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Abstract

In 1936, after travelling through Liberia, Graham Greene confronted a perennial problem for travel writers: how to write an interesting account of an unbearably tedious journey. In *Journey without Maps* Greene solved the problem, as Paul Fussell remarks in his *Abroad*, by 'conceiving] the journey as a metaphor for something else'.[^] Greene turns the African coast into an immense moralized landscape. In other words, he makes the topography of Liberia stand for a map of the human mind, much as Auden did with the map of England in the thirties.

Containing Continents: The Moralized Landscapes of Conrad, Greene, White and Harris

In 1936, after travelling through Liberia, Graham Greene confronted a perennial problem for travel writers: how to write an interesting account of an unbearably tedious journey. In *Journey without Maps* Greene solved the problem, as Paul Fussell remarks in his *Abroad*, by 'conceiv[ing] the journey as a metaphor for something else'.¹ Greene turns the African coast into an immense moralized landscape. In other words, he makes the topography of Liberia stand for a map of the human mind, much as Auden did with the map of England in the thirties.

Journey without Maps is very much of the thirties with its interest in revolutionary politics, public-school life, Kafka, psycho-analysis, travel and comparative methods of manufacture. But Greene's map of the mind has more in common with Conrad's in *Heart of Darkness* (1902) than with Auden's. Greene's 'country of the mind' has both the simplicity and the resonance of Conrad's original metaphor.² It is not cluttered with the familiar Audenesque trappings: rivers, mines, borders, railways, mountains, all with specific, if obscure, psychological and political reference. *Journey without Maps* has the symmetry and the sparseness of feature of Conrad's novella: there is a departure from Europe, a sea journey round the African coast, penetration of the unknown continent, a discovery or conversion and the return to Europe.

It is the formal elegance of Greene's journey, the disposition of significant details, that makes us think of the work less as a travelogue, a mere factual record, or a diary, than as a novel: a slyly plotted imaginative version of events. Greene, like Conrad, is concerned to draw up a map whose few essential features describe the crucial points in the contact of

Western civilized consciousness with the primitive, with otherness. Consequently, his map cannot be as detailed as Auden's because the territory it delimits is unfamiliar, not England but Africa which Greene conceives in advance as 'a shape, a strangeness; a wanting to know.... The shape, of course, is roughly that of the human heart.'³

Greene's words recall those in Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano* (1947) where the Consul suggests a Conradian connection between a journey into an uncivilized country and a journey into the enigmatic heart of Western man: 'And this is how I sometimes think of myself, as a great explorer who has discovered some imaginary land from which he can never return to give his knowledge to the world: but the name of this land is hell. It is not Mexico of course but in the heart.'⁴ Greene and Lowry both employ Conrad's topographical metaphor to make a journey into an uncivilized place simultaneously a journey inwards. Yet their attitudes towards the primitive peoples are quite different to Conrad's.

For Greene and Lowry the recognition that the primitive world lies not simply in the savage place but also within the heart of civilized man is less horrified than it is for Conrad. Greene, of course, is simply echoing Conrad when he observes that 'Africa is not really strange. The «heart of darkness» is common to us both.'⁵ But consider the difference in tone in which this discovery is recorded in the two works. In *Heart of Darkness* Marlowe's chief emotion on recognizing his fellow humanity with the savages is one of repugnance:

...the men were — No, they were not inhuman. Well, you know, that was the worst of it — this suspicion of their not being inhuman. It would come slowly to one. They howled, and leaped, and spun, and made horrid faces; but what thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity — like yours — the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar. Ugly. Yes, it was ugly enough; but if you were man enough you would admit to yourself that there was in you just the faintest trace of a response to the terrible frankness of that noise, a dim suspicion of there being a meaning in it which you — you so remote from the night of first ages — could comprehend. And why not? The mind of man is capable of anything — because everything is in it, all the past as well as the future.⁶

Greene merely observes that Freud has shown us all our own 'heart of darkness'.⁷ Nor do his natives posture and grimace. Their dances are less savage rites than drab versions of a maypole dance in an English village. Greene observes the savage practice of the natives — their superstitions and occasional cruelties — with the detached eye of the cultural anthropologist. In the lives of the natives in the hinterland of Liberia he discovers an image of what Europeans had once been, and his response to

these people is conditioned by his anguished knowledge that contemporary European civilization is capable of savageries undreamt of in African villages.

