



IRAQI
Academic Scientific Journals



العراقية
المجلات الأكاديمية العلمية

ISSN: 2663-9033 (Online) | ISSN: 2616-6224 (Print)

Journal of Language Studies

Contents available at: <https://jls.tu.edu.iq/index.php/JLS>



Tapestry of Cultures in Derek Walcott's Poetry: A Transcultural Reading

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Received: 1\5\2024, Accepted: 26\6\2024, Online Published: 31 / 7/ 2024

ABSTRACT

Walcott, through his searches for the history of his original nation, seeks to face the racial conflicts that impacted his cultural formation; he does celebrate the hybridity that becomes an integral part of his identity through crossing- national transit. It is through his constant traveling that, continuously, leads him to experience other nations, cultures, identities. His poetry comes to be a witness for a more cosmopolitan construction of individuality. Walcott, in his early poetry, shows his endeavors to understand the culture and the racial challenges of his origin, yet it seems that he comes to no resort. In his later poetic volumes, he seems to come to a better realization of his Caribbean identity that fell under colonial influences. Thus, Walcott comes to accept that his own Caribbean roots can go beyond its origins. This can be called transcultural approach which has developed

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in the last few decades, not only to embrace alterity, but also to encourage interconnectedness and empathy with the Other. Transculturalism challenges the traditional notions of culture, belonging, and identity. The purpose of this study is to explore Walcott's poetry that reveals the poet's perspective on national and cultural identity. It argues that, though Walcott's poetry is deeply rooted in the Caribbean culture, traditions, and national inheritance, yet it transcends the national and cultural limits to celebrate the hybridity of the Caribbean present identity. Walcott's constant traveling created a poetry that goes beyond its national borders to see in displacement of the Caribbean people and the diaspora as a means to develop a better communication with the world. Therefore, Walcott is quite liberal in his cultural perspective regarding identity politics.

Keywords: Caribbean identity, cultural mutation, multivocality, transculturalism, and transcultural literature.

نسيج الثقافات في شعر ديريك والكوت: قراءة عبر الثقافات

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المستخلص

يسعى والكوت من خلال بحثه عن تاريخ أمته الأصلية إلى مواجهة الصراعات العنصرية التي أثرت على تكوينه الثقافي؛ إنه يحتفل بالتهجين الذي يصبح جزءاً لا يتجزأ من هويته من خلال العبور الوطني. ومن خلال سفره المستمر، يقوده باستمرار إلى تجربة دول وثقافات وهويات أخرى. أصبح شعره شاهداً على بناء أكثر عالمية للفردية. يُظهر والكوت، في شعره المبكر، مساعيه لفهم الثقافة والتحديات العنصرية التي يواجهها أصله، ولكن يبدو أنه لم يلجأ إلى أي ملاذ. في مجلداته الشعرية اللاحقة، يبدو أنه وصل إلى إدراك أفضل لهويته الكاريبية التي وقعت تحت التأثيرات الاستعمارية. وهكذا، يقبل والكوت أن جذوره الكاريبية يمكن أن تتجاوز أصوله. يمكن أن يسمى هذا النهج عبر الثقافي الذي تطور في العقود القليلة الماضية، ليس فقط لاحتضان الغيرية، ولكن أيضاً لتشجيع الترابط والتعاطف مع الآخر. تتحدى العابرة للثقافات المفاهيم التقليدية للثقافة والانتماء والهوية.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف شعر والكوت الذي يكشف عن وجهة نظر الشاعر حول الهوية الوطنية والثقافية. ويجادل بأنه على الرغم من أن شعر والكوت متجذر بعمق في الثقافة والتقاليد والميراث الوطني الكاريبي، إلا أنه يتجاوز الحدود الوطنية والثقافية للاحتفال بتهجين الهوية الكاريبية الحالية. أدى سفر والكوت المستمر إلى خلق شعر يتجاوز حدوده الوطنية ليرى نزوح سكان منطقة البحر الكاريبي والمغربيين كوسيلة لتطوير تواصل أفضل مع العالم. لذلك، يعتبر والكوت ليبرالياً تماماً في منظوره الثقافي فيما يتعلق بسياسات الهوية.

الكلمات الدالة: الهوية الكاريبية، الطفرة الثقافية، التعددية الصوتية، التعددية الثقافية، والأدب العابر للثقافات.

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, many societies have experienced transcultural influences, leading to the enrichment and evolution of their cultural practices, languages, arts, and technologies. This cultural diffusion has played a significant role in shaping the diversity and complexity of civilizations throughout time. The increasing numbers of immigrants and displaced people, traveling back and forth across the globe, and the incessant exchange of digital information over countries have been basic components for making cultures open systems, rather than static or closed ones. Responding to the wave of continuous mobility and cultural changes, contemporary socio-cultural studies of multiculturalism and interculturalism have been extended to adopt a new cultural approach, naming transculturalism or transculturality.

Transcultural studies have developed in the last few decades, not only to embrace alterity, but also to encourage interconnectedness and empathy with the ‘Other,’ challenging the traditional notions of culture, belonging, and identity. Such studies, in this respect, investigate the liquidity of the contemporary world, promoting new discourses and scholastic programs, in order to understand the mutations of cultures as a means to contribute to a cultural openness that crosses a mere intercultural acceptance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Though there have been remarkable studies carried out on Derek Walcott’s poetry, most have focused primarily on his poetry from the theoretical frameworks of post-colonialism and ecocriticism. Thus far, however, there has been a very limited academic scholarship and studies on his poetry from a transcultural perspective. Further, in this study, the researcher takes the transcultural approach to analyze selected poems. Walcott assimilates his native culture with that of English, developing a transcultural loyalty which is able to surpass the individual consciousness and cultural boundaries.

Both Khanum’s “Derek Walcott: Divided in the Roots” (2012) and Hassan’s “Ambivalence in Derek Walcott’s Poetry” (2013) critically, examine Derek Walcott’s

ambivalence towards the colonizer's culture and language, since his poetry reveals hybridity, ambivalence and identity crisis. Raheef (2014), in her study "The Search for Caribbean Identity in Derek Walcott's Poetry" highlights the concept of hybridity and its significance in post-colonial writings, as the most nagging problem in the life of Caribbean people with which they grappled, and which pressed hard during the colonial and decolonial period.

