THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE

VOLUME I & II

ATO QUAYSON

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE

VOLUME I

Postcolonial studies is attentive to cultural differences, marginalization and exclusion. Such studies pay equal attention to the lives and conditions of various racial minorities in the West, as well as to regional, indigenous forms of representation around the world as being distinct from a dominant Western tradition. With the consolidation of the field in the past forty years, the need to establish the terms by which we might understand the sources of postcolonial literary history is more urgent now than ever before. *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature* is the first major collaborative overview of the field. A mix of geographic and thematic chapters allows for different viewpoints on postcolonial literary history. Chapters cover the most important national traditions, as well as more comparative geographical and thematic frameworks. This major reference work will set the future agenda for the field, whilst also synthesizing its development for scholars and students.

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	Historical and political events	Literary and cultural events
1492	Columbus sails from Palos, Spain (3 Aug); discovers Watling Island in Bahamas (12 Oct); Cuba (18 Oct); Haiti (6 Dec)	
1494	Treaty of Tordesillas: Spain and Portugal divide New World between them Parliament of Drogheda marks subservience of Ireland to England	
1498	Vasco da Gama arrives in Calicut, India	
1500	Pope Alexander VI proclaims a Year of Jubilee, and imposes a tithe for crusade against Turks Moorish revolt in Granada suppressed	
1503	Casa Contrataccion (Colonial office) founded in Madrid to deal with American affairs Zanzibar becomes Portuguese colony	
1510	Portuguese acquire Goa	
1514		Septem horae canonicae first book published in Arabic type, published in Italy

1515		The Lateran Council's decree, 'De impressione librorum', forbids printing of books without permission of Roman Catholic authorities
1518	The Barbary States of Algiers and Tunis founded	
1521	Hernando Cortes assumes control of Mexico after destruction of Aztec state	
1522	Spanish forces conquer Guatemala	Jacopo Sannazzaro, 'De partu Virginis', religious poem fusing pagan and Christian myth
1526	Babar establishes Mogul dynasty in Delhi	
1532	Francisco Pizarro leads expedition from Panama to Peru	
1540	Afghan rebel Sher Shah becomes Emperor of Delhi	
1547		Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, Spanish writer, born (d. 1616)
1548	Gonzalo Pizarro, son of Francisco Pizarro, defeated at Battle of Xaquixaguane (Peru) by Pedro de la Gasca and executed	
1555	French colony founded on the Bay of Rio de Janeiro	An Aztec dictionary published
1560		Hsu Wei, <i>Ching P'Ing Mei</i> , first classic Chinese novel
1564	Spaniards occupy Philippines and build Manila	William Shakespeare born (d. 1616)
1569		Alfonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga, <i>La Araucana</i> , Spanish epic on the conquest of Chile

1572		Luís Vaz de Camões, <i>Os Lusiados</i> , Portuguese epic poem on voyages of Vasco da Gama
1575		Tasso, <i>Gerusalemme liberata</i> , epic poems about the Crusades
1590	The Emperor of Morocco annexes Timbuctoo	
1592	Portuguese settle at Mombasa	
1595	Dutch begin to colonize East Indies	
1596	Pacification of Ireland	Merchant of Venice first performance (first printed 1600)
1598	Dutch take Mauritius	
1599		Building of the Globe Theatre, Southwark, London, where Shakespeare's plays are performed
1600	British East India Company founded	
1601		Bento Teixeira Pinto, <i>Prosopopya</i> , first Brazilian epic
1603	Lord Mountjoy conquers northern counties of Ireland	
1604		Othello first performance 1604–5 (first printed 1622)
1605		Cervantes, <i>Don Quixote</i> , part 1 published
1606		Antony and Cleopatra first performance between 1606 and 1607 (first printed 1623)
1610	Jesuit state of Paraguay created	
1610	Skirmishes between English and Dutch settlers in India	
1611		The Tempest first performance (first printed 1623)

1613	English colonists in Virginia destroy French settlement at Port Royal, Nova Scotia; prevent French colonization of Maryland	
1615		Cervantes Don Quixote, part 2
1620	Pilgrim Fathers, leaving Plymouth, England, in Mayflower for North America, land at New Plymouth, Mass., to found Plymouth Colony	
1625	French occupy the Antilles and Cayenne	
1626		English author and traveller George Sandys makes first translation of a classic in America, Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>
1627	Shah Jahan (1592–1666), succeeding his father Jahangir, becomes Great Mogul of India (–1658) Barbados, West Indies, claimed as English colony	
1628	Dutch occupy Java and Moluccas	
1630	John Winthrop, English Puritan leader (1587–1649), sails with Plymouth Company's expedition (Apr); arrives in Massachusetts with 1,000 settlers; founds Boston; 16,000 more settlers follow (–1642)	
1632	Portuguese driven out of Bengal	
1634	Island of Curaçao captured by Dutch forces	
1635	Dutch occupy Formosa, English Virgin Islands, French Martinique	

- 1636 Dutch settle in Ceylon
- 1640 French finish occupation of Alsace
- 1643 Confederation of New England formed by Connecticut, New Haven, Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay Colony
- 1644 French occupy Rhineland
- 1645 Dutch occupy St Helena
- 1646 English occupy Bahamas
- 1649 England declared a commonwealth
- 1650 Dutch and English agree about respective frontiers of their North American colonies
- 1652 Dutch establish settlement in Cape Town
- 1654 Treaty of Westminster ends
 Anglo-Dutch War; Dutch
 recognize Navigation Act
 Portuguese finally drive Dutch
 out of Brazil
- 1655 English capture Jamaica from Spain
- 1656 Dutch take Colombo from Portuguese
- 1661 Famine in India, no rain since 1659
- 1663 Charles II grants charters to
 Royal African Company and to
 eight proprietors of North
 Carolina and Rhode Island
- 1664 Swedish colonies on Gold Coast given to Dutch
- 1666 French capture Antigua, Montserrat and St Christopher English privateers take Tobago

1668	British East India Company takes control of Bombay	
1670	Spain formally cedes Jamaica to England	
1669	Venetians lose Crete, their last colonial possession, to the Turks	
1673	French expedition against Ceylon	Robert Clavel, Catalogue of All the Books Printed in England Since the Dreadful Fire of London in 1666
1680	French colonial empire, reaching from Quebec to mouth of Mississippi River, is organized	
1682	La Salle claims Louisiana territory for France and takes possession of Mississippi Valley	
1683	Peace treaty between William Penn and North American Indians	
1685	All Chinese ports open to foreign trade	Publication of Alexander Oliver Esquemeling's <i>History of the</i> <i>Buccaneers of America</i>
1686	Federation of New England formed by James II in order to remodel British colonies in North America French annex Madagascar	
1687	Arguin, Guinea, established as colony by Brandenburg	
1689	Natal becomes Dutch colony	
1691	New East India Company formed in London	
1693	National Debt begins in England	
1697	French under André de Brue attempt to colonize West Africa	

1707	Union between England and Scotland under name Great Britain	
1708	British East India Company and New East India Company merged	
1709	14,000 inhabitants of the Palatinate emigrate to North America (c. 100,000 Germans will follow during next 100 years, and 5 million during 1800s)	
1710	Mauritius, formerly part of Dutch East Indies, becomes French	
1711	Rio de Janeiro captured by French	
1713	Spain agrees at Utrecht to cede Gibraltar and Minorca to Great Britain	
1714	Tripoli becomes independent of Turkey	
1719		Daniel Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> Fray Francisco Ximénez translates fragments of <i>Popol Vuh</i> into Spanish
1726		Jonathan Swift, <i>Gulliver's Travels</i>
1749	Establishment of Halifax, Nova Scotia, as English fortress	
1756	120 British soldiers imprisoned and die in India ('Black hole of Calcutta') Start of Seven Years' War between English and French in North America that leads to the English acquisition of Quebec (-1763)	

1760	Dutch explorer Jakobus Coetsee advances beyond Orange River, S. Africa	
1763	British Proclamation provides government for Quebec, Florida and Grenada	
1768	Secretary of State for Colonies appointed in Britain	
1773	Boston Tea Party: protest against tea duty imposed by Britain	
1774	Quebec Act, to secure Canada's loyalty to Great Britain, establishes Roman Catholicism in Canada	
1775	American Revolution (-1783)	
1780	Rebellion in Peru against Spanish rule	
1783	Britain recognizes independence of the US	
1784	Pitt's India Act; East India Company under government control Founding of Asiatic Society	Phillis Wheatley, Black American poet, dies (b. 1753)
1787	Constitution of US signed Penal colony founded in Botany Bay, Australia	
1788		<i>Kālidāsa Shakuntala</i> translated into English by William Jones
1789	The French Revolution; French Royalists begin to emigrate	
1790	Canada Constitutional Act divides the country into two provinces, Upper and Lower Canada	
	Slaves revolt in French Santo Domingo	
1791		

- 1792 Denmark is the first nation to abolish the slave trade
- 1801 Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland comes into force
- 1802 France sends expedition to Haiti under General Leclerc to reintroduce slavery, which is defeated by Toussaint L'Ouverture
- 1805 Establishment of modern Egypt; Mehmet Ali proclaimed Pasha Break between Britain and US over trade with the West Indies
- 1807 France invades Portugal; dethroned royal family flees to Brazil Britain abolishes slave trade in its colonies
- 1808 US prohibits importation of slaves from Africa
- 1809 Napoleon annexes Papal States
 French lose Martinique and
 Cayenne to British
 Ecuador gains independence from
 Spain
- 1810 Venezuela breaks away from
 Spain
 Simón Bolívar emerges as major
 figure in South American
 politics
 British seize Guadeloupe, last
 French colony in West Indies
 Revolts in New Granada, Rio de
 la Plata and Mexico
- 1811 Paraguay declares independence from Spain British occupy Java
- 1812 US declares war on Britain

- 1813 Americans capture York
 (Toronto) and Fort St George
 Mexico declares itself independent
- 1815 Brazil declares itself independent from 1816 under Dom John
- 1816 Argentina declared independent Java restored to the Netherlands
- 1817 Simón Bolívar establishes independent government of Venezuela
- 1818 Chile proclaims its independence Border between Canada and the US agreed upon
- 1819 British settlement established in
 Singapore by East India
 Company
 Florida purchased by US from
 Spain
 Simón Bolívar becomes
 President of Colombia
- 1821 Peru proclaimed independent from Spain followed by Guatemala, Mexico, Panama and Santo Domingo
- 1822 Brazil becomes independent of Portugal
- 1823 Guatemala, San Salvador,
 Nicaragua, Honduras and
 Costa Rica form
 Confederation of United
 Provinces of Central America
 The Monroe Doctrine closes
 American continent to colonial
 settlements by European
 powers
- 1825 Bolivia becomes independent of Peru, Uruguay of Brazil Portugal recognizes Brazilian independence

1826	Pan-American Congress in Panama	
1827	Peru secedes from Colombia	Washington Irving, History of the Life and Voyage of Christopher Columbus
1828	Uruguay, since 1821 part of Brazil, becomes independent republic following Treaty of Rio de Janeiro	
1829	Venezuela withdraws from Gran Colombia to begin its independent existence	Tennyson, Timbuctoo
1830	France captures Algeria Ecuador secedes from Gran Colombia and becomes independent republic Mysore added to Britain's possessions in India	
1831	Syria, since 1516 part of Ottoman Empire, conquered by the Egyptians	
1832	Britain occupies Falkland Islands	
1833	Muhammad Ali is given Egypt and Syria; founds the dynasty that rules Egypt until 1952	The great German Shakespeare translation (began in 1794) by A. W. von Schlegel, in collaboration with Ludwig and Dorothea Tieck and W. von Baudissin, completed
1834	Sixth Kaffir War (-1835); severe clashes between Bantu people and white settlers on eastern frontier of Cape Colony Dutch farmers of the Cape Colony begin to settle in the country north of the Orange River	
1836	Boer farmers launch 'The Great Trek' systematic emigration across the Orange River away	

	from British rule; founding of Natal, Transvaal and Orange Free states	
1838	First British–Afghan War (–1842)	
1839	Treaty of London settles the dispute between Dutch and their former Belgian subjects The independent republic of Natal founded by the Boers	
1840	Lower and Upper Canada united by Act of Parliament	
1841	Britain's sovereignty proclaimed over Hong Kong USS Creole carrying slaves from Virginia to Louisiana is seized by the slaves and sails into Nassau where they become free New Zealand becomes British colony	
1842	Treaty of Nanking ends First Opium War between Britain and China and confirms cession of Hong Kong to Great Britain	
1843		William H. Prescott, <i>History of the</i> Conquest of Mexico
1845	Maori rising against British rule in New Zealand	
1847	Liberia proclaimed independent republic	William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Peru
1849	Britain annexes Punjab by treaty with the Maharajah of Lahore	
1851	Elgin treaty between Britain and US on Canadian trade	
1852		Harriet Beecher Stowe, <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>

1855	Britain annexes Oudh, India, and establishes Natal as Crown Colony	
1857	Indian mutiny over British rule; siege of Delhi begins; Delhi captured; British enter Cawnpore	
1858	East India Company transfers power to British Crown; beginning of British Raj	
1861		Charles-Étienne Brasseur de Bourbourg translates <i>Popul</i> <i>Vuh</i> in its entirety into French
1867	British North America Act establishes Dominion of Canada	
1868	W. E. B. Dubois born (d. 1963)	
1869	Mahatma Gandhi born (d. 1948)	
1873	Republic proclaimed in Spain Abolition of slave market and exports in Zanzibar	
1874	Britain annexes Fiji islands	
1875	Britain buys 176,602 Suez Canal shares from Khedive of Egypt Founding of the Theosophical Society	
1879	British Zulu War: Zulus massacre British soldiers in Isandlwana, British capture Cetewayo French Panama Canal Company organized under Ferdinand de Lesseps	
1880	France annexes Tahiti Transvaal declares itself independent of Britain; Boers led by Kruger declare a republic	
1882		James Joyce, Irish novelist, born (d. 1941)

1883	British decide to evacuate Sudan	Oliver Schreiner (South Africa The Story of an African Farm
1884	Berlin Conference of 14 European nations on African affairs Germany acquires protectorate of German East Africa, German Southwest Africa, Cameroon, Togo and German New Guinea	
1885	The Congo becomes a personal possession of King Leopold II of Belgium Germany annexes Tanganyika and Zanzibar Great Britain establishes protectorate over North Bechuanaland, the Niger River region, and south New Guinea; occupies Port Hamilton, Korea First Indian National Congress meets	
1887	First Colonial Conference opens in London	
1888	Suez Canal convention	
1890	Britain exchanges Helgoland with Germany for Zanzibar and Pemba	
1893	Natal granted self-governance Swaziland annexed by Transvaal France acquires protectorate over Laos	
1894	Uganda becomes a British protectorate	Kipling, The Jungle Book
1895	British South Africa Company territory south of Zambezi becomes Rhodesia Cuba fights Spain for its independence	
1896	France annexes Madagascar	

1897		Joseph Conrad, The Nigger of the Narcissus
1898	Russia obtains lease of Port Arthur, China; Britain, the lease of Kowloon US declares war on Spain over Cuba; Americans destroy Spanish fleet at Manila; Treaty of Paris between US and Spain; Spain cedes Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines for \$20 million	
1899	Philippines demand independence from US	Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness Rudyard Kipling, The White Man's Burden
1900	Commonwealth of Australia created	Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim
		Solomon T. Plaatje (South Africa), <i>Boer War Diary</i> José Enrique Rodó, <i>Ariel</i>
1901	Edmund Barton inaugurated as first prime minister of Commonwealth of Australia The Boers begin organized guerrilla warfare Cuba Convention makes country a US protectorate	Rudyard Kipling, <i>Kim</i> Nobel Prize in Literature established
1902	Colonial Conference meets in London First meeting of Committee of Imperial Defence	J. A. Hobson, Imperialism
1903	British complete conquest of Northern Nigeria King Edward VII visits Paris; French President Loubet visits London, the 'Entente Cordiale' established	E. D. Morel, The Congo Slave State
1904	Hereros and Nama revolt in German Southwest Africa until 1908	Joseph Conrad, Nostromo

1905 Sinn Fein Party founded Alberta and Saskatchewan become provinces of Canada Maji-Maji uprising in German East Africa 1906 Algeciras Conference gives France and Spain control of Morocco Self-government granted to the Transvaal and Orange River colonies US troops occupy Cuba (-1909) after reconciliation following Liberal revolt fails 1907 New Zealand becomes a Nobel Prize in Literature dominion within the British awarded to Rudyard Kipling (20 Dec. 1865 - 18 Jan. 1936) **Empire** Rabindranath Tagore (India), 1908 Leopold II transfers the Congo Home and the World (his private possession since 1885) to Belgium Union of South Africa established Dutch establish rule in Bali Anglo-German discussions on Mohandas K. Ghandi (India), 1909 control of Baghdad Railroad Hind Swaraj Kwame Nkrumah born (d. 1972) 1910 Egyptian premier Boutros Ghali assassinated Union of South Africa becomes a dominion within the British Empire with Louis Botha as premier W. E. B. Du Bois founds National Association for the

Iliya Abu Madi (Lebanon), *The Memorial of the Past*J. E. Casely-Hayford (Gold
Coast), *Ethiopia Unbound*

Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in US Start of the Mexican Revolution

1911

Chronology

		Muhammad Iqbal (India), Complaint
1912		Léon Damas born (d. 1978)
1913	Mahatma Gandhi, leader of Indian Passive Resistance Movement, arrested	Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Rabindranath Tagore (7 May 1861 – 7 August 1941)
1914	Northern and Southern Nigeria united General Zamon becomes president of Haiti Start of World War I Gandhi returns to India and supports government	E. R. Burroughs, <i>Tarzan of the Apes</i> Gabriela Mistral (Chile), <i>Sonnets of Death</i>
1915		Nikolai Bukharin, <i>Imperialism and World Economy</i> Mariano Azuela (Mexico), <i>The Underdogs</i>
1916	T. E. Lawrence ('Lawrence of Arabia') appointed British political and liaison officer to Emir Faisal's army	Vladimir Lenin, <i>Imperialism: The</i> Highest Stage of Capitalism Rabindranath Tagore (India), Nationalism
1917	US purchases Virgin Islands	
1918	British government abandons Home Rule for Ireland End of World War I	US Post Office burns instalments of James Joyce's <i>Ulysses</i> published in <i>Little Review</i>
1919	Peace Conference opens in Versailles; proposal to create League of Nations approved; in Treaty of Versailles Germany loses all its colonies War between British, Indian and Afghan forces Edward Carson demands repeal of Home Rule in Ireland US House of Representatives moves to curtail immigration	Li Ta-chao (China), A New Era

	Fighting begins between French and Syrians at Baalbek, Syria	
1920	In Paris, League of Nations comes into being Government of Ireland Act passed by British Parliament; Northern and Southern Ireland each to have own Parliament Gandhi emerges as India's leader in its struggle for independence	Albert Memmi born 15 Dec.
1921	First Indian Parliament meets Winston Churchill becomes Colonial Secretary Britain and Ireland sign peace treaty Lord Reading appointed Viceroy of India, succeeding Lord Chelmsford	René Maran (Martinique), Batouala
1922	Gandhi sentenced to six years imprisonment for civil disobedience League of Nations approves mandates for Egypt and Palestine Arab Congress at Nablus rejects British mandate for Palestine Mustafa Kemal proclaims Turkey a republic Irish Free State officially proclaimed	Herman Hesse, Siddartha Frederick Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa M. N. Roy (India), India in Transition
1923		Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to William Butler Yeats (13 June 1865 – 28 Jan. 1939) Albert Sarraut, <i>The Economic</i> Development of the French Colonies
1924		E. M. Forster, A Passage to India Pablo Neruda (Chile), Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair

1925	Cyprus becomes a British Crown Colony British Dominions office established Frantz Fanon born (d. 1961)	
1926		Hô Chí Minh (Vietnam), Colonization of Trial Ricardo Güiraldes (Argentina), Don Segundo Sombra Martin Luis Guzmán (Mexico), The Eagle and the Serpent Thomas Mofolo (South Africa), Chaka
1927		André Gide, <i>Voyage to the Congo</i> Taha Husain (Egypt), <i>The Days</i> (vol. II, 1939) José Vasconcelos, <i>The Cosmic Race</i>
1928	Italy signs twenty-year treaty of friendship with Ethiopia	Édouard Glissant born Mario de Andrade (Brazil), Macunaima José Carlos Mariátegui, Seven Essays towards an Interpretation of Peruvian Reality
1929	Inter-Americas Treaty of Arbitration signed in Washington Martin Luther King born (d. 1968)	Rómulo Gallegos (Venezuela), Dona Barbara
1930		Chinua Achebe born 16 Nov. Mao Tse-tung (China), 'A single spark can start a prairie fire' Launch of Negritude movement in Paris by francophone intellectuals including Léopold Sédar Senghor, Aimé Césaire and Léon Damas Nicolás Guillén (Cuba), Son Montifs Solomon T. Plaatje (South Africa), Mhudi

1932	Indian Congress declared illegal; Gandhi arrested	Evelyn Waugh, Black Mischief
		Gregorio López y Fuentes (Mexico), <i>The Land</i>
		Ahmad Shawqi (Egypt), <i>Diwan</i>
1933	US Congress votes independence for Philippines	Mulk Raj Anand (India), Untouchable Tewfiq al-Hakim (Egypt), The People of the Cave Claude McKay (Jamaica), Banana Bottom Mao Tun (China), Midnight Gilberto Freyre, The Master and the Slaves
1934	Gandhi suspends civil disobedience campaign in India	George Orwell, <i>Burmese</i> Jorge Icaza (Ecuador), <i>Huasipungo</i> Alfred Mendes (Trinidad), <i>Pitch Lake</i>
1935		Jorge Luis Borges (Argentina), <i>A Universal History of Infamy</i> Edward Said born (d. 2003)
1936		Mao Tse-tung, Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War Jayaprakash Narayan (India), Why Socialism Jawarharlal Nehru, An Autobiography Mani Bandopadhyay (India), The History of Puppets C. L. R. James (Trinidad), Minty Alley Lao She (China), Camel Hsiang-tzu Premchand (India), The Gift of a Cow
1937		Karen Blixen (Denmark), Out of Africa Hafiz Ibrahim (Egypt), Diwan R. K. Narayan (India), The Bachelor of Arts Siburapha (Thailand), Behind the Painting

1938	US Supreme Court rules the University of Missouri Law School must admit black students because of lack of other facilities in the area President Roosevelt recalls American ambassador to Germany; Germany recalls its ambassador to the US	C. L. R. James, The Black Jacobins
1939	Start of World War II	James Joyce, <i>Finnegans Wake</i> Margaret Atwood born
1940		Australian journal <i>Meanjin</i> established
1941		H. I. E. Dhlomo (South Africa), Valley of a Thousand Hills Edgar Mittelholzer (Guyana), Cortentyne Thunder Ibrahim Tuqan (Palestine), Diwan
1942		Albert Camus, <i>The Outsider</i> Jorge Amado, <i>The Violent Land</i>
1943		Ishaw Musa al-Husaini (Palestine), A Chicken's Memoirs
1944		José Maria Arguedas (Peru), Everyone's Blood Ismat Chughtai (India), The Quilt and Other Stories Jacques Roumain (Haiti), Masters of the Dew Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery
1945	End of World War II	Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Gabriela Mistral (7 April 1889 – 10 Jan. 1957) Gopinath Mohanty (India), <i>Paraja</i>
1946	Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana and Réunion become Overseas Departments of France	Jawaharlal Nehru (India), <i>The</i> Discovery of India

Peter Abrahams (South Africa),

Mine Boy Miguel Ángel Asturias (Guatemala), Mr President India is proclaimed independent Salman Rushdie born 19 June and partitioned into India and Jawaharlal Nehru delivers, 'Tryst Pakistan with Destiny' speech Babani Bhattacharya (India), So Many Hungers! Birago Diop (Senegal), Tales of Amadou Koumba Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala' (India), The Earthly Knowledge Badr Shakir al-Sayyab (Iraq), Withered Fingers 1948 Gandhi assassinated Graham Greene, The Heart of the State of Israel comes into Matter Alan Paton (South Africa), Cry, existence British Citizenship Act grants the Beloved Country British passports to all G. V. Desani (India), All About Commonwealth citizens H. Hatterr Saadat Hasan Manto (Pakistan), 'Toba Tek Singh' Ernesto Sabato (Argentina), The Tunnel Léopold Sédar Senghor (ed.), Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache de langue française Jean-Paul Sartre, Black Orpheus 1949 Apartheid programme Miguel Angel Asturias established in South Africa (Guatemala), Men of Maize India adopts constitution as Alejo Carpentier (Cuba), The Kindgom of This World federal republic Khalil Mutran (Lebanon), Diwan Holland transfers sovereignty to Indonesia; France to Vietnam V. S. Reid (Jamaica), New Day Ma'ruf al-Rusafi (Iraq), Diwan Pablo Neruda (Chile), Canto 1950 général Octavio Paz, *Labyrinth of Solitude* Doris Lessing, The Grass is Singing

1951

1952 Anti-British riots erupt in Egypt Honolulu Conference of threepower Pacific Council (Australia, US and New Zealand)

1953 London Conference of Commonwealth prime ministers

1954 Start of Algerian War of Independence (-1962) Aimé Césaire, Discours sur le colonialisme

Nirad C. Chaudhuri (India), *The*Autobiography of an Unknown
India

Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot Frantz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* Ralph de Boissière (Trinidad), *Crown Jewel*

Andrée Chedid (Egypt), From Sleep Unbound

Mochtar Lubis (Indonesia), A Road with No End

Amos Tutuola (Nigeria), *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*

Fidel Castro (Cuba), 'History will absolve me'

Alejo Carpentier (Cuba), *The Lost Steps*

George Lamming (Barbados), In the Castle of My Skin

Camara Laye (Guinea), *The African Child*

Roger Mais (Jamaica), The Hills Were All Joyful Together

Sahitya Akademi Award established

Samira 'Azzam (Palestine), *Little Things*

Martin Carter (Guyana), Poems of Resistance

Driss Chraibi (Morocco), *The Simple Past*

Kamala Markandaya (India), Nectar in a Sieve

Nicanor Parra (Chile), Poems and Antipoems

Abd al-Rahman Shasrawi (Egypt), *The Earth*

Bandung Conference of Amrita Pritam (India), Messages 1955 non-aligned nations Vietnam War starts; continues till Juan Rulfo (Mexico), Pedro fall of Saigon in 1975 Paramo Saadi Youssef (Iraq), Songs Not for Others 1956 Sudan proclaimed independent Octave Mannoni, Prospero and democratic republic Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization, trans. Pamela Nasser becomes president of Egypt and seizes Suez Canal etc. Powesland Fidel Castro lands in Cuba with First international conference of intent to overthrow dictator black writers and artists (Paris) Fulgencio Batista George Padmore (Trinidad), Pan Africanism or Communism? Carlos Bulosan (Philippines), America is in the Heart Mongo Beti (Cameroon), The Poor Christ of Bomba David Diop (Senegal), Hammer Blows Faiz Ahmed Faiz (Pakistan), Prison Thoughts João Guimarães Rosa (Brazil), The Devil to Pay in the Backlands Naguib Mahfouz (Egypt), Cairo Trilogy (-1957) Samuel Selvon (Trinidad), The Lonely Londoners Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Ghana: Autobiography Octavio Paz (Mexico), Sunstone Albert Memmi, The Colonizer and the Colonized