The worst aspects of Greene's natives are occasioned by their imitation of European vices. Once away from the coast and the corrupting influence of European civilization, Greene finds in the African villages of Liberia the primitive virtues of community, love, and trust. It is civilization, not barbarism, that occasions disgust. In Mexico in 1938 as Europe stumbled into a second, infinitely barbaric, war Greene was to find in the most isolated villages glimpses of precisely these virtues when he wrote *The Lawless Roads*. The rest of Mexico, which he loathed, disclosed the images of a European mode of violence: gas masks and Lewis guns worked into the indecipherable designs of Mexican architecture.⁸

Malcolm Lowry was intent on more than what Greene called 'a smash-and-grab raid into the primitive'.⁹ Lowry showed a lifelong preference for the primitive over the civilized and in Haiti actually had himself initiated into a voodoo cult. Lowry's Mexico, for all its hallucinated, surreal and violent qualities, has much in common with that of Stuart Chase: the Mexico of handicrafts and little villages in which peasants lived out their simple lives rounded by organic virtue. Chase's book, *Mexico* (1931), was well known to Lowry who, like Chase, valued the traditional Mexico and deplored the modern one which was in the thirties overwhelming it. Mexico, for Lowry, was a land not yet made over wholly in the image of Manchester or Detroit. The unattractive elements in Lowry's Mexico are essentially European features: the brutality and mechanical force of fascism imposed on the older, purer, still visible Mexico.

Both Greene and Lowry share a characteristically thirties nostalgia for the primitive and the organic and both have a fixed belief that European civilization in its contemporary state is exhausted and on the point of being swept forever down the gutter of history. However much they loathe the actual Mexico or Liberia, the corruption and oppression and the sheer discomfort, they cannot suppress a thirties conviction that simplicity is preferable to sophistication. Their somewhat naïve faith in the uncivilized may be understood more readily if we recall F.R. Leavis's championing of the organic throughout the decade and note that *Scrutiny* regularly held up Mexico as an example of a place where ancient handicrafts and peasant ways were still to be found.¹⁰

Behind this change in attitude towards the 'savage' peoples lie all the vast changes that occurred in Western civilization and its idea of itself between 1902 and 1936: the modernist discovery of the primitive, the

twenties cult of the Negro, the development of new towns and ribbon developments in English rural areas which increased dissatisfaction with industrial civilization and, of course, the Great War which exposed the rot beneath Edwardian confidence, the direction in which progress and material development had been heading all along. It is not surprising that in 1936 Greene is interested in finding his way back to a less troubled childhood, personal as well as cultural, whose terrors are the simple ones of superstition and whose pleasures are those of belonging. Nor is it surprising that he confuses the childhood he seeks beneath all the layers of deception and corruption with the lives of Africans in the hinterlands of Liberia. Time stops, he discovers, fifty miles away from the coast. And away from the coast he no longer finds seediness, imitation, the Alice-in-Wonderland sense of unreality that go with European civilization in its contemporary state.

Journey without Maps asks what sort of innocence lies behind the seedy littoral of the present state of European civilization, of the present state of the author, representative of a seedy generation. The device which makes possible this multi-layered exploration is a simple one: memory. The journey into the hidden Africa releases memories which take us deeper and deeper into the mind of the author. Greene was not the only thirties writer to adopt this method of making a journey by a sophisticated traveller into a primitive country bear back ironically on the civilization of the journeyer. Evelyn Waugh does precisely this in *A Handful of Dust* (1934) where Tony Last travels absurdly into the heart of the primitive and discovers there a mad, fundamentalist Christian who forces him eternally to read Dickens. Lowry takes up the method in *Ultramarine* (1933) where the further the novel's hero, Dana Hilliot, moves from his ship behind the littoral of the docks in Tsjang Tsjang — a kind of Shanghai with Liverpudlian details — into the heart of the brothels, the more tantalizing become the memories of youth and innocence and the more improbable his dreams of future domestic bliss with his girlfriend back in Liverpool. As with Conrad and Greene, the journey into the unknown continent releases memories which take us deeper and deeper into the mind of the narrator and into the divided heart of his civilization. Greene and Lowry find an image of what we have come from in what we meet. Beneath the layers of civilized self-consciousness they discover glimpses of a lost innocence.

