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Abstract

David Dabydeen's poetry belongs with 'a literature in broken English'.[^] In this revised usage, the odium directed at deviations from an ethnocentrically prescribed form is displaced by the recognition that the writing practices of those who are outside the dominant culture have opened 'Eng. Lit.' to heterogeneous and heretical modes. The notion has been differently deployed by Dabydeen to define the Creole of his native Guyana as a hybrid language which speaks the dislocations and oppressions of its history:

Between Creole and Cambridge English: The Poetry of David Dabydeen

David Dabydeen's poetry belongs with 'a literature in broken English'.¹ In this revised usage, the odium directed at deviations from an ethnocentrically prescribed form is displaced by the recognition that the writing practices of those who are outside the dominant culture have opened 'Eng. Lit.' to heterogeneous and heretical modes. The notion has been differently deployed by Dabydeen to define the Creole of his native Guyana as a hybrid language which speaks the dislocations and oppressions of its history:

[A] feature of the language is its brokenness, no doubt reflecting the brokenness and suffering of its original users – African slaves and East Indian indentured labourers. Its potential as a naturally tragic language is there, there in its brokenness and rawness which is like the rawness of a wound. (Introduction to *Slave Song*, pp. 13-14)

The power of language as a means of subjugation and conversely as the affirmation of values, perspectives and traditions despised or disregarded by colonial discourses, is a concept central to critiques of 'Third World' texts and the 'minority' writings of internally exiled communities like Afro-Americans, Chicanos, Aborigines, Maoris and British Blacks. One position, represented by Ngugi wa Thiong'o insists that since language is 'the collective memory bank of a peoples' experience in history', the post-colonial world can only repossess the signifying function usurped by imperialism through the use of native languages.² Other critics, extending a proposition of Deleuze and Guattari,³ argue that the heterodox practices of the culturally exiled who write in a 'major' language, produce a counter-discourse articulating another consciousness and sensibility in the process of decodifying or 'deterritorializing' the forms and categories of 'great literature'. Whether written in the native languages or in those of the imperialist nations, a polyglot post-colonial literature, disruptive of canonical modes, enters the lists as a refusal of the cultural supremacy still exercised by the metropolitan centres. At stake is the self-definition of radical cultural difference in its multiple registers, a practice which positions the colonial and post-colonial

worlds as subject, wrenching from the west the power of producing the other hemisphere as the deviant form of its Self. 'To represent the colonial subject is to conceive the subject of difference, of an-other history and an-other culture'.⁴ Such writing will resist assimilation by a literary criticism whose insistent rhetoric of universals effaces both the historical conditions within which texts are produced and the specificities they speak. What is instead required of critiques is attention to the breaking of rules and the dismantling of authorized structures:

Many arguments can be made for the importance and interest of non-canonical forms of literature such as that of the third world, but one is peculiarly self-defeating because it borrows the weapons of the adversary: the strategy of trying to prove that these texts are as 'great' as those of the canon itself.⁵

As critic, Dabydeen has contributed to the project of restoring to visibility the black presence in English writing and art that has been marginalized in analytical discussion.⁶ As poet, he is an eloquent black presence. In an essay 'On Not Being Milton: Nigger Talk in England Today', he places his poetry within those nonconformist traditions where established structures are disrupted and 'standard' English deliberately 'misused' by those to whom the language is both an imperialist legacy and a step-mother-tongue:

I cannot ... feel or write poetry like a white man, much less serve him ... I feel that I am different, not wholly, but sufficient for me to want to contemplate that which is other in me, which owes its life to particular rituals of ancestry.⁷

In search of a language that will speak the Guyanese history and landscape, Dabydeen has written in Creole and in an English which, as Henry Louis Gates has said of all black texts written in a western language, is 'two-toned ... Its visual tones are white and black, and its aural tones are standard and vernacular'.⁸ The many linguistic registers of his poetry enunciate a self dispersed between affiliation to Indian parentage, solidarity with Guyana's history of conquest, colonization and slavery, and a consciousness irreversibly marked and fissured by English education and residence, the disparate facets held together within a black identity. His is the poetry of one who exists precariously in at least two world, accepting diaspora as a permanent condition while remaining bound to a natal culture he can no longer inhabit; and his verse which is part of the process in Caribbean writing opening up the African, Indian and Amerindian experiences, can be read as a debt to the ancestors.