1957 Gold Coast gains independence, changing its name to Ghana

1958 Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*Édouard Glissant (Martinique), *The Ripening*N. V. M. Gonzalez (Philippines), *Bread of Salt*Ludu U Hla (Burma), *The Caged*

Ones

Qurratulain Hyder (India), River 1959 of Fire Es'kia Mphahlele (South Africa), Down Second Avenue 1960 Belgian Congo granted full Wilson Harris (Guyana), Palace of independence the Peacock Ousmane Sembene (Senegal), God's Bits of Wood George Lamming, The Pleasures of Exile Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the 1961 UN General Assembly condemns apartheid Earth Rajat Neogy (Uganda) founds Transition Magazine: An International Review Nnamdi Azikiwe (Nigeria), Zik: Selected Speeches Ernesto 'Che' Guevara (Argentina/Cuba), Guerrilla Warfare Adonis (Syria), Songs of Muhyar the Damascene Cyprian Ekwensi (Nigeria), Jagua Nana Attia Hosain (India), Sunlight on a Broken Column Cheikh Hamidou Kane (Senegal), Ambiguous Adventure V. S. Naipaul (Trinidad), A House for Mr Biswas 1962 Uganda and Tanganyika become Alan Hill at Heinemann initiates its African Writers Series independent (AWS) Mehdi Ben Barka (Algeria), 'Resolving the ambiguities of national sovereignty' Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Zambia Shall Be Free Patrice Lumumba (Congo), Congo My Country Albert Luthuli (South Africa), Let My People Go

1963 Kenya becomes independent republic within Commonwealth

1964 Zanzibar declared a republic and unites with Tanganyika to form Tanzania Northern Rhodesia becomes

Northern Rhodesia becomes independent republic of Zambia

1965 Gambia becomes independent replacing 1921 law based on nationality
Rhodesian Unilateral Declaration of Independence, Britain imposes oil embargo on Rhodesia

Carlos Fuentes (Mexico), The Death of Artemio Cruz
Alex La Guma (South Africa), A Walk in the Night
Carlos Martinez Moreno
(Uruguay), The Wall
Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru), The Time of the Hero

Time of the Hero

Julio Cortázar (Argentina),
Hopscotch

Ghassan Kanafani (Palestine),
Men in the Sun

Severo Sarduy (Cuba), Gestures
C. L. R. James, Beyond a
Boundary

Govan Mbeki (South Africa),
South Africa: The Peasants Revolt

Forugh Farrokhzad (Iran),
Another Birth

Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Martin Luther King (15 Jan. 1929 – 4 April 1968) First conference on Commonwealth Literature,

University of Leeds

Journal of Commonwealth Literature
founded

Paul Scott, *The Raj Quartet* (-1975)

Nelson Mandela (South Africa), No Easy Walk to Freedom

Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism

Michael Anthony (Trinidad), *The Year in San Fernando*

Guillermo Cabrera Infante (Cuba), *Three Trapped Tigers*

Kamala Das (India), Summer in Calcutta

Wole Soyinka (Nigeria), The Road

1966 Mrs Indira Gandhi, Nehru's
granddaughter, becomes
prime minister of India
British Guyana becomes the
independent nation of Guyana
Barbados becomes independent

British Guiana becomes Guyana

Paul Scott, *The Jewel in the Crown* U. R. Ananthamurthy (India), *Funeral Rites*

Louise Bennett (Jamaica), Jamaica Labrish

Jose Lezama Lima (Cuba), Paradiso

Flora Nwapa (Nigeria), *Efuru* Jean Rhys (Dominica) *Wide* Sargasso Sea

Marta Traba (Argentina/ Colombia) *Rites of Summer* Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru), *The Green House*

Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Miguel Ángel Asturias (19 Oct. 1899 – 9 June 1974)

Oginga Odinga (Kenya), *Not Yet Uhuru*

Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia), One Hundred Years of Solitude

V. S. Naipaul (Trinidad), *The Mimic Men*

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (Kenya), A Grain of Wheat

Wole Soyinka (Nigeria), *Idanre*, and other Poems

André Gunder Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America

Wilson Harris, Tradition, the Writer and Society

Booker Prize for Literature established

Julius K. Nyerere (Tanzania), *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism*

Ayi Kwei Armah (Ghana), The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born

Dennis Brutus (South Africa), Letters to Martha

1967

1968 British colony of Mauritius becomes independent state within Commonwealth British government restricts immigration from India, Pakistan and the West Indies

Ahmadou Kourouma (Ivorv Coast), The Suns of Independence Nizar Qabbani (Iraq), 'Comments on the Notebook of Decadence' Andrew Salkey (Jamaica), The Late Emancipation of Jerry Stoker Neustadt International Prize for Literature established Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Samuel Beckett (13 April 1906 - 22 Dec. 1989) Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique), The Struggle for Mozambique Elena Poniatowska (Mexico), Until We Meet Again Tayeb Salih (Sudan), Season of Migration from the North Fadwa Tuqan (Palestine),

Horseman and the Night

1970 Biafra capitulates to federal Nigerian government; end of civil war which began 2.5 years previously

Gambia proclaimed a republic within British Commonwealth

ARIEL: A Review of International
English Literature
Research in African Literature
journal established
Sala 'Abd al-Sabur (Egypt),
Journey at Night
Ama Ata Aidoo (Ghana), No
Sweetness Here
Merle Hodge (Trinidad), Crick
Crack Monkey
Jabra Ibrahim Jabra (Palestine),
The Shib

Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Pablo Neruda (Chile, 12 July 1904 – 23 Sept. 1973)

1971

1969

V. S. Naipaul (Trinidad) wins Booker Prize for *In a Free State*

Mahmoud Darwish (Palestine) Lover From Palestine Christopher Okigbo (Nigeria), Labyrinths Roberto Fernandez Retamar, 'Caliban' Bangladesh (E. Pakistan) Steve Biko (South Africa), I Write 1972 established as sovereign state What I Like Dhoomil (India), From the Britain imposes direct rule on Northern Ireland Parliament to the Street Athol Fugard (South Africa), Sizwe Banzi Is Dead Manohar Malgonkar (India), The Devil's Wind Simone Schwarz-Bart (Guadeloupe), The Bridge of Beyond Paulo Freire (Brazil), Pedagogy of the Oppressed Walter Rodney (Guyana), How Europe Underdeveloped Africa 1973 Bahamas granted independence Nobel Prize in Literature awarded after three centuries of to Patrick White (Australia, 28 colonial rule May 1912 - 30 Sept. 1990) Amilcar Cabral (Guinea-Bissau), Return of the Source Mahsweta Devi (India), Mother of Eduardo Galeano, The Open Veins of Latin America Nadine Gordimer (South Africa) 1974 wins Booker Prize for The Conservationist M. Gopalkirshna Adiga (India), Song of the Earth and Other Poems Emile Habiby (Palestine), The Secret Life of Saeed, the Ill-Fated

Pessoptimist

Bessie Head (South Africa/ Botswana), A Question of Power Daniel Moyano (Argentina), The Devil's Trill Agostinho Neto (Angola), Sacred Hope Augusto Roa Bastos (Paraguay) I the Supreme José Luandino Vieira (Angola), The Real Life of Domingos Xavier Adónis, The Fixed and the Changing: A Study of Conformity and Originality in Arab Culture Bharati Mukherjee (India/US), Wife Indira Sant (India), The Snake-skin and Other Poems Antonio Skármeta (Chile), I Dreamt the Snow Was Burning Alex Haley, Roots Callaloo journal established Jaranta Mahpatra (India), A Pain of Rites Manuel Puig (Argentina), The Kiss of the Spider Woman Antonio Torres (Brazil), The Land Wole Soyinka, Myth, Literature and the African World Bessie Head (South Africa/ Botswana), The Collector of **Treasures** Elias Khoury (Lebanon), Little Mountain Clarice Lispector (Brazil), The

1975

1976 Spain relinquishes colonial control of the Spanish Sahara; Morocco and Mauritania divide the territory, ignoring the Sahara nationalists' proclamation of independence

Commonwealth Conference reaches Lancaster House agreement on future of Rhodesia as the independent state of Zimbabwe

1977

Hour of the Star

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (Kenya),

Anita Desai (India), Clear Light of

Petals of Blood Sergio Ramirez (Nicaragua), To Bury Our Fathers Manuel Rui (Angola), Yes Comrade! Samir Amin Imperialism and Unequal Development 1978 Edward Said, Orientalism Noma Award for Publishing in Africa established Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Isaac Bashevis Singer (21 Nov. 1902 - 24 July 1991) Dambudzo Marechera (Zimbabwe), The House of Hunger O. V. Viajayan (India), Short Stories Kunapipi journal established 1979 Mariama Ba (Senegal), So Long a Letter Buchi Emecheta (Nigeria), The Joys of Motherhood Nuruddin Farah (Somalia), Sweet and Sour Milk Nadine Gordimer (South Africa), Burger's Daughter Roy Heath (Guyana), The Armstrong Trilogy (-1981) Earl Lovelace (Trinidad), The Dragon Can't Dance Lu Wenfu (China), The Gourmet Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Indonesia), Buru Quartet (-1988)President Carter restricts grain J. M. Coetzee (South Africa), 1980 sales to USSR in protest against Waiting for the Barbarians

liii

Day

the Soviet invasion of

Afghanistan

Indira Gandhi voted back into power Zimbabwe, formerly Rhodesia, gains independence Pepetela (Angola), Mayombe Ricardo Piglia (Argentina), Artificial Respiration

Osvaldo Soriano (Argentina), A Funny Dirty Little War

Michael Thelwell (Jamaica), *The Harder They Come*

Albert Wendt (Samoa), Leaves of the Banyan Tree

1981

Salman Rushdie wins Booker Prize for Midnight's Children Ariel Dorfman (Chile), Widows Mongane Wally Serote (South Africa), To Every Birth Its Blood Aminata Sow Fall (Senegal), The Beggar's Strike Malek Alloula The Colonial Harem

Malek Alloula, The Colonial Harem Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism

Edouard Glissant, Caribbean Discourse

1982 Canada's Constitution Act comes into force, severing the nation's last legal ties to the UK

South Africa adopts a new constitution giving limited political rights to 'Coloured' and 'Asian' but not 'Black' South Africans

Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia, b. 6 March 1927)

Thomas Keneally (Australia) wins Booker Prize for *Schindler's Ark* Inaugural issue of the series *Subaltern Studies*, ed. Ranajit Guha

Isabel Allende (Chile), *The House* of the Spirits

Reinaldo Arenas (Cuba), Farewell to the Sea

Edward Kamau Brathwaite (Barbados) *The Arrivants*

J. M. Coetzee (South Africa) wins Booker Prize for *Life and Times* of Michael K

1983

Iohn

Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua), Annie

Njabulo Ndebele (South Africa),

Fools and Other Stories Grace Nichols (Guyana), i is a long-memoried woman Sony Labou Tansi (Zaire), The Antipeople Luisa Valenzuela (Argentina), The Lizard's Tail Nirmal Verma (India), The Crows of Deliverance Johannes Fabian, Time and the Other Abdelkébir Khatibi, Maghreb pluriel Wasafiri journal established Rigoberta Menchú (Guatemala), I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala Miguel Bonasso (Argentina), Memory of Death Maryse Condé (Guadeloupe), Segu Abdelrahman Munif (Saudi Arabia), City of Salt Cristina Peri Rossi (Uruguay), The Ship of Fools Edward Kamau Brathwaite, History of the Voice Keri Hulme (New Zealand) wins 1985 Booker Prize for *The Bone* Peoble Tahar Ben Jelloun (Morocco), The Sand Child Assia Djebar (Algeria) Fantasia, An Algerian Cavalcade Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia), Love in the Time of Cholera Nayantara Sahgal (India), Rich Like Us Ken Saro-Wiwa (Nigeria), Sozaboy

1986 Haitian President Jean-Claude Duvalier flees to France after nationwide demonstrations against his rule Nobel Prize in Literature
awarded to Wole Soyinka
(Nigeria, b. 13 July 1934)
Nuruddin Farah (Somalia), Maps
Waleed Khazindar (Palestine),
Present Verbs
Hanif Kureishi (UK), My
Beautiful Laundrette
Álvaro Mutis (Colombia), The
Snow of the Admiral
Caryl Phillips (St Kitts), A State of

Independence Anton Shammas (Israel),

Anton Shammas (Israel). *Arbasques*

Derek Walcott (St Lucia) Collected Poems

Partha Chatterjee, Nationalist
Thought and the Colonial World:
A Derivative Discourse

Peter Hulme, Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492–1797

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Decolonising the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature

Frederic Jameson, 'Third World literature in the era of multinational capitalism'

1987 Portugal and China agree on the return to China in 1999 of Macao, a Portuguese colony since the sixteenth century

Commonwealth Writers' Prize established

Agha Shahid Ali (India), *The Half-Inch Himalayas*

Jesus Diaz (Cuba), The Initials of the Land

Daniel Maximin (Guadeloupe), Soufrières

Horacio Vazquez Rial (Argentina), *Triste's History* Shrikant Verma (India), *Magadh* Benita Parry, 'Problems in current theories of colonial discourse' 1988

Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Naguib Mahfouz (Egypt, 11 Dec. 1911 - 30 Aug. 2006)

Peter Carey (Australia) wins Booker Prize for Oscar and Lucinda

Upamayu Chatterjee (India), English, August

Amit Chaudhuri (India), *Afternoon Raag*

Michelle Cliff (Jamaica/US), No Telephone to Heaven

Tsitsi Dangarembga (Zimbabwe), Nervous Conditions

Amitav Ghosh (India), *The Shadow Lines*

Suong Thu Huong (Vietnam), Paradise of the Blind

Chenjerai Hove (Zimbabwe), *Bones*

Tomás Eloy Martínez (Argentina), *The Peron Novel* Salman Rushdie (India), *Satanic Verses*

Bapsi Sidhwa (Pakistan), Cracking India

Héctor Tizón (Argentina), *The Man Who Came to a Village*

Chandra Talpade Mohanty,
'Under Western eyes: feminist
scholarship and colonial
discourse'

V.Y. Mudimbe, The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge

1989 Khomeini announces Fatwa on Salman Rushdie after release of *Satanic Verses*

Pakistan rejoins Commonwealth after leaving in 1972

Kazuo Ishiguro (Japan/UK) wins Booker Prize for *The Remains of* the Day

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire* Writes Back

Nissim Ezekiel (India), Collected

Poems

Ngũgĩ Ka Thiong'o (Kenya), Matigari M. G. Vassanji (Kenya/Canada), The Gunny Sack Jean Bernabé, Patrick Camouiseau and Raphael Confiant, In Praise of Creoleness Nobel Prize in Literature Nambia becomes independent 1990 awarded to Octavio Paz state Nelson Mandela (South Africa) is (Mexico, 31 March 1941 – 19 released from jail after twenty-April 1998) Gayatri Spivak, The Postcolonial seven years as a political prisoner Critic Jean-Bertrand Aristide becomes Robert Young, White Mythologies first democratically elected president of Haiti First Gulf War, 2 Aug. - 28 Feb. Mia Couto (Mozambique), Every German reunification, 3 Oct. Man Is a Race Abd al-Wahhab Bayati (Iraq) Love Death and Exile Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson and Edward Said, Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature End of twenty-year Ethiopian Nobel Prize in Literature 1991 civil war awarded to Nadine Gordimer Start of Somali civil war (South Africa, b. 20 Nov. 1923) Ben Okri (Nigeria) wins Booker Prize for The Famished Road Khalil Hawi (Lebanon), From the Vineyards of Lebanon Timothy Mo (UK), The Redundancy of Courage Derek Walcott (St Lucia), Omeros Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary* Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to 1992 Rigoberta Menchú Tum (Guatemala, b. 9 Jan. 1959)

Chronology

Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Derek Walcott (St Lucia, b. 23 Jan. 1930) Michael Ondaatje (Canada) wins Booker Prize for *The English* Patient Ambai (C. S. Lakshmi) (India), The Purple Sea Patrick Chamoiseau (Martinique), Texaco Aijaz Ahmad, In Theory: Class, Nations, Literatures Marie Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation Arturo Uslar Pietri, The Creation of the New World Roberto Schwarz, Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture

1993 Israel and the PLO sign peace accord

Prize in Literature (b. 18 Feb. 1931)
Roddy Doyle (Ireland) Booker
Prize for Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha
Salman Rushdie (India) wins
Booker of Bookers for
Midnight's Children
Edward Said, Culture and
Imperialism
Amin Maalouf (Lebanon), The
Rock of Tanios
Vikram Seth (India), A Suitable Boy

Toni Morrison (USA), Nobel

1994 The Rwandan Genocide
(6 April–mid July)
Start of the Zapatista indigenous
movement in Mexico
South Africa holds first postapartheid elections, returning
the African National Congress
(ANC) to power

Muhammad al-Maghut (Syria), Joy Is Not My Profession Shyam Selvadurai (Sri Lanka/ Canada), Funny Boy

Ivan Vladislavic (South Africa),

The Folly

1995		Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Seamus Heaney (Ireland, b. 13 April 1939) Subcommandante Marcos (Mexico), Shadows of Tender Fury A. K. Ramanujan, Collected Poems Keki Daruwalla (India), A Summer of Tigers Declan Kiberd, Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation
1996	The Taliban seize control of Kabul, Afghanistan	Rohinton Mistry (India/Canada), A Fine Balance Nizar Qabbani (Syria), On Entering the Sea
1997	Zaire renamed Democratic Republic of Congo after the overthrow of long-time dictator Mobuto Sese Seko	Arundhati Roy (India) wins Booker Prize for <i>The God of</i> Small Things
	Britain hands sovereignty of Hong Kong back to China	Jouvert: Journal of Postcolonial Studies (1997–2003) Vikram Chandra (India), Love and Longing in Bombay A. Sivanandan (Sri Lanka), When Memory Dies
1998	Peace Agreement signed for Northern Ireland	Homi K. Bhabha, <i>The Location of Culture</i>
1999		J. M. Coetzee (South Africa) wins Booker Prize for <i>Disgrace</i>
2000		Margaret Atwood (Canada) wins Booker Prize for <i>The Blind</i> Assassin Caine Prize for African Writing (short story) established Naiyer Masud (India), Essence of Camphor Zadie Smith (UK), White Teeth
2001	Terrorist attacks on US soil on 11 Sept. spark subsequent era of war on terror	Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to V. S. Naipaul (Trinidad, b. 17 Aug. 1932)

Chronology

		Peter Carey (Australia) wins Booker Prize for <i>True History of</i> the Kelly Gang
2002		Yann Martel (Canada) wins Booker Prize for <i>Life of Pi</i>
2003	US invasion of Iraq	Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to J. M. Coetzee (South Africa, b. 9 Feb. 1940)
2004		Postcolonial Text established
2005		John Banville (Ireland) wins Booker Prize for <i>The Sea</i> Man Booker International Prize established
2006		Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Orhan Pamuk (Turkey, b. 7 June 1952) Kiran Desai (India) wins Booker Prize for <i>The Inhertiance of Loss</i>
2007		Nobel Prize in Literature awarded to Doris Lessing (Zimbabwe/ UK, b. 22 Oct. 1919) Anne Enright (Ireland) wins Booker Prize for <i>The Gathering</i> Chinua Achebe (Nigeria) wins Man Booker International Prize
2008		Aravind Adiga (India) wins Booker Prize for <i>The White</i> <i>Tiger</i>
2009		Alice Munro (Canada) wins Man Booker International Prize Penguin African Writing Prize launched

Introduction: postcolonial literature in a changing historical frame

ATO QUAYSON

When in 1961 Alan McLeod expressed his confidence that the new Commonwealth writing would be 'the particular interest of English scholars in the next fifty years', he was expressing a view shared by only a handful of people, among them Norman Jeffares at Leeds University and Bruce Sutherland at Pennsylvania State College (later University) where, with their respective colleagues, they set up the first courses in Commonwealth literature on either side of the Atlantic (Bahri and Raja, The Cambridge History). Even though McLeod's sentiment has been more than confirmed in the decades since his introduction to The Commonwealth Pen, there is much that has changed in the field of the then Commonwealth literature, not least of which has been the shift of nomenclature from that to the now more widely used postcolonial literature. Yet to view the undoubted ascendancy of postcolonial literature as merely the evolutionary consolidation of an ecumenical literary sensibility that dates from the era of the attainment of independence of formerly colonized countries is to ignore the fact that many of the tendencies and concerns central to the field today can be traced back to at least the mid nineteenth century, if not much earlier. With the consolidation of the field of postcolonial literary studies in the past forty years and its continuing interdisciplinary intersections with other interests, the need to establish the terms by which we might understand the sources of postcolonial literary history is more urgent now than ever before.

Thus we might note, for example, Hartley Dewart's introduction to *Selections* from Canadian Poets in 1864 and George Stewart's brief discussion in 1870 of Canadian literature in his *Literary Quarterly Magazine*. Despite writing in the context of Canada, Dewart's opening words to *Selections from Canadian Poets* had a peculiar resonance for many parts of the colonial world:

Only the illiterate and unreflecting adopt the sentiment, that, because more books have been already produced than can possibly be read in the compass of the longest life, to increase the number of books or the quantity of literature, is undesirable and unnecessary. The literature of the world is the foot-prints of human progress, and unless all progress should cease, and mental paralysis arrest all human activity, these way-marks shall continue to be erected along the pathway of the vanishing years. Whatever is discovered as new in the records of creation, in the capacities and relations of things, in the history of the mind's operations, or in the forms of thought and imagery by which in its higher moods soul speaks to soul, will always demand some suitable embodiment in literature.³

Both Stewart and Dewart take account of the emergence on the literary scene for the first time of poems, stories and novels written and often published not in metropolitan England but in the colony itself. As various commentators posed questions about the literary value and national significance of such new forms of writing, the directions of later postcolonial enquiries began to take shape (Siemerling, The Cambridge History). And it was not only in Canada that such discussion took place. Srinivasa Iyengar introduced the term 'Indo-Anglian literature' to account for the literary texts on the subcontinent that drew upon the dual traditions of Britain and India, whose roots lay in colonial contact and cohabitation from the early eighteenth century, and that were in their turn to feed into postcolonial writing in India (Kabir, The Cambridge History). 4 By 1955 Aimé Césaire was to outline the earliest form of colonial discourse analysis in his monumental Discours sur le colonialisme. He was followed in rapid succession by Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon in setting out a mode of analysis that was literary and poetic as well as refracting revolutionary, political and cultural ideals.⁵ From the Caribbean we might also note the works of C. L. R James, George Lamming and V. S. Naipaul, each of whom raised key questions about nation and narration, the struggle between universalism and localism in the literature of the newly independent nations, and the fraught intersections of the aesthetic, the ethical and the political dimensions of these new forms of writing.⁶ With the exception of Fanon, these thinkers were also well-known writers and in their literary works explored the ideas they gave voice to in their more critical-theoretical offerings (Savory, Murdoch, The Cambridge History). Even with Fanon, it may be argued that he wrote in such a highly charged poeticized idiom that works such as Black Skin, White Masks should be productively read under the rubric of literature (Prabhu, The Cambridge History). The we add to these early strands of debate the material provided for postcolonial literary studies in slave narratives, travel writing, auto/biographies, missionary journals, photography, in the long tradition of Asian and Black writing in Europe that dates from as early as the 1700s, and the resource matrices of orality and indigenous languages, we find that the field of Postcolonial Literature is fed by many discursive histories (Carpio, Griffiths, Holden, Mudimbe-Boyi, Esonwanne, Prasad, *The Cambridge History*). 8

Postcolonial literature has also had a growing presence in the popular imagination outside the academy. Theatres on both sides of the Atlantic have seen musical renditions of Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children (directed by Tim Supple, 2003) and Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart (adapted by Biyi Bandele-Thomas, 1997). Rushdie's novel is being adapted for the big screen and will be directed by the renowned Indian filmmaker Deepa Mehta.9 There has also been an international audience for the politically oriented plays of Ariel Dorfman and Athol Fugard since the 1970s; Anthony Minghella's Oscar-winning film of Michael Ondaatje's The English Patient and various postcolonial interpretations of Shakespeare and of Greek tragedies place postcolonial literary ideas on popular screen and classical stage alike. 10 These, along with a string of Nobel, Man Booker, Commonwealth, Neustadt and Pulitzer prizes to writers as varied as Octavio Paz, Pablo Neruda, Gabriel García Márquez, Naguib Mahfouz, J.M. Coetzee, Arundhati Roy, Kamau Brathwaite, Keri Hulme, Peter Carey, Jhumpa Lahiri, Ben Okri, Nadine Gordimer, V.S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Wole Soyinka, Doris Lessing, Derek Walcott and others have ensured that what is normally studied under the institutional rubric of postcolonial literature has had a wide and growing readership well beyond the academy. Within the academy itself the study of postcolonial literature is marked by the publication of numerous monographs and books on the area, with publishers as diverse as Routledge, Blackwell, Rodopi and the university presses of SUNY, Minnesota, California, Manchester, Oxford, Duke, Indiana and Columbia producing a steady stream of postcolonial titles. The area is now part of the curriculum of all major universities not just in the UK, the US, Germany and France, but also growing in popularity in Italy, Spain and even in Japan and South Korea. In 2005 literary scholars from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and Iceland formed a Nordic Network for Postcolonial Studies with generous government funding for conferences, seminars, and other forums of discussion. Apart from this there are now major scholarly journals such as Wasafiri, Kunapipi, Interventions, Journal of Commonwealth Literature, Callaloo, the Journal of Postcolonial Writing (formerly World Literature Written in English) and ARIEL (A Review of International English Literature) that are exclusively devoted to the discussion of postcolonial literature and literary theory (Raja and Bahri, *The Cambridge History*). This is not to speak of the many articles on postcolonial literature and the special issues on postcolonial topics to be found in the most important journals in the

humanities and social sciences. To highlight just one example from a non-literary field, by the end of the twentieth century *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* ran regular essays on postcolonial topics. The late 1990s saw articles in the journal by Barnett, Schech and Haggis, and Best that liberally referenced the work of writers such as South African J. M. Coetzee and Australian Christopher Koch, as well as postcolonial critics Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha and Arjun Appadurai, among various others. ¹¹ This trend continues with several journals that do not originally address a literary constituency.

