2. Post-Colonial Allegory and the Transformation of History

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There has been a resurgence in allegorical writing in recent years, and in my view the most interesting examples of it are coming out of post-colonial cultures. Alongside this resurgence has come a renewal of critical interest in the mode, much of it due to the increasing purchase of post-structural codes of recognition in Western society – the valorisation of textuality, irony, and the arbitrary in the theory of meaning, for example, and the corresponding devaluation of expressive and formal elements in art.[1] This critical interest has in turn sparked a significant revaluation of allegorical practice, so that the marked prejudice against allegory[2] that was initiated in the Romantic period, that continued through into New Criticism, and that still prevails in some areas even now, has become sharply, even radically, reversed. Whereas critics of the Romantic period understood allegory as a constrained and mechanical mode of expression that was utterly determined by the historical or textual matter which formed its external referent or "pretext",[3] and thus saw it as a violation of "organic form", a considerable body of post-structural theory now takes allegory to be the ultimate trope for discourse itself, so that *all* writing is deemed to be allegorical, and all reading allegorical misreading.[4] On the question of whether the post-structural revaluation of allegory has actually produced a *redefinition* of the mode, critics disagree.[5] But despite this renewal of interest in allegorical practice, significant discrepancies exist between the various theories of allegory now in critical currency and the kind of allegorical writing and reading that is currently being practised in post-colonial cultures – which is perhaps not entirely surprising given the fact that mainstream allegorical theory is based almost exclusively on art and intellectual traditions of European and United States provenance. This discrepancy has troubling implications for the

theory of allegory, ones that lie far beyond the terms of this paper. But what I hope to show here is that in one area – the relation between allegory and history – post-colonial allegorical writing not only constitutes a challenge to prevailing theoretical assumptions about what kind of cultural grounding is required for allegorical communication to take place, but also, that it is helping to change our received ideas of history.

Allegorical writing involves doubling or reduplicating extratextual material;[6] and since the allegorical sign refers always to a previous or anterior sign, it is by definition invested in what Paul de Man calls a "rhetoric of temporality".[7] In other words, an awareness of the passage of time is at the heart of allegory, and because of this, all allegorical writing is thought to be inherently involved with questions of history and tradition. A great deal of speculation goes on in allegorical theory about the precise relation between allegory and history, but a fairly common assumption seems to be that allegorical modes of reading and writing are concerned with redeeming or recuperating the past[8] – either because the present pales in comparison with it, or because the past has become in some ways unacceptable to the dominant ideology of contemporary society (allegorising the scandalously pagan Homer, for example, so that his great poems could be assimilated into the Christian worldview). Some post-structuralist critics, however, have reversed this assumption, reading allegorical expression as a willful act of annihilating the past.[9] But whether allegory is enlisting tradition in the service of historicism[10] or is exercising its own "will to power" against that tradition, the allegorical text is seen to be bound up with the question of the authority of the past, locked in "dynastic relation"[11] to it, and reduced to "mere contingency"[12] upon the historical or literary "pretext" to which it refers.

In the context of post-colonial cultures, however, the problem of history goes beyond the simple binary of either redeeming or annihilating the past. One of the legacies of the colonial encounter is a notion of history as "the few privileged monuments"[13] of achievement, which serves either to arrogate "history" wholesale to the imperial centre or to erase it from the colonial archive and produce, especially in New World cultures, a condition of "historylessness", of "no visible history".[14] Both notions are part of the imperial myth of history, however, flip sides of the same coin,[15] for under this formulation history "defines by what is central, not by what is peripheral";[16] and those not central to an assumed teleology of international advancement become, in Eric Wolf's use of the phrase, "people without history". From the post-colonial perspective, then, history as such becomes either an "intollerable pile"[17] or a cultural absence, and post-colonial

writing is full of strategies for transcending or going "beyond history". Some post-colonial writers, such as Derek Walcott, for example, "refuse to recognize" history and focus instead on the "simultaneity" of myth.[18] Other writers, such as Rudy Wiebe, convert images of time into images of place in order to permit the reader to "see through the language of time".[19] Whatever the specific tactic, the common pursuit is to proceed beyond a "determinist view of history"[20] by revising, reappropriating, or reinterpreting history as a concept, and in doing so to articulate new "codes of recognition"[21] within which those acts of resistance, those unrealised intentions, and those re-orderings of consciousness that "history" has rendered silent or invisible can be recognised as shaping forces in a culture's tradition.