The ambition of *Slave Song* is to articulate in the local idiom the perceptions and dreams of the historically muted, that is, to express what

'they themselves cannot verbalize because of their lack of words' (Notes, p. 53). But 'speaking for' others is a fiction, and although it is Dabydeen's stated intention to 'describe' ways of being and seeing based on 'a jumble of fact and myth, past and present', (Introduction, p. 10) what he does is reinvent the speech and reconceive the fantasies of slaves and peasant canecutters – and often in verse forms that can owe as much to manipulating or parodying English modes as to oral tradition. 'Guyana Pastoral', for instance, a lament for the rape and murder of an Indian girl, undermines the sanitized rendering of Caribbean plantation life in eighteenth century English verse and the slavish imitation of this style in what Dabydeen calls the tourist doggerel of early Guyanese versifiers. The harshly accented metre violates pastoral poesy, the convention of moon, sun and wind as benign images in this convention is subverted by recitation of their absence, and another order of naming indigenous to the Guyanese landscape, erases the mystique of nature's sublimity:

Under de tambrin tree whch de moon na glow,
Laang, laang, laang, she lay, laang, laang
She cry, but de wind na blow
An dem wraang an straang
An dem wuk an dem bruk till fowlcack-crow.
Who see who hear when she belly buss, when she mout splash blood?
Only de jumbie umbrella dat poke up e white eye from de mud.

Under de tambrin tree whch de sun na shine
...
Who know whch she lass, who know whch foh fine?
Only de cush-cush ants dat lay dem white egg in she mout. (p. 21)

In this collection are celebrations of food rituals ('For Ma'), the rendering of peasant wit pitted against the 'English' pretensions of an upwardly mobile youth, ('Two Cultures'), and an elegy to the failure of domestic relations ('Man and Woman'). The central preoccupation however is with protesting a history of untold oppressions and a present of relentless exploitation in a language that is 'angry, crude, energetic'. The cutlass, sickle and blade that hack, cut, chop and stab at the cane invoke the punishing labour of working on sugar plantations; chain, lash and whip image the condition and memories of slavery; piranha, snake and alligator are figures in an inhospitable landscape. Together these tropes overturn the vision of Arcadia delivered to the West by Raleigh's *The Discovery of the Large, Rich and Beautiful Empire of Guiana* and perpetuated in subsequent English literature. The voice in *Slave Song* is overwhelmingly that of public protestation. In

'Slavewoman's Song', the inferred exchanges between a speaker and an addressee imply a lament for shared sorrows:

Ya howl –
Hear how ya howl –
Tell me wha ya howl foh
Tell me noh?
Pickni?
Dem tek pickni way?
Wha dem do wid pickni
Mek yu knaack you head wid stone
Bite yu haan like daag-bone? (p. 38)

while 'Song of the Creole Gang Women' reworks a communal work song in the interlocution of women's voices execrating the usurpation and abuse of their bodies:

Wuk, nuttin bu wuk
Maan noon an night nuttin bu wuk
Booker own me patacake
Booker own me pickni.
Pain, nuttin bu pain
Waan million tous'ne acre cane.
O since me baan – juk! juk! juk! juk! juk!
So sun in me eye like taan
So Booker saach deep in me flesh
Kase Booker own me rass
An Booker own me cutlass – (p. 17)

(ii)

The physicality of the language which is the poetry's strength also signals its danger. Of *Slave Song* Dabydeen has written that he set out to deal with the Romance of Cane, 'meaning the perverse eroticism of black labour and the fantasy of domination, bondage and sado-masochism ... The subject demanded a language capable of describing both a lyrical and a corrosive sexuality' ('On Not Being Milton'). A project exposing the 'pornography of empire' may well itself need to utter obscenities in mapping the convergence of sexuality with the lived experience of an oppression that is racial and economic. When such writing simultaneously articulates and interrogates the heightened and morbid erotic energies released by colonialism, it will generate its own critique. This is the case with the polyphonic *Coolie Odyssey*, as it is with the requiems for the rape of Indian girls in *Slave Song*, which lament the deeds of men whose 'savage imagination is the correlate to the physical savagery of their work' (Notes, p. 53). However in that disturbing

set of poems which condense the internalization of colonialism's institutional and psychological violence, there is no dialogue with the direct represented discourse of speakers whose sexuality has been channelled into the desire to inflict and receive pain, and with whose imaginative transition from Romance to rape, the reader is invited to identify.