All this indicates no advance for those representatives of otherness, the natives. Whether grimacing savages or Wordsworthian simpletons, they are equally captives of the categories imposed on them by their viewers. We may observe that Conrad, for all his rhetoric in favour of English

imperialism, keeps the economic motive of imperialist adventure firmly in mind. The appalled vision in *Heart of Darkness* is rooted in a profound understanding of imperialism: the English variety recalls the Roman, and both find their brilliant ideological self-justifications reflected back in the tarnished Belgian variety. Greene and Lowry, for all their thirties gestures towards political economy, have dressed their savages up in the silly costume of organicist nostalgia.

Patrick White returned to Australia in 1947 and he has not ceased to grumble about what he found to this day. Behind his sometimes hysterical attacks on his native land we may hear the voice of one educated in an English public school and at Cambridge, accustomed to what he calls 'polished minds in civilized surroundings', regarding with horror what he sees as the unrelieved ugliness and banality of the Australian scene.¹¹ The Australia White depicts in 'The Prodigal Son', an essay written in the mid-fifties, is a land where 'the mind is the least of possessions'.¹² Australia is White's Africa: his dark continent, devoid of civilization. Nevertheless, it is the Australian world that White chose to explore in the post-war period. His fiction from *The Tree of Man* (1955) on has encompassed more and more of the Australian experience, social and historical. White has incorporated an astonishing variety of dialects and classes into his novels, making raids on more and more exotic features of the Australian scene.

This achievement has been made possible above all by *Voss* (1957) which is another version of the Conradian journey into the 'heart of darkness'. Voss journeys from the littoral into the interior of an unknown continent. He discovers the darkness within his own being. He is changed. But White does not merely stage a 'smash and grab raid on the primitive' as does Greene. Where Conrad and Greene follow the pattern of descent and return White does not allow his journeyer to return to the coast, far less to the European world from which he came originally, Voss remains in the country itself. His being becomes part of the landscape. He is in a sense swallowed by the primitive world he had hoped to subdue by virtue of the superiority of his will. Thus White changes the simple outline of the Conradian journey. In so doing, he intimates how the unfamiliar continent may be read, how its strange writing may be deciphered.

The Australia which confronts Voss is not yet a world. It is a circle whose circumference is ungauged, on the edge of which huddles a tiny outpost of English people clinging to the conventions of 'home'. It is a blankness waiting to be written on. To read this place in terms of the models provided by the traditional realistic novel, particularly the

Victorian novel with which the action of *Voss* is contemporaneous, is to imitate the imitators: the huddling English. The colonial social world is one in which the fixity, hierarchy and air of permanence of the Victorian class structure can appear only as travesties. White is prepared in *Voss* to question this structure in terms of the 'realities' it excludes, in terms, for instance, of the ways in which the aboriginals construe their world. It is indicative of White's break with the assumptions of his class and with those of the nineteenth-century bourgeois novel with which his writing is often compared that the Blacks in *Voss* are allowed to read the world in a consistent, structured and conventional manner. They are not, like the gypsies in Victorian romances, simply placed outside the circle of prejudice that defines the limits of reality for the colonial bourgeoisie, as though their response to the world were one of naïve wonder unmediated by social convention. The Blacks are as disconcerted by departures from convention as the Bonners. They are shocked, for instance, when the comet refuses to act within the bounds of a certain convention. They compete on more or less equal terms with the Bonners, the Pringles and with Voss himself to decide where the real begins and ends.

The Blacks in *Voss* have their own contradictory and complex inner lives as the Blacks in *Heart of Darkness* or *Journey without Maps* do not. In White's novel the indigenous people, so long convenient representatives of primitiveness, savagery or otherness, begin to live outside the categories which the mind of the Western explorer imposes on them. Voss, who seeks to impose the map of his spiritual arrogance on the blank continent, discovers the writing of the Blacks already there. Voss, who hopes to conquer the savage peoples by virtue of his innate superiority and thus understand their world, cannot penetrate their language. Nor can the novel's other explorer, Colonel Hebden, 'apprehend' the native guide Jackie, which he seeks to do in a vain effort to interpret the meaning of the original expedition.¹³ Jackie, who is associated in the novel with Hermes, god of interpretation, eludes him.

In *Voss* 'reality' must be fought over rather than taken for granted. Hence White introduces the familiar Victorian forms and confidences only to debunk them. Yet, while he has scooped out the stuffing of the Bonners' world, the safe world of the littoral, he has not done so merely to endorse Voss's equally confident, and equally narrow, construal of the real.

