified affirmation rather than denial. Birth and death are the predominant themes of *Oneiric Vision* and *Shadows in Flood-lights*. His last book, *Cooling Flames of Darkness*, is marked by a tone of disillusionment.

In spite of occasional excesses and repetitions, Bhatnagar's poetry merits careful reading and study.

Further reading

R. A. Singh (ed.), *Judgements: An Anthology of Papers on the Poetry of O. P. Bhatnagar* (2002).

PURNIMA MEHTA

Bhatt, Sujata (1956–)

Indian poet

She was born in Ahmedabad, India, and spent her early years in Pune (Poona). She moved to the USA in 1968 and received her MFA from the University of Iowa. She has published six collections of poetry with Carcanet Press, Manchester, UK; several also with Penguin Books, India. In 1992 she was the Lansdowne Visiting Writer/Professor at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. She has translated Gujarati poetry into English for the *Penguin Anthology of Contemporary Indian Women Poets*. Bhatt has received many awards, including the Commonwealth Poetry Prize and a Cholmondeley Award (1991). Her poems have been widely anthologized, broadcast (on radio and television), and have been translated into more than a dozen languages. Sujata Bhatt works as a freelance writer and translator. She currently lives in Bremen, Germany, with her husband, the German writer Michael Augustin, and their daughter.

Bhatt's first collection, *Brunizem* (1988), won the Alice Hunt Bartlett Prize and the Commonwealth Poetry Prize (Asia). *Monkey Shadows* (1991) was a Poetry Book Society Recommendation. *The Stinking Rose* (1995) – an excellent series of poems on garlic – was short-listed for Best Collection in the prestigious

Forward Prize for Poetry. *Augatora* (2000) was a Poetry Book Society Recommendation. Bhatt's selected poems, *Point no Point*, containing poems from her first three collections, was published in 1997.

A bilingual (German/English) edition of selected poems, *Nothing is Black, Really Nothing*, translated by Jürgen Dierking, appeared from Wehrhahn Verlag, Hannover, in 1998. Her fifth and latest collection is *A Colour for Solitude* (2002), largely a series of poems on the German painter, Paula Modersohn-Becker (1876–1907).

Bhatt's poetry is distinguished by a careful focus on language as a marker of the distance (and connections) between people and cultures. In her early poems she used lines from Gujarati – written in the original script, transcribed and freely translated. The very titles of books like *Augatora* (Old High German for 'eye gate' or window) and *Point no Point* indicate Bhatt's ear for language and her position as a poet between cultures. Unrhymed and without strict metre, her poems are subtly musical and often have the tone of philosophical musings.

Further reading

Cecile Sandten, 'In Her Own Voice: Sujata Bhatt and the Aesthetic Articulation of the Diasporic Condition', *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 35.1 (2000).

Sudha Rai, 'Diasporic Location and Matrilineage: The Poetry of Sujata Bhatt, Meena Alexander and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni', Jasbir Jain and Avadhesh Kumar (eds), *Indian Feminisms* (2001).

TABISH KHAIR

Bhattacharya, Bhabani (1906–88)

Indian novelist

Born in the town of Bhagalpur, India, his mother tongue was Bengali, and his earliest writings were for a Bengali children's magazine, *Mouchak*. Bhattacharya studied at Patna College, Patna, for his BA Honours degree in English (1927), and at the University of London, England (1928–34), where he took another BA degree before proceeding to a PhD in history. While a student in England, he translated into English some poems and allegorical tales of RABINDRANATH TAGORE for

publication in the *Spectator*; most of these were collected in his *The Golden Boat* (1932), a collection of translations from Tagore.

Bhattacharya returned to India in 1934 and settled in Nagpur with his wife Salila Mukherjee. He began writing a Sunday feature, 'This Week in Indian History', for the Madras-based newspaper *The Hindu*, and selections from this material went into his second book, *Some Memorable Yesterdays* (1941). He used the same source a few years later for *Indian Cavalcade* (1948).

The publication of Bhattacharya's first novel, *So Many Hungers!* (1947), launched him on an international career. Written in English, the novel was translated into several European languages within a few years and earned Bhattacharya recognition, somewhat inaccurately, as the representative novelist of the new India. He was appointed press attaché to the Indian embassy in Washington, USA, for a year (1949–50), and he subsequently worked briefly as assistant editor for the *Illustrated Weekly of India*. He was a member of the first Indian cultural delegation to the USSR and travelled extensively in the Soviet Union in 1951.

Bhattacharya's reputation abroad was strengthened by his extensive travels and lectures. After 1970 he and his wife lived almost continuously in the USA. Other than *So Many Hungers!*, Bhattacharya's novels were first published outside of India. During the better part of his career as a novelist, Bhattacharya was rated more highly by his foreign readers than by Indians. However, when the Sahitya Akademi, India's national academy of letters, was formed, he was nominated a member of the advisory board for Indian-English literature. In 1959 he was appointed executive secretary of the Tagore Commemorative Volume Society, a project sponsored by India's ministry of education; he was also invited by the ministry to assist in compiling a selection of English translations of Tagore's essays. The latter was published as *Towards Universal Man* in 1961, the poet's centenary year. The 1967 Sahitya Akademi award for English writing – for *Shadow from Ladakh* (1966) – capped Bhattacharya's most creative period as a writer.

Five of Bhattacharya's six novels are concerned directly or otherwise with India's emergence as a new nation. This preoccupation is presented in various situations and is tackled with different fictional strategies. In *So Many Hungers!* the

British still rule India, but it is clear they cannot do so for much longer. Their failure to rule justly is represented by the terrible Bengali famine of 1942–43, a pervasive presence in the book. If at one level *So Many Hungers!* is a relentless indictment of colonial rule, *Music for Mohini* (1952) is light-hearted in comparison, handling almost allegorically the typical conflict in free India between modern progress and traditional values. Bhattacharya returns to the Bengali famine and to his more realistic mode in *He Who Rides a Tiger* (1954), but here the famine forms the background to a plot in which an underprivileged person avenges himself upon society. The critique in this work is not of foreign rule but of native inequities, such as caste discrimination, that must be removed before Indian society can support a modern nation. With *A Goddess Named Gold* (1960) the author retreats again to a less substantial world; the work is like an extended parable in which greed endangers individual freedom as a consequence of opportunities created by political independence.

In *Shadow from Ladakh* contemporary history is presented in order to pose the central dilemma in modern India's developmental efforts – whether to follow the path directed by the ideals of Gandhi or adopt the course traced by JAWAHARLAL NEHRU's dreams. Translated into human terms, the novel's Cambridge-educated, scholarly and ascetic Satyajit is placed in charge of the ideal village community of Gandhigram; in nearby Steeltown the America-trained Bhashkar, chief engineer of a large modern factory, is planning expansion that threatens the future of the village. A clash becomes imminent when the government, chastened by the Chinese aggression of 1962, supports Bhashkar's plans, while Satyajit offers to organize non-violent resistance against the invaders. The crisis passes when the Chinese withdraw and Bhashkar falls in love with Satyajit's daughter and can visualize a future in which the simpler life of rural India can continue while industrial development takes place elsewhere in the country.

Bhattacharya's writing career passed its peak around 1966. He edited Sahitya Akademi's second volume of *Contemporary Indian Short Stories* (Series 2, 1967); the first volume (1959) included one of his stories, 'A Moment of Eternity'. His own collection, *Steel Hawk and Other Stories* (1968), draws upon earlier, and not very successful, efforts. Bhattacharya was given a grant by the Ford Foundation to write a volume for the

M. K. GANDHI centennial; *Gandhi the Writer* was published in 1969. That year began his long association with Hawai'i, first as a specialist at the East–West Centre, then in several spells as visiting professor at the University of Hawaii. Out of his initial encounter with this Pacific retreat came his last novel, *A Dream in Hawaii* (1978), in which an Indian professor turned yogi aspires to heal certain sicknesses of American society before he himself gets caught up in its corruption. *Glimpses of Indian History* (1976) contains *Some Memorable Yesterdays* and *Indian Cavalcade*; *Socio-Political Currents in Bengal: A Nineteenth Century Perspective* (1980) is the doctoral dissertation he wrote in the 1930s for the University of London.

The social realism of his first and third novels brought Bhattacharya early fame. At one time critics often compared him with MULK RAJ ANAND as an unflinching portrayer of contemporary India's flaws. In later estimation, however, he is regarded as a novelist with social purpose who has used the novel form as a vehicle for ideas and debate. Bhattacharya will always be respected as a writer of newly independent India for whom the future of his country was an abiding concern.

Further reading

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 R. K. Srivastava (ed.), *Perspectives on Bhabani Bhattacharya* (1982).
 Malta Grover, *Bhabani Bhattacharya as a Novelist of Social Conscience* (1991).

SUJIT MUKHERJEE

Bhushan, V. N. (1909–51)

Indian poet, critic

Born in Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India, he studied at Benares Hindu University (MA, 1933) before becoming a professor in Maharashtra and Madhyapradesh. Bhushan's English poetical works include *Silhouettes* (1928), *Moonbeams* (1929), *Flute Tunes* (1931), *Star Fires* (1932), *Enchantments* (1934), *Horizons* (1937), *Footfalls* (1938) and *The Far Ascent* (1948). Writing at

the peak of the 'Bhavakavitva' movement in Telugu poetry and profoundly influenced by RABINDRANATH TAGORE, Bhushan found his authentic lyric voice in English, a voice distinguished by a lively imagination, exuberant feeling and a keen sense of expressive form. His poetry marks the activation of the romantic impulse in its characteristic mutations of the Indian sensibility: idealism, mysticism, naturalism and nationalism. Bhushan regarded poetry as a hieratic realm 'full of treasures – dreams, hopes, visions, ecstasies, a devotion to something afar, winged words and wizard phrases'. He also published two plays, *Samyukta* (1933) and *Mortal Coils* (1934), besides editing Shakespeare and writing a critical study of comedy and tragedy, *Hawk over Heron* (1944), which contains interesting comparativist crosslights from Western and oriental drama.

With K. R. S. IYENGAR, Bhushan promoted and established Indian-English literature as a serious and relevant area of critical attention and academic pursuit. His *The Peacock Lute* (1945, poetry), *The Moving Finger* (1945, criticism), *The Blaring Shrine* (1946, one-act plays) and *The Earthen Bowl* (1945, short stories) were pioneering anthologies of Indian creative writing in English. Bhushan viewed Indian-English poetry as a product of the East–West synthesis, reflecting the mainstream Indian literary tradition as it is mediated by the modern cultural dynamic and characterized by 'a Virgilian sadness' and a sense of 'intense brooding reflection ... combining the metaphysical symbolism of the Upanishads, the contemplative passivity of Buddhism, the luscious eroticism of Sanskrit poetry, the subtle symbolism of the singer saints of South India and the sensuous Court Poetry of Medieval India'. He also formulated the well-known paradigm of imitation-Indianization-individualization in plotting the growth of Indian-English poetry.