That colonialism engendered a sexual pathology in both black and white, women and men, is not in question. What is at issue is how texts speak these psychoses. The slave who proudly resists the master's degradations by asserting an uncolonized sexuality, dreams of taking revenge by abusing the slaveowner's wife:

Whip me till me bleed
Till me beg.
Tell me how me hanimal
African orang-utan
Tell me how me cannibal
Fit fo slata fit fo hang.
...
Bu yu caan stap me cack dippin in de honeypot
Drippin at de tip an happy as a hottentot!
...
Is so when yu dun dream she pink tit,
Totempole she puss,
Leff yu teetmark like tattoo in she throat!
(‘Slave Song’, pp. 28 and 30)

The Canecutters who perceive in the white woman the image of their search for better things, are overtaken by the desire to defile and maim her, an assault which the speakers see her as inviting:

White hooman walk tru de field fo watch we canecutta,
Tall, straight, straang-limb,
...
Wash dis dutty-skin in yu dew
Wipe am clean on yu saaf white petal!
O Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!
So me spirit call, so e halla foh yu
...
But when night come how me dream...
Dat yu womb lie like starapple buss open in de mud
And how me hold yu dung, wine up yu waiss
Draw blood from yu patacake, daub am all over yu face
Till yu ditty like me and yu halla
Like when cutlass slip an slice me leg ...
(‘The Canecutters’ Song’, pp. 25,26)

A canecutter who declaims *his* febrile version of a white woman's nightmare, attributes to *her* a lust for violation:

Brak dung de door!
Waan gang sweat-stink nigga
Drag she aff she bed
Wuk pun she
Crack she head
Gi she jigga
Tween she leg!
...
Wet she awake, cuss de daybreak!
(‘Nightmare’, p. 34)

The frenzied imagination spoken by male black voices is balanced by the cries of black women for sexual gratification, even at the hands of the master whose exploitation causes their bodies’ agony:

Everything tie up, haat, lung, liver, an who go loose me caad? –
Shaap, straight, sudden like pimpla, cut free
An belly buss out like blood-flow a shriek?
Or who saaf haan, saaf-flesh finga?
Or who go paste e mout on me wound, lick, heal, like starapple suck?
(‘Song of the Creole Gang Women’, p. 18).

The field which an oppositional writing contests is densely mined by colonialist representation. As Fanon has written, for the white person, the black is the biological, the genital, the sexual instinct in its raw state, s/he is concupiscence, sexual prowess and performance.⁹ And in these poems, I would argue, pain, frustration and anger is spoken by the native positioned as the very figure of phobic white fears and desires – even though such paranoia is derided, even though the sadism/masochism is invoked as a disorientated spiritual aspiration. Moreover, what is troubling to this reader is that as the cut, chop, hack and stab of ‘the savage ceremony of cane’ takes possession of the imagination of male canecutter and slave, the rage against their condition is spent in fantasies of abusing and mutilating the white woman. This implicates the poems in a discourse shared by the master’s culture and beyond, one that represents rape as what woman wants.¹⁰ It could be anticipated that a poetry refusing colonialism’s misconstructions would displace its premises. When Fanon analyzed how the native under colonial conditions assimilates as self-knowledge and acts out in conduct those features ascribed to him or her by the master, he acknowledges his own capitulation to the white person’s denigratory gaze:

The black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man ... I was responsible at the same time for my body, for my race, for my ancestors. I subjected myself to an objective examination, I discovered my blackness, my ethnic characteristics; and I was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects, slave ships. (*Black Skin, White Masks*, p. 112)

It is against such surrender that Fanon's writing intercedes to construct an alternative mode of self-presentation. If the reading I have proposed is valid (it is one that may, and I hope will, be contested), can the same be said of these particular poems in *Slave Song*?

(iii)

Where *Slave Song* offers a fiction of transparency, of instant access to the authentically demotic voices of Guyana, *Coolie Odyssey* satirizes the conceit of poets aspiring to retrieve a folk heritage:

Now that peasantry is in vogue,
Poetry bubbles from peat bogs,
People strain for the old folk's fatal gobs
Coughed up in grates North or North East
'Tween bouts o' living dialect
(*'Coolie Odyssey'*, p. 9)

The illusion that the poet is transmitting the consciousness and unconscious of others sustained in *Slave Song* is dispelled in this collection by the presence of the poet as speaking subject. Here it is his address which appropriates the topos of the epic voyage to tell the story of the multiple dislocations in a Caribbean history:

It should be time to hymn your own wreck,
Your house the source of ancient song
(*'Coolie Odyssey'*, p. 9)