This general project of transforming our inherited notions of history provides a framework for appreciating why so many allegories of the colonial encounter and its consequences are being written within post-colonial literatures. We know from the work of Michel Foucault, Hayden White, and others that history is a mode of discourse that is culturally motivated and ideologically conditioned; it is a mirror of contemporary concerns and dominant, institutionalised practices. It consists not of things, but of words, and as Todorov points out, "language has always been the companion of empire . . ."[22] Since language mediates the way in which we see the past and the traditions that inform the present, we have to pay attention not only to historical content but also to the "lenses of language"[23] that bring it into focus; and the extent to which we are able to see history as language, as discourse, as a way of seeing, or as a code of recognition is also the extent to which we are able to destabilise history's fixity, its giveness, and open it up to the transformative power of imaginative revision. Post-colonial criticism abounds in statements of intent in this regard,[24] but it is quite another matter to communicate this perception in a way that genuinely enables a "positive imaginative reconstruction of reality".[25] Allegorical writing, and its inherent investment in history, provides the post-colonial writer with a means not only of presenting this proposition, but also of building it into the structuring principle of the fictional work of art.

Not all allegories written in post-colonial cultures share this concern, of course, but in those that do, received images of history are projected into an implied level of meaning that runs in parallel to the literal level of the text. A series of textual triggers signals this implies level of meaning, resonating against the cultural context in which the text is located so as to specify which historical events or processes are being allegorised. Ayi Kwei Armah's 'An African Fable', or specific episodes in Margaret Laurence's *This Side Jordan*, for example, allegorically re-enact the rape of the colonised by the coloniser. Kole Omotoso's *The Combat*, George

Lamming's *Water With Berries*, V. S. Naipaul's *Guerrillas*, Armah's *Why Are We So Blest?*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross*, John Hearne's *The Sure Salvation*, and Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* provide specific allegorical doublings of cultural rupture and its political consequences, all of which can be traced to the colonial encounter. Gwendolyn MacEwen's "Noman" stories allegorise aspects of the New World myth of a country without mythology or memory, while David Foster's *Moonlight* allegorises ironically the pattern of New World capture, appropriation, and settlement. And Randolph Stow's *Tourmaline*, or Kofi Awooner's *The Earth, My Brother . . .*, allegorise the plural traditions and typology that inhere in post-colonialism's cross-cultural encounter. These are just a few examples of what is a wide-spread post-colonial practice, and on the thematic level these readings are not especially remarkable, since many texts make the same points in different ways. But what is unique to the allegorical representation of such details of colonial and post-colonial history, I think, is the fact that the allegorical levels of meaning that open into history are bracketed off by a literal level of fiction interpollated between the historical events and the reader so as to displace the matter of history into a secondary level of the text accessible only through the mediation of the primary fictional level. This mode of representation foregrounds the fact that fiction, or writing, mediates history; that both fiction and history are discursive practices, subject to questions of authorship; and that history, like fiction, requires an act of reading before it can have meaning. This central positioning of the reader, this insistance on the reader's "active and self-conscious" participation, is enormously important in allegory; and some critics go so far as to argue that the reader is actually the central character in the allegorical text.[26] The point for post-colonial allegory is that historical material must be *read*, and read in *adjacency* to a fictional re-enactment of it. Two separate "lenses of language" require focusing; the reader's gaze must be binocular; and binocular vision enables depth perception. In post-colonial allegory, the field of vision for this depth perception is our inherited concepts of history itself.