This somewhat celebratory list of institutions, writers, publishers, journals and popular productions must not obscure the controversies that have also made themselves evident periodically in postcolonial literary studies. In a 1982 New York Review of Books piece, the astute and otherwise flawless Helen Vendler criticized what she termed the 'ventriloquism' of Derek Walcott, future Nobel Prize laureate, whom she found 'peculiarly at the mercy of influence'. 12 The issue is not so much whether Vendler's criteria of evaluation were accurate or not, as that Walcott presented a difficult case for anyone intent on unearthing the authenticity of his poetic voice. Is Walcott best understood via a model derived from T.S. Eliot's 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', in which the contribution of a writer fits into the temple of established literary monuments by means of their subtle reconfiguration of the already established aesthetic standards? Or is he best assessed through the model of the agonistic or even adversarial 'writing back' that Bill Ashcroft and his colleagues made famous in The Empire Writes Back in 1989?¹³ And if that is the case, what is the usefulness of cognate terms such as adaptation, appropriation and intertextuality? (Mukherjee, Dovey, The Cambridge History). How do we account for the fluid and ongoing relationship between orality, popular culture and the more highbrow postcolonial literature of Africa, India, and Latin America that has been the assumed and thus far unchallenged focus of pedagogical interest in schools and universities everywhere? (Esonwanne, Newell, Gupta, The Cambridge History). Add to all these Amitav Ghosh's voluble dismissal of the label 'postcolonial' writer, and the field shows itself to have as much controversy as it has points for celebration.¹⁴ It is impossible to think coherently and creatively, much less with any sense of authority, about these and other questions without a proper literary historical context in which to read and study postcolonial literature.

What, when and how is the postcolonial?

Though it is now conventional to ascribe the birth of the field of postcolonial studies to the publication of Edward Said's landmark *Orientalism* in 1978, with

further insights being extrapolated from Ashcroft et al.'s already mentioned and now classic *The Empire Writes Back*, the prehistory of the term 'postcolonial' itself proves slightly more colourful than generally supposed.¹⁵ The earliest instance of the word, used in a largely temporal sense and with a hyphen, appeared in academic writing in a 1910 essay by T.W. Allen in the Journal of Hellenic Studies with reference to some minor poets of the pre-Homeric era. In various scattered instances up to 1950 it was used in historical journals mainly with reference to early American and Latin American republics. The term's first unhyphenated application was in language studies and appears to have been in a 1952 issue of the journal American Speech. That essay, by A. R. Dunlap and E. J. Moyne, dwelt on traces of the Finnish language along the Delaware River. Its first use in literary studies, again unhyphenated, appeared in 1958 in the journal Comparative Literature in an article by Justus M. Van der Kroef on the colonial novel in Indonesia translated from Dutch. 16 By the 1960s and 1970s the term had shifted to the field of African and Pacific area studies where the two variant uses (hyphenated and unhyphenated) were deployed interchangeably. The term entered the comprehensive MLA Bibliography in 1967, with the PMLA's list of Forthcoming Meetings and Conferences in 1981 publicizing the South Pacific Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies held at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand under the topic 'Nationalism, Regionalism, and Internationalism in Postcolonial Literature'; it appeared in PMLA articles only in 1990. Apart from the 1990 PMLA pieces – an introduction to the special issue on African and African American Literature by Henry Louis Gates Jr and an essay by Debra A. Castillo on Coetzee's Dusklands respectively in each of the early published usages of the term it was deployed as a temporal marker to indicate the period after colonialism, whether this was in colonial antiquity with reference to the pre-Homeric era, or with respect to the cultural realities of post-independence America, or in relation to the end of empire in the mid twentieth century. After The Empire Writes Back, and vastly expanding the significance of the PMLA pieces by Gates and Castillo, the 1990s saw a decisive shift of usage from the merely temporal to the more discursive and theoretical, with Robert Young, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Aijaz Ahmad, Bart Moore-Gilbert, Ania Loomba, Elleke Boehmer, Ato Quayson and Achille Mbembe among others providing key parameters for debating the field.¹⁸ Williams and Chrisman's Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader was the first to gather diverse essays that collectively provided a genealogy of orientations in the field, with Ashcroft et al.'s Post-Colonial Studies Reader following a similar format and rapidly becoming a standard text. 19 Even though none of the early anthologies had a specifically literary historical bent, texts like them now abound in the field and provide a plethora of viewpoints for students and scholars. Despite the 1990s marking the expansion and consolidation of the field, it is nevertheless 1983 that we must take as the totemic date for the use of the term in an exclusively non-temporal sense in public academic debate, with the MLA panel chaired by Gayatri Spivak, then of the University of Texas at Austin, entitled Colonialist and Postcolonialist Discourse being the landmark event. Her copanellists were Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, then at the University of Sussex, and William Pietz, who has since left academia to work in green politics and neurocognitive training. Spivak, Said and Bhabha have long been hailed as providing the most significant early theoretical ideas for the field of postcolonial studies, so that the 1983 panel, coming half-way as it did between the publications of the late 1970s and what was to later become a veritable flood from the 1990s, acquires special significance in this regard.

When we outline the meanings of the term through current usage rather than from the etymology of first appearance, the unhyphenated version is taken to denote the field as an area of recognizable interests, debates and controversies. Understood not as limited to the implicit temporal marking of the 'post-', but as the sign of a critical orientation towards colonialism and its legacies, postcolonial literature then designates the representation of experiences of various kinds including those of slavery, migration, oppression and resistance, difference, race, gender, space and place, and the responses to the discourses of imperial Europe. It is conventionally assumed that postcolonial literature is as much a reflection on conditions under imperialism and colonialism proper as about conditions coming after the historical end of empires.

European expansion and the colonial world

Despite the designation of postcolonialism as a field of discursive practices as opposed to the temporal supersession of colonialism, the collective attempt to outline a literary history of postcolonial writing foregrounds certain conceptual and methodological difficulties for the elaboration of such a history. The *time* and *inception* of the colonial and how they are understood as processes as opposed to singular ruptures is decisive for both determining the literary writing that is taken to fall under the rubric of postcolonialism and the criticism that sees itself as doing justice to such writing. The process of imperial and colonial expansion from Europe proceeded in two main phases, both of which overlapped and were tied to the formation of the global political economy. The first expansion of modernity (1492–1650) was set in motion primarily by the Spanish and Portuguese crowns in the long sixteenth century, while the second

modernity (1650-1945) saw a decisive shift away from the multiple repercussions of Iberian ambition towards the interests of England, France, the Netherlands and Germany. Each historical phase of modernity also generated its own internal and external imaginative borders, such that whereas in the first modernity the expansion of Spain into the Americas coincided with the expulsion of Arabs and Jews from Spanish lands in the name of 'blood purity', a concomitant assumption of the heathen status of the natives the Spaniards encountered in what later became Latin America was also maintained. The second modernity, on the other hand, saw the progressive construction of the uncivilized Other (Chinese, African, Caribbean, Southeast Asian) that needed to be reformed through the light of reason and colonial governmentality. ²¹ The imaginative connection between the two modernities of expansion is provided in the relentless stream of letters, reports, chronicles and travel narratives by Europeans from the earliest period of contact which typified the non-Europeans they encountered as pagan and strange (Griffiths, The Cambridge History).²² An example of these was to be wryly noted by Gabriel García Márquez in his 1982 Nobel acceptance speech:

Antonio Pigafetta, a Florentine navigator who went with Magellan on the first voyage around the world, wrote, upon his passage through our southern lands of America, a strictly accurate account that nonetheless resembles a venture into fantasy. In it he recorded that he had seen hogs with navels on their haunches, clawless birds whose hens laid eggs on the backs of their mates, and others still, resembling tongueless pelicans, with beaks like spoons. He wrote of having seen a misbegotten creature with the head and ears of a mule, a camel's body, the legs of a deer and the whinny of a horse. He described how the first native encountered in Patagonia was confronted with a mirror, whereupon that impassioned giant lost his senses to the terror of his own image.²³

The deadpan inflection of the 'strictly accurate' in Márquez's account coupled with his nonchalant listing of what are evidently fantastical elements from Pigafetta's journal are stylistic devices that will by now be familiar to vast numbers of readers of his novels all over the world.

As Edward Said and others were to show, what started out as chronicles, histories and travel narratives was by the eighteenth century to be transformed into Orientalism proper, possessing an internal logic and ultimately tied to issues of colonial governmentality. But the two periods are also connected through the complex forms of resistance *and* complicity that proliferated everywhere Europeans found themselves. Despite the significance of the early fifteenth-century intercultural encounters to the forms of postcolonialism some literary writers were to represent, it is the inception of the second

modernity, with the elaboration of variant mechanisms for the governance of different peoples under the impress of empire, that currently provides the bulk of interest for postcolonial studies. Complicated factors affected the acquisition of territories, dependencies and protectorates throughout the period of formal colonial expansion, consolidation, and demise from the mid seventeenth century to the 1960s, when the bulk of colonized countries gained their independence. Several interrelated themes animate this period. ²⁻⁴

As Patke adroitly shows in his chapter on 'Postcolonial literature in Southeast Asia', the pattern of trade-offs among European countries was central to the demographic and political constitution of that region; yet the pattern can be shown to have been endemic to the constitution of empire and colonialism in general. The British, in strong rivalry with the Dutch, established the Straits of Settlement (Penang, Singapore and Malacca) between 1786 and 1824, while also gaining increasing control over the princely states of Malaya between 1874 and 1914. The Opium Wars with China ended with the Treaty of Nanjing that effectively ceded Hong Kong to Britain. On the other hand, whereas 1783 saw Britain formally recognize the impossibility of holding on to the thirteen colonies that came to form the nucleus of the United States of America, the contours of empire were already being redrawn in that part of the world some twenty years earlier at the close of the Seven Years' War (1756-63) that concluded in the Treaties of Paris and Hubertusburg. With these treaties Britain acquired Quebec, Nova Scotia, Cape Breton and India from France, with Florida also being ceded to them by Spain. In the Caribbean, Britain took control of Dominica, Grenada, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Tobago. Perhaps more significantly, the loss of the thirteen colonies of the eastern coast of the United States made them unavailable for convict deportation. This recognition ultimately led to the establishment of a penal colony in Australia's Botany Bay in 1788.

Significantly, the period from the seventeenth century was to be characterized by vast movements of populations from Europe to different parts of the world. The instigations for these movements were many, and included dire demographic transitions in Europe, acute living and social conditions due to the population explosion, and last but not least, the rabid religious persecutions and zeal for renewal that marked the Reformation and Counter-Reformation of the seventeenth century in particular. The plagues that afflicted London at various times during the 1600s (1603, 1625 and finally 1664–6) were estimated to have killed at least 100,000 people, with the Great Fire of 1666 gutting a large section of central London. The plagues and natural disasters exacerbated the religious persecutions that raged in the period, and in combination they led to a stream of migrations to the Americas and other parts of the world. While

merchants and other adventurers had been encouraging people to relocate to the Americas to settle new lands as early as the 1530s, by the 1650s the trend had shifted to embrace ordinary people desperate to escape the vagaries of Europe. As A. N. Porter points out, 'as many as 400,000 people may have crossed the Atlantic from the British Isles during the seventeenth century, half of them between 1630 and 1660. In these decades of religious and political upheaval, harvests were poor and wages low; there was much unemployment and underemployment.'²⁵

Sometimes such dispersals also became handy instruments of demographic control, especially with regard to race, poverty, and crime. Thus whereas West Africa had long been considered unsuitable for a penal colony in favour of Australia, a settlement was still established in Sierra Leone for London's 'black poor's from 1786 to 1791; these were subsequently joined by black settlers from Nova Scotia. The term Nova Scotians at the time did not refer to persons originally from what is now a Canadian province; rather, a large majority of those that migrated to what was subsequently to become a West African colony in 1808 were ex-slaves from Virginia and South Carolina, who had moved as Black Loyalists to British Nova Scotia in 1783, before leaving again in 1787 and then in 1792 because of broken promises of free land. ²⁶ The resolution of issues of poverty in Britain through the movement of segments of its own population was not limited exclusively to the plight of the black poor. As early as 1618 a hundred 'vagrant' children in London were rounded up and transported to the colony of Virginia. The policy of enforced child migration continued piecemeal throughout the colonial period, with orphaned children being sent off to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa and the Swan River Colony in Australia in 1832 and New Brunswick and Toronto in Canada in 1833. An estimated 150,000 poor children were transferred in this way until the outbreak of World War II, with at least 80,000 of these being sent to Canada alone. Many of the children ended up in dastardly slave-like conditions of labour servitude.²⁷ The child exploitation that William Blake was to rail against in his Songs of Innocence and Experience in the 1790s clearly had its counterparts in the situation of the many children that were scattered across empire. It is a profound irony that despite the moral panic often expressed in many parts of Europe and North America today at the prospect of immigrants and asylum seekers on their borders, the period of extensive migrations from Europe itself in the seventeenth century and after was marked by the same forces that have underpinned the desperate movement of populations from the global South to the global North from the latter part of the twentieth: spasmodic nation states, famine and natural disasters, inter-ethnic conflicts and

religious persecutions. These later population movements, as we shall come to see presently, have also left their imprint on postcolonial writing.

Another underlying factor to imperial expansion and colonial administration comes from the conditions that were generated for the sometimes voluntary and often forced movement of colonized peoples across states and regions all over the world. This overlapped with the European dispersals we have noted yet bore implications for the postcolonial world that were ultimately quite different from those earlier population movements. Examples can be multiplied several-fold that might serve to illustrate the effects of demographic criss-crossings and the intersections, controversies and hybrid identities that were produced by these colonial population movements. North and West African tirailleur (light infantry) regiments were to fight alongside the French in their various campaigns from as early as the Napoleonic period, with many of them progressively ending up in Paris and its suburbs to impact upon the racial character of France itself well before the wave of migrants from its former colonies were to arrive from World War II onwards. The Tirailleurs Sénégalais conscription supplied an estimated 170,000 troops for France in World War I alone, with many of them fighting and dying in Europe. ²⁸ On the other hand, in East Africa the British indentured labour policy that operated from the 1880s until the 1920s was to have a major impact on the demographic constitution of the region. The indentured labour policy was itself designed as a response to the abolition of slavery in 1833 to take account of the needs of plantation owners who now felt their plantations were under threat of collapse due to the loss of slave labour. When the policy was extended to East Africa it was mainly to provide non-African labour for building the East African railway. Of the roughly 32,000 Indian men brought in, roughly 6,700 stayed behind to work in the commercial and business sectors. After the official termination of the indentured labour flows colonial policy encouraged family reunion along with more voluntary migration from South Asia. By the end of World War II the Indians in East Africa were an estimated 360,000, with many of them firmly in control of the commercial trade in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. After the independence of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in the 1960s the Indians had not only become a central part of the civil service administration but also considered themselves African.²⁹ The ill-advised policy of Africanization in the region and the racially based economic policies aimed at wealth redistribution were later to lead to the migration of this population to other parts of the world, with the ascension to power of Idi Amin, the Ugandan dictator, in 1971 entrenching their violent diasporization. The conditions in East Africa speak to hybridity as much as to nationalist aspirations, which both impact upon the

ways in which we might think of the literary history of the region. Postcolonial writers that have come to write specifically about the long presence of Indians in East Africa include Shiva Naipaul, V. S. Naipaul (his brother and 2006 Nobel Prize laureate), M. G. Vassanji and Yusuf Dawood, among others. In thinking about a postcolonial literary history, it is no longer adequate to stipulate that sub-Saharan Africa is a space in which orality and literacy are the only elements that struggle for literary ascendancy. Rather, as Uzoma Esonwanne (*The Cambridge History*) shows, the very nature of our key terms has to take cognizance of the foundational nature of the mixings that have taken place everywhere on the continent.

The final animating thematic to empire and colonialism follows from the previous themes of dispersal yet takes us in a different direction. The many varied demographic and hybrid criss-crossings that took place in the period of colonial expansion also served to speak back to the colonial metropolitan centres and ultimately to affect social relations there. While several scholars have persuasively shown that ships were the travelling crucibles and microcosms of transnational multicultural societies, composed as they were of seamen from across the colonial world, it is the port towns in various parts of imperial metropolitan Europe that were to carry the permanent signs of these decisive mixings.³⁰ In the seaports of Bristol, Liverpool and Cardiff for example, a real multicultural and transnational identity was shaped by being recursively constituted through the dynamic impact that African, Asian and Arab seamen had on the social relations of the port communities of which they were a permanent feature by the start of World War I.

The Liverpool black community is particularly interesting in this regard. Genealogically varied, this community dates from the middle of the eighteenth century. After the abolition of slavery, and beginning in the 1870s, shipping firms were to hire Africans in large numbers, particularly from the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Liberia and Nigeria. Shippers in Liverpool also hired Afro-Caribbeans and Lascars (demobilized Indian soldiers), Chinese, Arab and Somali seamen.³¹ By the beginning of the twentieth century Liverpool had come to dominate the British trade with West Africa and indeed much of the colonial world. Estimates are that up to a third of the labour force on British ships from 1901 to the 1950s, or roughly 66,000 men, were from West Africa, East Africa, the Caribbean and the Arabian peninsula.³² Significantly, however, the numbers of coloured seamen hired by British ships changed according to the availability of their white counterparts. The two world wars of the twentieth century saw a shortage of white seamen and a concomitant rise in non-Europeans for the shipping industry. The popularity of the latter also

fell just after the wars.³³ After World War I, the demobilized black soldiers who remained in Liverpool were to face significant racism and violence. Thus in June 1919 Charles Wooton was murdered by a white mob in Liverpool, provoking an uprising of blacks in almost all areas where they had settled. Indeed, it is this first race riot in Liverpool that was to reveal the intricate connections between domestic social relations in Liverpool and Britain and the politics of colonial governance in Britain's colonies.

Given that the seamen in Liverpool from different parts of the empire were male, by settling down and entering different forms of relations with white women they introduced a sexual dynamic into metropolitan Britain whose results could not have been originally anticipated by colonial policy. After the 1919 riots colonial policy makers struggled unsuccessfully to accommodate the requests made by African seamen to return home with their white wives. These immediately raised unbearable headaches for the Home Office, the Colonial Office and the local colonial governments respectively, with the governments in the colonies being especially nervous about the deleterious effect that the sight of white women living in impoverished conditions with their black husbands might have on white respectability. Every imaginable effort was exerted to prevent such women from travelling back with their husbands, with sometimes damaging implications for the health of both the Africans and their white wives.³⁴ It was only from the 1950s that a significant number of women began migrating from the Caribbean, Africa and Asia into Britain in general. Liverpool, and other colonial ports like it, then become significant portals through which we might examine various vectors of what constitutes Britishness as it has historically interacted with the colonial Other not just in the colonies, but within Britain itself. The residues of these dynamic processes and relations make themselves visible in the postcolonial writing that has taken shape in Europe, and they serve to show how the metropolitan centre itself becomes postcolonial (McLeod, Lennox, Thomas, The Cambridge History).

Decolonization and postcoloniality

As a general rule, when talking about decolonization, scholars in postcolonial studies conventionally refer to India, Africa and the various countries in the Caribbean that gained independence from their European overlords in the twentieth century. To view the matter from the perspective of Latin America, however, is to discover a completely different sociopolitical and cultural inflection to the processes of decolonization. A number of 'independences' had been unofficially declared from as early as the late sixteenth and early

seventeenth centuries, with attendant social processes that revealed the progressive weakening of links between Spain and its colonies. Despite Spain's best efforts, widespread smuggling and illicit trade persisted between ports; many banned works of Enlightenment thought reached the Americas and beyond; Hispanicizing and nativist indigenous, African and mixed-race peoples wrote about and expressed membership in a broader reinvented Catholic culture and history which not only accounted for them, but also put them in a new moral centre prefigured by Christ's message; while criollos who were filling the convents and monasteries chafed under the lack of high office and consequently composed histories that reimagined global visions, with themselves as crucial harbingers and reformers of the New World. Formal decolonization from Europe itself occurred at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when countries in the region broke decisively away from Spain and Portugal. With the overall process of decolonization too, the relations among European nations had a direct impact on what unfolded in their colonies. In the guise of strengthening the Franco-Spanish pact against Portugal, Napoleon invaded Spain in 1807 and replaced Charles IV with his younger brother Joseph as King José I. This marked the conclusion of the long process of Spain's enfeeblement at the hands of Britain and France, its main European rivals from the 1650s. The overthrow of the Spanish king led first to popular revolt in Spain itself, with the emergence of civil and military juntas in various provinces determinedly opposed to the French occupation. It also had a dramatic effect on the Spanish colonies in America, who themselves saw no reason to continue under the impress of Spain following the political disorder that was unfolding there. Sometimes with the affirmation of loyalty to the king, and at others with an explicitly stated desire to break away from what had long been perceived as an inequitable structure of relations with the metropolitan centre, several countries in the region declared their independence from Spain in rapid succession, such that between 1810 and 1925 it had lost all of the American mainland. Cuba was to remain under Spanish rule until 1898, with the Philippines in Southeast Asia experiencing unbroken colonization under Spain from 1521 to 1898, when it was lost to the Americans following the Spanish-American War that had began in Cuba but had spread to the Philippines.³⁵

Even though the specific typology of decolonization in Latin America differed from place to place, certain cultural factors were shared across the region that are pertinent to reflecting upon a postcolonial literary history. The most important was the fact that the decolonization movement was spearheaded mainly by the *criollos* (American-born Europeans). Demography was firmly on the their side. By 1800, out of an estimated total population of 16.9 million in the region,

3.2 million were whites, with only 150,000 of these being *peninsulares*, or people born in Europe.³⁶ However, the demographic dominance of the *criollos* was not reflected in the distribution of administrative and religious offices. As the eighteenth century progressed Bourbon reformers from Spain adopted the policy of assigning the most important political and religious positions in their colonies to Spanish-born whites as opposed to their *criollo* counterparts. What appeared as the domino effect of the declaration of independence by several states was actually born out of the pan-American orientation of many of its *criollo* intellectuals, with inspiration being drawn from the successful American breakaway from Britain in 1775–83 and, to a lesser degree, the Haitian Revolution of 1791–1804. The emergence of political leaders such as Venezuelan Simón Bolívar and Argentinian José de San Martín, who inspired a pan-regional following in efforts to separate from Spain, was also telling. Much later, in 1959, Che Guevara and Fidel Castro were to attain iconic status within the region and well beyond as leaders of the Cuban Revolution.

Despite the fact that it was criollos that spearheaded formal decolonization from Spain, they were by no means alone in feeling restive under imperial arrangements. The criollos in their turn had been responsible for establishing and enforcing a racial hierarchy that worked to their advantage in relation to the non-white population. The racial mix in the region included the descendants of black slaves brought from Africa and the native Indians who frequently had their rightful claims to territory and farmland brutally repressed, along with the growing body of mestizos (mixed-race children) who complicated the racial classifications that were used to assign social and economic privilege. Many resistance movements arose that sought to challenge these hierarchies, the most famous and bloodiest of these being that of Tupac Amaru II from 1780 to 1782 in the Peruvian Andes. Tupac Amaru was a Christian who asserted his Inca lineage, spoke both Quechua and Spanish fluently, and drew on significant criollo as well as Indian and mestizo support until he was abandoned by the criollos. On his final defeat the bulk of his family was captured and killed, with he himself being decapitated and dismembered in the public square at Cuzco. He was subsequently to attain mythical status and was used as an inspirational figurehead for several subsequent rebellions across the region.³⁷

The fertile cultural and historical mix just described accounts for some of the most important literary tendencies to have emerged from Latin America. Whereas, as Ángel Rama instructs us, the bureaucratic processes of establishing a coherent administration in Latin America produced what he describes as the 'Lettered City' in the form of an army of scribes whose responsibility to render administrative and religious edicts from Spain engendered a vast array

of writings, the cultural and religious admixture accounts for what has come to be known as the genre of magical realism (Ortega, Natali, Siskind, The Cambridge History).³⁸ As Siskind points out, the impact that the work of Jorge Luis Borges, Miguel Ángel Asturias, Gabriel García Márquez, Isabel Allende, Laura Esquivel and other Latin American writers have had on postcolonial and world literature is difficult to overestimate, even if the precise definition of what constitutes magical realism remains a subject of intense debate.³⁹ Indeed, the question is worth posing as to why it is that despite certain telling demographic similarities between the United States and Canada, on the one hand, and Latin America, on the other, it is the latter that manages to produce the magical realism that is now taken to be one of the signature literary forms of the postcolonial world. The answer must lie in various sources, not the least of which is that unlike their northern neighbours, Latin America had sophisticated civilizations among the Mayans, the Incas and the Aztecs, to name the most well known that had to be accounted for at the Conquest and after. Criollo culture had to deal directly with these systems, both in terms of their imaginative semiotic orders and the bureaucratic apparatuses that had marked them as kingdoms and indeed empires well before the Conquest. Quite apart from providing templates for environmental consciousness and revolutionary action among the Indians, the Mayan Popol Vuh for example became a direct inspiration for Miguel Ángel Asturias's Men of Maize, originally published in 1949. 40 A reason for the emergence of magical realism must also be sought in the effects of the Catholic disposition towards infusing mundane objects with a sense of the sacred (bread, water, wine, fish, boat, staff, sheep), thus intensifying the practice of seeing uncanny correspondences along the reality/fantastical spectrum that was already common in Indian and African mythologies. Kenneth Mills gives credence to this proposition when he writes with respect to Andean Christianity:

The attraction of indigenous peoples in much of Andean Peru to the Christian cult of the saints was partly one of familiarity. Native Andeans had grown accustomed to the consultation of ancestral originators who asserted themselves across overlapping sacred landscapes . . . Andeans were familiar, too, with visible representations of the holy, and with ways of knowing, recalling and stirring their divinities through the performance of sacred narratives, offerings and visits to special places. ⁴¹

Also pertinent in this regard was the widespread use of Catholic iconography. As various scholars have shown, innumerable images of the Virgin of Guadalupe circulated as a medium for the dissemination of a cult that was to become central to Spanish American identity.⁴² Thus the representational effervescence that marked both formal and informal aspects of Catholicism was culturally

reconfigured when its symbols came to be co-mingled with African religious practices brought over by the slaves, with the syncretic admixtures thus generated coming to define the popular cultures of Latin America in *santería*, *candomblé*, Eshu and Sango cults, and local carnivals, among others. The literatures of Latin America were to be infused by this hybrid sensibility and magical realism became its mature literary expression.