Hence the title is without any connotation of oxymoron, signalling as it does a project celebrating the unsung heroic journeys made across geographical space, between languages, from a peasant to a late capitalist mode of production; a journey where Home is never a place of rest, but always the name of what has been irretrievably lost, to be regained only in verse. The passage is from India to Guyana, where Old Dabydeen always dreaming of India,

Washed obsessively by the canal bank,
Spread flowers on the snake-infested water,
Fed the gods the food that Chandra cooked,
Bathed his tongue of the creole
Babbled by low-caste infected coolies.
(*'Coolie Odyssey'*, p. 10)

Self-exiled from Guyana, 'young Dabydeen', 'Who move out from mud and walk England', ('Ma Talking Words', p. 40) commemorates what he has left:

We mark your memory in songs
Fleshed in the emptiness of folk,
Poems that scrape bowl and bone
In English basements far from home
(*'Coolie Odyssey'*, p. 13)

Returning to Guyana, the expatriate is appalled by the tourists' perception to which he now has access:

How they clearly passing you by like beggarman
But perplexed your blessed sunshine country
Should breed such you-lice, shacks.
(*'Homecoming'*, p. 43)

The poetry oscillates between the irony of the attempt to reincarnate in verse an original condition that never was, and the obligation on the poet to write the story of those silenced by history:

I brace you up against a wall
Doom-laden, mugging you for a life-story.
I trade you rum for old-time Indian talk
But you stutter creole stupidity, yielding
No gift but a sackful of green mangoes.

History we greed for in England,
Must know coolie ship, whip, brown paddy-skins
Burst, blown far by winds,
Whilst pearl-white rice feed overseer-mouth:
England, where it snows but we still born brown,
That I come back from to here, home,
As hungry as any white man for native gold,
To plant flag and to map your mind.
(*'Homecoming'*, p. 43)

The bitterness of the expatriate writer who by reiterating the tropes of colonialism's text places himself in the position of the colonizer is assuaged by the map his verse draws, one on which the configuration of colours conceptualizes an aboriginal perception of social landscape and history.

There is ambivalence too in the poet who, on returning to 'this library of graves' for a funeral, acknowledges the claim on him of forebears who discounted themselves and whose lives went unremarked and unhonoured:

There are no headstones, epitaphs, dates.
 The ancestors curl and dry to scrolls of parchment.
 They lie like texts
 Waiting to be written by the children
 For whom they hacked and ploughed and saved
 To send to faraway schools.
Is foolishness fill your head.
Me dead.
Dog-bone and dry-well
Got no story to tell.
Just how me born stupid is so me gone.
 Still we persist before the grave
 Seeking fables.
 We plunder for the maps of El Dorado
 To make bountiful our minds in an England
 Starved of gold.
 ('Coolie Odyssey', p. 12)

The self-conscious poet who privileges writing as constitutive of meaning – the past is a 'library of graves', the ancestors are documents written in an antique script – simultaneously performs an act of communication that inserts the writing into a social process. Now instead of speaking for a community, the poet addresses himself *to* them, conversing *with* them in a language that is 'two-toned' and producing their story which is also his own history. This act of recollection is not a re-call of a pre-existent condition but the reconception in writing of what they themselves drafted in their deeds, and which 'young Dabydeen' with his access to an English education and print technology will return to them. So fine an ambition does not go unchallenged by the peasant scepticism of 'Ma', herself a virtuoso word player, deriding the vanity of poetry:

That is dream and air!
 You can't make pickni from word
 Howsoever beautiful or raging:
 The world don't know word.
 ...
 Book learning you got,
 But history done dead...
 ('Ma Talking Words', pp. 40-41)

(iv)

In appropriating and alienating the tropes of colonialism's texts, Dabydeen's poetry produces an intensely focused critique of colonialist appetites and practices. Recurrently, gold is degraded into images of abused labour, as in cane and canefields, or into a figure of violent conquest: 'Yellow of the palm of dead Amerindian/Unyielding gold' ('The Old Map', p. 14). In 'El Dorado',

the object of desire in the conquistadors' and colonizers' quest after the Amerindian legend is simultaneously debased in sustained metaphors of exploitation, and redeemed through the grace of an oppressed community honouring its 'gilded one':

Juncha slowly dying of jaundice
Or yellow fever or blight or jumbie or neighbour's spite,
No-one knows why he turns the colour of cane.

...

Skin flaking like goldleaf
Casts a halo round his bed.
He goes out in a puff of gold dust.

...