Uddin (2015) in his study "Strengthening the Marginalized from Within: Derek Walcott's Poetic Mission," tries to explore how Walcott inspires his nation to be conscious of their social and historical dynamics, and of preserving nature to be a strong nation from inside, in order to successfully encounter Western post-colonial aggression. Baral (2016), "The Images of 'In-Between' in Derek Walcott's Poetry," notes that Walcott's poetry exemplifies a hybrid muse on cultural duality, since Walcott inhabits the liminal space with hybrid prototypes of his own creation in order to develop Caribbean discourse on cultural roots.

Waqar (2017) "Repossessing Home: A Postcolonial Study of Derek Walcott's *The Schooner Flight*" critically examines the African Diaspora as lived and experienced in Derek Walcott's poem "The Schooner Flight". In her study, "The City May be Just, and Humankind be Kind: Departures and Homecomings in Derek Walcott's Poetry", Sulayman (2018) deals with Walcott's deep sense of despair and bitterness at the corrupted politics in the Caribbean region. Sulayman shows that Walcott's poetry addresses the recurrence of the victim-victimizer system in the post-independence Caribbean, and how this colonial experience is part of the collective memory of the West Indian people as a whole.

In his article, Tamilmani (2019) "Derek Walcott's Selected Poems in a Postcolonial Perspective," examines the cultural dominance in Walcott's poetry from a postcolonial perspective. Hammed (2019) in his postcolonial study "The Imperial Legacy in Derek Walcott's Poetry" examines the imperial and cultural issues present in the Caribbean identity and colonial history. Challab (2021) examines Derek Walcott's book-length poem "Omeros" from a post-colonial lens. By putting the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer in the Caribbean setting, Challab illustrates how the Caribbean and Homeric worlds are interconnected. Rahman (2022) adopts an ecocritical approach. He, in his study, "Exploring Nature in Derek Walcott's Poetry: An Eco-critical Approach", investigates the interconnected relationship between Caribbean man and nature, as it is portrayed in Walcott's poetry.

In contrast, the present study is not tackled previously as it examines Derek Walcott's poetry from a transcultural perspective. The study seeks to show how transculturalism manifests itself in Derek Walcott's poetry. In order to foster cross-cultural understanding and reconciliation, Walcott attempts to forge a common transcultural ground, where values, beliefs, and lifestyles are exchanged between the Self and the Other. He also tries to harmoniously combine elements of different cultures,

embracing them in a new transcultural identity, which is gradually formed through transculturalism. The study, also, highlights the various dynamics which contribute to transcultural conversations and sensibility, as Derek Walcott sees his poetry as a viable way of building bridges between distinct cultures. By celebrating the culturally peaceful interaction between diverse cultural realities, the study offers a new representation of Self-Other relationship to show transculturalism as the art of living with the other.

3. TRANSCULTURALISM: UNITING DIVERSITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

The increasing numbers of immigrants and displaced people, traveling back and forth across the globe, and the incessant exchange of digital information over countries have been basic components for making cultures open systems, rather than static or closed ones. Responding to the wave of continuous mobility and cultural changes, contemporary socio-cultural studies of multiculturalism and interculturalism have been extended to adopt a new cultural approach, naming transculturalism or transculturality (Welsch, 2001).

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In sociology and in intercultural studies, it is understood that it is impossible to read a cultural relationship without differentiating a 'We' from a 'They'. For example, in interculturality, each entity maintains its own roots or origins irrespective of how intensive cultural exchange is. Thus, transculturality, as a new path to respond to the cultural changes of today, can contribute to a deeper anthropological, cultural, and social formation of the identity of contemporary man. In this way, one can experience the existential experience of relationality and otherness, hence challenging long-established cultural, ethnic, national, and religious barriers (Slimbach, 2005, p. 1).

But what does 'transculturality' mean? The same prefix 'trans' comes from the Latin which means 'beyond', or going 'over'. It has a significant role in bridging differences. Transculturalism indicates a cultural, social, and anthropological approach, which implies "the recognition of oneself in the other". In this regard, it is an extension of a mere acknowledgment of diversity. It, also, permeates cultural exchange from which a new experience and new culture might materialize. Transculturalism, in its essence, is a cultural phenomenon that is based on the encounter of people of diverse cultural backgrounds whether as a result of colonization, immigration, or displacement. It is, moreover, an experience of a dynamic process of give and take among two different

entities which are based on cultural and social mutation, leading to a flux of integration and fragmentation at the same time. It is beyond controversy that the fear of alterity stands, always, as a barrier in the transcultural encounter. It is, closely, associated with the fear of losing one's identity. It is for this cause; the need for interconnectedness with the 'Other' becomes crucial, demanding more than merely an intercultural interaction of tolerance or respect for diversity (Cuccioletta, 2002, p.3).

Therefore, transculturality can be viewed as a graced experience of connecting with otherness, promoting cosmopolitan relationships, dialogue, and friendship, essentially beyond one's communal groups. It is, from anthropological and social perspective, to extend one's 'I' to reach 'You' so as to form the 'Us' as the only place from which a culture of encounter emerges, constructing cultural links of universal human relations. More importantly, articulating the cultural, social, and anthropological change of contemporary individuals living in-between diverse realities requires living someone else's diversity. It, primarily, implies as Richard Slimbach (2005) assumes in his essay "The Transcultural Journey", "to think outside the box of one's motherland without losing one's cultural center. Today, who we are (by birth) and where we are (by choice) is not as relevant as it once was. More persons than ever before are pursuing lives that link the local and the global, they are becoming increasingly transcultural" (6).