Colonial space-making

Even as the inaugural time of the postcolonial is directly related to that of the colonial, it is not to be mistaken for or indeed limited to the epochal rupture signified by the dates that have conventionally framed some of the most intense debates in postcolonial studies: 1492 (Columbus's arrival in America and the expulsion of Jews from Spain); 1603 (Lord Mountjoy's colonization of the northern counties of Ireland); 1798-1801 (Napoleon's Egyptian Campaign); 1791-1804 (the Haitian Revolution); 1810-25 (the independence of Spanish America and of Brazil); 1833 (the abolition of slavery); 1857 (the bloody Sepoy uprising in Cawnpore); 1884 (the Berlin Conference and the scramble for Africa); 1947 (the independence of India and its partition); 1954-62 (Algeria's War of Independence); 1955 (the Bandung Conference); 1994 (the end of apartheid). If postcolonialism (without the hyphen) is necessarily tied to the colonial due to the simultaneous temporal and discursive framing of the field, it is the entire domain of what we might describe as colonial space-making and its aftereffects in the contemporary world that gives the term its significance today. Colonial space-making does not merely designate the formation, constitution and governance of a geographically demarcated area, though that is definitely also important. Rather, colonial space-making is first and foremost the projection of sociopolitical relations upon a geographical space. Colonial space-making is ultimately about the distribution of social and political goods along axes of power and hierarchical relations and is the result of a series of interconnected and highly complex procedures and instruments. It is undergirded by assumptions, metaphors and bureaucratic practices all of which interact with a given social environment to produce hegemonic relations of power. While the hegemonic relations of power and the ideas and assumptions undergirding them may be challenged, the platforms upon which the relations take shape are as much cultural and symbolic as they are political and spatial. Colonial space-making is thus defined by sets of relations that were structurally produced and contested across a series of interrelated vectors throughout the colonial encounter. Politically, colonial space-making sought to alter already existing relations

among well-constituted local groups (such as in the case of India between the Mughals and the Hindus or in Nigeria between the northern Muslims and the coastal Yoruba and Igbo), or to reconfigure the hierarchies between indigenous and diasporic populations (such as was exemplified in Southeast Asia or Latin America). And from its inception colonial space-making involved the conscription of material human bodies into the schemas of colonial relations of production and the differential constitution of citizens and subjects. ⁴³

Everywhere colonial space-making put into play the intellectual appropriation and symbolic reconfiguration of the relationship between colonizer and colonized, and between the colonized and their natural environment. As Al-Musawi shows in relation to Egypt, for example, when Napoleon landed there in the expedition of 1798-1803 he immediately declared himself a Muslim. With the help of French scholars he took with him he helped put into circulation a highly charged and mutually reinforcing contradiction about Egypt and its relationship to France. On the one hand, the Egyptians' religion was thought to require reform so as to incorporate them into a greater modernity. This reform implicitly demanded a respect for certain secular ideals. On the other hand, Egyptian writers were also to see the Europeans as languid and effeminate, something that was transferred to European culture itself to make it extremely seductive. The heady mix of secular idealism with erotic conceptualism was later to be taken up by Arab writers themselves, from as early as Hasan al-'Attar's 1801 disquisition on the French, about which Muhammad Siddiq notes, 'the young effeminate French scholars who possess and flaunt their superior knowledge, as they do their physical charms and bewitching glances, are depicted as invitingly effeminate'. 44 The theme of French effeminateness coupled with the fraught modernity of Arab culture is taken up in different directions by Arab writers such as Yahya Haqqi (Haggi) in his *The Saint's* Lamp, Naguib Mahfouz in Midaq Alley and Tayeb Salih in Season of Migration to the North (al-Musawi, The Cambridge History).⁴⁵

As will readily be evident from several of the chapters in *The Cambridge History*, each stage of the production and maintenance of colonial space was met with contestation and complicated forms of subversive complicity by the colonized, with varying degrees of efficacy and success. The postcolonial nation state, the excolonial metropolitan centres and predatory multinational corporations are all taken to be inheritors and beneficiaries of colonial space-making in the modern world.

Bearing in mind the caveat that there were many configurations of colonial space, and that in various instances these were not mutually exclusive but were rather mixed and overlapped in specific local contexts, we can now set out a structural typology of the colonial from which to situate different kinds of postcolonial literary representations, critiques and inflections:

- 1. The context of formal colonialism. This involved the establishment of a bureaucratic colonial apparatus comprising legislative and administrative units, the police, censuses, and with attendant cultural instruments and institutions such as the colonial church, school, theatre, arts councils and radio stations among others. Most sub-Saharan African countries, India and Southeast Asia would fall under this rubric. Postcolonial literature was directly impacted upon by the colonial apparatus in theme, content and agonistic reference points. As Simon Gikandi notes with specific reference to Africa: 'From the eighteenth century onwards, the colonial situation shaped what it meant to be an African writer, shaped the language of African writing, and overdetermined the culture of letters in Africa.'
- 2. The context of plantation economies. The transformation of plantation slavery into colonialism proper differed from place to place. However, as a general rule plantation economies were marked not by the paucity or indeed small number of subsistence or small farms, but by the fact that plantations tended to occupy the most arable and productive areas and were geared predominantly towards export. The colonial machinery that evolved in locations as different as Sri Lanka (coffee), Brazil, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and much of the Caribbean (sugar), and Malaysia (rubber) was designed to ensure that products from such places were exported specifically to the 'mother' European country, and that their European rivals had limited access to them. Furthermore, all such contexts also involved the mixing of variant populations transferred from different parts of the world. The indentured labour policy we have already noted that was in place in East Africa was also turned towards transferring South Asian and Chinese labour into plantation economies elsewhere. Colonial space-making ensured various degrees of racialized social segregation such that the race relations that remained after the formal end of colonialism were often marked by animosity and ill-will. This has been evident most poignantly in places as distinct as Malaysia, Guyana, and the Dominican Republic, where the fraught nature of race relations to this day may be traced to the plantation economies and their transformations under colonialism.⁴⁷ The literature of former plantation economies refracts these interracial and political tensions, and we read about these variously in Naipaul, Walcott, Brathwaite, Lamming, Rhys, Kincaid and others (Savory, *The Cambridge History*).
- 3. The context of settler colonialism. As has already been noted, from the fifteenth century Europeans had set out to different parts of the world to create settler colonies. This process especially impacted upon southern Africa, Ireland,

Canada, Australia and Latin America. Three attitudes generally marked these settler colonies. At the extreme end was an enclave and segregationist mentality, with strenuous efforts at reproducing the class privileges of the metropolitan centres while keeping the indigenous populations in various forms of servitude. The second attitude of settler colonists veered between policies of compromise or assimilation and the utter destruction of indigenous populations. Canada, Australia, South Africa and to some degree Ireland fall under this rubric. In this instance the indigenous populations (designated as Aborigines, Natives and sometimes Indians) find that the settler communities represent a continuing and unbroken paracolonial order against which they have to struggle (Heath Justice, Brewster, The Cambridge History). Whereas in Australia, the penal settlers from 1788 constituted the early vanguard of what was to become a largely British-dominated colony, the settler colonialism of South Africa was constituted by different waves of Europeans attempting to establish bureaucratic and administrative structures in different parts of the country, starting with the Dutch in the 1650s and ending in the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902, the fully fledged inter-European war of control (Warnes, The Cambridge History). Concomitantly, these different European settlers also engendered a new set of relations among the local indigenous populations, and subsequently between these populations and the large number of mixed-race children that were produced from the cohabitation of European men with local women. In all such settler colonies the descendants of European settlers developed an ambiguous love/hate relationship to the mother country. Australia, South Africa and Brazil more than Canada would come to show such strong ambivalence (especially in the field of sports), while the situation in Ireland is more complex given the waves of Anglo-Irish layerings over the Celtic indigenous populations from the seventeenth century onwards. The Anglo-Irish were in turn made the object of contradictory and often denigrating cultural and political policies by the British. Some of the most vociferous Irish nationalists came from this Anglo-Irish stock (Cleary, The Cambridge History).⁴⁸ As noted earlier, Britain acquired territories from the French in 1763, with settler colonialism in Canada being complicated by the fact that the French Quebecois came to consider themselves as a minority historically 'oppressed' by Anglo-Canada and sometimes insisted on claiming a colonized status (Siemerling, The Cambridge History).⁴⁹

4. The contexts of migration and diaspora. Apart from the European population dispersions that took place in the seventeenth century, in the period of formal colonialism diasporization and population movement were, if not deliberately intended policies of colonial governance (such as with the settling

of convicts in Australia, or the dispersal of indentured South Asian and Chinese labour, for example), then definitely an unforeseen consequence of colonial policy (such as with the 1947 Partition of India). With the rise of diaspora studies from the mid 1980s the concept of diaspora has undergone a number of conceptual changes, several of which may be related to postcolonial studies. Whereas the Jewish, Armenian, Greek and African American diasporas were taken to be the classic diasporas until the first half of the twentieth century, the term has come to be applied to various other constituencies in scholarly discourse and popular parlance. 50 Key among changes in the concept of diaspora is the idea that it has to be understood as much in terms of the causative factors that trigger mass population movement as in the different relations that are established over time between host land, homeland and diasporic communities. Depending on the causes of diasporization myths of homeland and return may either be radically reconfigured or become progressively attenuated within the diasporic imaginary. Furthermore, the idea of difference from the host land undergoes variations and changes, with certain diasporic groups better able to become integrated into the host hegemonic culture than others. Race and ethnic difference are critical in the constitution of diasporas as are the inter- and intraethnic modes of spatial identification and differentiation that have informed diasporas.⁵¹ Thus the postcolonial literatures of Britain, Germany and France may productively be understood as literatures of their postcolonial diasporas. With the infusion of new labour populations into the historically white settler colonies of Canada, South Africa and Australia starting in the mid 1960s and intensifying from the 1980s, there has also been the production of vibrant diasporic literary cultures in such historically white settler communities, with an attendant effort at providing space for the articulation of multiple cultural identities (Murphet, The Cambridge History).

Because colonial/postcolonial space did not emerge all at once but developed over a long period of time each chapter in *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature* will carefully historicize what it considers to be the colonial/postcolonial for a proper account of the relevant literary history to be provided.

Past, present and active histories

We have so far been deploying a singular description of postcolonial literary history – a postcolonial literary history – when all that has been described thus far suggests that it would be more accurate to speak of multiple postcolonial

literary histories. And yet the singular usage is not entirely without use. For it places firmly in the foreground the need to differentiate such a literary history from that organized under the rubric of another conventionally used singularity: the nation. As Linda Hutcheon and Mario J. Valdés remind us, literary history has traditionally been used as an instrument to demarcate and contest national cultural identity and heritage. Literary history then becomes the means by which to organize perceptions of the past and, more importantly, the way that past validates or interrogates present arrangements.⁵² The claims made about the past and the designs on the present implied by any literary historicizing, however, have to be completely rethought in the context of the large-scale enterprise embarked upon in The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature. For it is clear that the mapping of literary history for individual nations (Australia, South Africa, India) is significantly different from that of a continental or pan-regional, or hemispheric entity (Africa, the Arab world, Latin America, Southeast Asia) such as exemplified in the chapters by Esonwanne, al-Musawi, Ortega, Natali and Patke respectively. The scope, scale and salience of nonliterary events that impact upon the literary field are quite different as are the internal relations of elements within the literary field itself. Even within specific nations the literary history that is produced may differ according to the predominant lens that is deployed. This is aptly shown in the case of India, where Prasad, Kabir, Ganguly and Gupta all provide different standpoints from which to rethink the literary history of that country. The understanding of what constitutes the precise definition of the postcolonial and how it is dated and related to the literary historical field also raises some implications. Thus in Murphet's account of the postcolonial literary history of Australia, he takes the innovative and counterintuitive view that even though the colonial actions of settlement took place in the eighteenth century, the full collective consciousness of postcolonialism has to be traced to the Vietnam War and how it brought hitherto disparate interests together in redefining a then fraught Australian identity. This perspective is a sharp contrast to that provided in the chapter by Brewster, where Australia's literary history from an Aboriginal perspective places quite a different inflection on what constitutes the postcolonial writing of the country. The adoption of a thematically oriented as opposed to a nationalist or hemispheric perspective also allows for different kinds of comparative relationships to emerge. Even in such chapters, the focus on islands as a thematic lens taken by DeLoughrey for example contrasts with the more conceptual and structural perspectives of Johannessen and Li. In each instance, then, the use to which literary history is put implies what Valdés, following Paul Ricoeur, describes as 'effective history':

Effective literary history begins with the recognition that history, and literary history in particular, is effective insofar as it is used and is of use to would-be readers; it is a concept deeply aligned with the idea that we are affected in the present by our sense of the past. Thus, whenever the conceptualization of the cultural past is rigidly exclusive of multiple sectors that for one reason or another have been found wanting, our participation and contribution to the cultural present will be uninformed ... Our starting point is the recognition that effective literary history like all historical writing is a construct and it is not the past relived, but effective literary history is a construct based on the problematics of the writer. There is implicit in these considerations a decisive shift from the truth-claim of knowledge to that of an invitation to continued inquiry.⁵³

Postcolonial literary history must then be taken as an invitation to continued inquiry, partly because of the often variegated and sometimes unsettled nature of the national local contexts in which the literature is produced and consumed, and also because, in setting these against the literary history of canonical Western literature, it encourages us to rethink the key paradigms that have governed such literature. This does not mean a sceptical overthrow of concepts such as humanism, irony, or indeed genre, all of which have been central, along with others, to the constitution of the Western canon. Rather it is the rigorous interrogation of the sources and historical dispositions of the main assumptions of the writing of literary history that are raised both individually and collectively by these two volumes.

Given the range of perspectival modulations required for the detailing of a postcolonial literary history, the term 'literature' is used here in an expansive sense not limited exclusively to belles-lettres. While the traditional genres of poetry and prose have specific chapters dedicated to them (Prasad, Ramazani), with extensive discussions of drama in several individual chapters (e.g. Mukherjee, Murdoch, Esonwanne), all contributors pay attention to the full range of literary expression. However, given that other genres such as missionary writing, slave narratives, travel narratives, autobiography, film and popular literature have all had an impact on the constitution of postcolonial literary studies, chapters on these areas have been included as a reflection of the new tendencies in the field (Mudimbe-Boyi, Carpio, Griffiths, Holden, Dovey, Newell and Gupta). Several chapters explicitly address generic ambiguity as well as questions pertaining to the interface between local, indigenous writing traditions and the self-evidently European literary tradition, and one chapter deals exclusively with the character of postcolonial responses to the Western canon (Johannessen, Esonwanne, Mukherjee). With the existence of various non-europhone languages and literary traditions that inarguably provide a

viable creative resource matrix for postcolonial writing, other chapters acknowledge and contextualize the effect of local languages on such writing along with the effects of English as a global language (Ganguly and Peterson, Mazzon). Chapters such as those on 'Primitivism and postcolonial literature' (Li) and 'The narrative forms of postcolonial literature' (Fludernik) break new ground by exploring fresh themes that are not only historical but also make a direct appeal to the cognate narrative disciplines of history and anthropology. The chapters on literary prizes and on journals and institutions by Ponzanesi and Raja and Bahri provide direct links between literary history and literary sociology for understanding the institutional foundations of the field within academia.

Volume I is largely composed of national, hemispheric or geographically oriented chapters. The obvious exceptions to this general rule are the chapters on slave narratives, travel writing, missionary writing and auto/biography which between them cover genre-specific topics of overall significance to the field. The chapters at the end of Volume I on postcolonial writing in Britain, France and Germany serve to problematize any conception of postcolonial literary history that marries it exclusively to the context of ex-colonies. As has already been noted, it is evident that the literary production of metropolitan Europe has been thoroughly postcolonialized precisely because of the dialogical processes of colonial space-making and the direct impact these have had on the colonial metropolitan centres through the processes of diaspora and migration.

Volume II, on the other hand, comprises mainly thematically oriented as opposed to hemispheric or geographically inflected chapters, with the chapter on 'Religion and postcolonial writing' by Jamie Scott for example performing a wide-ranging and exemplary overview of how to generate a postcolonial literary history by focusing on a particular theme. However, the rationale of *The Cambridge History* is not to provide an encyclopedia of themes or geographical subjects, but rather to highlight the most productive ways in which literature in the field has been produced and may be discussed.

Postcolonial literary history: geographic coevalness or implicit hierarchy?

Even though it is ultimately literary history that unifies all the chapters, given the mixture between chapters with a decidedly more geographical focus (nation, continent, or hemisphere) and those with a thematic emphasis questions may arise about the implicit prioritization of certain geographical areas as opposed to others and how this is to be distinguished from previous anthologies in the field. Why Africa ahead of the Caribbean and Latin America?

Secondly, the thematic as opposed to exclusively chronological focus may be thought to generate a number of gaps if not outright confusion. Why a chapter on orality in African literature and not anglophone African literature in general? Why the transregional 'Postcolonialism and Arab literature', in contrast to the nationally oriented chapters on postcolonial literature in South Africa and India? A collection as wide-ranging as *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature*, which is both global and multifaceted in scope, raises a particular set of issues that are quite different from those raised by collections that might be focused exclusively on the literature of a particular country, continent, or region. To this specific set of questions we turn in conclusion.

There are two contradictory principles that have underpinned anthologies or collections in the field of postcolonial literature and of the Commonwealth literature that came before it. The first is the principle of coevalness, and the other is that of an implicit hierarchy among the regions that provide the literature. The principle of coevalness could very easily be defended under the rubric of Commonwealth literature, since the term Commonwealth itself was inherently a convenient political as opposed to literary label. It was rare that any justification was sought in the early anthologies for bringing together literature from Africa, South Asia, the Caribbean, Australia and Canada between the covers of a single volume. And yet at the same time there was an unacknowledged genuflection towards the idea of a hierarchy among the regions. In this implicit hierarchy, Africa, South Asia and the Caribbean took priority over Canada and Australia. In such schemas Latin American literature did not appear at all, partly because it was not part of the Commonwealth and partly because it entered into the frame of postcolonial literary study in translation. The combination of coevalness and implicit hierarchy is to be seen in every literary anthology in the field we can identify. Take for example the 1996 Arnold Anthology of Post-Colonial Literatures in English edited by John Thieme.⁵⁴ The volume opens with literatures from the various regions of Africa, before turning to Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, New Zealand and the South Pacific, and South Asia in that order and ending finally on the subject of transcultural writing. Anthologies of a critical-theoretical orientation have a different and more comparative approach to the task of discussing postcolonial literature, but even these betray the two principles outlined. Thus in Dennis Walder's more literary historical offering Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory (1998) there is no attempt to even devote any special sections to Canada and Australia, instead opening on West African texts and then going through texts from India, the Caribbean and South Africa in that order.⁵⁵ Are these earlier anthologies less useful because of the unresolved nature of the two principles of organization? That does not appear to be so, the reason being that the contradiction between the two principles of coevalness and geographical hierarchy is inherently irresolvable once we move outside a specific country or geographical region to embrace a more global and comparative approach to the field.

In fact, behind the principle of implicit hierarchy in Commonwealth and postcolonial literary studies is the unexamined idea that, to put it formulaically, Kenyan literature is more postcolonial than say Irish or Canadian literature. This is centrally because of race and how this category is thought to cross-articulate with questions of historical oppression. Thus, sticking with our earlier examples, Kenyan literature is considered intrinsically more postcolonial than say Canadian literature, given that the first was produced as a response to a rabid and oppressive settler-cum-administrative colonialism and is from the Third World, while the second draws from the dynamics of settler colonialism and is obviously centred in a developed economy. Despite recognizing the value behind such thinking, it is important to point out that given what we noted earlier about the variegated forms of colonial space-making and the crossillumination that a comparative approach provides, it would be a mistake to retain the implicit form of hierarchy in anthologizing the field without some further and robust justification. In fact, it might even be ventured from a historical and comparative perspective that Irish and Indian literature, on the one hand, are more postcolonial than Nigerian and Canadian literature, on the other, due to the much more complicated character of colonial space-making that affected the first two. This is by no means an uncontroversial proposition, and yet the opportunity to read about the literature from these places from a comparative and literary historical perspective is one that will help answer many questions that have remained silent or poorly articulated in postcolonial literary studies.

As each chapter has a clear chronological framing relevant to the specific topic (geographical or thematic) at hand, it is hoped that readers will finally be able to check facts on specific authors and literary tendencies, or to trace relevant details of stylistic and thematic developments and influences over a period of time, or to explore the often neglected relationships between specific authors and texts and other neglected features of their contexts while also getting a deeper grasp of what constitutes postcolonial literature and literary history. Our collective hope is that working out a system of concepts and ideas that are both historiographic *and* rhetorical in classrooms that have long been challenged to take true account of the fertile offerings that have come from the postcolonial world, *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature* will inspire a more informed and sophisticated engagement not just with its literature, but

with the very imaginative universe that informs our yearnings today. To misquote Shakespeare, to understand is prologue.

Notes

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- 20. I would like to say a special thanks to David Chioni Moore and Elizabeth DeLoughrey, with both of whom I served on the MLA Postcolonial Committee in 2007, for sharing so generously of the research they and earlier members of the committee had done on the etymology of the term. Moore suggested 1983 as a totemic date in his introductory remarks at the 2007 MLA panel on 'Postcolonial Studies Since 1983: Reflective Assessments'.
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GLENDA R. CARPIO

Fictional representations of slavery begin with texts such as Aphra Behn's Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave, a novella that was hugely popular in its time and widely adapted for the stage for over a century after its publication. The most recent adaptation, Biyi Bandele's 1991 play, is an adaptation of adaptations.¹ The Royal Shakespeare Company enlisted Nigerian-born Bandele to adapt a play based on both Restoration dramatist Thomas Southerne's 1695 Oroonoko and John Hawkesworth's 1759 play by the same name. These multiple layers of adaptation are no less rich than the sources Behn used for her novella. Depicting the tragedy of an African prince who, along with his beloved, is sold into New World slavery, Behn follows the slave trade back across the Atlantic to Africa, becoming the first English author to represent sub-Saharan African people in their own continent. To familiarize her readers with her characters and settings, Behn made use of the conventions of the New World travel story, the courtly romance and the heroic tragedy and, especially, the conventions of the Oriental romance, including the trope of the Noble Savage. Beyond familiarizing the foreign, Behn's strategies helped highlight the human tragedy of the slave trade. As a heroic tragedy, Behn's novella 'exaggerates precisely those emotional experiences that were often suppressed by historical description, debates, and documentary records' about the slave trade.2 In its various adaptations, Oroonoko became part of the abolitionist movement in England, and was eventually considered a forerunner to Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852).

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, is equally rich in its sources and powerful in its long-lasting legacy.³ The first full-length autobiography by an African who suffered the bonds of slavery, *The Interesting Narrative*, inaugurated the slave narrative tradition and eloquently agitated against the most significant change to have occurred since the publication of Behn's novella: the fact that New World slavery had gradually come to be justified on the basis of racial difference. Equiano, like Behn,

manipulated various literary traditions, including the spiritual autobiography, the picaresque novel, the travel or adventure book, the conversion and captivity narrative, and the sentimental novel, to heighten the intense loss and grief occasioned by slavery. Yet, unlike Behn's, Equiano's aim was to prove, by his own example, the humanity of the enslaved. Equiano deftly articulates a slave's transcendence of his abject condition and his ascendance to a position of literary, economic, political and social power, thereby challenging insidious correlations between blackness and savagery.

Behn was compelled to write Oroonoko's tragedy for rather different reasons. As the ardent supporter of James II, the Catholic king who was forced to abdicate the throne of England 1688, Behn projected her royalist sympathies onto the tragedy of the fallen prince. Emphatically identifying herself as the narrator of *Oroonoko*, Behn also makes explicit parallels between her and Oroonoko on the basis on her gender and her craft. The first professional woman author in England, Behn believed it was the fate of most women to be subjected to some form of commodification, whether through forced marriages, prostitution or, even in her own case, through the demands of her public. She sometimes compared middle-class women who were forced into unhappy marriages for money to slaves.

The stylistic and ethical differences between two of the founding texts in the history of fictional representations of slavery are thus significant. Their internal contradictions, as Behn's motives suggest, are no less complex. Equiano's narrative reveals its own contradictions since it makes clear the impossibility of transcending the enormous loss that Equiano suffered as he moves from captive and slave to subject and author. Indeed, because Equiano's text 'stylized the conversion from chattel to liberal subject, negotiated the voices of abolition and slave resistance, and mediated the logics of coloniality in which trade in people and goods connected Africa, plantation Virginia, the colonial West Indies, and metropolitan England', it has been taken to 'epitomize the most eloquent narration of individual redemption through modern liberal institutions'. 4 Equiano's narrative is also one of the very few first-person accounts of the Middle Passage and includes moving accounts of the trials that he and others suffered as slaves.⁵ At the same time, his narrative includes evasions and interruptions that are not only intrinsic to autobiography but also suggestive of the challenges involved in representing the world-shattering violence of slavery.

The internal fissures and ethical dilemmas that Behn's novella and Equiano's narratives incorporate are at the centre of contemporary, postcolonial fictions of slavery. This chapter explores divergent approaches to such dilemmas and tensions by juxtaposing a set of seminal texts in this literary genre, including

not only Caryl Phillips's novel *Cambridge* as well as Derek Walcott's poetic works, *The Star-Apple Kingdom* and *Omeros*, but also Gayl Jones's 1975 novel *Corregidora*. While the emphasis is on anglophone engagements with the transatlantic slave trade and its vast archive, the chapter draws together a vast geography including Europe, the Americas, the Caribbean and Africa.

Phillips's *Cambridge* echoes many of the motives and genres shaping Behn's novella and Equiano's narrative. The novel's plot is deceptively simple: on a nameless West Indian plantation sometime in the late eighteenth, early nineteenth century, a slave named Cambridge kills an overseer. The scene of the murder and the events leading up to it are provided in three distinct accounts: a white woman's travel journal, the slave's autobiographical account, and a brief article in a public newspaper. What differentiates these representations is not whether they designate Cambridge as culpable – for he confesses to the deed – but how the circumstances of his crime are rendered. In each case, the circumstances vary according to the ideological position of the narrator and the rhetorical conventions she or he employs.