Although Bhushan's creative work and his critical idiom are no longer fashionable, his historical contribution to Indian-English literary studies remains undisputed.

Further reading

- V. N. Bhushan, 'Behold the blossoms', introduction to *The Peacock Lute* (1945).

D. V. K. RAGHAVACHARYULU

Biography

See LIFE WRITING.

Bird, Carmel (1940–)

Australian novelist, short-story writer, essayist

Born in Launceston, Tasmania, Bird holds a BA and DipEd from the University of Tasmania. In 1963 she moved to Melbourne, where she taught at a girls' school for six years, followed by episodic teaching in universities and schools. She has written two inspirational books for writers, *Dear Writer* (1988) and *Not Now Jack – I'm Writing a Novel* (1994), and has edited several collections, including *The Stolen Children: Their Stories* (1998), containing extracts from the Report of the National Inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.

Bird describes herself as an expatriate who longs for the old country of the mind. Her earliest novels, *Cherry Ripe* (1985) and *The Bluebird Café* (1990), are set in Tasmania, as is *Cape Grimm* (2003). Many of the stories in *Births, Deaths and Marriages* (1983), *The Woodpecker Toy Fact* (1987) and *The Common Rat* (1993) draw on images from her childhood, as do essays in *Automatic Teller* (1996). Her novels *The White Garden* (1995) and its sequel *Red Shoes* (1998), *Crisis* (first published in 1996 under the pseudonym Jack Power) and her two crime fictions, *Unholy Writ* (2000) and *Open for Inspection* (2002), are set in suburban Melbourne.

Bird's books are rich in domestic details, but the sensual and the sinister are intertwined. Women are driven mad by the meaningless clutter of their lives; incest, rape, abortion and deformity are rife; and houses, gardens and landscapes are haunted by past horrors. The Gothic pervades Bird's writings as she documents the emptiness of the everyday, the mournful restlessness that flows beneath the surface of Tasmanian consciousness, and the community's fear of acknowledging the island's bloody history and the attempted genocide of its Indigenous people.

Yet her approach, as she meditates on the thin line that separates good from evil, is often playful; her books are reflexive, ironic and riddled with jokes and fantastic characters. She often uses the language and motifs of fairytales to draw attention to the way they socialize women to be fearful and dependent,

and similarly warns against the colonizing tendencies of psychiatric, legal and religious discourse.

The past is always present in Bird's work and she seems more sensitive than most Australian writers to the dilemma of being appalled by the tragic facts of history, even while owing her existence to them.

ELAINE LINDSAY

Birney, Earle (1904–95)

Canadian poet, novelist, dramatist

Born of a Scottish father and an English mother in Calgary, Canada, in what was then Canada's Northwest Territories, he spent his early childhood on the family homestead near Morningside, Alberta, before the family moved to Banff. He enrolled at the University of British Columbia in 1922, originally in engineering, later in English. Doctoral studies in medieval literature at Berkeley, USA, and Toronto, Canada, were not completed until 1936, much of his energy in this period going to the radical political activity of the 1930s. Birney served in the Canadian Army as a personnel officer during the Second World War. After earlier pedagogic wanderings, he taught full-time at the University of British Columbia from 1946 to 1965, heading a newly-created department of creative writing in 1963.

Best known as a poet, Birney also wrote two novels, *Turvey* (1949) and *Down the Long Table* (1955), and fourteen radio plays, some of them adaptations. While he wrote through much of his youth, his first book, *David and Other Poems*, did not appear until 1942. Two further volumes were published in the 1940s – *Now Is Time* (1945) and *The Strait of Anian* (1948), which includes some poems from the previous volumes. *Trial of a City and Other Verse* (1952) contains thirteen poems and the titular verse drama (given its manuscript title *The Damnation of Vancouver* in all other printings). From the 1960s on appeared *Ice, Cod, Bell or Stone* (1962), *Near False Creek Mouth* (1964), *Rag and Bone Shop* (1971), *What's So Big About Green?* (1973), *The Rugging and the Moving Times* (1976), *Fall by Fury* and the stories and sketches of *Big Bird in the Bush* (both 1978), along with non-fiction, six volumes of selected poems and the *Collected Poems* (1975). A final volume of new and selected poems, *Last Makings*, appeared in 1991. Birney twice won a Governor General's

Award for Poetry, for *David and Other Poems* in 1942 and for *Now Is Time* in 1945.

After a slow start Birney's writing career was long and varied, with significant production sustained with accelerating pace over forty years. Until the 1960s it moved restlessly through a multifaceted modernism. Always, however, the modernism was Canadian, touched by political issues inherent in the post-colonial condition (elements seen also in the works of F. R. SCOTT and DOROTHY LIVESAY). For this reason, satire, that mode exemplary of commitment, is a frequent feature of this poetry as well as the later. From this period came such frequently anthologized pieces as the Joycean 'Mammorial Stunzas to Aimee Simple McFarcin', 'Bushed', 'Slug in Woods' and 'Anglosaxon Street'. Ingenious and closely-wrought structures, concentrated effects and a studied impersonality link such works with the international movement, which in Birney's work must be seen as reactive to a prevalent nineteenth-century manner associated with colonialism. The now-classic narrative poem 'David' in many ways exemplifies the affiliations that dominated his work for nearly two decades. Set in the Rocky Mountains, the poem recounts a young man's discovery of self and place through the friendship of and shared experiences with David, a slightly older 'mountain man' who teaches him climbing and the lore of the mountains. Its tight structure and vivid imagery provide formal strength and signal its affiliation with Canadian modernism; its celebration of a majestic but unromantically alien nature form its distinctively post-colonial base, and its narrative of euthanasian murder continues to appeal to a major receptive audience of young readers.

During the late 1950s and the 1960s, sponsored by the newly-formed CANADA COUNCIL and other agencies, Birney travelled and read widely and internationally. While it is impossible to date its beginnings precisely, the later poetic manner – more playful, personal and informal – becomes evident in this period. Its ground is both in medium (the extension of language beyond the poetic 'standard') and in place (the use of the 'language of the tribe'). There is much experimentation with concrete verse. Spacing largely replaces conventional punctuation, and earlier poems are so revised even if retaining most other original features. A comparison of early and later versions of a poem such as 'The Bear on the Delhi Road' makes the gain clear. The linguistic zest is also

extended orally, the modernist formality of the earlier poems abandoned for a more flexible and idiomatic voice. Poems frequently incorporate the dialect of others – Australian, Fijian, American – orthographically captured. 'To Swindon from London by BritRail Aloud/Bagatelle' is a stunning oral mimesis of the journey described in the title. Anecdote, a particularly Canadian post-colonial mode, frequently provides narrative structure, as in 'ARRIVALS Wolfville/Locals ...', and meditative modes of the earlier period recur ('El Greco: Espolio'). In the late 1970s some tender and moving love poems emerge. In both early and later writings Birney's social, political and ecological commitments frequently surface, always distinguishing his writing from the artistic detachment of modernism and the relativism of postmodernism.

It is difficult to find exact parallels to Birney in other post-colonial writers. Like V. S. NAIPAUL, he travelled widely, but unlike Naipaul retained his native roots and commitments. Like A. D. HOPE, he came to terms with modernism, but his departure from it was not into classicism but rather to the poetic experimentation of young Canadian writers less than half his age – BP NICHOL, Judith Copithorne, Andy Suknaski. Like WILSON HARRIS, he tried to speak on behalf of an entire nation/region, but where Harris is a moral visionary Birney focused more pessimistically on the contradictions, disorders and failings of the times. The redemptions of his poems are distinctively his: of dancing in the Caribbean at GEORGE LAMMING's, of finding the mouse celebrated in AL PURDY's poems, of a boy flying a kite in Japan. They are, like Birney, of the margin, and powerfully so.

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IAN ADAM

Bissett, Bill (1939–)

Canadian poet

Born in Halifax, Canada, and a proud university drop-out, he has lived principally in Vancouver,

London and Toronto. Among the most substantial of his more than 60 books are *nobody owns the earth* (1971), *MEDICINE my mouths on fire* (1974), *Canada gees mate for life* (1985), *what we have* (1989) which won the Milton Acorn People's Poetry Award, *incorrect thots* (1992; BC Book Prize), and *b leev abul char ak trs* (2000). Several of these books incorporate visionary cover art by the poet, who is also a prolific painter. Unusually, bissett makes poetry by *narrowing* his vocabulary and linguistic resources. He attempts to democratize poetry by honouring a vernacular far removed from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation ideal and more readily appreciated in performance, or in his many recordings and films, than in print. His chanting, accompanied by rattles (shamanistic and child's toy), is hypnotic yet sensitive to the meanings of intonation. His stubbornly naive radicalism gives him a prominence in international sound poetry often unappreciated within Canada.

Bissett's typical poem features repeated colloquial tags, graphic play with type, and quasi-phonetic spelling. His lower-case, anti-power-structure politics is distantly allied with the simpler poems of Australian MICHAEL DRANSFIELD and the concrete poetry of Australian Peter Murphy. But in his emphasis on the integrity and freedom of restricted codes, bissett comes closer to the black street English of Jamaican poet E. K. BRATHWAITE.

In divesting language of its hierarchical principles, bissett attempts to be 'the voice uv ths things speaking thru us'. Insistent repetition of a few general, monosyllabic nouns – sky, wind, grass, fire, clouds, sun – and the verbs 'dew' and 'cum' mark a primitivism that 'dreem[s]/we are all/whun/creature'. Through cheeky anecdotes burlesquing establishment norms, a proclivity for the forms of indigenous peoples, ecological themes and privately eccentric notation, bissett manages to be both at the edge of contemporary movements in language art and at the centre of the democratization of poetry.

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LAURIE RICOU

Bissoondath, Neil (1955–)

Trinidadian/Canadian novelist,
short-story writer

Born in Arima, Trinidad, he spent his childhood in Sangre Grande before emigrating to Canada in 1973 on the advice of his uncle, V. S. NAIPAUL. After graduating from York University, Toronto (BA, 1977), he taught French and English as second languages. In 1984 he received a Banff School of Fine Arts writing scholarship, which led to the publication of *Digging Up the Mountains* (1985), a collection of stories. The novels *A Casual Brutality* (1988) and *The Innocence of Age* (1992), and another volume of stories, *On the Eve of Uncertain Tomorrows* (1990), followed. These works and several published essays have established Bissoondath as a vibrant new writer on the Canadian, Caribbean and post-colonial scene.