In this way, post-colonial allegorical writing builds the provisional, discursive nature of history into the structure and narrative mode of the text so that it becomes approachable only in an act of reading that foregrounds its secondary or conditional nature, its link to fictionality. The specific effect varies according to the kind of representation the allegorical text is undertaking: George Lamming's *Natives of My Person* allegorises colonial history as the present-day reality and argues that nothing has changed; Wilson Harris's *Carnival*, on the other hand, focuses on the discontinuity between a fluid present and the absolute

frames of cognition that prevailed in the period of the European renaissance. But whatever the case, the binocular lens of allegory refocuses our concept of history as fixed monument into a concept of history as the creation of a discursive practice, and in doing so it opens history, fiction's "other", to the possibility of transformation.

Allegory proceeds from identification between things[27] and depends upon an act of reading that recognises events and characters to be analagous with specific points of reference in what Frederic Jameson calls a "master code":[28] something already given, inherent in the tradition, and capable of acting as a matrix for a shared typology between the allegorist and the reading community. As a traditional practice, allegory has always privileged doctrine and metaphysical system at the expense of "otherness" – if allegory literally means "other speaking", it has historically served as a way of representing, of speaking *for*, the "other", especially in the enterprise of imperialism. When Columbus arrived in the New World, for example, he named (renamed, actually) the first two islands he encountered for the Christian deity and the Virgin, and the next three for the Spanish king, queen and heir apparent. As Colin Partridge points out, this was a means of assimilating the new World territory into the religious and political hierarchy of values that comprised the dominant ideology of Europe at the time, and the rationalisation for such an enterprise came from the process of reading "otherness" as automatically inferior because it lay "outside orthodox relation".[29] Columbus's ritual of naming is essentially an extension of allegorical consciousness in that it "reads" the territory of the "other" by reference to an anterior set of signs already situated in a cultural thematics, and by this process the "new" world is made contingent upon the old.

A similar process of allegorical thinking lies behind the hegemony of neo-colonialism; this, at least, is the argument Abdul JanMohamed advances in an article entitled "The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonist Literature".[30] JanMohamed perceives a binary or "manichean" code of recognition underlying imperialism's domination of the "other", which consists of a series of fixed oppositions such as self/other, white/black, good/evil, rationality/sensuality, and so on. But for the code to be effective, it must be open to the process of "allegorical extensions" whereby any form of difference can be "read" as the underprivileged term in a similar binary and then extended to all other binary oppositions in the system. This code, combined with the capacity of allegorical thinking to extend it infinitely, allows the coloniser always to read the "other" in the ideological mirror of his own metaphysical system and to rationalise

real cultural difference as a factor of the permanent hierarchical difference inscribed in the manichean master code. Thus the colonised can never be identified with the coloniser; there can be no meeting between them; and the threatening capacity of history to change power relationships can thus be neutralised.

The point I am making is that if allegory identifies a process of signification in which an image in a literary text is interpreted against a pre-existing master code or typological system, a similar process of interpreting signs has been used in imperial thinking to read the world and to legitimise the power relations it establishes within it. In Columbus's code of recognition, the territory of the "other" is read back into the master code of a monarchical and Catholic hierarchy. In the manichean code JanMohamed identifies, the "other" is read as the inferior term in a binary opposition and then, by extension, fixed in a permanent position of subordination within a master code of binary thinking. Both codes of recognition depend upon allegorical thinking to effect the assimilation of the "other" into an overarching, supposedly universal, metaphysical code, and both show how allegory can be indicted as a mode of representation that energises the imperial enterprise.[31]

For some post-colonial writers, then, the task of transforming our concepts of history requires the reappropriation and revision of allegory itself, for allegory is seen to be both part of the imperial process that instilled those concepts and part of the neo-colonial process that continues to hold them in place. George Lamming's *Natives of My Person*, for example, allegorically re-enacts colonial history in the form of a middle passage slave ship, the *Reconaissance*. Lamming subverts the kind of allegorical identification Columbus undertakes, however, by inverting the traditionally past-to-present direction of allegorical signification, thus reversing the pattern of contingency that normally accompanies it. In Lamming's fiction, the colonisers' ship and its crew are allegorically representative not only of the entire imperial endeavour but also of the post-colonial world and the economic and political relations that obtain within it[32] – the world, ironically, that they are physically unable to reach in the narrative action of the text. Whereas Columbus appropriated the "new" world to the significatory matrix of the old, Lamming employs old world figures to allegorise the new. Lamming's coloniser figures thus become contingent for one level of their allegorical meaning upon the cultural thematics of post-colonial territory, and by this process Lamming appropriates from linear history the anteriority of the allegorical sign.