Drawing upon the historiography of the British West Indies and the central texts of the slave narrative tradition, Phillips historically reconstructs the rhetoric, structure and content of slavery's textual archive as he underscores the complexities of its interpretation. Most of the novel details the experiences of Emily Cartwright, an Englishwoman who has been sent by her father to survey his West Indian sugar plantation. Her text constitutes a pastiche of facts, narrative strategies and actual passages from the travel journals and planter diaries of Victorian women, and it is organized to showcase the ideologies of a European mistress. Similarly, the novel reproduces whole sections of Equiano's narrative as well as those of his contemporaries, Ukawsaw Gronniosaw and Ottubah Cugoano, dispossessed Africans who also wrote about their experiences of captivity and enforced labour within the Black Atlantic. And, the novel's shortest section, the newspaper account, emphatically echoes the sensationalist and sentimental rhetoric of journalistic accounts of slavery.

In restaging the historical and literary nature of slavery's archive, Phillips calls attention to the hermeneutical challenges it proposes. Not only do the novel's narratives present competing claims about the crime and the nature of slavery in the New World, they also openly show the genre impurities and narrative incompleteness of the historical texts upon which they draw. Emily's and Cambridge's texts, like Behn's novella and Equiano's narrative, include the 'gaps, ambiguities, discreet omissions, self-protective explanations' that the performances as both narrators and protagonists of their tales necessitate.⁷ The bulk of Emily's narrative shows her manoeuvring physically and

rhetorically through an alien geographical environment and both constructing and protecting her identity as a lady traveller and planter diarist. While her text details her day-to-day life on her father's plantation, the reader must sift through the profound denials of her colonialist perspective and her thinly layered, sometimes openly naked racism, to compose the facts of the estate. Cambridge and the crime for which he is killed figure in her narrative only in so far as they disrupt her own experiences outside Europe and her father's house.

Because her narrative is juxtaposed to that of Cambridge, the reader is able to see the difference between what her representation permits and what it excludes. In his own narrative, Cambridge brackets his life story with two short allusions to the crime: his narrative focus is kept on his successful acculturation to European manners, his conversion to Christianity and his attainment of literacy in English. His own rendition of the facts of Emily's father's estate is coloured by his attempts to frame himself as a successful convert who has empowered himself despite his cultural dispossession. As his narrative details the trials and tribulations of his conversion, it minimizes the role of the crime and distorts the events that surround it. At the same time, it emphasizes the conventions that slave narrators used to forge forms of subaltern identity and agency.

The gaps within and between the texts are accounted for in the novel and are presented as part of the evasive 'truth' not only about Cambridge's crime but also about the crimes committed in the name of New World slavery. Unlike the two main narratives, the newspaper account emphatically dramatizes the murder at the same time that it obfuscates its circumstances through rhetorical flourishes and sensationalizing details. The brevity of the account and its omissions (it is less than four pages long and substitutes dashes for actual dates, names, places) provokes a shocking contrast to the starkly violent image with which the account closes, that of Cambridge, hung and gibbeted. The glaring omissions and distortions with which it represents the murder underscore the incompleteness of the record of the crime. Hence, each of the novel's narratives is a mixture of fact, fiction, convention and innovation; each one shows the limits of its own narrative scope as it contrasts with the others. The end result is a novel that highlights what it does not represent as much as what it includes.

Phillips's extensive borrowing and reappropriating of the historical record, what might be more properly called his lifting and pilfering of the archive of slavery, represents a key trend in postcolonial fiction about slavery. Mimicking the violence of its composition, Phillips beckons his readers to contend with the vast inequalities of that archive. Phillips's other novels, mainly, *Crossing the*

River, ⁸ The Nature of Blood (1997), Foreigners (2007), all take an approach similar to that which he takes in Cambridge. In Foreigners, he details the story of Francis Barber, an ex-slave from Jamaica who was Samuel Johnson's servant and a beneficiary of Johnson's will. In Crossing the River Phillips tells the story of three black characters: Nash, who travels from America to Africa as a Christian missionary, Martha, an old woman who attempts to travel from Virginia to California to escape chattel slavery, and Travis, an African American army servant during World War II; all three are connected through the history of the African diaspora.

But Phillips's Crossing the River has been severely critiqued because unlike Cambridge, the novel reproduces sometimes verbatim the writings of the masters, specifically those of John Newton, the eighteenth-century slave trader turned abolitionist. Marcus Wood, for instance, argues quite powerfully that Phillips's fictionalization of acts of brutality (e.g. the rape of a pregnant female slave upon a slave ship) constitutes a problematic reappropriation of the anonymous victim of this crime. Woods's point - that contemporary writers and readers all too often feed off a slavery archive that is itself largely white, virulently racist and violently unstable - is an important one for it points to the limits of Phillips's strategy. Like Barry Unsworth in Sacred Hunger (1992) and Fred D'Aguiar, in the aptly named Feeding the Ghosts (1997), which is based on the 1782 Zong incident, Phillips depends on the records of slavery written largely by the master class. In taking the archive as a point of departure, Phillips, like other contemporary writers that engage with questions of historical representation in fictional renderings of slavery, also runs the risk of subsuming an engagement with the emotional lives of the enslaved in favour of what some deem to be dry, largely academic, attempts to read in between the lines of the historical record.

What did it feel like to live through the Middle Passage? What did it feel like to live under slavery? We will never fully know the answers to such questions even if we look at the records written by those who were enslaved since, as Toni Morrison has famously observed, slave narrators 'were silent about many things and they "forgot" many other things' given the many constraints within which they published. ¹⁰ Can fiction allow us to imagine what those records left unsaid? The recuperative gesture of giving voice to those who could not represent themselves is suspect at best. It takes a talent as prodigious as Morrison's to venture, as she does in *Beloved* (1987), to transform pieces of the archive (in this case, the story of Margaret Garner) into a powerful text that isn't naïve about what fiction can do to fill in the gaps left by the historical record. In *Omeros* Derek Walcott suggests other risks involved in fictionalizing slavery: if factual fiction, the 'textbooks, pamphlets, brochures', the domain of

historians, has 'the affliction of impartiality', do fictions of slavery that depend on appropriating its archive risk flattening oceans of feeling into 'paper diagrams', 'skirting emotion' till literature is 'as guilty as History'? ¹¹

Cambridge is arguably Phillips's most successful postcolonial fiction of slavery because, rather than depend on texts written solely by white men of power, in that novel Phillips explores the tradition of elite subalterns, like Behn and Equiano, who sought precisely to engage readers emotionally with the discourse of slavery. Yet it is imperative to read fictions like *Cambridge* alongside texts that are less faithful to the archive and altogether more lyrical in their representation of slavery, the slave trade and enslavement since, as I have already suggested, even texts like Behn's and Equiano's contain gaps and omissions that obscure vast realms of loss and grief. Robert Hayden's poem 'Middle Passage' is an early and seminal example of this kind of lyrical literature.

'Middle Passage' is a collection of broken textual fragments taken from historical sources such as slave traders' logbooks, testimonies and reports. Hayden reinscribes these texts in order to highlight the internal sites of tension that characterize historical documentary and that challenge its authority as a truth-establishing discourse. Mixing allusions to Coleridge, Melville and Shakespeare with lines from hymns and spirituals, the poem underscores the connection between the religious, commercial and legal language of the slave trade. Through an allusion to *The Tempest*'s sea-change passage, for instance, Hayden invokes but mocks the religious rhetoric that was used to rationalize the transformation of people into property:

Deep in the festering hold thy father lies, Of his bones New England pews are made, Those are altar lights that were his eyes.¹²

The focus of the poem, however, is not only on the language of the slave trade. Through its conspicuous spacing, interruptions, ellipses and pauses, the poem also evokes the absence of Middle Passage accounts by African captives and suggests the difficulties involved in representing the suffering caused by slavery. The poem culminates with an account of the *Amistad* uprising and focuses on the Middle Passage more generally. Connecting itself to the 'deep immortal wish/the timeless will' that propelled the heroes of the *Amistad* towards revolt, the poem figures the Middle Passage as a 'Voyage through death / to life upon these shores', striking a delicate balance between elegy for the dead and ode to those who survived. ¹³

This same balance is at the centre of Walcott's *Omeros*, arguably the most realized postcolonial poem to treat slavery and its legacy. A 325 page poem

with rolling hexameters in terza rima, abundant allusions not only to Homer but also to James Joyce and Aimé Césaire among others, *Omeros* ranges historically from the present to precolonial Africa and geographically from the Caribbean to Europe and North America. Interwoven throughout are the stories of Ma Kilman, a powerful obeah woman, of a Caribbean Achille and Hector battling for a beautiful Helen, and of a composite poet named Seven Seas, part Walcott, part blind pensioner. They are peoples of African descent who live in St Lucia along with the Plunketts, an English/Irish couple who have made the island their home. Linguistically, the poem merges formal English with local patois, creole French and snippets of other languages such as Arawak and Spanish. Within its dazzling complexity, however, the poem makes palpable how slavery's past manifests itself in the diurnal lives of simple people. Appropriating and expanding the tradition of the Homeric epic, Walcott represents the amnesia, obsessive repetition, and despair that haunt those living in what Saidiya Hartman has called the 'after life of slavery'. 14

Significantly, the sexual subjection of black women under slavery is a topic that both *Cambridge* and *Omeros* fail to fully explore. By contrast, in *Corregidora*, Gayl Jones tackles the topic head on. Jones intertwines the seemingly disparate experiences of slavery in South and North America (colonial Brazil and post-segregation America) thus questioning the strict temporal and geographical categories through which we define postcoloniality. She also interrogates how much we depend on the textual aspect of the archive, building her novel out of fictionalized oral accounts of the past. At the same time, Jones refuses to romanticize oral history and to focus only on the limits of the archive. Thus, she experiments with the form of the novel, incorporating the aesthetic power of the blues to express the feelings of anger, loss, and grief that besiege the women in the matrilineal line out of which Ursa, her main character, emerges. Jones thus makes vivid how the presence of slavery's history in the lives of the women she represents threatens to usurp their sexual desire in the now.

In many ways, Jones follows in the footsteps of Harriet Jacobs who is now rightly recognized for the bravery and sophistication with which, in her *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, she addressed a topic that other slave narrators and abolitionists only allude to in veiled or symbolic terms: the sanctioned and routine raping of black women. ¹⁵ Jacobs had to develop rich rhetorical strategies to expose this topic to her mainly white, middle-class female readership, a group bound to the nineteenth century's cult of True Womanhood (which stressed piety, domesticity and purity), without alienating it. At the same time, she both enacted and portrayed forms of resistance and solidarity among black women and suggested the possibility of cross-racial alliances along gender lines.

Phillips does attempt to address these issues in Cambridge. His novel frames the subjectivity of enslaved black women, particularly that of a character named Christiania, as a sexualized subaltern. She is a bothersome and unruly 'wench' in Emily's journal, a troublesome wife in Cambridge's narrative and the overseer's paramour in the newspaper account. ¹⁶ Though she does not have her own narrative, she exerts power over the content and structure of each one of the novel's accounts. But who she is and what her power consists of remain mysterious because she is ambiguously presented as silent. In lieu of her speech, what each of the narratives offers is her sexuality, either as aberrant and savage, or as the effect of rape and madness. Phillips thus suggests that in the literary traditions of elite subalterns (wealthy white women, acculturated black men), no less than that of white men of power, black women are relegated to silence or framed only in terms of sexuality. However, Phillips's dependence on the very texts he criticizes leads him to reproduce rather than transcend limited representations of black women in the history of slavery. Let us now closely examine the promise and problems of Phillips's novel.

The inaccessible object of interpretation: black women in Phillips's *Cambridge*

Given the virulent racism that characterizes many colonial travellers' accounts, what can a twentieth-century novelist gain in re-creating them?¹⁷ For one thing, Phillips makes crucial aspects of the archive available to an audience wider than that which reads the archive for scholarly pursuits. As Evelyn O'Callaghan has shown, Phillips reconstructs Emily's travel journal through a 'deliberate, even ostentatious borrowing and echoing' of the journals of Lady Maria Nugent and Mrs Carmichael, women of polite English society. He not only replicates the phraseology, diction and scenes of his sources, but lifts 'specific incidents, phrases, even whole passages' from them.¹⁸ The result is a diary rendered in formal, sculptured language that would seem to present a historical and detailed view of a West Indian plantation but that, instead, renders plain the narcissism and prejudices of a colonial perspective.

Emily's lengthy narrative reflects her status as an elite subaltern and is shaped by the conventions that bind her to speak as such. As the daughter of a London-based plantation owner, Emily's journal presents a West Indian estate and its inhabitants according to an imperialist discourse yet her place within this discourse is clearly established as marginal. Her text emerges out of a set of strategies for speaking from such an ambiguous authority, strategies that Phillips presents as historical. Emily's journal includes many forms that

stabilize her authority: it is a mixture of genres (missionary, romance, adventure tales), of narrative modes (lyric rhapsody, poetic and objective perspectives), and of informative propositions (botanical information, recipes). As Eve Marie Kroller has shown, these are the most common rhetorical features used by Victorian women travellers in forging authoritative voices. Emily's simultaneous acknowledgement and dissimulation of the partial nature of her account, for example, is a strategy that Kroller identifies as central in such travel writing. Hence, her use of set-pieces of natural description to familiarize her new and exotic environment and her use of servants' explanations to translate 'a foreign epistemology', are part of the pastiche Phillips creates out of these strategies to emphasize the embattled nature of Emily's enunciative authority as well as that of the historical record from which he draws.¹⁹

Yet Emily's limitations as a narrator produce the irony of the colonial text, which, as Paul Sharrad argues, 'obscures and silences Empire by covering it over with inscription, by offering the impression of total description, papering over gaps, containing dialogue and denying intercourse'. 20 And Phillips allows us to see the process of this papering over. Emily's limitations are bound, ironically, to the limits she claims for those who are enslaved. The women she first encounters on the estate, for example, represent for her a mock, sad version of herself: a woman, a mistress and a speaking subject. Stella, who welcomes her to the Great House, 'holds herself as though the mistress', but she is betrayed by her 'jet' skin and the 'immodest proportions' of her large body. 21 These, Emily notes, make a mockery of the lady-like gestures with which Stella welcomes her. Stella's 'comical jargon' and her 'curious thick utterance', moreover, make it clear to Emily that the enslaved cannot speak, they can only mock and imitate speech or gesture hopelessly through their bodies.²² But it is Christiania's presence that most dramatically emphasizes Emily's ambiguous power. For Emily, Christiania is the wildness that opposes civility, the incarnation of libido and a questionable, even dangerous emblem of freedom. Being outside marriage and Christianity makes her repulsive because she is without status and order. At the same time, she is attractive, because she is free of the constraints which civility imposes upon women like Emily.

Hayden White has suggested that 'wild savagery' is a conceptual archetype for understanding difference, one that has a long and complex history of use. ²³ In Emily's particular deployment of it, however, the archetype of the wild savage has a definitively gendered nature as it imbricates the presence of an enslaved woman with an aberrant sexuality, this sexuality with insurgency, and insurgency with silence. Christiania enters Emily's journal *only* as a sexual entity whose sexuality, or as Emily terms it, 'insubordination', stands in the

place of her utterance.²⁴ The first time Christiania enters Emily's cognitive field, she enters the Great House's dining room, walks directly to the table, takes a seat and whispers something into the overseer's ear – *something we cannot hear*. In place of her words, we have Emily's: her entrance is a 'sudden intrusion', her whispering an act of 'insubordination', and Christiania herself a 'black wench' whose manners and motives can only be read within the realm of a vulgar, excessive sexuality.²⁵ In subsequent and similar dining room scenes, Christiania emerges in Emily's text as the 'insolent' and 'intrusive' 'slattern' whose 'presence' must be explained.²⁶ But this never happens. Brown, the overseer, merely denies any allegation of a sexual liaison between him and the 'wench' and remains silent. For her part, Christiania only flashes Emily a broad smile and slides 'out noiselessly'.²⁷

In Cambridge's own narrative, which Phillips constructs by replicating the structure and rhetoric of slave and criminal narratives, Cambridge provides possible names for and traces of Christiania. ²⁸ She is born out of rape and raped herself, she is a victim and, as such, a life bound by violence. But she is also powerful in part because she is an obeah woman. When she enters his text, she is the 'exceedingly strange, yet spiritually powerful young girl', who brings him 'food and water' in the 'isolation' of the hut where he is to be 'seasoned a slave'. 29 And she is also silent. Despite the fact that Cambridge notes her taciturn nature, her power and spirit, he inscribes her as transparently simple, melancholy, and perhaps mad. Such is the result of a narrative that seeks to represent Cambridge as the exceptional captive with almost messianic powers. Though by his own admission, 'her undeniably spiritual nature' is 'absorbed in an entirely different direction' than his Christian words, Cambridge develops a 'powerful sympathetic affection' for her and wishes to make her his wife. What is the nature of this desire? Desire for what and for whom? Of Christiania herself we hear but silence. 'Without uttering a word, she willingly agreed [to be my wife] ... And so we began to share our lives ... '30

The mystery of Christiania's power and identity – she is enslaved and yet free, sexual object and subject, named Christiania (to echo a Christian baptism?) and the obeah woman, defined and undefined – draws Emily towards her own mysteries. The novel's opening pages render Emily, like a character out of a work by Aphra Behn, silently voicing her 'buried feelings' as her father declares he will marry her for money.³¹ She listens 'as her voice unspool[s] in silence. Feelings locked deep inside ... hopes that demand' not to be abandoned 'for years of cold fleshiness ...' in a marriage to a widower many years her elder.³² Her stifled self-realization attains possibility when she meets Christiania because it is then that she faces the terror of her buried feelings.

In Cambridge's narrative, Christiania seems far less powerful; she is the victim of the routine and sanctioned raping of black women under slavery. And yet she is also the person who mocks Cambridge's Christian faith and his fervent belief that literacy equals freedom. If we know anything nearly concrete about Christiania, it is that 'she mistrusts words'; that she prefers the incantations of obeah to Emily's endless description and Cambridge's muted eloquence. In fact, she mocks their neat attempts, respectively, to paper over silences and to master the chaos of homelessness with words.³³ Arguably, Cambridge kills Brown because, within the sexual economy of slavery, Brown mocks Cambridge's efforts to perform the office of protector-husband and denies him the 'right' to subjugate Christiania's enigmatic power.

In the actual sound and spelling of her name Christiania signifies the closeness her power bears to Cambridge's Christianity and, at same time, it spells out its difference and obeah nature. As transported to the New World by African captives, voodoo (of which obeah is an expression) incorporated Christian iconography and beliefs and transformed and relocated their meanings. Voodoo practitioners were thus able to continue their practices covertly even as they seemed to participate in Christianizing conversions. While the closeness of Christiania's name to Christianity linguistically suggests the act of conversion, her resistance to Cambridge's Christian proselytizing dramatizes the voodoo practitioner's refusal to relinquish her own beliefs and practices despite the possibilities of self-empowerment offered by Christianity. Christiania openly 'mocks' Cambridge's 'Christian beliefs' and yields power through her own system of belief.³⁴ Moreover, to say Christiania's name is in a sense to echo the word Christianity. Like Phillips's echoing of the archival within the literary then, the sound and spelling of Christiania's name designates a repetition with a displacement.

As a figure of silence in the novel, Christiania is circumscribed by an interpretable set of texts; the blank space of her identity and agency exists between the lines of what it is said about her. In Emily's text, she is the elaboration of a savage insurgency while in Cambridge's and the newspaper's account, she is an innocuous and transparent object. Each of these statements attempts to frame her presence and fails. What they inscribe instead is the form, the shape of silence surrounding Christiania, the person, the human being. In inscribing their desire for and of Christiania, both Emily and Cambridge project images of their respective subject positions. Hence, the novel's elite subalterns gain something like an identity as they frame the presence of silence. But they do so at a great expense: Christiania is ultimately the inaccessible object of interpretation in *Cambridge*. A great deal of the power of Phillips's novel lies precisely in its

efforts to dramatize the effect that Christiania's presence has on the production of the texts that represent her obliquely. But in replicating the rhetorical processes by which Christiania becomes the ultimate sign of silence in the archive, Phillips also replicates the violence that rendered black women voiceless.

In Walcott's *Omeros*, as in *Cambridge*, black women are bound within identities characterized by either excessive or absent sexuality and by silence. But if Walcott does not transcend the limitations that Phillips's *Cambridge* makes evident in its critique of how black women figure in the archive of slavery, he is better able to represent the pathos that is muted in the section of Phillips's novel devoted to the enslaved man we come to know as Cambridge (like Equiano, this man must live under several names imposed upon him by his masters). To some extent, this section of the novel functions as a 'footnote' to Emily's narrative, one that turns her colonialist assertions 'upside down'.³⁵ At the same time, Phillips highlights Cambridge's own distorted perspective and the omissions and contradictions that characterize it. One of the most glaring omissions is the full extent of the grief that Cambridge experiences as a captive who is wrenched from his homeland and thrust into the Middle Passage and slavery. In Walcott's *Omeros* that grief takes centre stage.

The sea as an archive: Derek Walcott, modern elegy, and New World slavery

Helen, one of the main black female figures in *Omeros*, is seen from the outside as sexualized and desirable on various levels. Men compete for her 'sexual attentions'; the two writer figures in the poem, Major Plunkett and Walcott (as persona), construct and deconstruct her respectively as muse for St Lucia's historiography and poetry; Plunkett presents history as a British and French competition for St Lucia (originally named Helen) to possess the 'Helen of the West Indies', and finally, she is seen by Maud Plunkett and other women as an 'arrogant ebony' woman of questionable moral standards.³⁶ From these outside perspectives, she is often figured as a preying animal (a 'padding panther') or a 'whore'.³⁷ Despite the fact that she lives in modern times, Walcott's Helen, like Phillips's Christiania, figures as a powerful character known to others only through the signs of her sex.

Besides Helen, the only other significant black woman figure in *Omeros* is Ma Kilman. Like Helen, Ma Kilman exercises definite power within the text; she is a mother-healer-conductor of tradition. Yet she is also boxed in an asexual role, and like Helen, she never transcends the limitations imposed

upon her by her position in the epic poem. Neither of them experiences the physical and discursive mobility Walcott bestows upon characters like Achille, a central black male character, and Plunkett. While Walcott does question his own representation of these women, and of Helen in particular, he does not develop strategies to surmount the dilemmas he acknowledges. In fact, he only suggests the challenges of representing the perspective of the black female subaltern and leaves unanswered a series of questions that, as we will see, Gayl Jones addresses in *Corregidora*. Why do these challenges revolve around sexuality? How were they produced by the economic conditions of slavery? How are they maintained, challenged or transformed in the current historiographic and fictional discourse of slavery?

In *Omeros* and in his earlier set of poems, *The Star-Apple Kingdom* (1979), Walcott focuses instead on the painful particularities of captivity and enslavement by creating Shabine and Achille, epic personae who imaginatively revisit and excavate sites of memory: the floor of the Atlantic and precolonial Africa. In both works, Walcott appropriates and reinvigorates the epic form and figures nature, specifically the sea, in ways that revise its use in both traditional and modern modes of elegy. For instance, he pointedly refuses to find consolation in nature, a common characteristic of elegy, in part because he mourns events of such tragic magnitude that any attempt to find consolation would be obscene. He also refuses to draw correspondences between human experience and nature, another characteristic of elegy. Rather nature, specifically the sea, becomes the site of seemingly contradictory images and a site which is also significantly textual: it is at once a metaphorical blank page upon which the poet writes a history of trauma and one that the poet interprets through his lyrical power.

Early in his career Walcott sees nature as a force that consumes or erases historical evidence. In early poems such as 'The Gulf', and 'Air', nature is, as Ross Leckie observes, both 'an anti-cultural figure that absorbs the nightmare of history [and] ... a balm that removes the pain of historical horror'.³⁸ By contrast, in 'The Sea is History', a pivotal poem in *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, the sea becomes a 'grey vault' that Walcott opens in order to elucidate a history of dispossession, including not only that of slavery, but also of indentured servitude and colonialism. Contesting the notion that the Caribbean is a history-less landscape, natural and empty of culture, the poem presents the sea as a fictive depository of history, one to which we gain access through metaphor. Walcott calls attention to the conceit through the beauty of the poem's language and develops it through the voice of the narrator who guides us 'through colonnades of coral ... past the gothic windows of sea fans ...' to

the sea floor where we figuratively encounter the 'drowned women' and men, those 'who sank without tombs'.³⁹

Like Hayden's 'Middle Passage' the poem honours the victims of the slave trade. Walcott imagines the bodies of the millions who died in the crossing resting in the 'plucked wires / of sunlight on the sea floor'. But he also challenges traditional elegy by not transforming them into figures of nature. Indeed, the dead remain at rest and their demise – the 'packed cries', the 'shit and moaning' of the Middle Passage – is what the poem recognizes as an irrevocable and tragic loss.⁴⁰ The poem thus rejects the colonialist ideology of history as achievement and development, presenting history as the passion of the victims of the Middle Passage, slavery and colonialism.

If nature can serve the poet as a metaphoric archive of a history of dispossession, it can just as easily figure as an indifferent witness. From another perspective, the poem suggests, the ocean could simply 'keep[] turning [its] blank pages // Looking for History' because it would not recognize the deaths of those 'who sank without tombs' as historical.⁴¹ In the poem, this perspective is associated with that of the master/colonialist and contrasted to that of the narrator who deliberately presents nature in metaphoric terms in order to highlight the disruption of culture enforced by the slave trade. The blank pages to which the narrator alludes suggest a lack produced not only by the colonialist's limited perspective but also by the violence of the slave trade, which denied its victims the right to testimony.

The poem metaphorically substitutes, for the lost history implied by the 'blank pages', the image of the sea as a fictional archive but it also highlights the fact that such a substitution is always already a conceit. In 'The Schooner Flight', another central poem of The Star-Apple Kingdom, Walcott introduces us to a poet/sailor nicknamed Shabine who penetrates this archive and becomes temporarily overwhelmed by a vision of those who perished in the Middle Passage. Walcott gives Shabine's experiences an explicitly psychological focus, casting him in the role of the Freudian mourner who must revisit sites of trauma in order to free himself and, metonymically, the Caribbean from the potentially debilitating effects of a repressed history. While diving into the sea, Shabine is forced out of the confines of his individuality until his soul can see beyond the world he inhabits:

... this Caribbean so choke with the dead that when I would melt in emerald water, whose ceiling rippled like a silk tent, I saw them corals: brain, fire, sea fans, dead-men's-fingers, and then, the dead men. I saw that the powdery sand was their bones ground white from Senegal to San Salvador, so, I panic . . . and surface.⁴²

The poem elucidates both the necessity of and the risks involved in claiming a painful past as Shabine almost becomes consumed by what he witnesses. In fact, when he surfaces he must spend a month at a madhouse being nourished by '[f]ish broth and sermons'. Shabine calls his vision of the dead a 'rapture', suggesting the hallucinations that deep-sea divers can experience as a result of nitrogen narcosis. But the word also suggests a mystical experience, a state of being spiritually possessed by something overwhelming. Walcott figures Shabine as a questing hero who must withstand and explore the power of such raptures without being undone by them. That is, in Shabine Walcott combines two figures: that of the Freudian mourner and that of the epic hero.