Thus, thinking out of the box about one's mother language, culture or traditions signifies realizing many sides of other realities, abandoning conformity, and connecting centers with peripheries. Transcultural studies, based on this premise, are characterized by an inter- and transdisciplinary quality, adopting an open perspective to diverse cultures. Transcultural studies, in this regard, consider ethnicity, nationality, or color as limited spaces to influence identity construction. They aim to construct global transformations and mobility. In so doing, transcultural studies are a fundamental factor to establish interconnected cultures, which expand social networks, contacts, and relations. Both contemporary socio-cultural and transcultural studies came to confirm the entanglement of cultures, their hybridization, liquidity, and transcultural corporations (Slimbach, 2005).

Chris Barker, in his book, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* (2002), illustrates that "Cultures are not pure, authentic and locally bounded. They are the syncretic and hybridized products of interactions across space... globalization has made the idea of culture as a whole way of life located within definite boundaries increasingly problematic" (27). That is to say, in the so-called single culture, there exists as much foreignness as in its external relations with other cultures; instead of being isolated, they do overlap. In "On the Concept of Culture and Some Cultural Fallacies," the anthropologist David Bidney also states that culture is "a transcendental, metaphysical entity... To define culture as a social heritage from the past is to ignore the equally significant element of historical change" (pp.31, 37).

4. TRANSCULTURAL LITERATURE

In the midst of the contemporary world of today, which is defined by globalized modernity, increasing mobility of immigrants and cultural fluidity, new discussions have been raised on transcultural literature as an appropriate path of new dynamics for fostering diversity and interconnectedness. Transcultural literature attempts to move beyond one's home culture, reality, nationality, language, and even traditions. It is a kind of embarking on a global journey through literature. Transcultural literature is, closely, related to world literature and migrant literature, adopting new narrative forms and aesthetic techniques, generally experimental. It is, thus, interested in dealing with the complexity of post-modern mutation. The transcultural approach has obtained a great appeal in contemporary literature and comparative literary studies. Transcultural literature aims to produce a border crossing literary output that is not associated with native or regional boundaries, able to extend to all humanity as a way to convey the 21st century globalized world.

In her *Transcultural Writers and Novels in the Age of Global Mobility*, the Italian, Australian researcher Arianna Dagnino (2015), who is mostly concerned with transcultural literature, calls this new trend as 'Literature of mobility'. Moreover, she remarks that transcultural literary works "are opened up to different national boundaries, finding "new arrangements of form and content to adapt to a changed culture and social paradigm" (p.143). Similarly, Ottomar Ette, a professor of Romance languages and Comparative literature, notes that literatures of the 21st century "will be literatures without a fixed abode, literatures that evade attempts at clear territorialisation" (p.13). Such kind of literature, constantly, transcends the limits of any landscape, becoming more transcultural, instead of being deeply rooted in bounded territories.

Therefore, since 1980s an immense concern has grown in world literature with which travel, migrant, and ethnic literatures are incorporated. They are interested in both cultural values and global processes, which are spreading beyond national and cultural borders. The gradual increase of circulating the masterpieces of Western European, English and American literary works beyond their country or language of origin has further expanded the interest in works written by non-Western writers, gaining global recognition as works of world literature. Circulated in English or excellent in translation, such literary works became dynamically present wide-reaching. The objective of these literary works is to display cultural and social experiences of belonging, mixed receptions of multicultural traditions, which are based on relationships rather than ethnic, cultural or national affiliations. Hence, transculturality, as a cultural and literary approach represented in their writings, is viewed as a mechanism towards a cultural awareness of Otherness and the Self at the same time (Dagnino, 2015).

Transcultural writers are in a quest to apprehend the hybrid realities of the border blurring phenomena of the mutations of cultures, displaying a transcultural sensibility as a means to challenge the traditional tendency to define culture, the individual and even

literature within a particular category. Transcultural writers are incapable of situating themselves within specific ethnic, national or cultural margins. Thus, they find themselves writing across cultures (Asian, European, American, English, etc.), nurturing cross-cultural flows for the aim of going beyond “the diversity of cultures to even the diversity of individuals, in order to reach a broader cultural model capable of appealing not only to specific minorities, but to the universal potentials of human understanding” (Dagnino, 2012, p. 1).

More importantly, transcultural writers attempt to perceive cultural transformations, achieving a new perception of the so-called ‘cultural identity’. They question the idea of cultures as single entities, capsulated by inherited traditions or social norms. Transcultural English studies, in addition to contemporary socio-cultural and anthropological studies, came to be applied to literary works, attaining a great appeal by contemporary writers, especially those who lived in multicultural contexts. They write beyond nations, in search of self-definition and understanding of one’s cultural identity within the transitory nature of the world. Thus, it is a key characteristic of transcultural literature, especially as it is produced by writers, who themselves have been immigrants, travelers, or displaced.

Eurocentric detachment is another trait that transcultural writers tend to exhibit in their writings, besides overcoming the twofold dichotomies of multicultural and postcolonial writings that center on the colonized and the colonizer; the dominator and the dominated; ethnic minority and majority; native and foreigner, etc. Transcultural writers, in other words, seek to dissolve the “binaries of center/periphery and national self/other” (Dagnino 2015, p.10).

Transcultural literature, basically, corresponds to the sensibilities of such writers, who aim to release themselves from the constrictions of culture, language, confined literary canons and the tendency of being regionalist writers. They, thus, adopt new poetics in terms of literary paradigms and discourses, responding to the migrant, diasporic, or nomadic experiences the individual of today might be living. Transcultural writers, going afar the terrain of grounded national origins, claim that it is “the freedom of every person to live on the border of one’s inborn culture or beyond it” (Dagnino, 2013, p.19).

Therefore, it is for the individual to choose with what aspect of life, place, or group he identifies himself, as he wanders about diverse foreign settings. The image of the individual as a wanderer or nomadic is quite dominant in transcultural literature, denoting the broad framework modern man has to build and rebuild his identity, as he passes through cultural disorientation and orientation, moments of detachment and attachment, exclusion and inclusion.