This process of transforming received concepts of history and tradition through the revisioning and reappropriation of allegory is under-

taken even more directly in J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*. Here, Coetzee allegorises the process by which empire, in constructing the "other" into the unit of knowledge known as "barbarian", projects its own binary code onto the colonised and then becomes trapped in its own limiting system of reference. Some critics have attacked this novel on ideological grounds precisely because of its employment of the allegorical mode in depicting this process, the objection being that allegory's tendency to dehistoricize, to construct a vantage point *outside* history, permits Coetzee to avoid acknowledging his novel's grounding in South African racial paranoia.[33] This reading depends, I think, on a narrow view of allegory, one which fails to recognise not only allegory's investment in colonial discourse and the imperial enterprise but also Coetzee's deconstructive troping, or "turning", of that enterprise through his narrative repetition and displacement of it. *Waiting for the Barbarians*, in my view, is actually engaged in subverting this association between allegory and imperialism and in reappropriating allegory to a politics of resistance. Coetzee's tactic in this novel is to portray imperial allegorical thinking in the thematic level of his novel and to juxtapose it with the allegorical mode in which the novel itself is written. The juxtaposition foregrounds the discontinuity between the two kinds of allegorical discourse, one based on imperial codes of recognition and the other on resistance to totalitarian systems. In the gap between the two lies the possibility of transformation, and Coetzee's text thus suggests that allegory can itself be used to dismantle the system of allegorical thinking that underwrites the act of colonisation.

This process of "revisioning" history through the reappropriation of allegory becomes not only technique, but also thematic content, in Wilson Harris's latest novel, *Carnival*. The text portrays an allegorical journey through the inferno and purgatory of colonial Guyanese history, taking Dante's *Divine Comedy* as its immediate ancestor and model. The Dantean "pretext" thus imposes itself on Harris's textual frame in much the same way that colonialism imposed its codes of recognition, its cultural and metaphysical structures, and its institutions onto what it took to be the uninscribed geography of colonial space. And in this way Dante's canonical allegory, which Harris reads as aspiring to "absolutely sovereign theatre"[34] and "ruling pattern of the word",[35] threatens to reduce Harris's fiction to mere contingency, a mimicry or reinscription of traditional and centralised cognitive patterns from within colonised space. Yet Harris's fictional aim has always been to effect "genuine change"[36] within the legacy of a seemingly totalising tradition and the conceptual biases and "barren imperatives" it carries, and in *Carnival* Harris attempts to accomplish this through a dialectical interchange with the past, a "deepseated, mutual, cross-cultural dialogue

between imaginations''.[37] ''Dantesque allegory'' becomes emblematic of tradition as a whole: ostensibly absolute and inescapable, and yet containing within it the germ of imaginative release. And allegorical repetition, in Harris's handling, articulates not so much the arbitrary recurrence of static, unbreakable forms as the undeniable *difference* that inhabits apparently similar constructs, and thus it contains the capacity to open, in Harris's terms, a gateway into the received codes of tradition and history, a way of reading the past, and the investment of the present in it, through a liberating process of imaginative reconstruction. Through the refigurative actuations of allgorical repetition, history becomes transformed: absolutes become fragmented, non-vision becomes vision, and the false clarities of tradition become the uncertain round upon which an inner confidence and authority in post-colonial cultures can be constructed.[38]

Whatever its precise form or historical moment, allegorical writing is associated with ''a belief in the possibility of transformation''.[39] This characteristic of allegory may have served the ideology of imperialism in legitimizing the transformation of the ''other'' into colonial subject, and it may continue to underwrite neo-colonial codes. But by foregrounding the fact that history is not a set of immovable past achievements but a discourse, open, as are all discursive practices, to reinterpretation, post-colonial allegorical narratives show that allegorical transformation can also be an effective means of subverting imperial myths. Texts such as *Natives of My Person*, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, and *Carnival* go one step further in this process of subversion by setting out directly to transform these imperial codes of recognition from *within* the rhetorical stance of their own cognitive strategies, and in this way, the act of ''revisioning'' allegory becomes also an act of ''revisioning'' those codes of recognition which we inherit from the imperial encounter, including those codes that make up our received notions of history. In this new form, allegory provides the post-colonial writer with a means of foregrounding such inherited notions and exposing them to the transformative powers of the imagination; and in doing so, post-colonial allegory helps produce new ways of seeing history, new ways of ''reading'' the world.