Making explicit use of Homer's Odysseus, Walcott presents Shabine as a journeying exile who is transformed through his travels and whose experiences allow him to 'give voice to [his] people's grief'. In this sense, Shabine is like the traditional protagonist of the epic who is usually a heroic figure on whose actions depend the fate of a tribe, a nation. But Walcott reconfigures the heroic, which in the panegyric mode of the epic consists of physical contests, giving Shabine's feats a decidedly psychological and spiritual character.

The convergence of the psychology of trauma and Walcott's use of epic tropes might, at first sight, seem surprising. After all, we are accustomed to think of the epic form as one used to praise heroes of battles and not to mourn the plight of victims. But Walcott, who in *Omeros* refers to himself as Homer's 'freshest reader', uses the form of the epic in ways that remain faithful to its original purposes. As Thomas Greene reminds us, poems such as the Old Babylonian *Gilgamesh* and the Homeric epic do not focus on 'heroic achievement in itself', as is commonly believed, but rather on 'the affective cost of achievement'. What they lead towards, what they leave us with, Greene adds, 'is that acute personal recognition of pain, often the restorative sharing of pain, which [they] present . . . as the inescapable burden of action'.⁴⁴

In *Omeros*, Achille, like Shabine, encounters a startling vision of the Middle Passage. But unlike Shabine, Achille is not only a witness but also a vehicle through which the past and the present merge. While suffering from sunstroke, the fisherman encounters the dead who perished in the Middle Passage and then travels back in time to pre-colonial Africa. Among the dead, he sees 'the ghost / of his father's face' and is left to stare 'in pious horror'.⁴⁵ Walcott evokes the ancestor spirit of Achille's father and figures him as an embodied

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being named Afolabe. Meanwhile Achille, a character of the poem's narrative present, is transported into the past. But Achille cannot make full contact with the world into which he is conjured. He knows that his father and tribe will suffer capture, the Middle Passage and enslavement; he knows it as his own memory and history and yet he cannot reveal or change anything. By positioning him in this predicament, Walcott allows Achille to understand history in the first person – to experience the actuality of the past as lived experience – but also to see it as a vision from which he is distanced.

Walcott stages Achille's encounters with Afolabe and Africa as intense moments of union and separation. He both projects Achille's experiences as an intoxicating ritual of memory and stresses their fictive nature by slipping in references to his own craft. The muscles that bulge from Achille's back as he experiences his sunstroke are depicted with a telling simile. They are likened to 'porpoises leaping out of *this* line / from the gorge of our memory'; they leap, as it were, out of Walcott's own poetry. 46 Similarly, Achille likens what he first sees of the 'other world', the world of his ancestors, to 'the African movies / he yelped at in childhood...³⁴⁷ The reference to the movies suggests the image of a fiction within a fiction, thus stressing the craft through which Walcott renders his protagonist's trip. When Achille's screen images eventually flicker into 'real mirages', he begins to 'mov[e] with the dead' but only when he loses his own substantiality. To his horror, Achille realizes that his body casts no shadow.⁴⁸ Thus, as Achille comes into the depths of his history ('into his own beginning and his end'), he himself becomes a fiction of a fiction.⁴⁹ The sense Walcott evokes is surreal: a 'light inside him wakes, skipping centuries, ocean and river and Time itself and he comes to face 'himself' in the image of his 'father' conjured to life. 50 Memory thus becomes the 'real mirage' of the past and the present in simultaneous correspondence.

Through this dialogic notion of time, Walcott makes the reader privy to the intense but astonished feelings between father and son; he makes tangible the gap between the two and suggests the sense of loss and longing between them. We are told that when they meet, they swirl 'in the estuary of a bewildered love'. ⁵¹ But, within the motion of this love, Achille in fact begins to realize that, although the experience he is gaining through his racial memory is his birthright, Africa is no longer home. Afolabe, on the other hand, does not recognize the values personified by his son.

Staging a dialogue between father and son and, by implication, between the New (Caribbean) and Old (Africa) world, Walcott shows the inescapable fact of their severance and evokes the grief involved in accepting their loss. While Achille is ineluctably estranged from his forebears in his knowledge of the

future, Afolabe struggles to know essential qualities about Achille including the nature of his name:

AFOLABE

Achille. What does the name mean? I have forgotten the one that I gave you. But it was, it seems, many years ago. What does it mean?

ACHILLE

Well, I too have forgotten.

Everything was forgotten. You also. I do not know. The deaf sea has changed around every name that you gave us; trees, men, we yearn for a sound that is missing.

A name means something. The qualities desired in a son, and even a girl-child; so even the shadows who called you expected one virtue, since every name is a blessing,

since I am remembering the hope I had for you as a child. Unless the sound means nothing. Then you would be nothing. Did they think you were nothing in that other kingdom?⁵²

Afolabe's question speaks to a history of dispossession inscribed in Achille's name. In fact, as Rei Terada notes, when father and son speak 'we become conscious of the nearly incomprehensible sequence of events by which Achille came to be a St Lucian fisherman named, of all things, Achille'.⁵³ The tribe's response to the dialogue suggests the pathos produced by the meeting: we are told that while listening, the tribe senses the threat 'of amnesia [and] oblivion', and that it begins to sway with fear and grief.⁵⁴

Through a vision within the ongoing sunstroke 'trip' to Africa, Achille journeys undersea across the three centuries back to 'the life he had left behind'. ⁵⁵ But, though we follow him until he emerges from the surf in the Caribbean, Achille awakens from his truncated dream back in Africa. As we shall see, Walcott keeps him in the ancestral site of dispossession because, though it is no longer home, it is the place from where he must re-experience the traumatic severance between himself and the tribe in order to heal himself and his island. Indeed, Walcott re-stages the moment of capture and allows us to witness it both from Achille's individual perspective and from a moving panoramic angle. Thus, when Achille awakens from his submarine trip to the Caribbean, he is caught in the open as a band of slave traders raid his tribe's village, killing and capturing all around him as though he were not present. In relegating Achille to the role of a helpless observer, Walcott stresses his inability to rectify historical injustice. ⁵⁶

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Though the raid is so 'swift' that it is over before Achille knows it, he is left to witness its painful aftermath and it is here that Walcott allows us to bear witness and mourn with Achille. After the raid, he climbs a ridge and there counts the captives, now chained 'by their wrists with vines', moving in the distance like a 'line of ants'. Helpless, Achille moans 'as the last ant disappear[s]'. Then, walking around the 'barren village', he grieves the sight of its 'doors like open graves', giving way into a vast silence that signifies absence and loss. '9 'Achille turned away // down another street. Then another, to more and more silence'. 60

Walcott weaves the perspectives of the captives who are sold on the coast and transported across the ocean with Achille's mourning voice and that of the poem's narrator through a 'song / of sorrow' Achille hears in the wake of the raid. This song projects a series of images through which we see the captives' passion. Some of them die in the crossing, floating in the wake of slave ships, yet others survive carrying within them the seeds of their disrupted culture. 'The chained wrists couldn't forget', Walcott sings, their arts and their tools. Carvers, potters, painters, 'each carried the nameless freight of himself to the new world'. Within them, was the 'itching instinct' to make, to create with their palms, with their signs. There is the epical splendour', the narrator states simply. Walcott celebrates the survivors' perseverance in the face of so much loss without recourse to facile sentimentalism.

Walcott's emphasis on craft and creativity as the 'nameless freight' brought across the Middle Passage by the survivors of the slave trade subtly suggests his own sensibility as he fictionalizes slavery from a postcolonial perspective. Rather than depend on the archive, as Phillips does, Walcott reinvigorates the epic form to mourn the many who were erased or distorted in the pages of that archive. Through his craft and creativity, he highlights its gaps. At the same time, he does not naïvely position himself as one who can correct them.

Gayl Jones's *Corregidora*, through its title alone, might suggest the corrective impulse that Walcott refuses. And to some extent it does. Unlike Phillips and Walcott, Jones challenges the primacy of the textual in historical fictionalizations of slavery and, in so doing, reveals the phallocentrism of the archive. Yet Jones, like Walcott, stresses the importance of the creative impulse in the effort to transcend the limits of the historical record that Phillips's *Cambridge* so eloquently delineates.

'I'll sing it as you talked it': *Corregidora* and the limits of the archive

As John Cullen Gruesser argues in *Confluences: Postcolonialism*, *African American Literary Studies and the Black Atlantic* (2005), given the 'formidable similarities

between postcolonial and African American literary criticism, exemplified but by no means limited to [the works of Edward Said and Toni Morrison], it is both surprising and regrettable that only a handful of postcolonial theorists have sufficiently accounted for black American literature and that African Americans have in general been resistant to postcolonial theoretical concepts'. Gruesser rightly grants that the 'experiences of people of African descent in the United States differ markedly and profoundly from those of persons from colonized and formerly colonized lands'. Yet, as exemplified perhaps most dramatically by Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic* (1993), the intersection of African American literary and postcolonial studies can yield tremendous insights. Fiction writers have certainly explored the intersection. African American novelist Gayl Jones, for instance, has usefully contrasted the historiography of slavery in colonial Brazil to that of American chattel slavery, while highlighting the similarities between the sexual subjection of black women in two slave societies in the Americas.

When Jones's novel opens, it is 1968, but Ursa Corregidora, its protagonist and narrator, is remembering herself in 1947, singing the blues in Happy's Café while her jealous husband, 'looking drunk and evil', tries to peek in from the outside through a window. 66 While singing helps Ursa keep her composure, it does not shield her from her husband's jealousy and possessiveness. Ursa's tale begins with him pushing her down a set of stairs, causing her not only to have a miscarriage but also to lose the capacity to bear children. What the singing as well as the remembering of her story allows her to do, however, is to explore the myths, ambiguities, contradictions, and continuities of a familial and historical drama through the prism of her particular and intimate predicament of loss, love, anger and desire. Ursa was born into a legacy of dispossession and abuse that originates in pre-emancipation Brazil, where a slave owner known as Corregidora raped and prostituted Ursa's greatgrandmother and incestuously fathered both her grandmother and mother. Forbidding them any sexual relations with black men, Corregidora also denied Ursa's mothers the choice to have children and oppressed them with such violence that Ursa, the first not to be fathered by Corregidora, feels its effects a century later in post-segregation Kentucky.⁶⁷

Compounding the oppression Ursa's mothers suffered at the hands of their master is the fact that in 1891 a provisional government of Brazil ordered the archives of slavery burned. As a result, the mothers do not have textual evidence for the abuse endured. Determined to invert Corregidora's oppression and to resist the subalternity to which official history relegates them, but unwilling to trust written forms of recollection, Ursa's mothers insist that

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their daughters keep giving birth to children that can safeguard and relay their oral testimony across generations. 'I am leaving evidence', Ursa's grandmother tells her, 'And you got to leave evidence too. And your children got to leave evidence.' 'They can burn the papers but they can't burn conscious, Ursa. And that's what makes the evidence.'

When Ursa becomes sterile, she is faced with the impossibility of maintaining her mothers' legacy and forced to contend with its contradictions and limitations. Ursa comes to realize that the oral narrative her forebears pass on claims for itself the power of absolute truth and that it narrows the scope of remembrance to Corregidora, to his desire, his crimes and the hatred he inspired. Insisting not only on the truth of their testimony but also on specific forms of response (namely anger and hatred), the mothers repeat their story so often that the telling itself becomes automatic; in Ursa's words, it becomes 'a substitute for memory'. As Bruce Simon puts it, by the time she and her mother are forced into the project of bearing witness, that project 'has become' one 'merely of bearing witnesses' so alienated are they from the feelings provoked by the history to which the mothers were subjected. The interval in the story to which the mothers were subjected.

Through an innovative narrative style that incorporates the aesthetic power of the blues, Ursa invents a way of maintaining while transcending her mothers' legacy. She inscribes the aesthetics of the blues into her own narrative, exploring the relationship between bearing witness to cultural trauma and perpetuating injury and revealing, specifically, how her mothers' memories of sexual oppression imprison their desire and her own. Offering her narrative as the means to testify to that imprisonment, Ursa also presents it as the form through which she gives voice to the outlawed erotic power of her and her mothers' captive sexuality.

As an expressive mode that can contain contradictions in a state of unresolved suspension, the blues allows Ursa to express the paralyzing fear, anger and pain occasioned by her own loss and to move beyond, freeing herself and her desire from the obligation her mothers impose upon her. Using the story of her physical and emotional recovery, she expresses a paradigmatic blues condition (which is, to rephrase Ralph Ellison): the impulse to 'keep the painful details and episodes of [her mothers'] brutal experience alive in [her] aching consciousness, to finger its jagged grain, and to transcend it, not by the consolation of philosophy but by squeezing from it' lyrical expression.⁷² Ursa sings about loss and desire but, rather than doing so through a rigidly personalized form, she offers a meditation of experiences encompassing the lives of her ancestors and of those coming in contact with her in the now.

Significantly, Ursa learns to sing the blues by listening to the sound of her mothers' testimony. She generates or, rather, is forced to invent a new form of testifying to the past, a form that mines her ancestors' legacy as a source or matrix for her art. In the process, she produces a memory of slavery that is at once fiercely individualistic and communal. 'I am Ursa Corregidora,' she declares, 'I have tears for eyes. I was made to touch my past at an early age. I found it on my mother's tiddies. In her milk. Let no one pollute my music. I will dig out their temples. I will pluck out their eyes.'⁷³

Ralph Ellison argues that the blues 'imply far more than they state outright' and that they 'make us constantly aware of the meanings which shimmer just beyond the limits of the lyrics'.⁷⁴ Ursa listens against the grain for the moments in which feeling slips through the mothers' stories, the moments that suggest, as Ursa puts it, the 'somewhere behind the words' of their evidence.⁷⁵ She incorporates the stories she hears from the mothers, the critical listening she does as she hears them and the signifying she effects to change them from disembodied tales to the written re-collection she reproduces as her living testimony. Reconstructing the scenes of her listening, Ursa states:

Great Gram sat in the rocker. I was on her lap. She told the same story over and over again. She had her hands around my waist, and I had my back to her. While she talked, I'd stare down at her hands. She would fold them and then unfold them. She didn't need her hands around me to keep me in her lap, and sometimes I'd see the sweat in her palms . . . Once when she was talking, she started rubbing my thighs with her hands, and I could feel the sweat on my legs. Then she caught herself, and stopped 7^6

It is through listening to the feelings that slip through Great Gram's constant repetition, that Ursa learns how to sing. Circumscribed by their vigilant insistence on disembodied repetition, Great Gram's and Grandmama's desire slips across a 'rocking' and a 'talking' that expresses a 'genealogy of [rhythms], a blood-line of [beats] and [notes] that are transmitted' to Ursa 'in the body, in oral discourse'.⁷⁷ Like Ellison, Madhu Dubey reminds us that the 'blues voice does not name but only intimates, through breath and rhythm and intonation, what slips through language'.⁷⁸ As Ursa remembers:

My mother would work while my grandmother told me, then she'd come home and tell me. I'd go to school and come back and be told. When I was real little, Great Gram rocking me and talking.⁷⁹

Listening behind the constant repetition, Ursa surmises not only the desire of the older women but that of her mother whose eroticism is so suppressed that it seems to be on the verge of explosion:

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I never saw my mamma with a man ... But she wasn't a virgin because of me. And still was heavy with virginity. Her swollen belly with no child inside ... And still, it was as if my mother's whole body shook with that first birth ... Loneliness. I could feel it, like she was breathing it, like it was all in the air. Desire, too ... Desire and loneliness. ⁸⁰

The mother's stubborn desire makes itself evident to Ursa who can feel it 'like it was all in the air'. 'I'll sing it as you talked it,' Ursa later tells her mother, 'your voice humming...'⁸¹ However, Ursa does not sing exactly as the mothers talk; rather she signifies and improvises upon the blues she hears shimmering beyond their narrative and upon the blues tradition more generally.

Ursa builds a textual matrix, a web through which she weaves the stories she inherits with those she experiences personally, articulating how the legacy of Corregidora's sexual oppression intertwines with the cultural memories of slavery borne by the African American men and women with whom she lives in Kentucky. Ursa's textual matrix becomes the juncture wherein all the different voices of the novel and temporalities intersect (1891, the year that the archives are burnt in Brazil, 1947 Kentucky, or segregation era America, and 1968, the year that Martin Luther King is shot). This is most clearly evident as Ursa articulates how the legacy of slavery affects the relationships that she and her mother have with the men they marry. In the middle of relating the story of her quest to redefine the terms of her identity and sexuality, Ursa pauses to include what she calls her mother's 'private memory'. 82 At this point, she bequeaths her role of principal narrator to 'Mama', who relates the intimate aspects of her life in the United States, aspects that have been buried by the great-mothers' unrelenting narrative of hatred. Mama reveals the extent to which the memories of Corregidora have bound her desire and kept her locked in a legacy of abuse. She tells of meeting Martin (Ursa's father) and not letting herself 'feel anything' in their sexual relations. 83 Trapped as she is by her mothers' reproductive injunction, she does not want Martin, 'the man himself', 'his fussy body'. 84 As Amy Gottfried puts it, she only wants 'a tool for vengeance', a means to conceive a witness and to fulfill the mothers' requirement. 85 But Mama also reveals how this aggravates the cultural scar that Martin, as an African American man, inherits. As various critics have commented, Mama makes Martin feel trapped in a stereotype that painfully recalls the sexual violence committed against captive men during slavery, that of a male breeder. 86

Ursa does not hear her mother's 'private memory' until well into her adulthood because her mother is compelled to subject her to the Corregidora narrative rather than share her own life with her. When she finally does, she realizes that her marriages (first to Mutt, the man who pushes her down a set of stairs, and then to Tadpole, the man she marries immediately after) fail in part because, like her mother, she has incorporated the Corregidora legacy into the very core of her being. The depth of her mother's psychic attachment to the past is most clear when she witnesses how, in the middle of speaking out her 'private memory', Mama abruptly begins to relate the most explicit and detailed account of Corregidora's sexual oppression. Significantly, Ursa notices that, to tell the tale, Mama wholly adopts Great Gram's identity and voice. 'Mama kept talking until it wasn't her that was talking, but Great Gram. I stared at her because she wasn't Mama now, she was Great Gram.'⁸⁷ The tale involves a young man who is lynched after he is seen talking to Great Gram. Threatened by the sight, Corregidora rapes Great Gram and brutally kills the young man.⁸⁸

Ursa incorporates both the explicit and violent details of the tale, showing, at the same time, how the past interrupts the narrative of her mother's desire. In fact, argues Bruce Simon, as 'a medium' for 'Great Gram's testimony and traumatic experience', Mama becomes a vehicle (a body) for someone else's experience and submerges her own feelings and voice. While witnessing Mama, Ursa realizes the extent to which her own narrative of desire has been penetrated by the past. She, too, has buried her feelings in the mothers' memories, making it impossible for her to make love to her husbands and promoting an atmosphere of thwarted desire and anger that eventually provokes Mutt to physical violence.

Because Ursa's narrative is structured as a web of interconnected stories, the reader is able to see that Mutt is also motivated by his own unprocessed attachment to the legacy of slavery. He is obsessed with controlling his wife, arguing against her singing in public because he believes it exposes her sexually to other men. He pushes her while trying to force her off stage, propelled by his own fear that the fate of his ancestors, who were repeatedly dispossessed of their roles as husbands within the system of slavery, will also befall him. As Mutt tells Ursa, his great-grandfather lost his own wife after 'buying' her from slavery because 'he got into debt ... and so they come and took his wife. The courts judged that it was legal because even if she fulfilled the duties of wife, he had bought her, and so she was also property.'90 Though Mutt demands that Ursa stop retelling the stories of slavery and warns her against eliding their lives with those of their ancestors ('[w]hichever ways you look at it, we ain't them'), he cannot act on his own words. 91 Mutt wants to control Ursa because, as Stelamaris Coser argues, he has internalized 'the sexist morality established in the Americas by the colonial system: he wants to possess a woman, to control her and brand her as his property'. 92

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Tadpole, too, wants to possess and control Ursa. During her marriage to him, Ursa discovers clitoral sexuality as a form of pleasure outside the reproductive injunction that binds her mothers' desire but is unable to explore it partly because Tadpole, like Mutt, also re-enacts forms of patriarchal domination that are implicitly connected to the history of slavery (Tadpole's and Mutt's names invoke the brutality of that history, in which black men were animalized). 'I was struggling against him,' Ursa states, 'trying to feel what I wasn't feeling. Then he reached down and fingered my clitoris, which made me feel more.'93 Yet Ursa is unable to admit to the pleasure that she discovers, stating simply that what she 'felt didn't have words'.'94 In part, her silence and reticence are a result of Tadpole's inability to understand that Ursa has needs beyond his own. In fact, their marriage collapses because he interprets Ursa's desire to explore her sexuality outside the realms of possession and reproduction as her inability to be a 'real' woman that can satisfy his needs.'95

If the web of intersecting stories Ursa constructs emphasizes the limitations placed upon descendants of New World slavery, her imagined dialogues, reveries and blues songs express her desire to remember and transcend the history that produced those limitations in her own life. 'I wanted a song that would touch me, touch my life *and* theirs' she states, a 'Portuguese song, but not a Portuguese song. A new world song. A song branded with the new world'. ⁹⁶ Ursa's songs, which I am unable to explicate within the confines of this chapter, simultaneously suggest the intermingling of freedom with captivity, witnessing with incrimination, sexuality, desire, and pain. Most importantly perhaps, they attest to the need for formal experimentation in order to avoid depending on archives, whether textual or oral, in representing slavery in the now.

Not everyone has appreciated the achievement that is Jones's *Corregidora* or, for that matter that of its predecessor, Jacobs's *Incidents*. The authenticity of Jacobs's narrative was questioned until 1987, when Jean Fagan Yellin republished the narrative with a well-documented introduction. Jones's novel, published during the height of Black Power (with its 'black is beautiful' motto) was criticized for rendering a negative portrait of black sexuality. Now, over a quarter of a century since the publication of Jones's novel and decades after the authentication of Jacobs's narrative, the impact of both texts is undeniable. The aforementioned *Beloved* as well as Sherley Anne Williams's *Dessa Rose* (1986) powerfully attest to this impact, as does Marlon James's more recent *The Book of Night Women* (2009).

James's novel takes place on a Jamaican sugar plantation at the beginning of the nineteenth century and centres on slave women who, after struggling to retain their humanity in the face of constant rape, torture and murder, lead a bloody if ultimately unsuccessful revolt. Told in a narrative voice that matches the women's fierceness, the novel gives full voice to figures like Phillips's Christiania and Walcott's Helen, women of indefatigable power. James thus extends a tradition in anglophone West Indian literature that treats the history of black women under slavery and colonialism, including Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) and extending through Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie John* (1983), *Autobiography of My Mother* (1996), Michelle Cliff's *Abeng* (1985) and Erna Brodber's *Myal* (1988), among others. ⁹⁷ Like more recent American publications, especially Edward P. Jones's tour de force, *The Known World* (2003), this fiction depends less on archival sources and uses a more lyrical approach to the complicated and violent history of slavery. ⁹⁸ In this way it expands the resonance of something that threatens to exhaust the understanding and makes room for further representations of a historic horror that might be considered unrepresentable.

Notes

- 1. Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*; or *The Royal Slave* (1688), ed. Catherine Gallagher and Simon Stern (Boston and New York: Bedford/St Martin's, 2000); Biyi Bandele, *Aphra Behn's Oroonoko* (London: Amber Lane Press, 1999).
- 2. Catherine Gallagher and Simon Stern, 'Introduction', *Oroonoko*; *or The Royal Slave*, ed. Gallagher and Stern, pp. 13–16, 7, 24.
- 3. Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789), ed. Werner Sollors (New York: Norton, 2001).
- Vassa, the African (1789), ed. Werner Sollors (New York: Norton, 2001).
 4. Lisa Lowe, 'Autobiography out of empire', Small Axe, 28.13 (March 2009), 100, 103.
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- 32. Ibid.
- 33. Ibid., p. 60.
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- 37. Ibid., pp. 23, 36, 115.
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- 39. Walcott, *Collected Poems: 1948–1984*, pp. 364–5. All references to *The Star-Apple Kingdom* will be made as it appears in this edition of Walcott's collected poetry.
- 40. Ibid., p. 364.
- 41. Ibid., p. 364.
- 42. Ibid., p. 219.
- 43. Ibid., p. 360.
- 44. Greene argues, in fact, that the narrative telos of most European poems commonly described as epics is the release of pathos in the form of tears and that this release is a communal experience shared in the performance of poetry by characters, audience and poet. Thomas M. Greene, 'The natural tears of epic', in Margaret Beissinger, Jane Tylus and Susanne Wofford (eds.), *Epic and Traditions in the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 192–93.
- 45. Walcott, Omeros, p. 130.