It was necessary for White to make as opposed as possible the worlds of Voss and Mr Bonner. These worlds are competing interpretations of Australia: the Scylla and Charybdis between which the novel steers its deft way. Each is a totality, something complete within itself, that claims

to 'contain' the continent (the suggestive pun is Richard Poirier's with American novelists in mind).¹⁴ The merchant 'contains' the country as a totality of material facts and things, a whole that can be mapped, carved up, and turned to profit. Voss 'contains' the continent as a metaphysical totality, a pure idea which his will imposes on reality. '«The map? ... I will first make it»', he tells Mr Bonner.¹⁵ Both views rest on self-serving notions of perception. Each sees only what serves his epistemological purposes: Voss sees only the architecture of matter; the merchant sees only its flesh. The problem is, whose eye is sufficiently encompassing to see the continent as a whole without excluding whatever fails to fit neatly into his system?

White has created in Voss a figure who chooses the most extreme isolation of mind open to him: radical exile from the community and rejection of its materialistic vision of the land. Unlike ordinary Australians, Voss refuses to settle for no more than a small square of the country's unprepossessing face. While merchants like Bonner set up stone monuments to an unobtainable permanence on the fertile periphery of the continent, Voss is determined to pit the vastness and ugliness of his own nature against the identical qualities he expects to find in the central deserts. While squatters like Sanderson and even smallholders like Judd attempt to enclose themselves within their acres, Voss is determined to contain within the compass of his skull the entire resistant continent. First, however, he must cleanse 'the doors of perception'.¹⁶

Voss 'cleanses' his perception by adopting the Blakean policy of closing the eye which passively receives sense data and opening the living eye of the imagination. His object is to create not to see a world. Unfortunately, Voss's mind plays Lockean tricks on him, storing up images of the German castles of boyhood as abstract generalizations which he foists on the Australian landscape. Voss has an unBlakean disdain for particulars. He is also, in a sense in which Blake was not, a mystic. Voss's mysticism is of a particularly crazed and blasphemous stamp. As such it is exactly suited to White's sly aesthetic purpose.

Voss's heresies are essential to his — and White's — scheme. If the land is to be grasped as something more than a geographical presence, a first and ultimately daring leap of the imagination must be made. The man who would make such a leap must reject not only the materialism of a community which reduces landscape to economic units but also its conventional religiosity which is complicit with this reductive way of seeing. Mr Bonner's God is as limited, as conventional, and as boring as his garden. He never tempts the merchant to visualize the world through the eye of the imagination. Voss's God is utterly beyond restriction: He is

his own self unbound. 'Atheismus', he sententiously informs Laura Trevelyan, is 'self-murder'.¹⁷ Voss will deify the self. Such divinity is to be attained by unseating the pale God of Christianity and installing the human will on the vacated throne.

In this endeavour the empty land will prove both collaborator and reward. Its very ugliness, its absence of the sensuous, will encourage the spirit to attempt the infinite. Only when the spirit (in Voss' terms 'spirit' may be equated with either genius or will) has become as limitless as the Godhead it has toppled, will it prove equal to the metaphysical possibilities of the continent. The scope of Voss's daring is thus commensurate with his task: the making out of the bare bones of the country a version of Australia that is agreeable to visionary and artist rather than farmer and merchant who rule the colonial roost.

If Voss is to supplant the straitened interpretation of Australia propagated by squatter and merchant, he must first dispatch their comfortable deity. Orthodox, materialistic Christianity serves the purposes of those who read in the scrutable face of their God approval of their proprietary and utilitarian conceptions of the world. The world to them is not a text to be read in search of metaphysical disclosures but a topography to be mapped, divided, and farmed. Nature to them is not a book between whose lines are intercalated moral lessons and anagogues but a blank slate which, once inscribed with the cartographer's coordinates, offers commercial opportunities. Such a megalomania as Voss's does not hesitate to wrestle with divinity. It is tempting to connect Voss with the favourite romantic figure of the God-opposer: Prometheus interpreted with a gnostic gloss as by Byron or Shelley. Voss, however, is locked in struggle not with a still potent Jehovah but with the deity of the colonial bourgeoisie who is merely a windbag full of platitudes. This unworthy opponent must be done away with not because he retains the power to terrify men's hearts, but because he supports the structure of conventions which holds together a thoroughly materialistic society. This God throws an unendurable limit around the imagination.