5. DEREK WALCOT: PERSONAL JOURNEY AND CULTURAL CROSSROADS

Derek Walcott (1930-2017) is a notable laureate and a prominent West Indian

literary figure. He is known for writing poetry, drama and essays that transcend boundaries of geography, race and language. He assimilates his native culture with that of English, developing a transcultural loyalty which is able to surpass the individual consciousness and cultural boundaries. Walcott was born on the island of St. Lucia which had exchanged hands among the French and the British for fourteen times before the British gained total control in 1814, and because of these changes in colonial government, Standard English, English Creole, and French Creole are all spoken on St. Lucia; Walcott uses all three of these languages in his poetry (Woodward, 1997, p. 209).

The island of St. Lucia is the core of Walcott's creative universe "heaven" and the center of his world. Even in his early poetry, traces of transculturalism are apparent, as a result of the creolized nature of St. Lucia itself, his native island. In fact, St. Lucia is pluralist society by itself as cultures, languages, and races intermingle at this Caribbean crossroads. In fact, Walcott made a conscious choice as a young man to remain aesthetically rooted in his native St. Lucia. He and his close friend, the painter Dunstan St. Omer, made a pact to stay on the island and devote themselves to representing it in art, as he recounts in his long, autobiographical poem *Another Life*: "*But drunkenly, or secretly, we swore, that we would never leave the island / until we had put down, in paint, in words, everything that they considered their home*" (CP 194). Additionally, the linguistic, cultural and racial multiplicity of the island itself can be linked directly to European colonization, which allowed him to have free access to art, culture and classic European literature and traditions and at the same time to the native popular literature of oral character.

Indeed, Walcott's devotion to native island, St. Lucia, is evident in "As John to Patmos," as he makes a vow to "*voyage no more from home,*" but to "*speak here*" and to "*praise livelong, the living and the brown dead*" (CP 5). He believes himself bound to the island, its people and their history. Therefore, he maintains a spiritual connection to his home culture. Furthermore, St. Lucia plays a greater aesthetic significance in Walcott's poetics than does any other region. From the earliest works to the most recent, St. Lucia is of an enormous presence in Walcott's writings, though a comparatively tiny island. In this sense, Walcott is a cosmopolitan poet, who aims to go beyond cultural, geographical and linguistic boundaries, and who seeks to create cross-cultural connections, which is like the amalgamated, commingling, fluid cultures of the West Indies. (Walder, 1998)

Furthermore, Walcott oscillates between two distinct cultures, European and African. He is often described as a "mongrel," since both of his grandmothers were African and grandfathers were European. He is an offspring of both the Anglo-European and Afro Caribbean heritage. He loves both the African culture and the English tongue, but he finds it difficult to choose between the two, thus he prefers the transcultural space. Walcott swings between two lives, two cultures, two traditions and two languages; consequently he faces identity crisis. Walcott, apparently, emerges as a transcultural

writer beyond borders. He is subjected to cross cultural exchange that paves way for the transcultural and fluid identity, which also points to the process of the transcultural union of these different cultures. Hence, Walcott has rightfully called the poetry of the Antilles a “survival”. In fact, transculturalism is a survival strategy to protect the Creole identity. (Jay, 2005, p. 546)

The Caribbean by itself accommodates diverse cultures, Hindu, Muslim, Chinese, etc., and languages, creole, pidgin and patios. This transcultural society of St. Lucia has been an inspiration for Walcott. Similarly, P. Loiusy (2001) commented that the Caribbean “has always been the intersection of civilizations and cultures” (425). The Caribbean identity, due to this fusion of histories and cultures, is constantly changing. Wilson Harris, in *The Womb of Space* (1983), rightly states that “Caribbean identity in the present is constantly struggling to free itself from a past which stressed ancestry, and which valued the ‘pure’ over the ‘composite’ and the plural” (34).

Colonialism initiated the cultural transaction between the two civilizations. To ‘civilize’ them, the colonizers introduced western education in the colonies. Walcott is, also, their prodigy. This western education of a black man is, in Walcott’s words, “a sensibility”. It has rendered two colliding voices within the Caribbean. The Caribbean identity is transcultural in nature, as it is fragmented and multifarious because of its collusion with other cultures. The Caribbean people are torn between the marginality of their Creole environment and their culture and the struggle to repossess the memory of a fragmented and ruined past.

To Walcott, the fragmentation of memory and identity is one of the common attributes of a transcultural writer, who lives abroad and cherishes the memory of his own country, as he tries to reflect that world. Walcott’s childhood memories are fragmented, and he realizes that it is impossible to give a precise history of the Caribbean “*Nameless I came among olives of algae / I remember nothing*” (CP 11). Walcott, not solely for himself, speaks for West Indians as a whole who emerges “nameless” from “olives of algae,” remembering “nothing” of their own origins. Therefore, he attempts to piece together his recollections to describe his transcultural vision of the Caribbean islands. Walcott employs fragmentation and disintegration as rich metaphors for celebrating his transcultural identity (Breslin, 2001, p. 8).

Walcott's constant movements between Boston, London, Warwick, New York and the Caribbean have rendered a transcultural understanding of the world cultures. In fact, geographical displacement occurs effortlessly in his poetry, since his poetry collections encapsulate the cosmopolitan world with the erosion of national sovereignty and cultural boundaries. Jahan Ramazani (2001) aptly explains that the tension within Walcott, between his native land and the larger literary world, always strengthen his transcultural poetry. Sociologically, this cultural polarity of different ideologies helps form a transcultural vision of the Caribbean for the contemporary readers on all continents. This fracturing of colliding identities due to colonialism has opened up the pandora's box of

imagination for Walcott. In this respect, Walcott's poetry becomes a transcultural dialogue between the world of the Caribbean and the world outside. He speaks from both sides of the political fence without compromising either his Caribbean creole history or his Western education. His poems exemplify the mixing of these two contrasts. His writings move beyond the cultural boundaries of St. Lucia, as he has not let his image as Post-colonial Caribbean writer prevent him from expressing his global experiences as a transcultural writer.

Without a doubt, this forward-looking globalism is evident in his poetry, essays, and other writings which refuse to be neatly contained within national, linguistic, or cultural boundaries. Walcott continues to live as “foreigner” while he sought to forge a transcultural poetics. Thus, Walcott is considered as cosmopolitan, since his works convey a sense of conflict between home and abroad. He is a transcultural poet, who transcends geographical and linguistic boundaries (Baer, 1996, p. 119).