- 46. Ibid., p. 29, my emphasis.
- 47. Ibid., p. 133.
- 48. Ibid., pp. 133, 136.
- 49. Ibid., p. 134.
- 50. Ibid., p. 136.
- 51. Ibid.
- 52. Ibid., pp. 137-8.
- 53. Rei Terada, *Derek Walcott: American Mimicry* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), p. 28.
- 54. Walcott, Omeros, p. 138.
- 55. Ibid., p. 142.
- 56. Walcott suggests that the raid is conducted by Africans involved in the slave trade, signalling thus to a painful node in the history of slavery.
- 57. Walcott, Omeros, p. 145.
- 58. Ibid.
- 59. Ibid.
- 60. Ibid.
- 61. Ibid.
- 62. Ibid.
- 63. Ibid.
- 64. John Cullen Gruesser, Postcolonialism, African American Literary Studies and the Black Atlantic (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005), p. 2.
- 65. Ibid.
- 66. Jones, Corregidora, p. 3.
- 67. Since the importation of slaves from Africa to Brazil did not end until years after the illegalization of importation into the United States, Brazilian slave owners did not have to breed their captives to increase their numbers.
- 68. Jones, Corregidora, p. 14.
- 69. Ibid.
- 70. Ibid.
- 71. Bruce Simon, 'Traumatic repetition: Gayl Jones' Corregidora', in Judith Fosset Jackson (ed.), Race Consciousness: African American Studies for the New Century (New York University Press, 1997), p. 98.
- 72. Ralph Ellison, Shadow and Act (New York: Vintage, 1972), pp. 78-9.
- 73. Jones, Corregidora, p. 77.
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- 78. Madhu Dubey, *Black Women Novelists and the Nationalist Aesthetic* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 85.
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- 82. Ibid., p. 104.
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- 86. See Melvyn Dixon, 'Sing a deep song: language as evidence in the novels of Gayl Jones', in Mari Evans (ed.), *Black Women Writers: A Critical Evaluation* (Garden City, NY: Anchor-Doubleday, 1984), p. 242.
- 87. Jones, Corregidora, p. 124.
- 88. Ibid., pp. 127-8.
- 89. Ibid., p. 99.
- 90. Ibid., p. 151.
- 91. Ibid.
- 92. Stelamaris Coser, Bridging the Americas: The Literature of Paule Marshall, Toni Morrison and Gayl Jones (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), p. 126.
- 93. Jones, Corregidora, p. 75.
- 94. Ibid.
- 95. Ibid., pp. 88-9.
- 96. Ibid., p. 59.
- 97. For some of the most prominent texts in the anglophone Caribbean context to fictionalize slavery (in addition to the works discussed or mentioned in this chapter), see Caryl Phillips's *Higher Ground* (New York: Viking, 1989), Kamau Brathwaite's three-part epic *The Arrivants* (Oxford University Press, 1973). For a full bibliography of texts in the West African literary tradition, see Laura T. Murphy's PhD dissertation, 'Enduring memory: metaphors of the slave trade in West African literature', Harvard University, 2008.
- 98. Other texts in this tradition include but are not limited to Alex Haley's *Roots* (1976), Octavia Butler's *Kindred* (1979), Charles Johnson's *Oxherding Tale* (1982) and *Middle Passage* (1990), J. California Cooper's *Family* (1991) and *In Search of Satisfaction* (1994), Barbara Chase-Riboud's *The President's Daughter* (1994). They are popularly known as 'neo-slave narratives', a term coined by Bernard Bell in *The Afro-American Novel and Its Tradition* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987), p. 289. See Ashraf Rushdy, *Neo-Slave Narratives: Studies in the Social Logic of a Literary Form* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

GARETH GRIFFITHS

Travel and colonialism

Travel and travel narratives shaped the way we understand the colonial and postcolonial world, and their importance to postcolonial studies has generated several book-length accounts in recent years. Colonialism encompasses the stories of many kinds of travellers with many motives, European merchant venturers, colonial officials, explorers, missionaries, settlers and others become bound together with people of the colonized spaces, who themselves, as we will see, engaged in travel between their homelands and the world beyond.

Colonization may have begun, as was once remarked of the acquisition of the British Empire, 'in a fit of absent-mindedness', but it rapidly evolved into a way of consolidating these encounters in an emerging structure of conscious power and dominance. In the same way the early, random stories of encounter, which emerged as Europeans moved out to new lands, rapidly evolved into accounts that sought to impose European patterns and ideas on the experience of their expanding physical world. A full account of colonial travel literature might best begin by analysing some of the early ways the world was represented by these first random travellers beyond the then known world and how their narratives both shaped the imaginations of those who followed and inspired their curiosity and their cupidity. It might also consider how travel narratives began to shift the perspectives of Europeans as they began to embrace the wider horizons the travellers and their accounts brought home.

The opening phase: medieval and Renaissance travel

If we follow briefly and sketchily the pattern of European outward expansion we need to think of how Europe engaged first with the East and the southern Mediterranean littoral, its oldest and most intimate Other, then with sub-Saharan Africa, as Europeans explored the coastlines of the regions beyond

the straits of Gibraltar, and finally with the regions to the west, which had lain wholly beyond the knowledge or even the imagination of the mediaeval world of Europe, Asia and Africa, a world which ended where the Atlantic faded into the western horizon. In the medieval period traveller's tales were a mixture of conjecture, confused retelling of classical accounts and pure, often nightmarish, fantasy. Tales of spaces of unimagined wealth or splendour contested with tales of awesome terror and unimaginable barbarity. This daunting, entangled mixture of 'fact' and 'fiction' continued to haunt the earliest 'firsthand' accounts. The most famous of early Renaissance travellers, Marco Polo, and his account, commonly known in English as the Travels of Marco Polo, is still the subject of debate as to whether his journey is a mixture of fact and fiction, whether Polo wrote it, or even whether Polo travelled at all.2 Many versions of the travel account exist and what we have today is inevitably a compilation of many conflicting versions in different languages. Similarly, Columbus's own account of the discovery of the Americas in the late fifteenth century is recorded in a journal that survives only as a copied abstract of the original, which is lost.³ But what matters is less whether these were authentic, factual and true accounts than the undoubted effect they had on a world whose ignorance of what lay beyond its boundaries was only matched by its eagerness to engage with and to exploit its resources. This ignorance extended to Europe's neglect of the knowledge about that wider world produced by people beyond their own shores. Little or no attention was paid to the evidence in the narratives and texts of the peoples of those worlds themselves, their own accounts or histories, even when they were known. Even now most reasonably well-informed readers would recognize the names of Marco Polo or Christopher Columbus, whilst failing to recognize the name of Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Battuta, the medieval Arab whose travels in the fourteenth century lasted for thirty years and extended east as far as India and China and south into what is now modern Tanzania, journeys that far surpassed in variety and duration that of his supposed near contemporary Marco Polo. Abu ibn Battuta's journal, which he wrote at the command of the Moroccan sultan, is commonly known simply as the *Rihla* or Journey. 4 Like Polo's account doubt has been voiced as to the veracity of parts of ibn Battuta's account, but the details of both suggest that much of these early accounts is based on experience, though frequently extended by the incorporation of story and hearsay evidence.

For most travellers of the period, whether Christian or Muslim, pilgrimage was a key element in their motives, though as ibn Battuta shows, visits to holy places and merchant venturing, or indeed even something resembling the

restlessness, curiosity and escapism which characterize modern tourism, could not be excluded from the mix of motives. Pilgrimage to Jerusalem was the ostensible reason for the journey of the fictional protagonist of *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* (c. 1371), the source of some of the most influential fantastic narratives of the late medieval period. This completely fictional text haunted the imagination of Shakespeare, who echoes it when he speaks of the 'anthropophagi and men whose heads do grow below their shoulders', ⁵ and it directly influenced Christopher Columbus when he planned his voyages. ⁶

What we know of the world is still too frequently bounded by such inherited narratives and their images. Our cultural horizons continue to be shaped by their assumptions. For this reason the discourse of travel has been of central concern to a number of contemporary postcolonial scholars, beginning with the work of Edward Said in Orientalism (1978). In that foundational work Said examined the crucial role played by nineteenth century French travel writing in shaping the Orient as a supposedly inferior Other space, giving support to the attitudes that justified the conquest of many of the world's oldest civilizations by an aggressive, imperialist Europe. But the texts to which Said draws attention, for example French authors such as Flaubert and Nerval and English writers such as the explorer and translator Richard Burton, are part of a much larger and older body of works, which constructed the world outside Europe as a domain whose practices justified, even provoked, the imperial mission. For example in the late sixteenth century, when English merchant venturers began to reach out to the coast of the Americas and elsewhere, Richard Hakluyt, published several books that collected maps and accounts of the world beyond Europe. Hakluyt was a clergyman, who himself never travelled beyond Paris. As the title of one of his many works indicates, his motive was to justify the new expansionism of the English by explorers such as Raleigh, who probably commissioned this particular work. Hakluyt was himself a successful investor in many such enterprises, and as personal chaplain to Sir Robert Cecil, Elizabeth I's Secretary of State, he was close to the centre of expansionist power.

Fiction, the novel and eighteenth-century travel writing

Even in the late seventeenth century, when the idea of an objective, evidential scientific truth had led to the institution of the Royal Society, travel accounts, which purported to offer reliable and factual 'eye-witness' accounts of the world beyond Europe, often slid imperceptibly into fictional narratives. The

novel, whose origin is itself a tribute to the porous boundaries of the realms of fact and fiction, found a fruitful source of inspiration in the spate of traveller's tales, which accompanied the outward expansion of Europe in the period. In England journalist and writer Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe became the archetype for a whole series of colonialist narratives of voyaging, settlement and the encounter of the so-called 'civilized' and 'savage' worlds: so much so that the term 'Robinsonade' has been coined specifically to describe this genre. What was new in Defoe's work was not the attempt to represent a world beyond the known, that had been a part of European fantasy literature from its inception, but rather its insistence on its truthfulness and so its validity as a justification for the responses of its readers in the real world. When, at almost the same time, Swift had sent Gulliver voyaging to the far corners of an imagined world, his account had openly embraced the satirical idea that in representing the world of the Other the text was really constructing a commentary on its own world and its values; though many readers of the time nevertheless assumed it was a true account of a real traveller.8 But texts like Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* occlude this practice, and replace satire with a narrative which consciously flatters and reinforces the prejudices and the expansionist interests of its readership.9 This new and literally novel genre is aimed at the growing class of bourgeois merchants and their families, whose money draws upon and fuels the expansion of trade and the establishment of colonies in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. A screen of authenticity and falsified 'true narrative' effectively hides its ideological biases. From the tattered fabric of Alexander Selkirk's narrative of marooning and rescue Defoe weaves a garment which clothes the naked aggression of the merchants and their colonist brethren in layers of justification: making the barren land fruitful; working to make all nature serviceable and useful; 'rescuing' the native from savagery and barbarism and bringing to him the benefits of civilization; and, not least, justifying the ways of man to a God whose providential force is assumed to be identical with the self-interests of his adherents and whose worldly prosperity and success is the visible mark of his favour. Travel writing of this kind then made a crucial contribution to the representation of the world, which underpinned and justified colonial expansion.

What allowed Defoe's novel and its successors to flourish was their symbiotic relationship with the many popular accounts of exploration, which flourished in the eighteenth century. Just as Africa was the great undiscovered space which haunted the imagination of the Victorians, so in the eighteenth century the unknown areas of the Pacific and beyond created a zone of exotic fascination fuelled by speculation of the existence of a Great Southern Continent (Terra

Australis Incognito). This inspired journal accounts of exploratory voyages, such as Captain Cook's Endeavour voyage (1768-71) and that of the French explorer La Pérouse (1788), who was actually at anchor in Botany Bay when the British soldiers and convicts of the First Fleet arrived there in that year. Fictionalized accounts, such as the reputed last journals of La Pérouse, published in Paris in 1797 as Fragments from the Last Voyage of La Pérouse, which mimic these authentic journals emerged after La Pérouse failed to return from his voyage. 10 After all, who amongst their readers could tell the one from the other?¹¹ Before the first actual exploratory voyages and long after the nature of the actual spaces of Australasia had been established, fantasies of the order which had preceded these explorations continued to fill this imaginary Southern Continent with fictional worlds, utopian and dystopian societies, and fantastic beings or living animals that had never graced its shores. 12 Even after settlement the impenetrable interior and the remaining extensive unexplored coastlines of the north and west, remained spaces in which the colonial imagination could roam freely, imagining great inland seas and fertile plains, where in reality only harsh desert existed. Even more tellingly, such European fantasies of a potential settlement in the interior continued to fuel the European settlers' inability or unwillingness to perceive the rich and complex indigenous peoples as anything beyond what William Dampier, one of Australia's first visitors, had denigrated in his A New Voyage Round the World (1697) as the 'miserablest People in the world...¹³

Nineteenth-century exploration and travel writing

Building on these early complex forces of fascination and repulsion, travel writing set in the many regions which colonial powers had drawn into their sphere of influence and control, became a staple of fiction publishing as the nineteenth century unfolded. Yet, as suggested earlier, by the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century a literature of supposedly objective scientific discourse of exploration was also emerging, under the auspices of the scientific community, and in conscious opposition to the 'fictional' narratives which had dominated the early part of the eighteenth century. This may be exemplified in the Scots explorer Mungo Park's *Journal of a Mission to Central Africa* (1805). ¹⁴ Park charts with a disarming lack of overt cultural bias the differences of the people he encounters as he makes his way down the Niger. But such supposedly objective scientific travel discourse is always saturated with the alternative discourses which informed earlier fantastic literary voyaging and mythmaking, and with the hidden biases of the Euro-colonizer. Such biases are indelibly inscribed in the tropes and images of travel encounter,

which these so-called objective discourses of scientific observation and exploration continue to employ. The fate which rapidly overtook these early attempts at an objective, scientific discourse of travel as imperial power consolidated its hold over the physical and representational space of the Other can be illustrated when we recall that Park is the first European to use the phrase 'mumbo-jumbo', which he records simply as the name of a local deity he encounters in a village on the upper Niger. For Park the name is recorded without overt rancour or denigration, yet within less than fifty years the term has become the common term for the superstition, idolatry and barbaric religious practices that have to be set aside in the name of the imperial, civilizing missions of Europe and America in Africa and elsewhere.

Travel and the age of high imperialism

Travel narrative in the high colonial period from the mid nineteenth century onwards had many and varied motivations and colonial-period travellers were of many kinds. Yet, arguably, travel itself rapidly became absorbed into a discourse in which encounter implied an always already present hierarchy, and an implacably unequal relationship between the cultural presuppositions of colonizer and colonized. This discourse, in its turn, literally shaped how that Other world was seen and how colonial policy was shaped towards it. Explorers, missionaries and traders, whose roles were sometimes interchangeable, all published journals and memoirs of their travels, which were enthusiastically received by a reading public, whose numbers increased as literacy became more widespread as the century unfolded and schooling became more available to classes of people for whom in the past reading had been literally a closed book. There is no better example of this crucial overlap than the most famous of mid-Victorian travellers, David Livingstone. The portrait of this young Scot working long hours at the looms of his native Lanarkshire with an open book propped up on the frame of his machine became an iconic image of the self-help ideal of the period. Having successfully trained as a doctor, Livingstone arrived in South Africa in the 1840s as a missionary for the London Missionary Society. It is a significant feature of missions, of course, that they often existed on the borders of the imperial world, at its defining edges as it were. Livingstone began his journeys into the then unknown areas of Africa to the north with the idea that by travelling, meeting and influencing local chiefs as yet unmet he might increase his effectiveness as an evangelist. This process had had some success elsewhere, notably in the South Pacific. 15 Later journeys saw Livingstone cross the continent from east to west and seek

to open a route into the interior of Africa along the Zambezi. Livingstone's 1853-6 journal published as Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa (1857) brought him instant fame as well as the financial means to continue his explorations. 16 For Livingstone there was no clash of roles between his evangelical work and his exploration. Exploration, he asserted, would open up the interior of Africa to the benefits of 'Christianity, Commerce and Civilisation', ends that were mutually supportive and interrelated. Travel was for Livingstone the key which allowed these linked benefits to flow. Exploration literally pioneered the way for the forces of change which would sweep away the evils of slaving and provide Africans with alternative livelihoods in agriculture, mining and trade. Unfortunately, not all exploration in this period was conceived with Livingstone's high, if perhaps, with hindsight, politically naïve and paternalistic ideals. During his last journeys into Central Africa from Zanzibar, Livingstone received funding and support from the Royal Geographical Society. The Society, which had been the main supporter of exploratory voyages from its inception in the late seventeenth century, was now supplemented as a patron by public subscriptions taken up by an English public for whom the exploration of Africa, especially the discovery of the legendary sources of the Nile, had become an obsession unmatched until the race in the twentieth century to be the first nation to put a man on the moon. Henry Morton Stanley, Livingstone's self-proclaimed 'finder' (though there is little evidence Livingstone ever considered himself lost), ironically represented an almost diametrically opposed vision of imperial travel. By the time Stanley set out to find Livingstone, which he recorded in the bestseller How I Found Livingstone (1872), this patronage had been extended to the new popular newspapers of the period, which recognized that dramatic, first-hand accounts of imperial travellers sold extremely well. 17

The age of armchair travel, and the interpellation of the world outside Europe and America as the exotic Other in a binary construction of 'them and us' had now been irrevocably sealed. Stanley's famous phrase 'Dr Livingstone, I presume' was as renowned in its day as Neil Armstrong's famous 'one small step for man, one giant step for mankind' was for a later age. Stanley bullied and shot his way through most of Central Africa in what were some of the most remarkable, successful and ruthless journeys of the high imperial period. First, for his own glory and financial gain as a journalist (his accounts were amongst the most successful bestsellers of his day) and later, for the benefit of his royal patron Leopold, King of the Belgians, the founder of possibly the most repressive colonial regime even in Africa's sad history of exploitation. In their different ways Livingstone (the high-minded

working-class moralizer) and Stanley (the blustering, violent, self-promoting working-class parvenu) both exemplify how in the late nineteenth century travel and exploration could become the road to renown and fortune.

Travel and imperial popular fiction

By the end of the nineteenth century the explorer as hero had become one of the dominant images of the late imperial imagination. Empire was a space into which all the pent-up imaginings of a Europe whose reality was increasingly that of the cribbed and confined post-industrial cities could be poured. For young men, and increasingly for women, too the empire was a welcome field of travel, adventure and opportunity. This was literally the case for those who became its administrators and traders, most of whom belonged to the new middle classes the Industrial Revolution had nurtured. But for those who stayed at home the accounts and memoirs of the adventurous few became the stuff of imperial dreams. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the stories of imperial adventure and travel became the staple of a new body of popular fiction, often referred to as "boy's own" adventure' fiction, after the name of a popular magazine, which specialized in these stories - the Boy's Own Magazine. Writers such as R. L. Stevenson, G. A. Henty, R. M. Ballantyne, H. Rider Haggard and a host of others churned out endless versions of a tale in which intrepid young men travelled into the far-flung corners of empire to overcome natural dangers and tangle with native insurrectionists and evildoers. Haggard's experience as an administrative aide in South Africa informed a series of romance novels in which a fantastic world of lost kingdoms, white queens ruling adoring native populations, and heroic adventurers were bestsellers of his day and continue to influence the popular imagination to this day, in remakes of movies based on the most-famous of his novels King Solomon's Mines (1885), 18 look-alike modern texts such as Michael Crichton's Congo¹⁹ and the astonishing present-day Sun City resort-complex, northwest of Johannesburg. Penetrating the virginal interior, Haggard's heroes journey through a landscape with mountains shaped like breasts and enter treasure chambers through womb-like tunnels. Thus late nineteenth-century travel narrative becomes also a trope of a journey through the disturbed realm of the imperial sexual psyche. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries travel accounts of explorers, missionaries and others represented a large portion of the popular reading material of the day in both the secular and the mission publishing fields. Accounts of the adventures of explorers leaked into those of the missionary hero.20 These narratives created the new mass readership of armchair travellers, whose subscriptions supported the secular and religious missions, and whose votes sustained the political parties that spoke for empire. In an age when images can be transmitted instantaneously from one side of the globe to the other it is difficult to appreciate how few sources there were for knowledge of the world beyond the shores of the metropolis even well into the twentieth century. These immensely popular narratives of imperial exploration and adventure literally shaped the ways people perceived their world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and underpinned the ideology of imperialism.

Women and travel writing in the imperial age

For women, whose role as travellers has been the subject of several excellent studies in recent times, the space of empire could have different fascinations.²¹ For settler women, travel to distant places and the struggles there to sustain domesticity in areas of 'wilderness' form the basis of many narratives, for example those of the two sisters Catherine Parr Traill (The Backwoods of Canada, 1836,²² and Canadian Crusoes, 1852)²³ and Susanna Moodie (Roughing It in the Bush, 1852, 24 and Life in the Clearings, 1853)25 recounting their lives in and frequent dislike of conditions in the backblocks of Ontario, Canada. For other women, especially those whose class status at home allowed them access to financial means, travel could become a way of escaping the restrictions a patriarchal society imposed on the female of the species. Women such as Isabella Bird and Mary Kingsley literally travelled beyond their assigned gender roles by escaping into areas where women could act as fully independent agents. Isabella Bird, in particular, earned the title of woman adventurer. Her first journey to the American Rockies, chronicled in The Englishwoman in America (1856), was undertaken because of health reasons. 26 The journey was as successful in restoring her health as was the book itself, which was an overnight bestseller. In 1877 she travelled to Japan, Hong Kong, China and Malaya. After marrying, on her return, her travels ceased until her husband died in 1886, when she travelled again, this time to Tibet. In 1890 she travelled to Persia, as part of a military expedition. She had trained as a nurse after her marriage. Her last journeys were in 1897 to China and Korea, and in 1904 to Africa, when she was seventy-three years of age. It would be hard to find a masculine match for this extraordinary set of journeys.

Outside Europe, and especially perhaps in the delimiting space of empire, as some critics have argued, women travellers achieved a status of honorary masculinity by virtue of their whiteness. Yet they combined this with what

may sometimes seem to be incongruous assertions of their femininity, for example in Mary Kingsley's famous maintenance of the full and voluminous Victorian female dress code in the depths of the West African hinterland. But even this may be seen as evidence of their desire not to deny their gender but to transform, liberate and empower themselves as women through the act of travel itself.²⁷

A number of Victorian women engaged in travel as actual exploration; for instance, Florence Baker, the explorer Samuel Baker's wife, who accompanied her husband on his explorations in search of the sources of the Nile. Though her name was not on any of the published accounts of these journeys, and her diary did not appear until a female descendant prepared an edition in 1972.²⁸ Other women undertook solitary journeys, such as Gertrude Bell, who travelled extensively in Persia and in the Arabian Peninsula in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and recorded her experiences in letters, and in memoirs e.g. Persian Pictures: A Book of Travel, which she published anonymously in 1894.²⁹ Bell also served as an advisor to a number of senior colonial officials in Egypt and Mesopotamia, and played a major role in creating the kingdom of Iraq in the 1920s. Several studies of these 'intrepid' Victorian women travellers have been written in recent decades as part of the general feminist project to recover Victorian women's writings.30 However, in her 1991 study of women's travel writing Sara Mills has argued that the focus on these as examples of 'strong, exceptional women who somehow managed to escape the structures of patriarchy'31 may exclude other women who travelled within the defined 'feminine' roles of the period, such as Nina Mazuchelli (The Indian Alps and How We Crossed Them, 1876)32 or Emily Eden (Up the Country, 1866).³³ Despite this caveat, women's texts often challenged the prevailing idea that exploration was predominantly a masculine activity, and feminist scholarship has rightly stressed this.

The travels of the colonized

Like so much else in the postcolonial experience, the dominant travel narrative was subject to leakage and appropriation, and travel narratives also emerged by those of the colonized who had for various reasons made the journey to the imperial homelands. Of course, people from the world beyond Europe had always been present in Europe, and from the eighteenth century onwards Africans who had been enslaved had published accounts of their enforced travels and their treatment by their captors and owners through the patronage of the slavery abolition movements. Amongst the best known and most

controversial of these is the *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African, Written by Himself* (1789), which became an instant bestseller.³⁴ The tag 'written by himself' is characteristic, as such memoirs become entangled in the issues of authenticity. The recent dispute over the authenticity of Equiano's story and his provenance exemplifies the idea that the legitimation of such accounts must involve their truthful record of direct experience.³⁵ Philip Curtin has also shown how generally difficult it is to tell 'true accounts' from those written by liberal white supporters in the numerous slave narratives of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.³⁶

What is again not in dispute is the huge effect such narratives had on an audience that had been largely able to ignore the many figures from other lands who had long lived in their midst. Naturally the degree to which these texts were able to present their perspective was limited by the expectation of their patrons and the audiences at whom their narratives were aimed. For this reason, such accounts differ greatly in the degree to which they succeed in voicing openly the attitudes of their authors towards the societies through which they travelled.

As the century unfolded, policies such as indirect rule, initiated by the British in India, then in African colonies such as Uganda and Nigeria, led to the emergence of a local ruling elite whose circumstances made it possible and desirable for them to be brought back to the colonial metropolitan 'homelands'. The display of this elite in visits to the metropolitan centres was meant to show how colonialism could improve and yet preserve the differences of cultures which made up the imperial mosaic. The parades of Indian princes and others at the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in London in 1897 formed such a display. When her successor Edward VII was crowned in 1904, a further display of invited visiting colonial dignitaries was planned. Amongst them was the Katakiro (prime minister) of Buganda Sir Apolo Kagwa, who was accompanied by a Bugandan nobleman, Ham Mukasa. Mukasa wrote a detailed account of their journey in his own language (Luganda), which an accompanying missionary translated into English with omissions of 'unsuitable material' in 1904.³⁷ The text raises the issue of patronage and appropriation in ways that characterize how travel narratives are part of the process of capturing and recapturing the powers of representation for colonized places and peoples. For colonial officials, who arranged the English translation, the text represented a vindication for the colonial process and for the benefits that 'civilization' can bestow. For Kagwa and Mukasa, on the other hand, the text asserted their own political aim, which was to encourage Bugandans to embrace modernity and change whilst remaining true to their own people's basic traditions. Thus they

admire the technological skill of the British, whilst also asserting their own dignity and pride in Bugandan ways. Nor is it without subtle criticism of the British, notably in the section which records Mukasa's astonishment at the drunkenness of councillors during their visit to Glasgow, which he contrasts very unfavourably with the dignity expected of their Bugandan equivalents, and their account of a visit to the Tower of London where they are shown the torture and execution instruments the English used in the past, which subtly hints at the fact that the barbaric practices for which Buganda had been criticized in the recent past had its parallels in English history too.

Education of the traditional leaders in colonized countries was an early technique of imperial control, as witness the many sons of Indian Maharajahs who spent their time at Eton or Harrow. By the late nineteenth century many figures in the emerging class of nationalist leaders, such as M. K. Ghandi, J. Nehru, J. E. Caseley-Hayford, had also been educated in England. The important role of Christian missions schools in many colonies meant that their students also received their education abroad, either in the colonial centres or in the USA, as American missions were active in many Englishspeaking colonies. In the early twentieth century Nzamdi Azikwe and Kwame Nkrumah both studied in the USA; some, like Pixley Seme, studied in both the USA and England. Many of these early nationalists wrote autobiographies, which included their observations on their travel to and reception in the colonial homelands, for example Ghandi's The Story of My Experiments with Truth (1927),³⁸ Nehru's An Autobiography (1936)³⁹ and Nkrumah's The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah (1957).40 Philip Holden in his chapter in this volume on 'Postcolonial auto/biography' has covered some of these texts in more detail. Travel, memoir and autobiography intersect throughout the history of postcolonial travel writing, illustrating how greatly travel to other cultures helped define personal and public attitudes by both ruler and ruled throughout the colonial period. In time these colonial genres imposed on the colonized were employed to articulate forms of resistance. As organized opposition to colonial rule developed more critical accounts emerged. The autobiography of the Malawian-born South African trade unionist Clements Kadalie includes an account of a six-month journey he took to Europe in 1927, attending trade union conferences in Geneva and Paris, and visiting Holland, Germany and Austria as well as Britain.⁴¹ This shows an openly critical perspective, which contrasts with the generally admiring, if occasionally critical tone of earlier colonial visitors such as Kagwa and Mukasa. Kadalie's account registers the rampant class inequalities he observed in England, which colonial ideology had dissolved into an overarching discourse of white racial superiority, which occluded issues of class and gender distinctions.