Bissoondath's fiction focuses on the individual's sense of placelessness and alienation in a new society. As *Digging Up the Mountains* shows, the lives of immigrants are fraught with insecurity and disillusionment. Bissoondath attempts, with varying success, to portray protagonists of different ethnic backgrounds and of both genders – for example, an East Indian father in 'Insecurity', a young Japanese woman in 'The Cage', and a female Guatemalan in 'In the Kingdom of the Golden Dust'. *On the Eve of Uncertain Tomorrows* foregrounds even more darkly the loneliness and distress of immigrants and refugees. In the title story, two Latin American refugees dread their appearance at a hearing that decides their refugee status. They are as helpless as the women in 'Kira and Anna' who, marginalized as immigrants, become pawns of unscrupulous men. Bissoondath's depiction of his immigrant protagonists lacks SAM SELVON's comic affirmation in *The Lonely Londoners* (1956). Pessimistic and at times depressing, his stories are closer to V. S. Naipaul's 'Tell Me Who to Kill', in his *In a Free State* (1971).

A Casual Brutality emphasizes the East Indian immigrant's rootlessness and instability. A medical doctor from the Caribbean who has been studying and living in Toronto returns home with his white Canadian wife and their son. The violent deaths of the wife and son in a political uprising send him back to Canada, which for him is simply a haven, not a home. Like his ancestors, whose journey

from India to the Caribbean left them adrift, he is now the perpetual itinerant.

In *The Innocence of Age* Bissoondath's protagonist is a white Canadian whose alienation from family members parallels that of the novel's many secondary immigrant characters. Bissoondath's appropriation of the voice of a white Canadian, like GEORGE RYGA's of a Native Canadian in *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* (1970), enables him to propose that beneath overt differences and stereotypes all alienated individuals need to be loved and understood. As in his stories, Bissoondath captures well the feel of place, using the setting as a metaphor for estrangement. The protagonist watches helplessly as Toronto changes from a friendly, peaceful city to a fast-paced metropolis with skin-heads, drug pushers, immigrants and defensive police reeling under charges of brutality and racism.

Bissoondath's most recent novel, *The Worlds Within Her* (1999), deals more with the personal history of the protagonist, Yasmin, than with cultural heritage. Yasmin leaves Canada for Trinidad, the land of her birth, to scatter her mother's ashes. There she discovers a connection with Trinidad, but she begins, ironically, to realize that her real roots lie elsewhere. Bissoondath's best-selling non-fiction book, *Selling Illusions, the Cult of Multiculturalism* (1994), triggered an intense debate about nationalism in Canada. He criticises the government's policy of multiculturalism, especially its financial support of immigrant groups to preserve their culture and ethnic traditions, which, he believes, serves to create stereotypes and cultural ghettos. Preserving culture, he argues, is a family responsibility, not the government's. He has recently completed another novel, *Doing the Heart Good* (forthcoming), which deals neither with immigrants nor with government policy. It is the story of a 70-year-old anglophone Montrealer who is forced to live with his daughter and her bilingual family after his house burns down. In writing about such varied issues, Bissoondath shows an uncanny awareness of basic human needs and desires.

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RUBY RAMRAJ

Black British Writing

Black British writing features prominently in the counter-canon of post-colonial literature, with writers such as V. S. NAIPAUL, WILSON HARRIS, BEN OKRI and Zadie Smith stimulating considerable international debate. Although these debates have been largely confined to the post-war period, the history of black British writing goes back at least as far as the 1700s. The earliest writings include Olaudah Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789), and Ukawsaw Gronniosaw's *A Narrative of the Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw* (c.1770), and were mostly oral slave narratives recorded by white amanuenses. Followed later by writers such as Ignatius Sancho and Mary Seacole, there was, by the end of the nineteenth century, a range of (largely African, polemical and autobiographical) writing in print.

It was not until after the Second World War, however, and in the aftermath of the Nationality Act of 1948 (designed to encourage immigration from Britain's colonies and former colonies), that a substantial body of black British literature began to emerge. During the 1950s and 1960s, this literature was dominated by male Caribbean writers who had come to settle in and regard London as a literary capital. The major figures of the period include GEORGE LAMMING, SAM SELVON, ANDREW SALKEY, V. S. Naipaul, KAMAU BRATHWAITE and JAMES BERRY. The pioneering novels by this generation of writers – such as *The Emigrants* (Lamming), *The Lonely Londoners* (Selvon) and *The Mimic Men* (Naipaul) – depict transient lifestyles structured around temporary dwellings (basements, hostels, bedsits), while documenting the pleasures and disappointments associated with life in the metropolis.

Although the work of these early writers was initially met with acclaim, finding itself fostered by publishing houses and programmes like Henry Swanzy's 'Caribbean Voices', by the mid-1960s interest was beginning to decline. In response to this, Brathwaite, Salkey and John La Rose came together to form the Caribbean Artists Movement (CAM) which was active in London between 1966 and 1972. CAM provided an important forum for artistic debate, while also encouraging the sense of a 'community' of black artists in Britain. Although a primarily 'artistic' project, the rise of black

consciousness in the late 1960s and early 1970s soon impacted on the Movement which became increasingly politicized. LINTON KWESI JOHNSON, one the best-known black artists/activists in Britain, was present at many of the CAM sessions, and has spoken of its influence on his own development as a writer.

The work of Johnson was typical of a new phase of black British writing that dominated the 1970s and early 1980s. Politically committed and linguistically self-conscious, experimenting with creole and musical forms (what Johnson termed 'dub poetry'), and largely poetry-based, it included work by JOHN AGARD, E. A. MARKHAM and GRACE NICHOLS. The writings of these and other poets were collected in important early anthologies edited by James Berry: *The Bluefoot Traveller* (1976) and *News for Babylon* (1984).

Unlike black American literature, which is used to designate African Caribbean cultural production, the appellation 'black British' (which was first used in the late 1960s and early 1970s) includes African, Caribbean and South Asian artists. Key Indian writers of the 1970s and early 1980s such as FARRUKH DHONDY and SALMAN RUSHDIE interpellated themselves as 'black' in order to indicate their political solidarity. While the macho rhetoric of the Black Power movement recurs in poetry and fiction of the period, this was also the first time a substantial body of women's writing appeared in print, including the work of Grace Nichols, BERYL GILROY, BUCHI EMECHETA and Valerie Bloom.

The protest literature associated with Linton Kwesi Johnson and others had largely exhausted itself by the late 1980s. The so-called 'Rushdie Affair', prompted by the publication of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, divided Britain's ethnic communities and vividly dramatized the break-up of a consensual black British community. In his seminal essay, 'New Ethnicities' (1988), Stuart Hall articulated the arrival of a new body of cultural production by writers such as HANIF KUREISHI that sought to de-essentialize the black experience as singularly positive or 'right on': 'What is at issue here is the recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category "black"; that is, the recognition that "black" is essentially a politically and culturally constructed category ...'.

Central to Hall's argument was its recognition of the black experience as a diaspora experience.

A preoccupation with what fellow black British intellectual Paul Gilroy termed 'the black Atlantic' characterizes much contemporary black British writing, including the work of CARYL PHILLIPS, FRED D'AGUIAR and Jackie Kay. Many of these writers have tended to draw attention to the hybridity of racial identities in a way that destabilizes 'blackness' as a monolithic category. In the 1990s writers such as Kureishi (in *The Buddha of Suburbia*) and Meera Syal (in *Anita and Me* and *Goodness Gracious Me!*) satirized the migrant experience in a manner that would have been unthinkable a decade earlier. As such examples suggest, the destabilization of 'blackness' since the late 1980s has not just taken place within avant-garde literary discourse, but can also be traced within contemporary black pulp fiction, such as the hugely successful 'Yardie' trilogy of Victor Headley and the crime novels of Mike Phillips.

The cultural contribution of post-war black British literature was recently remembered at the Windrush anniversary celebrations in 1998. The *SS Empire Windrush* docked at Tilbury in 1948 and is associated with the 'beginnings' of post-war, post-colonial immigration. A number of literary events showcasing writers and poets were organized in conjunction with the celebrations, including walking tours around 'black London'.

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JAMES PROCTER

Black, Stephen (1880–1931)

South African dramatist, novelist

He was born in poor circumstances in Cape Town, South Africa, to an alcoholic British bookkeeper and his Capetonian wife. By 1903 Black was known as a featherweight boxer; in 1904 he first went to school at Diocesan College, Cape Town, on an athletic scholarship. As sporting correspondent for *The Cape Argus Weekly* he also wrote sketches in the vernacular on low life in the magistrates' courts.

In 1908 Rudyard Kipling 'discovered' Black, commending his use of local colour.

Edwardian theatre in South Africa was on the typical circuit of British companies 'playing the Empire' from Cape Town to Sydney. (See DRAMA (SOUTH AFRICA).) In 1908 Black scratched together from stranded music-hall performers the first substantial South African production, *Love and the Hyphen* (premiered 1908; first published 1984). Like Australian George Darrell's *The Sunny South* (premiered 1883; first published in 1975), Black's play includes representative spectacles of colonial life, but his mode was not melodrama; he mixed drawing-room social comedy with ribald farce. *Love and the Hyphen* praises the spirit of the National Convention of that year, which attempted to reconstruct the post-Second Anglo-Boer War world by bringing the four British colonies into Union in 1910. The departure of the colonial power's garrison and the rise of local politicians is celebrated in the play, as both whites and Coloureds foresee opportunities for self-expressive nation-building and more equal, responsible status. Between 1909 and 1929 *Love and the Hyphen* was revived for six distinct seasons.

In his second play, *Helena's Hope, Ltd.* (1984; premiered 1909), which is named after a goldmine and which still holds the record for most performances (approximately 600) of any South African play, Black formed the nucleus of his repertory company with himself as playwright, manager and leading man. He wrote another dozen scripts over the years, with which the company toured as far as Victoria Falls (in modern Zimbabwe). *Helena's Hope, Ltd.* outlines the penetration of the imperial cash economy in the rural Transvaal, and the lure of the industrial city for poor settlers and dispossessed indigenes alike. The hero is an independent English pressman who lives by exposing extortion and corruption, siding with the locals in their struggle. For himself Black wrote the role of Zachariah, an 'Uncle Tom' who learns to survive as a swindler.

During the First World War, Black moved to London, England, and worked as the *Daily Mail's* theatre critic before emigrating with his French wife to Nice, France, in order to farm. There he wrote the satirical novel *The Dorp* ('The Village', 1920), a comedy that pits 'Boer' against 'Brit' over a young mixed couple's intended marriage. Another novel, *The Golden Calf* (1925), deals with illicit diamond buying.