The point I have been making is that post-colonial allegorical writing is engaged in a process of destabilizing and transforming our fixed ideas of history, and this process demonstrates, I think, the inadequacy of the critical position that perceives allegory as a mode of writing that is limited in scope and mechanically determined by the historical or literary ''pretext'' upon which it is based. In the kind of allegory I have been describing, it is fiction that determines the way we read history,

history that is contingent upon fiction, and not the other way around. Post-colonial allegorical texts would thus offer support to the critical enterprise of rehabilitating allegory as a viable mode for writing creative fiction. But as yet, post-colonial practice goes largely unnoticed in the theory; and as a result, an overdetermination of the relation between allegory and history, and the idea that the reader of allegory suffers from a lack of freedom in interpretive range,[40] still prevail in the critical discourse. Post-colonial allegories are concerned with neither redeeming nor annihilating history, but with displacing it as a concept and opening up the past to imaginative revision. They place themselves in "adjacency", not in "dynastic relation",[41] to the anterior sign and thus depend upon the reader's binocular vision for the "revisioning" process that allegory promotes: that way of seeing that rejects "history" in favour of those aspects of culture that have been subject to historical erasure, those codes of recognition that comprise what Michael Dash so eloquently terms the "counter culture of the imagination".[42]

And furthermore, post-colonial allegories depend upon the awareness in their readers that the colonial encounter and its aftermath, whatever its form throughout the post-colonial world, provides a shared matrix of reference and a shared set of problems for post-colonial cultures. In this, they clash with one of the shibboleths of allegorical theory, which proclaims that although "a matrical system of reference must always constitute [allegory's] establishing values", no "shared referential, metasemantic system such as was available to mediaeval allegorists and their audience is . . . commonly held by readers, and so one has to be constructed or invented in the act of reading itself".[43] Underlying this shift to the purely semantic level of allegory is the belief that no other typology is "universally shared in our day",[44] but post-colonial allegorical writing suggests, I think, that a shared typology grounded in the real world of cultural and political relations does exist and does provide a cultural thematics upon which allegorical communication can take place. As is so often the case with metropolitan critical patterns, the problem remains one of searching, albeit covertly, for universals. A culturally specific typology – that of the Akan carrier ritual[45] – underlies the allegory of Armah's *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, for example, and Naipaul's *Guerrillas* allegorises political relations that obtain throughout the post-colonial world. But the dismissal of these typologies because they are not universally held leads to the mistaken reading of Armah's novel as conventionally allegorical in the *Everyman* mode,[46] and Naipaul's novel as unallegorical, unpolitical except in the narrow sense of individual character, because it seems to be written in a mode of narrative realism.

Allegorical theory will continue to invite such misreadings as long as it encourages generic or modal associations between texts without accounting for their cultural grounding. As Frederic Jameson makes clear in *The Political Unconscious*, our expectations concerning genre, mode, form, and language are tied to the institutions and ideologies that generate such systems of classification, and literary critics will have to unlearn a number of prevailing assumptions about allegory if they are not to traduce post-colonial allegorical practice. For post-colonial allegory is changing not only our ideas of history but the concept of allegory itself, and the challenge for criticism is to learn to read this new, "revised" mode of representation in all of its diversity, its plurality, its cultural and political difference.

NOTES

1 Michael Newman, "Revising Modernism, Representing Postmodernism: Critical Discourses of the Visual Arts" *ICA Documents*, 5 (1986) [Institute of Contemporary Art] p. 42.

2 See Edwin Honig, *Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory*, Evanston, I11.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1959, p. 3.