They bury him like treasure,
The coolie who worked two shillings all day
But kept his value from the overseer. (p. 15)

Coolie Odyssey is haunted by a word that came to Europe via Columbus, was later anagrammatically reinscribed in *The Tempest* and perpetuated by *Robinson Crusoe*. Of the power of this word, Peter Hulme has written:

Discursively the Caribbean is a special place, partly because of its primacy in the encounter between Europe and America, civilization and savagery, and partly because it has been seen as the location, physically and etymologically, of the practice that more than any other, is the mark of unregenerate savagery – cannibalism. 'Cannibalism' ... is the special, perhaps even defining, feature of the discourse of colonialism as it pertained to the native Caribbean.¹¹

As the poems variously and ingeniously invoke this 'defining feature', detaching it from 'Caribbean savagery', there is a shift in the semantic field. 'Bone' is reiterated as a figure of social deprivation; the baby feeding at a mother's breast 'Cannibalize she nipple' ('Christmas in the Caribbean', p. 23); the act of cannibalism is mimicked and metamorphosed in sexual encounters:

Lapped at her ego
Like the mouth of beasts
...
Sucked her distress
Like berries from her gaping vein
(*'Water with Berries'*, p. 36)

She wanted to suck words,
Violate some mystery,
Feed deep, delirious
Into some gleaming tropical vein
...

He clamped his loins
From her consumptive mouth
(‘New World Words’, p. 37)

The daemon is briskly demystified by the Englishwoman oppressed by the black man’s obsession with the self-image imposed on him:

She wanted to be alone with her world, vexed
Always by his prehistoric eye,
The strange usurping tales of anthropophagi
And recitation of colonial texts.
(‘The New Poetry’, p. 28)

And it is exorcised by the memory of a joyous crab feast, its pleasures contrasted with the bleakness of expatriation:

Tonight we’ll have one big happy curry feed,
We’ll test out who teeth and jaw strongest
Who will grow up to be the biggest
Or who will make most terrible cannibal.

We leave behind a mess of bones and shell
And come to England and America
Where Ruby hustles in a New York tenement
And me writing poetry in Cambridge
(‘Catching Crabs’, p. 44)

To demythologize ‘Caliban’ requires yet more complex moves. At the centre of the collection both in its ordering and its engagement with the white world’s construction of its others, are the poems invoking the incommensurable wants in encounters between black man and white woman who find themselves cast in the roles of ‘Caliban’ and ‘Miranda’ written by colonialism. When the poet as supplicant black man yearns for the white woman as lover/mother to heal his psychic pain and redeem his degraded image, it is Caliban’s speech that he borrows for his text – and for the title of one poem:

That when he woke he cried to dream again
Of the scent of her maternity (‘Miranda’, p. 33)
...
...he, forever imprisoned
In a romance of history
Emerges from sleep as from ship’s bowel
Desperate to dream again
In her white spacious body
(‘Water With Berries’, p. 36)

However, both the concupiscent, disobedient Caliban and the pristine figureheads of the civil society that perpetrated colonialism are parodied in the witty dialogue of 'The Seduction' where the speakers define themselves negatively in relationship to the stereotypes – as is poetic form since the sexual tensions complicit with colonial history are sung in the simple syntax, metre and rhyming couplets of the ballad:

She said her name was Kate
And whether he would mate
On such and such a date
Or else tonight before too late
Before the pause to contemplate
Before the history and the hate.

I cannot come to you tonight
With monstrous organ of delight
I have no claw no appetite
I am not Caliban but sprite
But weakness flutterance and flight
An insect scurrying from the light.

She said her name was really Jane
That she was sweet as sugarcane
Unblighted by colonial reign
That all he wanted was some pain
To wrap himself in mythic chain
And labour in his self-disdain.

You know that I am flaccid black
Yet stretch my skin upon a rack
That I may reach whereof I lack
And scrape away the mange and plaque
Of legacy and looking back
Obliterate the ancient track

That I am naked lost in shame
Without the fantasy and game
The rules that history did proclaim –
I am the torture: you the flame
I am the victim: you the blame –
Tell me again, what is your name?