Voss, then, offers us not so much an 'interpretation' of Australia as a denial of the possibility of ever arriving at any final interpretation of Australia, of the world, or of literary texts. The expedition is thwarted in its desire to inscribe its legend on the country by the discovery everywhere of writing: of messages, languages, inscriptions that resist decipherment as the marginalia in the nautical manual that Marlowe discovers in the course of his penetration of a dark continent resist his attempts at decipherment. A definitive interpretation of the cave drawings or the aboriginal dialects or the meaning of the comet is as

unlikely as the discovery of a key to the Revelation of St John on which Palfreyman's uncle is working. The new world is discovered as a palimpsest of meanings already written in the minds of its discoverers. Homer may serve to chock a table leg in Brendan Boyle's shack, but his writing surrounds the expedition. *Voss* is the expedition of the broken modern world in which there can be no homecoming, no *nostos*.

Wilson Harris's *Palace of the Peacock* (1961) completes the movement of these several texts away from an imperialist reading of the experiences of confronting otherness and being elsewhere towards a national one. In Harris's version of Conrad's metaphor the members of the expedition comprise a single national consciousness made up of layer upon layer of racial memories. Harris's aim, in his own words, is to 'visualize a *fulfilment*' of the fragmented psyche of the West Indian, particularly the inhabitant of Guyana.¹⁸ He seeks no homogeneous cultural myth or set of absolutes in whose terms the diverse experiences of the peoples of Guyana might be read. He seeks rather to show how the fossils of these various experiences, of exploiter as well as exploited, may be restored to vital existence and creative interplay within the individual. He seeks to take division and antagonism out of history and throw them into the psyche.

Harris considers himself formally obliged as a novelist to move beyond the frontier at which, in his view, Conrad was stalled in *Heart of Darkness* by the limits of his own ideology. Conrad's novella closely follows the paradigm of descent and return. Marlowe moves from Europe to the coast of Africa before penetrating by degrees the interior of the continent. Finally, Marlowe returns to Europe with the booty of his dark knowledge about what horror lies beneath the false consciousness of imperialist self-justification. Having returned, Marlowe is unable to convey the knowledge he has acquired to Kurtz' fiancée. What Harris calls an 'eclipse of the word' occurs here that signals the helplessness of those in Marlowe's and Conrad's position: able to see the horror, they cannot do anything about it.¹⁹ The mute closure of *Heart of Darkness* signals the strickenness of sensibility that gave rise to the work. Conrad, according to Harris, is unable to break with the enclosed, monolithic ego of Western civilized bourgeois consciousness.

In *Voss*, according to Harris, White breaks with the exhausted paradigm of penetration and return by his formal ploy of allowing only a modified return. *Voss* himself does not return to the coast and to civilization. It is Judd, the former convict and victim of power, who returns with his memories about the fate of the expedition and the role of *Voss* tellingly jarred. Harris considers that this displacement of Judd's

memories, among other qualities, qualifies *Voss* as one of the great novels of the twentieth century.²⁰ The reason for this high estimation is not far to seek. Judd's dislocated framework of memory deals a complex blow to Voss as saviour and leader. This is precisely what Harris seeks to do with Donne who occupies a complementary position to Voss in *Palace of the Peacock*. In Harris's novel the expedition is initiated by Donne with the traditional imperialist motive of ruling the land and exploiting the folk. But in the end Donne's expedition is contained by what it sought to contain and exploit.

This reversal is achieved as Harris progressively breaks with the static, predictable ego of the bourgeois and with the bourgeois realism as White does progressively in *Voss*. In both novels, to move into the hinterlands is to move away from the old fixed ego of the individual and away from linear notions of time and crudely causal historicity. It is to stage, forty years after Joyce and Lawrence, the breakthroughs of modernism which have finally caught up with fiction in the Commonwealth. In both novels also, the moralized landscapes through which the expeditions move signal the stages in a ritual descent towards a discovery and a change or breakthrough in the assumptions that had given rise to the expedition. In both novels vision supercedes mere perception as a means of construing the world. The perceiving eye, tricks of light, and the object world collaborate so that a marriage is effected between the imaginative eye that views and 'the goodly universe of things'.²¹ It is this visionary capacity that throws a line, what Harris calls 'a metaphysical outline', around the new worlds, 'filling in blocks where spaces stood'.²²

Thus is overcome the great danger of ruling as a way of responding to and understanding the external world. The ruler is severed from what he rules. He inhabits an abstract universe. He imposes a map of conquest on the actual world. The ruled, the folk or 'native' peoples, remain part of the world they inhabit. In *Palace of the Peacock* the expedition journeys towards reconciliation with the folk, the joining of the 'civilized' invader's consciousness to that of the 'savage' people. Thus Harris 'visualize[s] a fulfilment' of the broken pieces of the West Indian psyche and community. He seeks a means of binding the mind of the Western hero of imperialist adventure and exploitation to the world from which his own lust for conquest has separated him. Harris seeks to show how the antagonisms between ruler and ruled, exploiter and exploited, civilized and savage, self and other, even rapist and victim, might be healed.