On his return to South Africa in 1925, Black rewrote and revived his many shows. Beaten, however, by talking films, he turned to running a satirical weekly paper, *The Sjabok* (1929–31). The paper strongly resisted the control of the entertainment industry by London and Hollywood, and first published the work of many South Africans such as HERMAN CHARLES BOSMAN. Crippled by libel suits, Black died bankrupt. Today he is known as the 'father' of South African English-language drama.

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STEPHEN GRAY

Black Writers in Britain

There is evidence of small numbers of black people in Britain since at least the second century AD; they worked as soldiers with the Roman imperial army and as entertainers, musicians and servants in royal households. As a result of Britain's role in the Atlantic slave trade between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, their numbers steadily increased. Royal proclamations, parish register entries and documents relating to the slave trade testify to their silent presence and to prevailing social prejudices about dark-skinned people. By the mid-eighteenth century, the 15,000-strong London black community found its voice and began to give accounts of life among pale-skinned people. Acquiring and using a new language and literacy skills were fundamental rites of passage in the process of assimilation to, and commentary on, British society. Emerging from the silent status of the observed to seize the word, the early black writers mastered language in their oral accounts, speeches, letters and written texts. The earliest accounts – Briton Hammon's *A Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings, and Surprising Deliverance of Briton Hammon, A Negro Man* (1760) and Ukawsaw Gronniosaw's (c.1710) *A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Aloert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, An African Prince, as Related by Himself* (c.1770) – treat a variety of subjects: adventurous sea travel, cultural adjustment, precarious survival and religious conversion.

Complex personal, familial and social relationships emerge in most of the early writing. Gronniosaw's moving scenes of family life, often in extreme poverty, may be compared with details of relatively comfortable family life given by the erudite African Ignatius Sancho (1729–80) in his *Letters of the Late Ignatius Sancho* (1782). Sancho's witty correspondence with famous and ordinary men and women conveys his skilled use of the English language, his knowledge of the arts, literature and politics and the ups and downs of trade in his Westminster grocery shop. A number of the eighteenth-century slave narrators – Gronniosaw, OLAUDAH EQUIANO and Ottobah Cugoano (c.1757) – include memories of African childhood in their autobiographical accounts of the journey from slavery to freedom. Mary Prince (c.1788) broke the silence of the female slave in the first substantial account by a female slave narrator, *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave* (1831). Like Hammon and Gronniosaw, Prince dictated her account to a white amanuensis; Prince's account was then edited by a second hand. Equiano is thought to be the 'invisible hand' shaping Cugoano's narrative for publication. The multiple 'voices' in these accounts are fundamental to the slave narrative tradition, foregrounding complex relationships and issues of authorial control and self-representation.

Black people who spoke and wrote their experiences implicitly refuted prevailing myths and ideologies that denied all black people full human status and dignity. Since such myths and ideologies helped justify the slave trade, their words were essential in the Anti-Slavery movement. In Equiano's two-volume autobiography, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, written by Himself* (1789), the skilled use of irony and foregrounding of African identity result in a subtle and complex analysis of slavery personally experienced. His public speaking and letter-writing against the slave trade also established him as the principal black spokesman in the British Anti-Slavery movement. Cugoano's *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (1787) is overt and strident in condemning slavery; as such it may be compared with the autobiographical account of the radical Jamaican-Scots preacher Robert Wedderburn (c.1761–c.1835), *The Horrors of Slavery* (1824).

Unwilling travellers of the African diaspora were pioneers of African, Caribbean, Black-British

and African-American literary traditions. Common patterns and themes are repeated and revised, from the earliest oral accounts to the creative work of contemporary black writers. Mary Prince is important in relation to contemporary Caribbean women's writing and nineteenth-century African-American women's writing, especially Harriet Jacobs's (c.1815–97) *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* (1861). Toni Morrison's (1931–) novel *Beloved* (1987) is the finest example of a number of neo-slave narratives by African-American authors. The symbolic importance of the African woman figured in Negritude poetry and in African literature emerging at the time of nationhood is anticipated in Equiano's placement of his own mother in his memories of 'Mother Africa'. West African writers resident in Britain can be linked to the early writers: BUCHI EMECHETA's novels revise and challenge stereotypes of 'Mother Africa'; BEN OKRI's stunning novels, including *The Famished Road* (1991), celebrate the life-affirming power of storytelling. SAM SELVON's early life in Trinidad, followed by residence in England and Canada, traces a geography of cross-cultural experience common in early black and post-colonial writing. Selvon's brilliant use of dialect in novels sharing a Caribbean focus testifies to the continued importance of the spoken word to inscribe unique individual and cultural identity. CARYL PHILLIPS directly engages eighteenth-century accounts as source and inspiration for the diasporan setting, characters and complex relationships in his novel *Cambridge* (1991). Phillips's earliest novels move between the Caribbean, his birthplace, and the UK, where he grew up and was educated. In Equiano's words, the reader may 'look back with pleasure' to an unbroken arch of continuity from the early black writers in Britain to the flourishing traditions of black creativity today.

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POLLY REWT

Blainey, Geoffrey (1930–)

Australian historian

Born in Victoria, Australia, he has pursued his career both independently and at the University of Melbourne. His historical interests have ranged exceptionally widely, from mining – *The Peaks of Lyell* (1954), *The Rush That Never Ended* (1963), *White Gold* (1997) – to banking and other institutions – *Gold and Paper: A History of the National Bank of Australasia* (1958), *A History of the AMP* (1999) – to Aborigines, to the growth of colonial Australian society – *Our Side of the Country* (1984) – to human conflict – *The Causes of War* (1973) – to the long-term oscillations between optimism and pessimism in the Western world – *The Great Seesaw: A New View of the Western World, 1750–2000* (1988). Between these major works Blainey has published a number of iconoclastic ones – *Across a Red World* (1968), a reflective account of a railway journey across China, Siberia and Russia, and *All for Australia* (1984), which, by questioning the government's immigration policy, embroiled him in considerable public controversy. His television series *The Blainey View* (1982) brought together many of his interests in economics, war, and world events. In 1994 he published *A Shorter History of Australia* and in 2000 *A Short History of the World*. He has been an active member of the Literature Board of the AUSTRALIA COUNCIL (see LITERATURE FUND (AUSTRALIA)), the Australia-China Council, and the Australian Heritage Commission.

Of all his works, Blainey is likely to be most remembered for *The Triumph of the Nomads: A History of Ancient Australia* (1975), which presents traditional Aboriginal society in an exceptionally sympathetic light and which remains valuable, despite subsequent very rapid advances in knowledge of Aboriginal prehistory and ethnography, and especially for *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (1966), whose title has become a signifier of national experience.

Blainey's great strengths as a writer lie in his ability to present the results of specialist studies in a way intelligible to general audiences, and to convey the nature of past circumstance by way of a striking analogy with the present. Together with MANNING CLARK, Blainey largely created the post-Second

World War audience for Australian history, and has been instrumental in taking a society becoming conscious of itself past its colonial cringe.

ALAN FROST

Blaise, Clark (1940–)

Canadian novelist, short-story writer

Professing to be the 'only Canadian writer to come from Fargo, North Dakota', he has lived in Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Jacksonville (Florida), Springfield (Missouri), Montreal, New York and Iowa City. Blaise's work is similarly diffuse, with numerous locations in the USA, Canada and India – this last being the birthplace of his wife, BHARATI MUKHERJEE, also a writer and the co-author of two of his works, *Days and Nights in Calcutta* (1977) and *The Sorrow and the Terror* (1987). Blaise is better known for his short stories – *A North American Education* (1973), *Tribal Justice* (1974), *Resident Alien* (1986), *Man and His World* (1992) – than for his novels – *Lunar Attractions* (1979), *Lusts* (1983) and *If I Were Me* (1997). Both the shorter and the longer fiction, however, provide variations on a theme: himself. Obsessively self-conscious, unashamedly self-indulgent, Blaise's fictions are perhaps best seen as autobiographical explorations of 'the whereness of who and what I am'. The quest is continuous, for out of the traversal of a series of different environments emerges a succession of different selves, each as accidental, as impermanent and finally as inadequate as the last. For Blaise, autobiography is a continual process of self-invention. But as the selves multiply and scatter, the writer becomes alienated from his own creations; the writing self contemplates the written self and finds it 'other'.

Alternately exhibitionist and paranoid, Blaise's wilfully eccentric narrator-protagonists draw the reader into complicity with their voyeuristic activities. The delight of seeing is offset by the fear of being seen: to read Blaise (reading himself) is to collaborate in an ambivalent process of self-creation in which much is revealed but more concealed, and the writer is as likely to deceive the reader as he is to confide in him. Blaise's prose style is no less duplicitous, making frequent use of paradox and oxymoron. Self-parody is a prevalent

mode: Blaise sizes up his first-person narrators, his child and adolescent characters and his neurotic obsessions with the past, then declares himself to be ‘wedded like a reborn Wordsworth to the epic of my own becoming’.

Yet if, in his serio-comic quest for ‘identity’ – as a man, as a writer, as a born-again Canadian – Blaise is haunted by a fear of failure, he is also struck by the advantages of indeterminacy. For Blaise, autobiography is less a process of self-discovery than one of self-estrangement; but, like several other contemporary writers from Canada and different parts of the Commonwealth, Blaise is as much given to celebrating his own sense of displacement as he is to lamenting it. Blaise is understandably wary of the ‘Commonwealth’ label, believing that Commonwealth literature, ‘a category without conscious (or admitted) practitioners, claiming participants from every race, religion and national background, from six continents and Oceania ... either points to a spontaneous fertility that is humbling or a loose Platonism that is embarrassing’. Blaise does recognize his affinity, however, with other Commonwealth writers whose material, like his own, ‘has been tractlessness, [a] grasping for compasses, [an] envy of those who were born knowing what they were, or never having to ask.’ Unsurprisingly, Blaise cites his admiration for V. S. NAIPAUL, but his work probably has more in common with that of an Australian, DAVID MALOUF, another writer of mixed background and wandering habits whose autobiographical fictions chart the uncertain movements of a self that both seeks and resists definition. Like those of Blaise, Malouf’s stories radiate outwards from an undefined centre, coordinating the ‘otherness’ of a self that remains elusive, multiform, dynamic. In their challenge to the notion of fixed identity – personal, cultural or national – Blaise and Malouf align themselves with a new generation of Commonwealth writers whose work is less concerned with describing a (colonial) condition of exile than with exploring the heterogeneity of (post-colonial) societies such as Canada’s or Australia’s that thrive on the capacity to locate – and invent – themselves anew.