6. IMPACT OF POSTCOLONIALISM ON DEREK WALCOTT'S POETRY

Exploring the poetry and plays of Nobel Prize winner Derek Walcott is like taking a deep dive into the past, present, and future of the Caribbean. In his writings, Walcott delves into the intricate relationships between Caribbean identities and the Caribbean Sea and geography, as well as the processes of identity-formation in the colonial and postcolonial Caribbean. The central themes of Walcott's writings are the complex connections that exist between the colonized and the colonizer, as well as the manners in which the Caribbean-self embraces and is divided between desperate places and loyalties. Walcott's works offers his readers a glimpse of the formation of modern Caribbean identities. Investigating his works can help us understand the modern Caribbean dilemmas and struggles in identity-formation within the framework of a colonial heritage of universal socio-economic and political inequality.

In addition to presenting special literary significance, Walcott's writings can thus serve as ethnographic accounts of the challenges and conflicts faced by postcolonial societies. His poetics calls into question the role played by colonial language and history in the contemporary Caribbean identity and culture. Walcott investigates and documents the Caribbean present and past. Yet like many contemporary Caribbean authors, he also highlights the ways in which the Caribbean self should or can place itself in the postcolonial world, offering a model of Caribbeanness which emphasizes the fertilizing qualities of cultural and racial diversity. Therefore, the socio-political frequently integrates with the literary in the works of these contemporary writers (Wyke, 1995).

Derek Walcott, in “A Latin Primer” from *The Arkansas Testament* (1987), stresses his dissatisfaction with the British educational system which does not only capture, but in fact is fails to adequately represent sensitivity and landscape of the Caribbean culture. As an adult, he continued explain the different ways of the diverse colonial cultural dualities which separate the Euro-Creole upper class from the Afro-Creole majority in terms language, class and race. After Walcott had become a school

teacher, he found himself associated with the Euro-Creole elite and was forced to follow the restrictive British dress code of “*tweed jacket and tie*,” (45) which is inappropriate for the tropical climate of the Caribbean region. Additionally, he had to employ the very strategies which he believes hinder literature as he “*watched the old words dry like seaweed on the page*” (47-48). He concludes that it is challenging to find a strong sense of the Caribbean identity in a divided world between the North and South sociopolitical blocs to which the Caribbean does not truly belong:

I spun the globe’s meridian
showed its sealed hemispheres,
but where were those brows headed
when neither world was theirs? (57-60)

The poem alludes to the literary void of the Caribbean region, where the British curriculum focused on literatures of the classical traditions, rather than on the Caribbean culture. Feeling estranged by these “distant literatures” (8) that he nevertheless loved, the narrator had no local literatures to help him shape his literary sensitivity during his developing years. But he had the Caribbean landscape which penetrates and amplifies the expressive texture of the poem:

I had nothing against which
to notch the growth of my work
but the horizon, no language
but the shallows in my long walk home (1-4)

Caribbean nature constitutes a powerful source of inspiration for the literary production of the emerging poet/narrator, in a context where Caribbean identity is in the process of defining and establishing itself. Caribbean nature constitutes also a fundamental element of liberation and self-definition, as the narrator is “*trying to find [his] voice*” (64) away from the “silence” that “clogged [his] ears” (61). Then, in the midst of his walk amongst colonial remains, the narrator makes a crucial, liberating encounter with the frigate bird, a tropical bird with V-shaped wings and known for its ability to fly very high for long distances.

As noted above, Walcott has written against “a literature of recrimination and despair, a literature of revenge” (“The Muse of History”) that remains trapped in the angry contemplation of the wrongs of past history. He argues instead for a literature of the New World that “neither explains nor forgives history (422). The hero of great literature “remains the wanderer, the man who moves through the ruins of great civilizations, the poet carrying entire cultures in his head, bitter perhaps, but unencumbered” (423).

Likewise, in “A Latin Primer”, the narrator wanders through ruins, but lets the encounter with the frigate, [his] “phoenix” (9) elevate him away from “the curse of revenge.” As such, the bird metaphorically carries out, like the mythical bird which has the power to renew itself out of its own ashes, a vital and powerful role of elevating

transcendence. It is through the “emblem” (77) of the frigate, a native bird, that the metaphoric uniting of the different linguistic traditions of St. Lucia, English, Latin, and Patois, can be achieved. The use of different languages in St. Lucia is, therefore, no longer a cause for division or alienation, but an enriching mixture and synthesis. Furthermore, the narrator's encounter with the bird helps him reclaim his own lexical voice:

with one wing beat for scansion,
that slowly levelling V
made one with my horizon
as it sailed steadily (85-88)

Moreover, while the narrator used the word “horizon” in the first stanza to refer to cultural void and disconnection, he now uses it to intimate a newly-found harmony between the narrator and his region. Thus, the apparition of the local bird makes the narrator re-visit in positive terms his relationship with St. Lucia and its different languages. The bird gloriously reconnects and sacralizes the different European and African cultural traditions that comprise the Caribbean. Hence, the luxuriant Caribbean nature and fauna serve as a literary and cultural bridge that transcends racial divisions and can create the poet's own “horizon,” away from colonial alienation.

Walcott therefore posits the idea that the Caribbean people can find an uplifting liberation from the acknowledgement of the glory of their different cultural traditions, including Ancient Greece, Africa, and Europe. Poetic creativity serves to truly unify and find points of connections in a disjointed postcolonial world. In other words, for Walcott, as for the phoenix of Greek mythology, a new Caribbean culture can be re-born anew out of the ashes of the past. “A Latin Primer” can thus be read as a poem that outlines and celebrates the creation of a unique Caribbean identity and poetry originating from and transcending the complex colonial history of the region and its divisions. As the local landscape allows such transcendence, the Caribbean becomes a space opened for the imaginative and creative impulse.