The close of the novel achieves the desired resolution by invoking a myth of wholeness and oneness that is outside time. Memory, the means

by which Conrad, Greene, Lowry, and White traced the links between past and present, here and elsewhere, is repudiated in favour of a timeless moment in which vision discloses the unity of the basis of being. The landscape of Guyana is moralized by a mystical insight that discovers in the 'material nexus' of the perceived world signs of the spiritual reality on which it rests.²³

Harris's need to appeal to such a myth suggests the centrifugal force of the tendencies he seeks thereby to contain. The vision which closes the novel, like that of Stan Parker at the end of White's *The Tree of Man*, discloses an aesthetic desperation on Harris's part. White and Harris each employs a myth to give order to what he sees as the 'immense panorama of futility and anarchy' that is the contemporary world: 1950s Australia or post-colonial Guyana.²⁴ But Harris, unlike White, offers his myth of healing as a consolation for the real fragmentation of history, for the real losses that imperialism has inflicted on native cultures, for the real antagonisms that economic exploitation causes. By making the 'savage' peoples part of a community capable of unifying exploiter as well as exploited, Harris moves beyond the impasse Conrad reaches in *Heart of Darkness*. In doing so, however, Harris blunts the sense of what the exercise of power over these people actually meant and means. For all the limits of his ideology, we feel that sense most strongly in Conrad.

NOTES

1. Paul Fussell, *Abroad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 67.
2. Patrick White, *Voss* (New York: Viking, 1957), p. 440.
3. Graham Greene, *Journey without Maps* (London: 1936; rpt., Heinemann, 1953), p. 32.
4. Malcolm Lowry, *Under the Volcano* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1965), p. 36.
5. Greene, *Journey*, p. 311.
6. Joseph Conrad, 'Heart of Darkness', in *Youth and Other Stories* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1903), pp. 109-10.
7. Greene, *Journey*, p. 311.
8. Graham Greene, *The Lawless Roads* (London: Longmans, Green, 1939), p. 103.
9. Greene, *Journey*, p. 140.
10. For a representative Leavisite view of Chase and the 'organic community' see Denys Thompson, 'A Cure for Amnesia', *Scrutiny*, 2 (1933/4), 2-11.
11. Patrick White, 'The Prodigal Son', *Australian Letters*, 1, No 3 (1958), 39.
12. White, 'Prodigal Son', p. 38.
13. White, *Voss*, p. 412.
14. Richard Poirier, *A World Elsewhere* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 51.

15. White, *Voss*, p. 19.
16. William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, in *Blake: Complete Writings*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 154.
17. White, *Voss*, p. 85.
18. Wilson Harris, 'Tradition and the West Indian Novel', in *Tradition, the Writer, and Society* (London: New Beacon, 1967), p. 28.
19. Wilson Harris, *Explorations* (Denmark: Dangaroo, 1981), p. 74.
20. Harris, *Explorations*, p. 77.
21. William Wordsworth, Preface to *The Excursion*, 1:53, *Wordsworth: Poetical Works*, ed. Thomas Hutchinson, rev. Ernest de Selincourt (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 590.
22. Wilson Harris, *Palace of the Peacock* (London: Faber, 1960), p. 144.
23. Harris, *Palace*, p. 149.
24. T.S. Eliot, 'Ulysses, Order and Myth', *The Dial*, 75 (July-Dec. 1923), p. 483.

DEREK WRIGHT

Fragments: The Cargo Connection

Gareth Griffiths has written of Ayi Kwei Armah's second novel, *Fragments*:¹

Although the traditional value systems persist they persist in altered and debased forms, and are often as potent a source of pressure and corruption as the new. For Armah then there is only a marginal comfort in the past.... There is no nostalgia in Armah's treatment of Naana. Her world cannot be restored. Its systems and patterns were effective and valuable, but they have been perverted into the modern myth of the 'shiny things' of consumer dreams.²

This is an accurate account of the outcome of an old process in a new world. There has to date, however, been no attempt in the criticism of Armah's novel to examine the course of developments by which this state of affairs was arrived at. The dangerous transitional area glimpsed here, across which the corruptive energy of alteration moves between 'tradi-