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GRAHAM HUGGAN

Blight, John (1913–95)

Australian poet

Born in Unley, South Australia, he spent most of his life in Queensland. His substantial contribution to Australian poetry is based largely on his obsessive preoccupation with what he called his ‘sea sonnets’, short poems of precise observation and speculation using as first reference the myriad life-forms (non-human and human) of the ocean, the littoral, and specifically the coastal areas of Queensland: reef life, bay life and holiday-makers. Although these sonnets are substantially collected in three individual volumes that almost cover Blight’s full writing career – *A Beachcomber’s Diary* (1963), *My Beachcombing Days* (1968) and *Holiday Sea Sonnets* (1985) – his *Selected Poems* (1976), which received both the National Book Council and the Patrick White awards, also reveals a more urban, if not urbane, imagination. Blight’s concern with contemporary social issues is highlighted in the opening section of his *Selected Poems* under the heading ‘Poems 1969–1975’. This was the period of the Vietnam conflict and Blight’s responsiveness was reflected not only in an opening-up of subject matter but also in technical innovation stimulated by a new contact with Canadian poetry following the migration of one of his daughters to Canada.

Blight’s poetic career was consolidated with the publication of *Selected Poems*. His stature was further enhanced by his three subsequent volumes, which placed the compulsive observer of quiddities and oddities (including his own) within the raucous high-rise development world of ‘the new city’ in the technological decades: *Hart* (1975), *Pageantry for a Lost Empire* (1977) and *The New City Poems* (1980). *Selected Poems 1939–1990* was published posthumously in 1996.

Blight stands outside the mainstream of Australian poetry, not so much because the subject-matter of much of his writing ostentatiously isolates itself through its restriction of form and content, but because of his pursuit of the

determinedly non-lyrical mode, staccato and clustered, and often with quite complex thought structures compressed into tight phrases. It was not until the appearance of the later 'new city' poems that a truer appreciation of Blight's rugged individuality of mind and his strikingly idiosyncratic cadence became widespread. It was a period when a review of poetic forms and processes was being undertaken and Blight was hailed as a precursor to the work of BRUCE BEAVER and the new ironists.

Despite a certain 'fashionableness' attributed to his work in the 1970s, Blight's poetry retains a remarkable consistency of tone and voice, though within this individuality there has certainly been technical development, especially regarding not only the use of rhyme but also the placement of it. Nevertheless, what is apparent is how early the poetic compression and the rasping, quirky tone established themselves to distinguish an original poetic identity. Blight was a substantial contributor to what might be termed the 'anti-lyric' line of Australian poetry that makes an uneasy linking through CHRISTOPHER BRENNAN, R. D. FITZGERALD and Blight down to Bruce Beaver and PHILIP SALOM.

Blight was awarded the Dame Mary Gilmore Medal in 1965, the Grace Leven Poetry Prize in 1977 and the Christopher Brennan Award in 1980.

Further reading

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THOMAS SHAPCOTT

Boey Kim Cheng (1965–)

Singaporean poet

He was born in Singapore and graduated with honours in English from the National University of Singapore in 1988. His poetic inclinations were noted early in his university career, and the poet LEE TZU PHENG took him under her wing from the start. In 1989 his first collection, *Somewhere Bound*, was published and received very favourable reviews. There is a strength in the volume that definitely makes Boey one of the best young poets writing in Singapore today. In 1992 his second volume, *Another Place*, was published.

As the titles of the collections indicate, Boey's poems deal with displacement and the human cost

involved. There is an impressive maturity about the poems as he ponders in *Another Place* on his experience during a sojourn 'into a land which looks like the past'. Boey's travels in India helped to extend the dimensions of his well-crafted poems and provide the basis for existential reflections based on the recurring theme of quest which continues in a third volume, *Days of No Name* (1996). His voice has resonance, the tone is serious, and the language terse. There is the stamp of rich maturity in the work of this poet who is now engaged in doctoral research on the work of W. B. Yeats.

DUDLEY DE SOUZA

Boldrewood, Rolf (1826–1915)

Australian novelist

Born Thomas A. Browne in London, England, the eldest son of a merchant and sea captain, he went to Australia at the age of five, was educated in the classics at Sydney College, and developed a profound admiration for Sir Walter Scott, whose *Marmion* supplied his pen name. Boldrewood commenced running cattle in Western Victoria, changed to sheep, and fell victim to drought. In 1870 he abandoned grazing and sought an alternative income through the political patronage of a brother-in-law and through writing. In 1871 he was appointed police magistrate and clerk of petty sessions in Gulgong, New South Wales, and in 1872 he became gold commissioner. Subsequently he held positions at Dubbo, Armidale and Albury until he retired from government services and settled in Melbourne, where he died.

Boldrewood published a kangaroo-hunting sketch as early as 1866 in the *Cornhill Magazine*, but the real impetus and opportunity to write came with the failure of his farming career in 1870. With a substantial family to support and a wealth of pastoral, goldmining and judicial experience on which to draw, Boldrewood plunged into a twenty-five-year career during which he produced some twenty works of fiction.

Boldrewood's plots range from the pastoral apologia of a successful Kentish immigrant (*A Sydney-Side Saxon*, 1891) to a historical romance of the Maori wars in New Zealand (*War to the Knife*, 1899). His realism, which is most convincing when he writes directly from his own experience, is

tempered by a romantic cult of the aristocratic: characters intuit the true status of the dishevelled remittance man and feel a *paysannerie obligé* need to assist him.

Boldrewood's masterpiece is *Robbery Under Arms* (serialized in the *Sydney Mail* in 1882–83), a vernacular repentance novel that recounts the exploits of a gang of Australian bushrangers led by a charming, courteous and superhuman English gentleman, Captain Starlight. Boldrewood sets the exciting but illicit adventures and exotic locations within the frame of Dick Marston's 'what-a-fool-I've-been' thoughts in the condemned cell. The commitment to racy vernacular narration alongside the casting of the English gentry as the exemplum of ability, manners and style is typical of a phase of colonial ambivalence.

Further reading

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Paul de Serville, *Rolf Boldrewood: A Life* (2000).

CHRIS TIFFIN

Bolt, Carol (1941–2000)

Canadian dramatist

She was born in Winnipeg, Canada, and educated at the University of British Columbia (BA, 1961), but lived for almost thirty years in Toronto, Canada.

Known best for *Buffalo Jump* (1972), *Gabe* (1973) and *Red Emma: Queen of the Anarchists* (1974), Bolt blends a variety of styles with fact and fiction. She wrote some seventeen plays, including children's plays, plus radio and television work.

Often compared to that of the Canadian playwright SHARON POLLOCK, Bolt's work is more akin to that of the Australian writer DOROTHY HEWETT and the New Zealand playwright RENEE. The comparison to Pollock seems to derive from their both being Canadian women playwrights in the 1970s and from their interest in history. Bolt's use of history is more closely associated with a desire to re-create moments of forgotten history than to document the past: these re-creations establish mythical figures for today, including 'Red Evans' (a combination of two marchers who protested against the Depression government's treatment of the jobless) in *Buffalo Jump*; the anarchist Emma Goldman, in *Red Emma*; Métis leaders

Gabriel Dumont and Louis Riel in *Gabe*; and PAULINE JOHNSON in 'Pauline' (premièred 1973).

Like Hewett, Bolt uses short scenes, shifting time sequences, music, satire, myth-making, and puppets or 'fake' people to swell the numbers of 'actors' (particularly in *Buffalo Jump*). Her work relies on quick pacing and wide-ranging action. The influence of the theatre collective (from which Bolt came) is often apparent in, among other things, her montage style scenes and multiple roles for many actors.

Bolt shares with Renee an interest in social equity. Maintaining more than one political agenda, Bolt's plays convince audiences to think issues through: *Shelter* (1975), for instance, uses the experiences of five women at a bridal shower to debunk many contemporary institutions, while *Famous* (1997) uses a notorious double murder to explore the role of women in aggressive violence.

Bolt's nationalist stance is also obvious in her satirical film industry plays ('Desperadoes', premièred 1977, and *Escape Entertainment*, 1982). With the very successful thriller *One Night Stand* (1977) – the filmed script won three Canada Film Awards in 1978 – these later plays demonstrate Bolt's ability to write theatrically exciting and socially relevant plays in a variety of genres.

Further reading

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JOANNE TOMPKINS

Bond, Ruskin (1934–)

Indian novelist, short-story writer, children's writer

He was born in Kasauli, India, to British parents, grew up in Jamnagar (Gujarat) and Dehradun, attended Bishop Cotton School, Simla, and, after spending three years in the Channel Islands and London, he returned to India in 1955 for good. Bond's first novel, *The Room on the Roof* (1956), which received the John Llewellyn-Rhys Memorial Prize in 1957, is a sensitive treatment of friendship in a cold and inconstant world. He has since written more than a hundred short stories, essays, novels, poetry collections, and more than thirty

books for children including *Grandfather's Private Zoo* (1969), *Angry River* (1972) and *Adventures of Rusty* (1986). His short-story collections include, among others, *The Neighbour's Wife and Other Stories* (1967), *My First Love and other Stories* (1968) and *When Darkness Falls and Other Stories* (2001); his poetry collections include *It Isn't Time that's Passing; Poems 1970–71* (1972) and *Lone Fox Dancing: Lyric Poems* (1975). Bond's reputation as writer, however, rests on the fictional works *The Room on the Roof*, *The Night Train at Deoli* (1988), *Time Stops at Shamli* (1989) and *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra* (1992), winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992. He received a Padma Shri in 1999.

Bond excels at writing 'mood' pieces about his own life and the lives of those whose paths have crossed his. His recurring motifs are 'the strivings after something lost' and 'the striving after better hopes', as he states (quoting poet Sarah Doudney) in his introduction to *The Night Train at Deoli*. Not political history but the history of places and ordinary people engages Bond. *A Flight of Pigeons* (1980) is the story of an Anglo-Indian mother and her daughter abducted during the Indian Revolt of 1857 by Javed Khan, who is passionately in love with the daughter; it was made into an award-winning Hindi film *Junoon* (*Possessed*) by Shyam Benegal. *Strange Men, Strange Places* (1969) is a vivid introduction to some of the chief actors, mostly European, who dominated the North Indian scene of colonial India, but who are now almost wholly forgotten.