3 Maureen Quillingan, *The Language of Allegory: Defining The Genre*, Ithaca and London: Cornell Univ. Press, 1979, p. 9, defines the allegorical "pretext" as "the source that always stands outside the narrative" and sees it as naming "that slippery relation between the source of the work and the work itself."

4 This is, of course, an oversimplification of a complex point. There remains wide disagreement over the question of allegory within the ambit of post-structural theory; see for example, Paul de Man, *Practice*, ed. Charles S. Singleton, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969, pp. 173–209; Craig Owens, "The Allegorical Impulse: Towards a Theory of Postmodernism", *October*, 12, Spring 1980, pp. 67–86 and 13, Summer 1980, pp. 59–80; Stephen Melville, "Notes on the Reemergence of Allegory, the Forgetting of Modernism, the Necessity of Rhetoric, and the Condition of Publicity in Art and Criticism", *October*, 19, Winter 1981, pp. 55–92; and Paul Smith, "The Will to Allegory in Postmodernism", *Dalhousie Review*, 62, 1, 1982, pp. 105–22.

5 As Frank Lentriccia, in *After the New Criticism*, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 295 puts it: "However much he [Paul De Man] might wish to revise the theory of allegory, in the end it appears that he does not so much wish to displace the traditional idea as to add to it."

6 See Owen,s 12, p. 68: ". . . allegory occurs whenever one text is doubled by another"; and Stephen Barney, *Allegories of History, Allegories of Love*, Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1979, p. 311: "The business of reduplication, which underlies both typological and reification allegories, is the principle technique of allegories . . ."

7 De Man reads allegory as a "rhetoric of temporality" because, as Frank Lentricchia, p. 293, explains, ". . . it is the essence of the allegorical sign to refer to a previous sign which, by definition, is 'pure anteriority' ".

8 For example, Owens, 12, p. 68 notes in allegory a "capacity to rescue from historical oblivion that which threatens to disappear. Allegory first emerged in response to a similar sense of estrangement from tradition; through its history it has functioned in the gap between a present and a past which, without allegorical reinterpretation, might have remained foreclosed. A conviction of the remoteness of the past, and a desire to redeem it for the present – these are its two fundamental impulses".

9 Smith, pp. 118, 115, writes that the allegorist tries to effect "an excessive forgetting of the past", and adds: "the allegorist's historical consciousness is of the type that tries to take command of the past: the past 'is critcally examined, the knife put to its roots,' in order that the allegorist free himself from the constraints of temporal transience". But Smith sees this effort as doomed, because allegory "must always suggest the presence . . . of the work it pretends to devastate". Newman, p. 44, reads Owens' post-structural approach to allegory less as an attempt to redeem history than as an attempt to escape it.

10 See Owens, 12, p. 76.

11 Edward Said, *Beginnings*, New York: Basic Books, 1975, p. 10.

12 Roberto González Echevarría, *Alegjo Carpentier: The Pilgrim at Home*, Ithaca and London: Cornell Univ. Press, 1977, p. 205.

13 Echevarría, p. 259.

14 See Eddie Baugh, "The West Indian Writer and His Quarrel With History", *Tapia*, 7, 8, 1977, pp. 6–7; 8, 9, 1977, pp. 6–7, 11.

15 Derek Walcott, in "The Muse of History", *Is Maasa Day Dead?*, ed. Orde Coombs, New York: Anchor, 1974, p. 1, writes: ". . . they know by openly fighting tradition we perpetuate it, that revolutionary literature is a filial impulse . . ."

16 W. L. Morton, "The Relevance of Canadian History", in *Contexts of Canadian Criticism*, ed. Eli Mandel, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1971, p. 52.

17 George Lamming, cited in Baugh, 8, 9, p. 6.

18 Walcott, p. 2.

19 Coral Ann Howells, "Re-visions of Prairie Indian History in Rudy Wiebe's *The Temptations of Big Bear* and *My Lovely Enemy*, *Revisions of Canadian Literature*, ed. Shirley Chew, Leeds: Univ. of Leeds, Institute of Bibliography and Textual Criticism, 1984, pp. 66, 68.