Britannia it is not she cries!
Miranda also she denies!
Nor map nor piracy nor prize
Nor El dorado in disguise
With pity gazed into his eyes
And saw he could not improvise (pp. 30,31)

The disjunctions of this dialogue are implicit in the series of poems about 'white woman'. The black man's sexuality is imprisoned in a dream world

inhabited by images of Sun-god, cane and overseer, slave ships and ‘a cornucopia of slaves poured overboard’, by chain, rack and whiplash, by

The howling oceanic thrust of history
That heaved forth savages in strange canoes
(‘The Sexual Word’, p. 32)

The liberation he seeks in her embrace is refused by the white woman who can respond to his poetry but not to the importunities of his demand that she enter into his phantasmagoria: ‘She forsook as tedious his confession...’ (‘The New Poetry’, p. 28); ‘She refused the embrace of fantasy...’ (‘The Sexual Word’, p. 32). In another incarnation, the white woman expropriates the black man to serve her desire for the primitive, seeing him as ‘Goldleaf or edge of assagai’ (‘Caliban’, p. 34), or probing him for ‘some gleaming tropical vein’ (‘New World Words’, 37). In keeping with an ‘Odyssey’ that is a journey without arrivals, there is no repossession of a sexuality whose privacies have been invaded by colonialist representation, only the struggle to confront and disavow the positions this imposes.

Dabydeen’s is a radical political poetry; nourished by images of the enslaved past endured by generations of the downtrodden, its atavism is not a retrograde worship of the ancestors but a rewriting of the west’s master narrative that addresses the post-colonial condition. He writes not only as a Guyanese within a Caribbean tradition, but as a British Black who has known the ‘winter of England’s scorn’ and whose poetry defies the racist fear that ‘They will besmirch the White Page with their own words’. The irony, of which Dabydeen is aware, is that prominent in his audience are ‘congregations of the educated’ who are white, and if as Ma maintains ‘White people don’t want heal their own scar or hear their own story’, then to whom are the poems addressed? Dabydeen is being ingenuous when he attacks a critic for dismissing creole as difficult; the effort required of those who know no creole is rewarding, but it does require an effort, and this makes the reception of *Slave Song* self-limiting amongst a diversified poetry readership. The address of *Coolie Odyssey* is however available to the heterogeneous poetry reading communities of the Caribbean, the metropolitan centres and the Anglophone post-colonial world. It is on these combined sources that the poetry depends for its reinscriptions in critical discussion. In a changing situation where critics are increasingly aware of the need for attention to the structural and historical difference of nations and communities, Dabydeen’s iconoclastic poems which foreground their revisions of traditional and modernist forms, can now be received on their own terms – as poetry that estranges customary English usage, returning the language to

readers as the bearer of alternative meanings. Because the poetry redraws the map of territory charted by a European cartography, it has the capacity to change the consciousness of its audience.

NOTES

1. Colin MacCabe, 'Broken English', *Critical Quarterly*, Vol, 28, No's 1 and 2, p. 12.
2. Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature, (London, James Currey), 1986, p. 15.
3. 'What is a Minor Literature?', in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press), 1986 (Published in French, 1975). The argument has been explored and expanded in issues of *Cultural Critique*.
4. Homi Bhabha, 'Representation and the Colonial Text: A Critical Exploration of Some Forms of Mimeticism', in *The Theory of Reading*, (Sussex, Harvester Press), 1984, p. 98.
5. Fredric Jameson, 'Third World Literature in the Era of Multi-national Capitalism', *Social Text*, 15, Fall 1986, p. 65. For a discussion on the theoretical framework for a 'Third World Literature', see Georg M. Gugelberger, 'Decolonising the Mind: Towards A Theory of Third World Literature'; to be published; and Abdul R. Mohamed, *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in colonial Africa*, (Amherst, Univ. of Massachusetts Press), 1983.
6. See *The Black Presence in English Literature*, ed. David Dabydeen, (Manchester, Manchester Univ. Press), 1985; *Hogarth's Blacks. Images of Blacks in Eighteenth Century English Art*, (Denmark and U.K., Dangaroo Press and Manchester University Press), 1985; *Hogarth, Walpole and Commercial Britain*, (London, Hansib), 1987.
7. In *The State of the Language*, ed. Christopher Ricks, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, Univ. of California Press, to appear 1989).
8. Henry Louis Gates, ed. *Black Literature and Literary Theory*, (New York and London, Methuen), 1984, p. 4.
9. *Black Skin, White Masks*, Pluto Press, 1986, with a Foreword by Homi Bhabha; published in French 1952, first English edition, 1967.
10. See Notes to 'The Canecutter's Song' where Dabydeen writes: 'She wants to be degraded secretly (the long lace frock is temptingly rich, and it hangs loose, suggestively; also the chaos of her hair), to be possessed and mutilated in the mud. The tragedy is as much hers for her desires too are prevented by social barriers.' p. 53.
11. *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean 1492- 1797*, (London and New York, Methuen), 1986, p. 3.

Slave Song (1984) and *Coolie Odyssey* (1988) are published by Dangaroo Press.