Indeed, in a much later poem, “North and South,” Walcott writes: “*I accept my function / as a colonial upstart at the end of an empire, / a single, circling, homeless satellite*” (FT, 11). Walcott identifies himself as a “*single, circling, homeless satellite,*” in the sense that his upbringing had oriented him toward Europe, while his transcultural makeup and regional loyalties made it likely that he would remain a “satellite,” not a fully rooted participant in European culture.

7. TRANSCULTURAL THEORY IN WALCOTT'S POETRY

In his poetic renderings, Derek Walcott articulates the complexities of his transcultural identity, as he paradoxically celebrates his divided heritage comprised of three loyalties; the West Indian, the English language and his African origin. His poems, clearly, demonstrate how a transcultural rebirth is possible through such fusion of diverse cultural loyalties. In his works, Walcott attempts to explore the recognition of

fragmented, multiple identities of the West Indians and his reconciliation with a unified universal human identity. Therefore, his transcultural vision enables him to connect his roots to that of the human race which goes beyond linguistic, regional, racial and cultural boundaries.

Furthermore, Derek Walcott moves in a transcultural journey in both time and place, from the past to the present and from St. Lucia to Africa, Europe and America. Walcott manages to keep the Caribbean cultures from “disintegration”. He exists on the “outskirts” of civilizations, at the margins, whether geographically, spiritually, or both, yet he self-consciously accepts his roles as a world poet, participating deliberately and enthusiastically in a global literary tradition while always maintaining his local roots. Thus, Walcott's poetry forges contemporary bonds across cultures, truly transcultural bonds (Ismond, 2001).

Weintaub (2000) writes that in the world of growing inter-connectedness and globalization, Walcott's poetry encourages “the inclusion of the other, openness to the world” (35). In his search for origin, Walcott tries hard to integrate his divided self, which is often engendered by the totality of his transcultural legacy. Through his poems, he reveals his transcultural identity that is the offspring of different cultures. Thus, he positively celebrates Antillean culture with its fusion of English, French and Creole strands. Walcott “is caught between a commitment to English cultural traditions ‘the English tongue I love’ and the new transcultural identity of the Caribbean” (Cameron King, 1973, p. 287).

Walcott's transculturalism is an extension of the island's transculturalism. His usage of language is one such example, where language is not static, but ever evolving, changing, mixing, colliding and, of course, creating. His choice to use patios and English reflects his attitudes towards his choice of language. He opts for a mixture of the two, which reflects his personal reality and the reality of his people. Therefore, Walcott challenges the idea of the purity of any language and culture. Walcott hopes to reach beyond the Caribbean landscape, by presenting and documenting a vast array of cultural values in his poetry (Bruce, 2000).

Derek Walcott's poetry collections emphasize that his transcultural philosophy is a means of survival and creativity. Accordingly, his appropriation of the colonizer's language empowers him to talk back. His unique transcultural voice in poetry has shaped his position at the cultural crossroads. Consequently, the core of Walcott's transcultural poetry is the internal conflicts within Walcott himself, between his native land and the larger literary world. Walcott, furthermore, posits that diversity is a source of empowerment. In this sense, his writings become a transcultural way of thinking beyond exclusionary, fixed, binary notions of identity based on ideas of rootedness and cultural, racial and national purity.

His poetry has always been transcultural in nature from the very beginning, owing in part to the cultural and linguistic diversity of his native home St. Lucia. In Walcott's

poetry, transculturalism shows up in three main ways: as multiple voices within a single poem; as variations in linguistic registers, either within a single poem or among a group of poems; and as dialogue between diverse cultures, such as African and European. All of these aspects add up to multivocality which is the main hallmark of Walcott's transcultural poetics.

Walcott enters into a transcultural dialogue with canonical Western texts, and this becomes a defining feature of his transcultural poetry. In fact, such dialogue is a foundational building block of Walcott's transculturalism, most notably in his multiple rewritings of the classical myth, and of Homer in particular. Such dialogue between the European voices of his education and the Caribbean voices that surround him becomes much better defined in his later poems, often taking the form of a transcultural exchange that incorporates Standard English and a West Indian dialect. In "As John to Patmos," Walcott seems to imply that something new has begun, that a new culture has arisen, one distinct from those of Africa or even Europe. A people, who had once felt themselves "homeless," have begun to feel at home. (Breslin, 2001, p. 19)

In fact, Adam, as the first human, becomes a metaphor for those making a new beginning in the New World. Walcott reanimates him as "*the first inhabitant of a second paradise*" (Walcott, 1965, p. 35). In fact, both Adam and John, as Walcott presents them, are exile figures like himself. This "second paradise," as Walcott envisions it, is literally a new world, where every element of culture, including language, mythology, and literature, must be created anew. This new world is founded upon the intermingling of European languages and texts with non-European languages and folkways. This new beginning in a "second paradise" must necessarily be built on the foundations of African and European cultural memory.

The multivocal, particularly St. Lucian voices, appears in "Origins," *Selected Poems* (1964). This poem also hints at the transcultural dialogue between the West Indian poet and European culture. The poem begins with the speaker's emergence from nowhere, from "nothing," which almost certainly refers to V. S. Naipaul's famous assertion that "History is built around achievement and creation; and nothing was created in the West Indies" (Naipaul, 1969, p. 209). The speaker of "Origins" seems to speak on behalf of the residents, especially the non-European residents, of the West Indies, those whom the Trinidadian novelist accuses of creating "nothing," and the opening stanza satirizes their supposed lack of history "*Nameless I came among olives of algae, / Foetus of plankton, I remember nothing*" (CP, 11).

Accordingly, "flowering," in the first line, indirectly suggests that something, new, beautiful may grow even out of destruction. The second half of this stanza finds the speaker speaks not only for himself, but for all West Indians of color, emerging "nameless" from "olives of algae," remembering "nothing" of his origins. He has come ashore, amnesiac, in the wake of the "flowering breaker" that preceded him. He may have no memories, but he soon gains knowledge of culture and history, despite they may not

be his own or even those of the original inhabitants of the Antilles:

Clouds, log of Colon,
I learnt your annals of ocean,
Of Hector, bridler of horses,
Achilles, Aeneas, Ulysses,
But "Of that fine race of people which came off the mainland To greet Christobal
as he rounded Icacos,"
Blank pages turn in the wind. (*CP*, 11)

These clouds move freely over the ocean between the Eastern and Western hemispheres, and therefore come to represent the transcultural movement of Western culture between Europe and the Americas. The clouds might, also, have indicated the transcultural movement between Africa and the Americas. Again, as in the poem "As John to Patmos," Walcott participates in transcultural dialogue with Europe, and again that universal dialogue finds its basis in literature. However, the Homeric and Virgilian heroes, "annals of Hector, Achilles, Aeneas, Ulysses," which the poet had "learnt," are set in ironic contradistinction to the "blank pages" of the native inhabitants of the islands.