Landscape dominates Bond's writing, his favourite settings being the slow-to-change villages or small towns of the Himalayan foothills, where the British once set up hill stations (Dehra Dun, Piplanagar, Deoli, Shamli). Kasauli and Mussoorie feature regularly. An empathy for all forms of life and an instinctive openness to the unglamorous in life make his panther, tiger and leopard stories, such as 'Panther's Moon', 'Tiger, Tiger, Burning Bright', 'The Leopard' and 'The Tunnel', comparable to the masterly suspense tales of Jim Corbett. The mapping of Bond's literary life in *Scenes from a Writer's Life* (1997) and his reflections on the sources of his creative empowerment in *Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas* (1993), *The Lamp is Lit: Leaves from a Journal* (1998) and *Landour Days: A Writer's Journal* (2002) are not only a 'celebration of my survival as a freelance' but they also evoke the seasons of a peripatetic writer's sensibility. For

Bond, the India of the Himalayan ranges 'is an atmosphere' which, together with 'the freedom that only the mountains can give', holds Bond's imagination ('At Home in India').

Bond's stories spring from his instinctive enjoyment of the variegated Indian life; his evocation of it is reminiscent of Rudyard Kipling. The bazaar is a metaphor for easy acceptance among individuals; railway trains mark, like the flow of time itself, meetings and partings, changing destinations, possibilities to which one can never return. 'The Woman on Platform 8', 'The Eyes Have It', 'The Night Train at Deoli' and 'Time Stops at Shamli', all capture a mood of yearning for the ghosts of what might have been: 'It isn't time that is passing by, it is you and I.'

The child protagonists of some of Bond's powerful stories, such as 'Most Beautiful', 'Panther's Moon', 'Bus Stop, Piplanagar' and 'Sita and the River' (revised as *Angry River*), though deprived and capable of sadness, stand out for their individualism and their instinctive enjoyment of life. In this they are like Lila and Hari in ANITA DESAI's *The Village by the Sea* (1982), and also project, as in the case of Rusty, Bond's 'alter ego'. To Bond's achievement must be added his revival (see *A Season of Ghosts*, 1999), in the manner of Lafcadio Hearn, of the ghost story, not as a tale of evil and horror but as the more cosy narrative with which people entertain each other.

Further reading

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DEVINDRA KOHLI

Bornholdt, Jenny (1960–)

New Zealand poet

Born in Wellington, New Zealand, she holds a BA in English Literature and a Diploma in Journalism. Bornholdt's tendency to write about

the familiar and the ordinary makes her poetry accessible and popular, while it works on a number of levels. Playful humour, emotional honesty and the elevation of the everyday are her trademarks. Her first three books are *This Big Face* (1988), *Moving House* (1989) and *Waiting Shelter* (1991). Poems from these collections and *How We Met* (1995) were reprinted in *Miss New Zealand: Selected Poems* (1997). In *This Big Face*, as in her other collections, there are short poems, long poems and prose poems. *Waiting Shelter* is about family and travel, based on a 1990 journey through Europe; two major sequences explore the shifting relationship between home and overseas. *How We Met* is concerned with more intimate relationships – between people, and between people and things – and with meetings. Bornholdt's most recent collection of poetry is *These Days* (2000).

Bornholdt has acted as co-editor of *My Heart Goes Swimming: New Zealand Love Poems* (1996) and *An Anthology of New Zealand Poetry in English* (1997). With her husband, the poet GREGORY O'BRIEN, she has edited *My Heart Goes Swimming: New Zealand Love Poems* (1996) and, with Mark Williams, they edited *An Anthology of New Zealand Poetry in English* (1997), the 1997 winner of the Montana Book Award for Poetry. Critics have noted an exchange running throughout the poetry of Bornholdt and O'Brien.

Bornholdt was the winner of the 2002 Meridian Energy Katherine Mansfield Fellowship.

CHRISTINA STACHURSKI

Bosman, Herman Charles (1905–51)

South African short-story writer,
novelist, poet

He was born in Kuils River, near Cape Town, South Africa. Although Afrikaans was his home language, Bosman was educated at English-language institutions: Jeppe Boys' High School, Houghton College, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the Johannesburg Normal College. In 1926, two days after an impulsive secret marriage to Vera Sawyer, he left Johannesburg without her to take up a teaching post in the Groot Marico District of the Western Transvaal. He

spent only six months in the small rural Afrikaner community from which he would derive the characters and setting for most of his short fiction. While at home for the school holidays, he killed his stepbrother during an altercation and was sentenced to death for murder.

Subsequently reprieved and his sentence commuted, Bosman was released from prison in 1930 and joined Aegidius Jean Blignaut in writing for journalistic enterprises ranging from *The Toulleier*, a pioneering South African literary endeavour, to gutter-press periodicals such as *The New LSD*. In 1932, having obtained a divorce, he married Ellaleen Manson, and in 1934 they left for London, England. There Bosman worked as literary editor of the short-lived *Sunday Critic*, published short stories, articles and poems in *The SA Opinion*, and with his wife started an unsuccessful publishing venture. They returned to South Africa in 1940.

During the next decade Bosman's occupations included the literary editorship of *The SA Opinion* and its successor, *Trek*. He also taught poetry and gave private lessons in short-story writing to LIONEL ABRAHAMS. His eight months in Pietersburg as editor of *The Zoutpansberg Review and Mining Journal* in 1943 provided him with material and a setting that he would use in his two novels. Following his second divorce, Bosman married Helena Stegmann in 1944. He left *Trek* in 1950 and worked as a proofreader for *The Sunday Express* to allow himself more time to write.

Publications of Bosman's work include the story collections *Mafeking Road* (1947) and *Unto Dust* (1963); *A Bekkersdal Marathon* (1971) and *Jurie Steyn's Post Office* (1971), which comprise selections from his *voorkamer* conversation pieces published in *The Forum*; the novels *Jacaranda in the Night* (1947) and *Willemsdorp* (1977); his prison memoir, *Cold Stone Jug* (1949); *A Cask of Jerepigo* (1964) and *Uncollected Essays* (1981), comprising selected essays, articles and literary criticism; *The Earth is Waiting* (1974) and *Death Hath Eloquence* (1981), which include poems from *The Blue Princess* (1931), *Mara* (1932), *Rust* (1932) and *Jesus: an Ode* (1933). His 1951 play *Street-woman* appears in *Theatre One: New South African Drama* (1978), edited by STEPHEN GRAY. *Collected Works* (two volumes) was published in 1981. In 1998 the Anniversary Edition of his works was launched with a completely re-edited *Mafeking Road and Other Stories* and

Willemsdorp. Several further volumes in the series have since appeared, including some previously unpublished material.

The literary scene Bosman entered in 1931 was still largely colonial, and most writers looked to England for publishers and readers. Bosman, however, was from the first committed to the development of an indigenous South African literature. Central to his work are certain themes: he saw the heart as supreme, human nature as eternally and everywhere the same, poetic truth as superior to historical and scientific fact, humour as residing in contrast and incongruity, and Africa as symbol of and setting for man's oldest, truest impulses. Drawing largely on his own experience, he used the same themes, character types and human situations in all his fiction, but with modifications that reflect the changes he saw in his people, his country and himself over some two decades.

The early phase of Bosman's adult writing career took impetus from his partnership with Blignaut, whose Hottentot Ruiter stories inspired 'The Rooinek', his first Marico story. (At this time Bosman used the pen-name Herman Malan.) The nine Marico stories from this period are by no means free from the youthful arrogance and desire to shock displayed in his esoterically romantic poetry and three stories set in Johannesburg, but it is clear that the Marico afforded Bosman the ironic distance he needed to give both a national and a universal dimension to his personal preoccupations. In this period he portrays the Marico as he had seen it in 1926: an isolated, backward, conservative community whose people viewed blacks as an inferior race.

Features typical of Bosman's work appear in these early Marico stories: his awareness of life's victims and the bond of common humanity, his audacious use of humour and irony to expose hypocrisy and prejudice, his flair for the telling realistic or historical detail, and his technique of statement by implication. These stories also introduce characters and elements that form part of Bosman's fictional stock-in-trade, among them Oom Schalk Lourens, the typical old backveld Afrikaner who narrates most of the stories Bosman wrote before 1950, the central character who is a misfit, loser or outsider, and violent deaths, love affairs, inferiority complexes, racial tension, droughts and the *voorkamer* post office.

The nineteen Marico stories Bosman wrote in England mark a development from the previous group, in that he uses the Marico as the setting for an ironically humanized version of the romantic visions he had earlier confined to his poetry. With frequent comic effect and no loss of realism, several of these stories feature the world of chivalric romance in Marico guise, replacing wizards, love potions and princesses with witch-doctors, juba berries and Bushveld girls.

Bosman's literary activities after 1944 show him taking stock of both South Africa and himself. Depicting a community irrevocably linked to the outside world and contemporary realities, the Marico stories of this period capture the humorous, ironic and painful aspects of change and progress in South Africa at the time. Many of his essays and articles evaluate the present against the past; they are also increasingly concerned with the question of an authentic South African literary culture. *Jacaranda in the Night*, based on his relationship with Helena Stegmann, uses Pietersburg (renamed Kalvyn) as the setting for the emergent phase in the evolution of the Afrikaner; describing Hannah Theron's love affairs, Bosman looks at the people of his own generation, whose occupations have removed them from the soil to an urban milieu where their basic needs and impulses, still in step with the veld, conflict with the imperatives of progress, Calvinism and Afrikaner middle-class respectability. The semi-autobiographical *Cold Stone Jug* reviews his prison experience.

Bosman's experiments with form and the statement of his work in the eighteen months before his death mark this period as a separate creative phase. Taken together, the *voorkamer* conversation pieces, *Willemsdorp*, and the play *Street-woman* amount to a personal overview of South Africa at mid-century: the *voorkamer* series focuses on the rural poor white Afrikaner, *Willemsdorp* on the entire South African community, though more particularly the middle-class Afrikaner, and *Street-woman* on the English-speaking outcasts of urban society.

In the *voorkamer* series Bosman expands the *voorkamer* post office conversations sometimes occurring in Oom Schalk Lourens's stories from a narrative device into a versatile literary form suited both to wide-ranging social satire and to suggesting the displacement of the rural Afrikaner in South Africa's post-war development.

Willemsdorp, in which a white newspaper editor has an affair with a Coloured prostitute, focuses on the recently enacted extension to the Immorality Act of 1927, which outlawed sexual intercourse between people of different races. Here Bosman portrays characters alienated from their African heritage, from each other and from themselves.

Influences on Bosman's writing include Edgar Allan Poe, other nineteenth-century American short-story writers, and a local tradition of fireside tales such as those he had heard in the Marico. Its irony, psychological insight, literary resonances and the inclusion of South African terms without explanation distinguish Bosman's fiction from much similar contemporaneous work. He may be compared with Frank Brownlee and PAULINE SMITH, South African regional writers of roughly the same period who wrote English with the cadence of the language spoken by the community they described, but, unlike them, he belonged to his characters' language group, wrote specifically for South Africans, and published his work locally. In the people he depicts and in his awareness of their vulnerability in the face of social change, he bears similarities to William Faulkner and John Steinbeck.