No bigger contrast could be imagined than the contrast between the squalid streets of the East End and the scene in Hyde Park, no more than a couple of miles away. Here one realised Hyde Park as nothing more than a bad joke, a sort of by-product of civilisation and knew that these poverty-stricken streets, stunted and pathetic human beings ... were the bedrock and reality on which Western civilisation was built. Western civilisation has accomplished things of great magnitude. It has built great bridges and machines and spanned the world with steamships and railroads ... But still it has not learned that while great masses of children go hungry and barefoot ... it carries its own failure inherent within itself.⁴²

Kadalie also drew attention to the similarities of the East End slums and those of colonial Johannesburg, so that 'Kadalie turns back on Europe the intellectual and cultural magnifying glass with which Europeans had so recently examined Africa, and (from their perspective) found it wanting.'43

Early twentieth-century travel writing: the emergence of the professional travel text

Despite such nineteenth-century popular successes as the works of H.M. Stanley, already mentioned, it is the twentieth century which sees travel writing emerge as a major genre with distinctive features, markets and writers who are principally if not always exclusively perceived as travel writers rather than novelists, explorers, historians etc. Several fuller accounts of this phenomenon exist and a separate Cambridge Companion volume is dedicated exclusively to this genre.⁴⁴ Even limiting oneself to writing directly about the colonies or by writers from ex-colonies would be beyond the scope of this brief overview. I have to be content, then, with identifying some travel writers in both these categories whose work might be seen as especially significant in the context of postcolonial literatures; though it is clearly important to recognize that these writers, and indeed the genre of travel writing as a whole, are still deeply inflected with imperialist nostalgia as several critics have suggested.⁴⁵ Even in an era of broader global politics the neo-colonial inflection of much travel literature is constructed in a binary trope of 'them and us' in which hierarchies and prejudices lurk, even where they do not openly surface in the text. This may extend even to examples of the genre authored by those born in the colonies themselves, to seemingly anti-colonially inflected accounts, and even to broader discourses of the global in areas such as

development theory. 46 What this demonstrates is that if colonial discourse can be appropriated to acts of resistance it can also continue to exercise hidden control over even overt attempts to write back against its prejudices.

Early and mid twentieth-century travel writing draws continually on the tropes established by imperial texts. For example, in the significantly named *Journey without Maps* (1936) Grahame Greene describes a journey of several weeks in 1935 through the interior of Sierra Leone, French Guinea and Liberia. He chose the region because it was marked on a US government map as a blank white space inscribed with the single word 'cannibals'. Even Greene, that most sardonic of observers of colonial decay, at least in his later fiction, draws heavily on imperial tropes such as the 'heart of darkness' and the 'witch-doctor'. Thus, encountering an initiation elder of the Poro, the male initiation cult, Greene represents him in classic colonialist discourse fashion as a Bush-Devil (the term used in nineteenth-century mission and colonial records to denigrate and suppress these core educational and governmental institutions of the indigenous cultures of the region).

By the 1950s writers such as Eric Newby and Wilfred Thesiger are actively and even self-consciously reviving the trope of the classic imperial explorer in their travel accounts. For writers such as Newby, the role of adventurer is deliberately inflected with nostalgia and he is engaged in an almost parodic act of self-construction as an amateur British explorer of earlier times. To what extent he believes in this 'persona' is hard to judge, as the tone of the writing veers between self-congratulation and a wry undercutting of his status as adventurer in a world where the dangerous and the exotic are the goal of the journey rather than a by-product of an exploration of the literally unknown. Travel writing like all genres quickly becomes self-reflexive, consuming and feeding upon itself, so that by the late 1950s when Newby published *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush* (1958) the existential act of travel is mediated through multiple references to the classic texts of imperial travel and fiction.⁴⁷

In Arabian Sands (1959)⁴⁸ and The Marsh Arabs (1964)⁴⁹ Thesiger seeks to establish the idea that the writer is a person who has a unique insight into and sympathy for the life of the people he travels with and among. In this respect he is the direct heir of the insider/outsider heroes of imperial fiction, figures such as Kipling's Kim and Strickland Sahib, who are either born in the countries they rule or establish deep connections with its peoples, connections that border on the ultimate colonial danger of 'going native' entirely. Like many of these fictional figures Thesiger was brought up outside England, in his case in Ethiopia, where his father was a British diplomat. The experience of these native-born figures supposedly enables them to see into the life of the

colonized peoples while remaining outside and beyond them. They have a supposed respect for them as people who have not yet been corrupted by the blight of 'civilization'. That this trope turns on its head the other idea - that it is the primary role of colonialism to promote the 'civilization' of those subject to imperial rule - is only one of the many paradoxes that the imperial enterprise as described in such texts embodies and simultaneously seeks to occlude. The siger and others like him represent the paradox at the heart of the imperial adventure that the imperial hero can only discover his true self when he travels into the space of the remote and distant Other. Metonymically, they also stand for the fact that, as Edward Said in Culture and Imperialism (1993)⁵⁰ and Homi K. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994)⁵¹ have argued, metropolitan imperial cultures themselves come into being through the creation of an enabling signifier of Otherness. This trope of the insider/outsider and the identity problems it involves had played itself out in the lives of late imperial heroes and their travel/adventure memoirs, notably T.E. Lawrence and his highly fictionalized account of his heroic actions in World War I in Seven Pillars of Wisdom (1926).⁵² Such figures also expose the contradictions of personal and public gender identity which haunt Victorian 'masculinity' stereotypes, stereotypes which the Victorian female travel writers also unsettle, as I suggested earlier. There is an interesting overlay of gender-identity concerns and the act of travel amongst distant and different races in many of the twentieth-century travel writers such as Lawrence, and less overtly Thesiger, the life-long bachelor and frank admirer of young native men. It is not overtly present in Newby's more heterosexual, masculinist accounts, even though different disturbances of masculine confidence may be seen to be acted out there, such as his self-conscious flouting of danger. But in the work of Bruce Chatwin unsettled gender identity again emerges as an overt trope, which reinforces the colonialist idea that travel to the remote places of the world may be in part a means of entering spaces where acts of violence or of sexuality deemed transgressive within the dominant culture may be more openly pursued. Chatwin's work frequently elides fact and fiction, brazenly embracing the practice common to much travel writing of inventing characters and scenes that the themes require and passing them off as real.⁵³ Disarming though this admission may be, it does little more than to expose what is true of all travel narration, that it always involves a fictionalizing element. The problem for Chatwin is that the embattled cultures he describes, and claims to celebrate, such as indigenous Australian cultures in *The Songlines* (1987),⁵⁴ are recruited to serve a romanticized, exoticized vision of culture as commodity. The issue that broad recent accounts of the genre of travel writing have addressed is whether this is an

inescapable and deeply disabling part of the discourse of travel narrative itself, whoever practises it.

Postcolonial travel literature: resistance and the appropriation of a genre?

By the late 1950s the genre of travel writing had attracted several practitioners from postcolonial societies. Not all were antipathetic to the culture of the colonizer, despite the politics of the independence struggles. A classic example of such an ambivalent account of a colonial traveller in England is that of Nirad C. Chaudhuri, author of the earlier controversial Autobiography of an Unknown Indian (1951).⁵⁵ His travel memoir, A Passage to England (1958),⁵⁶ is followed by his bitter account of contemporary India, The Continent of Circe (1965),⁵⁷ a precursor of the equally controversial Indian travelogues of the Trinidadian born V.S. Naipaul. Chaudhuri's account of England and the English, while not uncritical, is interesting precisely for its open announcement of its own bias and the causes for this. As he says, when he visits England he carries with him a mind 'burdened with an enormous load of book-derived notions ... from literature, history and geography. 58 Chaudhuri is also insistent on the idea that despite the changes in England and in India in recent times the essential England and India remain unchanged and, by implication, unchangeable. It is hardly surprising that this idea caused so much distress in post-independence India, but what is perhaps even more interesting is the degree to which Chaudhuri is here simply openly acknowledging the colonialist bias, which arguably now burdens all travel writing. Even in the postindependence era, travel narrative may be indelibly inflected with the tropes and discursive formations of imperialism. Thus the traveller travels to find a world that he or she has already encountered and naturalized, a world whose lineaments are defined not by the experience of travel but by the colonial cultural formations which precede it.⁵⁹ In this respect Chaudhuri's title (A Passage to England), which echoes the title of Forster's classic novel, is particularly apt, suggesting that the liberal intentions of an author cannot overcome forces which control the limitations of the discourse in which his experience is inevitably framed.

Diametrically opposed in intention to Chaudhuri's admiring and some might suggest sycophantic stance is the work of the Barbadian novelist George Lamming. In his collection of essays *The Pleasures of Exile* (1960)⁶⁰ Lamming uses the narratives of West Indian emigration to deconstruct the colonial myth of English superiority. His emigrants are astonished when they

arrive at the quayside in Southampton to see white stevedores handling the ropes, and to realize that the English have poor workers, and are not all the natural masters that the colonial myth had depicted. Similar reactions occur when colonial subjects travel to the United States and record their experiences. In the twentieth century West Indians, South Asians and Africans have often found travel to the 'land of the free' a disconcerting and alienating experience. For example, the Nigerian John Pepper Clark's savage indictment of American values in his America, Their America (1964)⁶¹ mirrors the anger of Lamming at the duplicity of colonial myth-making and its role in masking power and racism. Even the work of a white settler born in what was then Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) such as Doris Lessing, in her memoir In Pursuit of the English (1961), 62 shows how for the descendants of settler colonizers England has become a place where myths of class and race superiority are displaced, and where a sense of the settlers own alienation may be engendered by acute differences from those who inhabit what they have been taught to think of as 'home' but which they now perceive to be unsettlingly different and Other, and where the accumulated cultural biases through which one's views of others are formed resist and conflict with their lived experience.

Caribbean people had an especially complex and active role in the narratives of travel. The descendants of the slaves and indentured labourers who had been brought to the islands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had always had a further outward bound passage, as seafarers. During and after World War II they had been recruited (as had been West Africans and Indians) to serve in the armed forces, though usually in a service rather than a combatant role, reflecting their colonized status. In the postwar period large numbers of West Indians (as British Caribbean peoples were called at the time) emigrated, usually to Britain, though there had also been for a long while a steady, if smaller, flow of people northward from the islands to Canada and the US. Although not strictly travel narratives, the fictional stories that emerged from these emigrants, such as the Brackley stories of Sam Selvon in The Lonely Londoners (1956), 63 offered a startlingly new insider view of English life, as Caribbean migrants engaged with and altered the patterns of life amongst working-class Londoners. Other writers, such as the Jamaican Andrew Salkey, re-engaged with the Caribbean itself in a series of journeys recorded in Havana Journal (1971),64 the record of his visit as a guest of the Castro regime, and Georgetown Journal (1972),65 his record of a visit to Trinidad and Guyana. These are early examples of the fact that postcolonial travellers reengaged with their own and other postcolonies after they had relocated to the so-called homelands. Salkey's radical, anti-colonial tone contrasts sharply with

his better-known contemporary V.S. Naipaul, also resident in Britain from the late 1960s onwards. Probably the most controversial of the Caribbean emigrant novelists, Naipaul from the beginning was as active in producing travel narratives as novels and short stories. As well as accounts of journeys back to the Caribbean in *The Middle Passage* (1962)⁶⁶ and *The Loss of El Dorado* (1969),⁶⁷ over the next twenty or more years he produced travel narratives of journeys to numerous postcolonies and to spaces beyond, including Mauritius, the Southern United States, the Middle East and Pakistan, Central Africa and elsewhere. He also produced two powerful accounts of his return to India, from which his ancestors had been shipped as indentured labourers to Trinidad, An Area of Darkness (1964)⁶⁸ and India: A Wounded Civilisation (1977). 69 Naipaul, through these texts, established a reputation as one of the most prolific and controversial of the travel writers whose provenance was the postcolonial world. Whereas for most European travel writers the spaces of the exoticized Other are spaces of adventure, if often tinged with a licence which adds a frisson of danger and transgression to their experience, for Naipaul the overwhelming emotion is of horror, even disgust, at what he presents as the meaningless squalor of the postcolonial space. Unlike earlier accounts such as Salkey, who sees the politics of neo-colonialism, including the role of the United States and the global economy it has promoted, as playing an ongoing role in the dislocated societies and economies of the Caribbean region, Naipaul seems to assign the causes of this postcolonial disorder to a postcolonial disablement which is ineradicable and irreversible. If not causeless, then it is seemingly without address in that the cause has been so internalized that the very social psyche of the ex-colonized has been irretrievably damaged. For the modern European travel writer the space of the postcolony is often a space where the colonial exotic can be nostalgically reconstituted, evincing a desire which expresses both a longing for the past and a distaste for the post-imperial present of the 'colourless' and increasingly uniform metropolitan spaces. For Naipaul all places, whether the originary Caribbean islands, the England in which he has lived for most of his adult life, or the spaces across the world to which he has been such a reluctant, if persistent, traveller are all tainted with an inadequacy from which no space is free. Naipaul does not foreground the globalizing forces, which may be the both cause and the result of this globalizing pressure. But other postcolonial travel narratives take up this theme, though not necessarily with a deeper or more penetrating analyis of its politics. Pico Iyer's several texts, such as *Video Night in Kathmandu* (1989),⁷⁰ focus on the ways in which global economic trends and their cultural effects are erasing the cultural differences which promoted the idea of travel in earlier generations.

For writers such as Iyer travel has become an increasingly urgent attempt to escape the places which international tourism have rendered essentially similar. Yet, with a wry self-consciousness, he is forced to acknowledge that video, film and music icons, such as Rambo, have arrived at even the most remote locations and that the exotic, like the cannibal of Columbus's journals, is always the condition of the people over the next hill or beyond the nearest boundary, a required signifier of otherness that is both absolutely necessary to the would-be traveller's self-identity and totally undiscoverable.

Such accounts from the postcolony continue to show a persistent nostalgia for the idea of a journey in search of difference or of psychic freedom. But some of the best of these do seek to address the effects of recent political and economic factors on the construction of the societies affected by colonialism. A notable example is Vikram Seth's From Heaven Lake: Travels Through Sinkiang and Tibet (1983).⁷¹ Seth, a student in China, decides to return to India overland through Tibet. A fluent Mandarin speaker, he is able to interact with the Chinese he encounters, but in the end he remains an 'Outlander' (the term the Chinese apply to him), dissecting China and Chinese attitudes from the position of the visiting 'traveller'. The centre of the text, as in classic travel literature, remains not the space travelled but the effect on the traveller, the ultimate subject of the text being the traveller's own psyche and attitudes. Seth is preoccupied with the ambivalent position he holds both as a non-Chinese and as a citizen of a country, India, which itself has been endlessly defined and redefined through the psychic demands of 'Outlanders', including Naipaul, whose travel accounts of India he analyses with great perspicacity and surprising generosity. Despite Seth's attempt to analyse the social realities of the China he travels, he is finally unable to overcome the classic impulse in traditional travel writing to construct the event as a journey beyond the ordinary into the space of the exotic and the remote - in his case the 'impenetrable' state of Tibet and into his own personal psyche.

Other recent texts address the idea of the state of the erstwhile colonizing metropoles, such as Idries Shah's *Adventures*, *Facts and Fantasies in Darkest England* (1987),⁷² which turns on its head some of the oldest tropes of the classic colonial travel narratives we examined earlier such as Stanley's African journeys, satirically reversing the dominant prejudiced gaze. Caryl Phillips in *The European Tribe* (1987)⁷³ critiques the postwar liberal politics of the diverse countries of a Europe which competed in the conquest of and colonization of the rest of the world, to expose their ongoing shared assumptions of white racist superiority. He convincingly shows how this has been exacerbated rather than dismantled by the collapse of their colonial empires and by the domestic

reactions to the in-flood of people from the ex-colonies to the erstwhile colonial homelands.

These recent essays into a dismantling of the classic genre of travel writing, with its exoticizing and eventually disabling rendition of the world of the colony and postcolony, contain much to be applauded and have gone a good way to allowing us to see the limitations of earlier examples of the genre more clearly than before. But travel writing itself may now have become so deeply imbricated with the idea of the colonial that even the most oppositional texts from either the old colonial metropoles, or even from the postcolonies themselves, are inextricably entangled in a discursive and ideological frame, making any and all examples of the genre of travel writing deeply problematic. In this sense postcolonial travel writing raises the same kinds of issues about agency and resistance which we have seen come to mark many aspects of the investigation of the postcolonial experience in recent times.

Notes

- 1. For example: Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992); David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing and Imperial Administration* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1993); Stephen Clark (ed.), *Travel Writing and Empire, Postcolonial Theory in Transit* (London and New York: Zed Books, 1999).
- 2. Marco Polo, *The Description of the World*, trans. A.C. Moule and Paul Pelliot (New York: AMS Press, 1976).
- 3. Christopher Columbus, *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*, trans. Rev. C. Jane, annotated L.A. Vigneras (London: A. Blond & the Orion Press, 1960).
- 4. A. A. M. ibn Battuta, *The Travels of ibn Battuta*, *AD 1325–1354*, trans. and ed. from the Arabic text of C. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti by H. A. R. Gibb (Cambridge: Haykluyt Society, 2000).
- 5. William Shakespeare, Othello, I. iii.144-5.
- 6. C. W. R. D. Moseley (ed.), *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* (1371; Harmondsworth and New York: Penguin Books, 1983).
- 7. Richard Hakluyt, A Particuler Discourse Concerninge the Greate Necessitie and Manifolde Commodyties that Are Like to Growe to this Realme of Englande by the Westerne Discoueries Lately Attempted, Written in the Yere 1584 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1993).
- 8. Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels (1726; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1941).
- 9. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, ed. Harold Bloom (1791; New York: Chelsea House, 1995).
- 10. John Dunmore (ed.), Fragments of the Last Voyage of La Pérouse, 2 vols. (1797; Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1987).
- 11. La Pérouse had sent earlier accounts of his discoveries back in instalments, lending credence to the discovery of the so-called last journal fragments published in France in 1797 referenced above, and an anonymously authored English account of his life and voyages published in Scotland as *Life of Perouse and His Surprising Adventures in a Voyage to the South Seas* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Co., 1807).

- 12. See, for example, Paul Longley Arthur, 'Fictions of encounter: eighteenth century imaginary voyages to the Antipodes', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 49.3 (2008), 197–210.
- 13. William Dampier, A New Voyage Round the World (1703), intro. Sir Albert Gray (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1937), p. 312.
- 14. Mungo Park, *Travels in the Interior of Africa* (1805), ed. Kate Ferguson Masters (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).
- 15. John Barker, 'Where the missionary frontier ran ahead of empire', in Norman Etherington (ed.), *Missions and Empire*, Oxford History of the British Empire, Companion Series (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 86–106.
- 16. David Livingstone, Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa etc. (London: John Murray, 1857)
- 17. Henry M. Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone*; travels, adventures, and discoveries in central Africa; including four months' residence with Dr Livingstone (London: Sampson Low, Marston Low and Searle, 1872).
- 18. H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), ed. Dennis Butts (Oxford University Press, 1989).
- 19. Michael Crichton, Congo (New York: Avon Books, 2003).
- 20. Gareth Griffiths, 'Popular imperial adventure fiction and the discourse of missionary texts', in Jamie S. Scott and Gareth Griffiths (eds.), *Mixed Messages: Materiality*, *Textuality*, *Missions* (London: Palgrave, 2005), pp. 51–66.
- 21. For example: Jane Robinson, Wayward Women: A Guide to Women Travellers (Oxford University Press, 1991); Sara Mills, Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism (London and New York: Routledge, 1991); Karen R. Lawrence, Penelope Voyages: Women and Travel in the British Literary Tradition (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Inderpal Grewal, Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire and the Cultures of Travel (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); Srilata Ravi, Antivoyages: Reflections on Women's Travel Writings (Singapore: Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore, 1999); Jordana Pommeroy (ed.), Intrepid Women: Victorian Artists Travel (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005).
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- 24. Susanna Moodie, *Roughing it in the Bush or Life in Canada* (1852), ed. Carl Ballstad (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988).
- 25. Susanna Moodie, *Life in the Clearings versus the Bush* (1853; Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991).
- 26. Isabella L. Bird (ed.), *The Englishwoman in America* (1857), ed. Andrew Hill Clark (Madison, Milwaukee and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966).
- 27. Mary H. Kingsley, West African Studies (1899), intro. John E. Flint (London: Cass, 1964), Travels in West Africa Congo Français, Corisco and Cameroons (London: Macmillan and Co., New York, 1897).
- 28. Anne Baker (ed.), Morning Star: Florence Baker's Diary of the Expedition to Put Down the Slave Trade on the Nile, 1870–1873 (London: Kimber, 1972).
- 29. Gertrude Bell, *Persian Pictures: A Book of Travel* (1894), intro. Liora Lukitz (London: Anthem Press, 2005).

- 30. See E. Ann Kaplan, Looking for the Other: Feminism, Film and the Imperial Gaze (New York: Routledge, 1997), also Grewal, Home and Harem, and Pommeroy (ed.), Intrepid Women.
- 31. Mills, Discourses of Difference, p. 29.
- 32. Nina Elizabeth Mazuchelli, *The Indian Alps and How We Crossed Them. Being a Narrative of Two Years' Residence in the Eastern Himalaya and Two Months' Tour into the Interior. By a Lady Pioneer. Illustrated by Herself* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1876).
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- 34. Paul Edwards (ed.), The Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa the African (1789; London: Dawsons, 1969).
- 35. See Vincent Carretta, *Equiano the African: Biography of a Self-Made Man* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2005).
- 36. Philip Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Actions* 1780–1850 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964).
- 37. Ham Mukasa, *Sir Apolo Kagwa Discovers Britain*, ed. Taban Lo Liyong (African Writers Series, London: Heinemann Educational, 1975).
- 38. M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography: or, the Story of My Experiments with Truth* (1927), trans. Mahadev Desai (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Pub. House, 1940).
- 39. J. Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru: An Autobiography, with Musings on Recent Events in India (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1936).
- 40. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1957).
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- 42. Ibid., p. 115.
- 43. T. Jack Thompson, 'Speaking for ourselves: the African writers of Livingstonia', Bulletin of the Scottish Institute of Missionary Studies, New Series, 10 (1994), 33.
- 44. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- 45. See especially Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters:* Critical Reflections on Contemporary Travel Writing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), where this argument is made with convincing force.
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Missionary writing and postcolonialism

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This chapter will emphasize the relation between evangelization and culture by arguing that official missionary discourse was one of necessary ambiguity, and that the missionary intervention in society and culture legitimized a counter-discourse in postcolonial writing.

Coming in waves

The spread of Christianity on the African continent did not occur exclusively with European expansion outside the Western hemisphere from the fifteenth century onwards. Rather it came in several waves. Early Christianity in North Africa during the first and second centuries gave birth to a dynamic and vibrant Christian church, and produced eminent Fathers of the Church such as Saint Augustine, Bishop Cyprian and the theologian and writer Tertullian. The Islamic conquest of Africa soon overshadowed and almost completely erased Christianity in the region, and yet the church survived in different Coptic denominations in Egypt and Ethiopia.

A second wave of new evangelization took place during the fifteenth century, concomitant with the great discoveries spearheaded by European expansion outside the West. Portugal's political power was coupled with the exertions of Portuguese explorers to conquer new territories with the seal and the approval of the Holy See, the highest Christian authority. Through papal bulls (*Dum Diversas* (January 1452) and *Romanus Pontifex* (January 1455) by Nicolas V, *Inter Cetera* (March 1456) by Callixte III, *Aeterni Regis Clementia* (June 1481) by Sixte IV, *Dum Fide Constantium* (1514) and *Dumdum Pro Parte* (1516) by Leon X), the popes granted to the kings of Portugal the full right to conquer territories, and at the same time to bring the Christian faith into these newly conquered spaces. Territorial conquest thus functioned simultaneously as a political and religious enterprise, aimed at the conversion of 'barbaric nations' and the 'propagation of the Christian name', as Pope Callixte III states

in his bull *Inter Cetera* of March 1456. The coalescence of the terms 'nations' and 'Christian' in the discourse of the papacy already points to the imbrication of politics and religion, and also blurs the frontiers between the political/ secular and the religious/spiritual.

Christianization accompanied territorial conquest. We are reminded, for instance, of the Portuguese explorer Diego Câo's expeditions. Mandated in his mission of discovery by the Catholic king of Portugal Dom Enrique, Câo brought with him missionaries and technicians during his second travel to Central Africa, which he 'discovered' in 1482. Together, they worked to build the kingdom of the Kongo as a Christian monarchy shaped according to the Portuguese model. They installed Christian missions and introduced new political, economic and social structures. By the end of the sixteenth century the Portuguese had established other missions in West and Central Africa that were themselves followed by Italian Capuchin missions.

The seventeenth century marks a decline, almost a disappearance, of Christianization and Christian missions in Africa, until a revival took place during the nineteenth century during the colonial expansion that inaugurated a new era of modern Christianization. Missionaries in Africa belonged to the colonizing nations: France, Portugal, Spain, Britain and Germany, all of which would introduce their respective brand of religion into their colonies. The major Western religions of Catholicism, Anglicanism and different Protestant denominations entered the African continent with the colonizers, thus consolidating their position similarly to the process of colonial expansion itself.

The twentieth century represents a further phase of the consolidation of Christianity in most evangelized African countries, as shown by the creation and increase of a local clergy, and from the middle of the twentieth century to present times, in the promotion of indigenous clergy to high church positions as bishops and cardinals. One also sees on the continent new orientations of Christianity manifest in the rise of independent African churches. While the work of missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, was based on wider canonical teachings, the early 1970s saw the emergence in Africa of charismatic movements with a new trend, namely, a focus on the Holy Spirit and its perceived attributes of miracles, glossolalia and prophecy. The late twentieth century was distinctive for the multiplication of Christian 'sects'. Unlike the charismatic movements, which operated within the traditional churches, the new sects operated independently, outside, and mostly in competition with the mainstream traditional Christian churches.

As a final point to this survey, one could mention the impact of the work of non-traditional contemporary missionary figures such as Mother Theresa in