Thus, the void left by the natives appears to be filled by Walcott, and those for whom he speaks, as he emerges from nowhere: while the natives have disappeared, like "*blank pages [that] turn in the wind,*" the poet comes "*nameless*" into the world, from "*nothing*". The speaker of the poem, nonetheless, does in a certain sense participate in the transcultural dialogue between these two cultures, showing his usual cosmopolitan dialogic model. He occupies a transcultural space where cultures are pervasive and influencing each other "*between the Greek and African pantheon,*" (*CP* 12).

The many voices, dialects, and languages of Walcott's experience, of his native culture, have continued to be an aesthetic shaping force throughout his career, most famously, in the closing interrogatives of "A Far Cry from Africa," from *In a Green Night* (1962). Thus the intermixing of different cultures (Native American, Indian, African, French, British and Dutch) resulted in a hybrid culture. The inheritance of an identity informed by such complexities resulted in a form of identity schizophrenia:

I who am poisoned with the blood of both,
Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?
I who have cursed
The drunken officer of British rule, who choose
Between this Africa and the English tongue I love?
Betray them both, or give back what they give?
How can I face such slaughter and be cool?
How can I turn from Africa and live? (26–33)

For Walcott, the Caribbean writer breathes two different traditions, namely the African and the European traditions. Such a split reality has various consequences for the ways in which the colonized self can think of itself, particularly for Walcott, whose

mixed racial heritage highlights the historical dilemma between races. Indeed, past colonial and racial divisions constitute the crux of Caribbean identity, and the question of the divided nature of the postcolonial self is central to his intellectual quest. “A Far Cry from Africa” explores Walcott’s psychological condition; his feeling of polarity, which tears him between ‘Africa’, his indigenous country, and “*the English tongue I love*” because it gave him a voice in the post-colonial world. Walcott chooses then, and continues to choose, to “*give back what they give,*” that is not to betray either one of his cultural heritages, but to embrace them both. However, he can neither turn away from his English identity, nor from his African ancestry.

In this respect, Walcott celebrates the transcultural co-existence of these two colliding cultures, as he sees beauty and richness in the harmony of his fragmented souls. Indeed, he admits that his mind “*was halved by a horizon*” (CP 305) He is placed in this transcultural position, that he could not turn away from his African culture to be assimilated with the English. He accordingly bears a transcultural identity, and at this juncture, he describes himself as a man “*poisoned with the blood of both*” (26). Though trapped in his African roots, he also has unrestrained love for the English tongue, which he acquired from learning. The speaker closes the poem in an ambivalent note, as he laments: “*How can I turn from Africa and live?*” (33). In this respect, he chooses to be neutral. Commenting on this ambiguous ending, Thounaojam (2013) comments that such an ending “anticipates a more positive construction of transcultural identity” (9).

In the opening section of “Names,” from *Sea Grapes* (1976), Walcott claims that his “*race began as the sea began, / with no nouns, and with no horizon*” (CP 305). The poet uses the word “race” here to mean West Indians or perhaps Afro-Caribbeans in particular.

I began with no memory,
I began with no future,
but I looked for that moment
when the mind was halved by a horizon. (CP 305)

The poet emerges as though from the sea, without memory and without language. The poet seems to fear the consequences of numerous ethnic groups living together in the islands, cut off from their homelands, and wonders whether West Indians have “*melted into a mirror, / leaving our souls behind*” (CP 306). Patricia Ismond argues that Walcott “tacitly refuses the condition of inferiority as the primary term of his transcultural identity” (2001, p. 48).

The theme of transculturalism comes again in “The Schooner *Flight*,” a long poem from Walcott’s 1979 collection *The Star-Apple Kingdom*. It centers on an Odysseus-like figure, Shabine, who emblemizes Trinidad. The protagonist shares Walcott’s mixed-race, multilingual background and stands in as an alter ego for the poet himself, yet his voice also becomes an instrument through which Walcott can express his transcultural identity. Shabine, whose name is actually derogatory West Indian slang for

“mulatto,” speaks a dialect that is creolized like his culture, and his racial makeup also represents the pluralist society that he comes from. Shabine expresses his transcultural status, consisting of the features of two races that are in between Dutch and English. He declares:

I'm just a red nigger who love the sea,
I had a sound colonial education,
I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me,
and either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation. (*CP* 346)

Shabine does indeed stand for his nation; Shabine cannot be “nobody,” precisely because he is everybody. Shabine, the sailor, sets out on a journey of escape as the poem opens. His exploration of the sea symbolizes his exploration of the fluidity of time, history, human consciousness and language itself. Paradoxically by running away from his home and country, he develops closer transcultural ties not only with his country, but with the whole world and the entire human race. The reference to ‘door’ in the closing verses of the poem “*the moon open/ a cloud like a door*” (361) suggests those transcultural hints, as West Indies can overcome psychological problems by cultivating transcultural consciousness. The imagery of ‘white moonlight’ and ‘a door opening’ offers a transcultural regenerative potential of perseverance and tenacity of the Caribbean people and their islands.