Except in a handful of short lyrics, Bosman's poetic persona is incapable of achieving the ironic and humanizing objectivity of his Marico stories and *voorkamer* conversations. He is similarly handicapped by his closeness to the central characters in his novels. His short fiction, however, includes some of the early masterpieces of South African post-colonial fiction.

Further reading

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GILLIAN SIEBERT

Botswana

The Republic of Botswana (formerly Bechuanaland) is a vast and sparsely populated country in South Africa, bordered by Namibia and the Caprivi Strip to the west and north, Zimbabwe to the northeast and South Africa to the south and southeast. Although much of the country is dominated by the Kalahari Desert, with its arid climate, the lush waterways of the Okavango Delta in the northwest produce tropical conditions, while in the eastern area rainfall is moderate and the soil arable.

It is largely in this eastern region that the Tswana came to settle. Little is known of Botswana's history before their arrival, but by the early nineteenth century these Bantu peoples were already firmly established. Displacing the indigenous Khoi-San groups ('Hottentot-Bushmen'), they introduced sophisticated political structures and enjoyed successful economies based on cattle and grain farming.

During this period the first contact with Europeans was made through Christian missionaries, notably Robert Moffat, Mary Moffat and David Livingstone. But it was only later in the nineteenth century, primarily over land and gold, that tensions developed with the Boer trekkers from the Transvaal (now in the Republic of South Africa). One of the most able of Tswana leaders, Khama III, chief of the Bamangwato, skilfully negotiated with the Europeans and won the protection of the British government (1885), which led to the formal establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1891. Using British support, Khama was not only able to defend his eastern borders against the incursions of the Boers but he secured his northern borders from attack by the traditional enemy, the Ndebele of Matabeleland (now in Zimbabwe).

From this time until 1960 Bechuanaland remained under the protection of the British crown, its powers exercised by the high commissioner in South Africa. The South African Act of Union of 1909, which created the Union (now the Republic) of South Africa, provided for eventual transfer to South Africa of Bechuanaland and the two other High Commission Territories, Basutoland and Swaziland, despite their resistance to it. The provision was dropped in 1961, however, after the withdrawal of South Africa from the Commonwealth.

A major step was taken towards independence in 1965 with the implementation of Bechuanaland's self-government constitution under Seretse Khama, hereditary chief of the Bamangwato, who had become prime minister in recent general elections. As a grandson of Khama III, he enjoyed substantial rural and traditional support in the country. He had also emerged as a cautious and conservative politician, generally acceptable to Britain on both domestic and foreign grounds. In early 1966 final constitutional talks were held in London, and a number of months later, on 30 September, under the leadership of President Khama, the Republic of Botswana was created.

At independence Botswana was one of Africa's poorest states, with minimal infrastructural development and a predominantly subsistence economy. Despite a series of devastating droughts, however, drastically reducing the national livestock and crop output, Botswana has become one of the continent's richest states in terms of GDP *per capita*. This has been achieved largely through its mining operations, with abundant mineral deposits – especially diamonds – having been discovered since 1966. Some of this wealth has been used for rural development, in an attempt to check the increasing unemployment. Yet agricultural production remains relatively low, and migration continues from the farms to the mines and towns.

With the death of Sir Seretse in 1980, his vice-president and chosen successor Quett Ketumile Masire (later Sir Ketumile) became president in his stead. While less conservative than his predecessor, he continued with much the same political and economic policies, which led to his renewal as president in the general elections of 1984 and 1989. (He came from the smaller Bangwaketse group and so did not have as strong a personal power-base. But tribalism has not proved to be a serious problem in Botswana's politics.) In 1998 Festus Mogae became president.

The roots of the country's multi-party democracy date back to Tswana traditions, particularly the 'Kgotla' or village council, in which the powers of traditional leaders were limited by custom and law. This has resulted in one of the most open political systems in Africa, in which the various ethnic minorities participate freely. Although a government-owned newspaper and broadcasting operation dominate the media, there is an independent press, and foreign publications are readily available.

Also contributing to the country's stability and progress is the recent emphasis placed on education. Until 1961, primary schooling was completely financed by tribal treasuries, with some groups spending up to 70 per cent of their budget on education. After independence primary schooling became free, although not compulsory. Out of a population of one-and-a-half million, virtually all primary-school-aged children are now enrolled at schools, and the adult literacy rate has been officially estimated to be more than 75 per cent. As well as vocational, technical and teacher-training institutions, there is an agricultural college and a national university, located near the capital city of Gaborone.

Although the official language of Botswana is English, Setswana (the language of the eight Batswana tribes) is spoken by the majority of people and is predominant. *Dikgang Tsa Gompieno* (Botswana Daily News) is published in Setswana and English by the Department of Information and Broadcasting. Moreover, Radio Botswana, the sole broadcasting service, transmits a variety of news, educational, cultural and entertainment programmes in both languages. The TV Association of Botswana is presently limited to a relay service from South Africa, but plans are under consideration for a national television system.

The boundaries of Botswana literature have yet to be clearly determined. There were three figures of note whose works largely appeared in the decades leading up to independence: Lettles Disang Raditladi (1910–71), Michael Ontepetse Seboni (1912–) and Moliri Silas Molema (1892–1965). The first two, who were educated in South Africa, preferred to write in Tswana, while the bulk of Molema's literary effort was in English. In keeping with the social conditions and publishing practices of the times, these pieces were generally formal in style and biographical-historical in subject-matter.

Only one contemporary writer has succeeded in breaking through these limitations and achieving international recognition. BESSIE HEAD was born in South Africa, but took up a teaching position in Botswana in 1964. In such works as *When Rain Clouds Gather* (1969), *Maru* (1971) and *A Question of Power* (1974), she explores the recurrent themes of racism, women's oppression, exile/expatriation and the tyranny of chieftaincy.

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PAUL SCANLON

Bowering, George (1935–)

Canadian poet, novelist

He was born in Penticton, British Columbia, Canada, and grew up in nearby Oliver. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force (1954–57) and

then studied at the University of British Columbia for his BA (1960) and MA (1963). At university he met such writers as FRANK DAVEY and FRED WAH and became part of the notorious poetry magazine *Tish*. Influenced by the open form poetics of Charles Olson and other New American poets, the Canadian group valued process, voice and form in the poetic act, and the local as the ground of poetry. Such qualities shaped Bowering's first collections of lyric poems, *Sticks and Stones* (1962; rev. 1989), *Points on the Grid* (1964) and *The Man in Yellow Boots* (1965).

Bowering taught at the University of Calgary (1963–66), enrolled in the PhD programme at the University of Western Ontario (1966–77), then withdrew to become writer-in-residence and, later, lecturer at Sir George Williams University (now Concordia University) in Montreal (1967–71). In 1972 he began teaching at Simon Fraser University, British Columbia.

Bowering has published more than fifty books and pamphlets in a range of genres: poetry, short stories, fiction, essays, reviews, plays, and works that combine genres. The localism of his upbringing in British Columbia is evident in such works as *George Vancouver* (1970), *Autobiology* (1972), *Flycatcher and Other Stories* (1974), *A Short Sad Book* (1977), *Bowering's B.C.* (1996) and *His Life: A Poem* (2000).

Bowering has challenged literary forms that assert control and that, to him, characterize the 'centralist' bias (or the Ontario bias) of mainstream Canadian literary thought, with its humanist preoccupation with national unity and identity. For Bowering, such attempts to establish order restrict the freedom of the writer and repress the power of the writing act itself; he was drawn to literary forms in which the materiality of language takes precedence. Bowering's early lyrics soon gave way to his interest in the 'suite' of poems, as in *Rocky Mountain Foot* (1969). This extended form, arising from the localism of the writing moment, developed into what is perhaps Bowering's unique contribution: 'serial' texts (adapting the term from the American poets Jack Spicer and Robin Blaser), his version of the long poem form so prevalent in modern Canadian poetry. His breakthrough serial poem, *Baseball* (1967), dedicated to Spicer, was followed by a succession of distinguished titles: *Genève* (1971), *Autobiology*, *Curious* (1973), *Allophanes* (1976), *A Short Sad Book* and *Kerrisdale Elegies* (1984).

Serial writing combines a faith in the moment of composition with formal limits or 'rules' (as in a game) that prevent the writer from pre-determining the writing; the assurance of the latter enables a writing act in which chance and indeterminacy become operative. Continuity, or aesthetic order, is not governed by the writer's memory of what preceded, but by connections that emerge in the process of writing each successive piece. *Genève*, for instance, was composed using the Tarot's Higher Arcana, which were shuffled, turned over, and left in a desk drawer. For each writing occasion, the top card was revealed and a poem written through immediate attention to the card's details, the length of the series governed by the number of cards.

Many years after his first novel, *Mirror on the Floor* (1967) – still in the 'realist' mode that he would abandon – Bowering published three radically self-reflexive fictional works also written in a 'serial' mode of composition: *Burning Water* (1980), *Caprice* (1987) and *Harry's Fragments* (1990). In these Bowering adopts a parodic strategy to expose the formal and perceptual expectations of genre, using as types histories, westerns and mysteries, respectively. The writer-narrator openly participates in the construction of the novel as it proceeds, making readers aware of fiction as artifice or, in Bowering's terms, as a 'stained-glass window' that reveals consciousness both in the process of creating form and of apprehending its own mortality. His short-story collections include *Flycatcher and Other Stories*, *Protective Footwear* (1978), *A Place to Die* (1983) and *The Rain Barrel and Other Stories* (1994).

Bowering has advanced his post-modernist sense of writing as integral to the creation of self and history through numerous critical essays and editorial projects, including his magazine *Imago* (1964–74). He has won two Governor General's Awards: for poetry in 1969, for *Rocky Mountain Foot* and *The Gangs of Kosmos* (1969), and for fiction in 1980, for *Burning Water*.

Further reading

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ROY MIKI

Boyd, Martin (1893–1972)

Australian novelist

Born in Lucerne, Switzerland, he was a child of delicate health. His family, long established in Australia, pedigreed and inherent with a 'strong artistic impulse', provided the background to Boyd's more celebrated fiction. He attended St John's Theological College, Melbourne, but withdrew before taking orders, realizing that his 'desire was no longer set exclusively on the Kingdom of Heaven'; he was articled to an architectural firm in Melbourne until the outbreak of the First World War. As a commissioned officer in the British Army in France, and subsequently in the Flying Corps, he contracted a detestation of militarism and the 'suicidal futility' of war, finding 'male comradeship' its one 'redeeming feature'. Boyd's hatred of belligerence became the 'most important negative preoccupation' in his writing, expressed in symbols like Hollis, aged nineteen years, 'half his face blown away, gurgling and twitching, but still alive'; Stephen Brayford, 'crucified' for his pacifist principles; and the blood-chilling Marazion hospital for the shell-shocked. In 1920 Boyd privately published *Retrospect*, a volume of poems 'in the style of Rupert Brooke'.