20 Baugh, 7, No. 8, p. 7.

21 Howells, p. 62.

22 Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard, 1982; New York; Harper & Row, 1984, p. 221.

23 Howells, p. 61.

24 See, among others, Baugh; Howells; John Thieme, "Scheherazade as Historian: Rudy Wiebe's 'Where is the Voice Coming From?' ", *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 17, 1, 1982, pp. 172–81 and "Alternative Histories: Narrative Modes in West Indian Literature", *A Sense of Place: Essays in Post-Colonial Literature*, Göteborg: Gothenburg Univ. Commonwealth Studies, 1984, pp. 142–49; and Walcott, p. 2.

25 J. Michael Dash, "Marvellous Realism – The Way Out of Negritude", *Caribbean Studies*, 13, 4, 1973, p. 66.

26 See, for example, Quilligan, p. 226.

27 See Honig, pp. 115–23.

28 Frederick Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, 1981; London: Methuen, 1983, pp. 25–33.

29 Colin Partridge, *The Making of New Cultures: A Literary Perspective*, Amsterdam: Costerus, 1982, pp. 33–4.

30 Abdul JanMohamed, "The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonialist Literature", *Critical Inquiry*, 12, 1, Autumn 1985, pp. 59–87.

31 Edward Said, in *Orientalism*, 1978; rpt. New York: Vintage, 1979, p. 67 notes that ". . . all cultures impose corrections upon raw reality, changing it from free-floating objects into units of knowledge"; but in the discourse of colonialism, the construction of the self as actuating agent of the imperial centre requires the figuration and allegorical transformation of the "other" into an inferior repetition of the self. Examinations of this process, and deconstructive critiques of it, are given in the essays collected in *Europe and its others*, 2 vols., eds. Francis Barker *et. al.*, Colchester: Univ. of Essex, 1985: see especially the articles by Gregory Rabassa, Peter Hulme, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha. See also Patrick Brantlinger, "Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent", *Critical Inquiry* 12, 1, Autumn 1985, pp. 166–203, and my review of Barker *et. al.*, "Cultural Alterity and Colonial Discourse", *Southern Review* 20, 1 (1987), pp. 102–107. James Clifford extends the terms of this discourse to a discussion of current ethnographic practice in his article "On Ethnographic Allegory" in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, ed. James Clifford, Berkeley: Univ. of California Press 1986, pp. 98–121.

32 Avis C. McDonald, "Within the Orbit of Power': Reading Allegory in George Lamming's *Natives of My Person*", *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, XXII, 1, 1987, p. 73–86.

33 See JanMohamed, p. 73, and Richard G. Martin, "Narrative, History, Ideology: A Study of 'Waiting for the Barbarians' and 'Burger's Daughter' ", *Ariel* 17, 3, July 1986, pp. 3–21.

34 Wilson Harris, "The Quest for Form," *Kunapipi*, V, 1, 1983, p. 25.

35 Ian Munro and Reinhard Sander, Interview with Wilson Harris, *Kas-Kas*, Austin, Texas: The African and Afro-American Research Institute, 1972, p. 54.

36 Wilson Harris, "Adversarial Contexts and Creativity," *New Left Review*, 154, Nov.–Dec. 1985, p. 128.

37 Wilson Harris, "Commedy and Modern Allegory: A personal View", Paper given at the Italian Assoc. of English Studies conference, Turin, Italy, Oct. 1985, p. 72.

38 For an expanded treatment of this argument, see my "Revisioning Allegory: Wilson Harris's *Carnival*", *Kunapipi*, VIII, 2 (1987), 45–55.

39 Gay Clifford, *The Transformations of Allegory*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974, p. 29.

40 See, for example, Quilligan, p. 225.

41 Said, *Beginnings*, p. 10.

42 Dash, p. 66.

43 Smith, p. 107. See also Clifford, p. 16.

44 Smith, p. 115.

45 See Derek Wright, "Motivation and Motif: The Carrier Rite in Ayi Kwei Armah's 'The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born' ", *English Studies in Africa*, 28, 2, Sept. 1985, pp. 119–33.

46 For a critique of such readings, see Wright, p. 124.