His career as a novelist began five years later. Boyd's early books were pseudonymously written (as Martin Mills) and poorly received in England, although *The Montforts* (1928), a cluttered 'pseudo-Galsworthian account of [his] mother's family over five generations', achieved an enthusiastic Australian audience and the first gold medal of the Australian Literature Society. In *Lucinda Brayford* (1946), following the same formula, Boyd chronicled the family history of the Brayfords, leaves imbibing failing sap from the now-'fallen tree' of aristocracy. In the Langton tetralogy – *The Cardboard Crown* (1952), *A Difficult Young Man* (1955), *Outbreak of Love* (1957) and *When Blackbirds Sing* (1962), tentatively entitled 'The Past Within Us' – Boyd comfortably continued to portray the dying aristocratic system, elegantly, meticulously and empathetically, his tone mellow and meditative. But contemporary trends and publishers' demands that fiction should be 'violent, outspoken and crudely sexual' prematurely 'killed the Langton sequence' and diverted Boyd's primary interest from literature to art. His

'Australian' fiction, therefore, entered neither the post-aristocratic era, nor post-colonial Australia. While within the old order, Australia might be culturally dependent upon the English motherland, Boyd, unlike Henry James, viewed the land of his youth not as culturally anaemic but as possessing a 'far more living creative culture'. In *The Picnic* (1937), for example, he proffered as examples of a vital Australian art works by Hans Heysen, Arthur Streeton and his own brother Penleigh Boyd.

The images of natural Australia in his writing are vibrant and lovingly executed. In his novels, there is a dramatically rich Anglo-Australian tension. On one hand, Boyd might argue that colony and motherland were both 'Anglo-Saxon countries', that he created his 'characters as people, not as nationals': 'I was not patriotic in the nationalistic sense, but I was patriotic in that I wished my country to be a land of justice, human wellbeing, and creative achievement.' On the other, he considered himself geographically schizophrenic: 'I have suffered through being considered an Englishman in Australia and an Australian in England.' In the materialistic, post-war world, he could find 'no abiding city'; he lived restlessly in England and in Italy. Truculently, he criticised the hypocrisy of archbishops, the ineptitude of politicians and the abrogation of aristocratic responsibility; his authorial tone became pervasively threnodic; and Boyd concerned himself more with a 'spiritual home, built over two thousand years with marble from Athens and rock from Galilee.'

Writing, Boyd argued, must be an expression of the Holy Ghost within him: 'if what he expresses is good and true, and has something of the eternal, it will contribute to the spirit of his age ... All good art is religious.' As Boyd's sentiments were conservative, so was his style. He described his technique as akin to the painter Alfred Sisley's pointillisme. Like pointillist art, Boyd's writing lacks dynamic passion: sentiment and lyrical love are abundant, but his fiction, teeming with trysts, elopements and adulteries, is never convincingly libidinous. More fruitfully, Boyd conveys mystical emotions: epiphanies wrought by the art of Michelangelo and Praxitiles; discernment of 'dark forces' beneath the 'sunlight and dreamy distances' of Australian landscape; or awe inspired by Palestrina's masses sung in Dijon's cathedral.

Further reading

Brenda Niall, *Martin Boyd* (1977).

NOEL HENRICKSEN

Brainard, Cecelia Manguerra (1947–)

Filipino novelist, short-story writer, essayist

Born in Cebu City, the Philippines, she grew up in the old aristocracy of Cebu, studying in an exclusive girls' school run by nuns, with whom she studied Anglo-American literature. An outsider-spectator to the tumultuous events of the Marcos years, which culminated in the People Power Revolution of 1986, Brainard was, by her own admission in her collection of essays, *Philippine Woman in America* (1991), neither 'just Filipino' nor completely American, but one who had 'evolved into another creature – a Filipino American'. She left the Philippines in 1969 and has since lived with her family in California, USA, where she is a board member of the USA West PEN Centre.

Brainard draws heavily on memories of childhood and youth for much of her fiction. These memories include a wealth of stories, both fictive and historical, such as folk-tales, quasi-legends, superstitions, quaint customs and traditions, and notorious or famous personages who fuelled gossip in Cebuano high society.

This historical Cebu becomes the fictive 'Ubec' in her stories, collected in *Woman with Horns and Other Stories* (1987). Inspired by Latin American writers as well as Filipino writers such as NICK JOAQUIN, she weaves romantic fantasies of Ubec during different periods of an imagined past. In the stories set in the 1960s, however, Brainard shifts to a more realistic mode as she culls more directly from her memories of adolescence – close kinship ties, extended families with innumerable aunts and cousins, young girls agonizing over their first stirrings of sexual passion.

In her novel *The Song of Yvonne* (1991), Brainard grapples with 'the ghost of that War ever present' during her childhood, as she grew up with 'endless war stories [which] were there, always there'. Set in Ubec during the Japanese occupation, the novel is her earnest attempt to understand 'the collective wounding that Filipinos experienced in that War'.

Her other books include the novel *Magdalena* (2002), the short-story collection *Acapulco at Sunset and Other Stories* (1995), and *Cecilia's Diary* (2003).

THELMA E. ARAMBULO

Braithwaite, E. R. (1922–)

Guyanese novelist

Born and educated in Georgetown, Guyana, he studied in England and served in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War. After demobilization he worked as a schoolteacher in a poor neighbourhood of London, England, and used his experience of racial prejudice there in his bestselling novel *To Sir, With Love* (1959). The book was made into a popular film starring Sidney Poitier. Braithwaite was also a social worker in London before he became head of the Guyanese Mission at the United Nations. He later became Guyana's ambassador to Venezuela, and educational consultant to UNESCO in Paris.

In *To Sir, With Love* Braithwaite's account of his experience is interwoven with commentary and analysis. This is his standard method and is seen again in *Paid Servant* (1962), describing his experience as a social worker in London. His third book, *A Kind of Homecoming* (1962), concerns Braithwaite's travels in West Africa, his ancestral homeland (his ancestors were taken as slaves from West Africa to Guyana). *A Choice of Straws* (1965) departs from this standard method: it is a novel dealing with interracial love in London. *Reluctant Neighbours* (1972) gives Braithwaite's impressions of racial discrimination in the USA, and *Honorary White* (1975) describes a visit to South Africa, where he was regarded as an honorary white under apartheid laws.

Whether based on his experiences in England, the USA or Africa, Braithwaite's books provide documented reports of discrimination suffered by black people. Braithwaite deserves credit for bringing the subject of racial discrimination to a wider audience, but to the extent that he suggests that racial discrimination may be removed by education alone, thereby ignoring possible political and economic motives, his commentary is well-meaning though somewhat outdated. Only in the final pages of *Honorary White* does Braithwaite

show some awareness of the complex human motives through which racial prejudice is generated and sustained.

FRANK M. BIRBAL Singh

Brand, Dionne (1953–)

Canadian/Trinidadian poet,
short-story writer

Born in Guayaguayare, Trinidad, she attended a private girls' school in Trinidad before studying at the University of Toronto (BA, 1975) and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (MA, 1988). Her work includes children's poems (*Earth Magic*, 1980) and a collection of essays and interviews (*Rivers Have Sources, Trees Have Roots: Speaking of Racism*, 1986), co-authored with K. Sri Bhaggiyadatta.

Complaining of a 'Past/always on yuh arse', Brand shares many post-colonial writers' obsession with history and a determination to appropriate imperial languages to serve formerly colonized peoples. The liminal state Brand records in the title of her book of poems *Fore Day Morning* (1978) and elsewhere reflects in themes, puns, oxymoronic syntax and ironic lineation is a counterpart to the twilight condition between two cultures that DEREK WALCOTT recurrently constructs. Whereas, however, Walcott seeks to reconcile himself with imperial 'civilization', Brand takes issue with imperial barbarities. She often offers feminist correctives to male texts, a practice exemplified in *Winter Epigrams and Epigrams to Ernesto Cardenal in Defense of Claudia* (1983) and *No Language Is Neutral* (1990), a lesbian feminist response to Walcott's volume of poetry *Midsummer* (1984). The surrealist poetry collection *Primitive Offensive* (1982) parallels parts of EDWARD BRATHWAITE's *The Arrivants* (1973) as the protean, ancestral, naked, dismembered and contemporary warrior/woman protagonist journeys to recover her African roots and the names lost in the middle passage (the sea route used to transport slaves from Africa), documenting the racism that those in the black diaspora endure and fight.

In 1970 Brand moved to Toronto and a condition of double exile represented in the witty 'Winter Epigrams' and in many narratives of *Sans Souci and Other Stories* (1988). Frequently parallel workings of experiences recorded in her poetry, some of these

stories have Caribbean settings, while others bear comparison to SAMUEL SELVON's accounts of Caribbean emigrants' experiences of racism in northern climes. Brand's more isolated protagonists, however, additionally encounter misogynistic behaviours.

The poetry collection *Chronicles of the Hostile Sun* (1984) represents Brand's angry response to the 1983 American invasion of Grenada.

Since 1994, Brand has continued her exploration of the exilic condition of the African diaspora within several new genres. Along with new collections of poetry, *Land to Light On* (1997, winner of the 1997 Governor General's Award for Poetry and the Trillium Award for Poetry) and *Thirsty* (2002), she has published a book of essays, *Bread out of Stone: Recollections, Sex, Recognitions, Race, Dreaming, Politics* (1994), and two novels, *In Another Place, Not Here* (1996) and *At the Full and Change of the Moon* (1999). Pursuing her interest in the visual media, Brand both directed and featured in *Conversation* (National Film Board of Canada, 1996). *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (2001) is her first book of memoirs.

Further reading

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SUSAN GINGELL
KRISTEN WARDEN

Brasch, Charles Orwell (1909–73)

New Zealand poet, editor

He was born and raised in Dunedin, New Zealand, of Jewish descent on both sides; members of his mother's family were well-established merchants with many European connections and interests in scholarship and the arts. Between 1927 and 1945 Brasch lived mostly abroad, as student, teacher and civil servant in England, as amateur archaeologist in Egypt, and as eager traveller in Italy and Russia, years described in his memoir, *Indirections* (1980).