Walcott's poem “The Schooner Flight” reveals the transcultural journey of the poetic persona, Shabine, a sailor who searches for an island that heals. He writes: “*I was a dog on these streets / if loving the islands must be my load / out of corruption my soul takes wings*” (27-29). Shabine feels that he has been corrupted, and he is ready to undergo a process of purgation. The corruption in terms of European influence results in his transcultural identity:

But they had poisoned my soul
With their big house, big car, big-time bohbohl,
Coolie, nigger, Syrian and French Creole,
So I leave it to for them and their carnival
I taking a sea-bath, I gone down the road. (30-34)

He recognizes that the sound European education and the English language have made him popular, and originally he is a transcultural Caribbean, who powerfully celebrates his transcultural identity. With pride, he asserts that he is “nobody” or a nation. He is neither a pure African nor a European but nobody, who represents the future Caribbean nation that holds up its composite culture. This denotes the position of a transcultural being. He is “castaway,” who longs to return to innocent Eden as a result of the tension between the two cultures. Walcott attempts to create a new culture, which help him survive in the face of the complicated Caribbean experience of colonization.

The final poem of *The Fortunate Traveller*, entitled “The Season of Phantasmal Peace,” in its first stanza, provides an excellent metaphor for the transculturalism, which

Walcott typifies in his finest moments:

Then all the nations of birds lifted together
the huge net of the shadows of this earth
in multitudinous dialects, twittering tongues,
stitching and crossing it. They lifted up
the shadows of long pines down trackless slopes,
the shadows of glass-faced towers down evening streets,
the shadow of a frail plant on a city sill—
the net rising soundless as night, the birds' cries soundless, until
there was no longer dusk, or season, decline, or weather,
only this passage of phantasmal light
that not the narrowest shadow dared to sever. (FT 98)

In this dreamlike vision of transculturalism, legions of birds, “twittering” in their “multitudinous dialects,” literally remove the darkness from the surface of the earth, “stitching and crossing” a vast fabric collectively. One could easily imagine Walcott, or any of the countless voices of his poems, as one of these birds, free from linguistic or racial barriers, engaging in global discourse with “all the nations of birds,” while still remaining exactly who he has always been: a St. Lucian whose very identity was shaped in a manner similar to these diverse birds have woven a transcultural web of earthly shadows.

Traveling, as a fundamental transcultural feature, is an important theme in Walcott's poetry. In *Arkansas Testament*, the cosmopolitan restlessness is evident, as the speaker of “tomorrow, tomorrow” says “*To have loved one horizon is insularity, / it blindfolds vision, it narrow experience*”. *Arkansas Testament* is comprised of two parts ‘here’: St. Lucia, Caribbean and the speaker's home, and ‘elsewhere’ which, mainly, stand for the American landscapes. Traveling is, in this sense, Walcott's attempt to overcome the differences between ‘here’ and ‘there’. Therefore, traveling is, as Clifford (1997) puts it, “human difference articulated in displacement, tangled cultural experiences, structures and possibilities of an increasingly connected but not homogeneous world” (2). Thus, to be a transcultural writer beyond borders is to travel. Walcott recognizes that and accepts it as a part of his own reality. Accordingly, in “North and South, he says “*I accept my function / as a colonial upstart at the end of an empire*” (CP 405).

In “*Midsummer*”, Walcott writes that “traveling is a transcultural way of opening the world for the traveler”. He says “*this is the lot of all wanderers, this is their fate, that the more they wander, the more the world grows wide*” (VII) (CP 474). In his collection, “*Midsummer*,” he uses the metaphor of summer heat as purifying fire, which dissolves differences of place and history. The intensity of the heat is too much for even the poet to handle. At the same time, the heat in the north is described as “*midsummer's leaves race to extinction*” and “*seethe toward autumn's fire*,” whereas on the Caribbean Islands

"noon jerks toward its rigid, inert center" (CP 488). The heat is same, yet the experiences are different. Thus, it is transculturalism in its purest philosophical sense, which is saying that mankind is same; it is only their socio-cultural differences which separate them.

The hybrid language of Walcott's poetry, also, mirrors the cosmopolitan culture of St. Lucia itself. In his poems, he uses universal references, ranging from Homer to Shakespeare, and phrases from foreign languages like Latin to enhance the global setting of his poems. In so doing, Walcott is trying to write a "new song" of this transcultural world. His attempt is to have universal appeal. In "Origins," the poet brings out the transcultural nature of the Caribbean at present as *"But now, twin soul, spirit of river, spirit of sea,"* (98) which demonstrate the fusion of the African river-centered culture and the European sea-centered culture. He also talks about how this 'new song' will replace the old (CP 15). This 'new song' is the mixture of the transcultural songs of St. Lucia. The poem "Love in the Valley" expresses the transcultural position of the cosmopolitan poet, *"and now I drift elsewhere, / through hostile images / of white and black"* (16-18). "Hostile images" and "White and Black" highlight the speaker's transcultural identity.

The poem "Goats and Monkeys" is a poetic rewriting of Shakespeare's Othello. Othello, in this poem, represents the African or Black. An African is compared to a "sliding shadow" *"He is Africa, a vast sidling shadow, / That halves your world with doubt"* (5-7) Othello's African identity divides his world into two halves. He serves both the Venetian society as a General, and rebels against the same society, by crossing all inter-racial boundaries for the desire of a white woman. The following lines display the transcultural perspective or the divided vein: *"Virgin and ape, maid and malevolent moor / their immortal coupling still halves our world"* (20-21).

Walcott, through his poems, depicts his transcultural allegiance between the home where he was born and his position in western culture. He realizes the rigid dichotomy between the two self-images that are inevitable and without betraying his native identity. Thus, Walcott gets himself absorbed into the world around him with deeply transcultural consciousness. Realizing his transcultural identity, Walcott is not able to curse the colonizer, since he possesses and utilizes the resources of the English language. The local realities inspire Walcott's poetic idiom and facilitate his transcultural and universal poetic tones. His transcultural mission is to search for the solution, a redemptive panacea for the inequalities in the destinies of men.

In the poem "Names," he declares *"My race began as the sea began, / With no nouns, and with no horizon"* (1-4) He identifies the origin of his race with that of the origin of human race. In this attempt of tracing the origin of the black, he transcends the angst of colonization. In the poem "Ruins of a Great House," Walcott recognizes that the colonizer is *"part of the continent, piece of the main"* (45). His transcultural spirit identifies that the English is not in pure vein, as they have been influenced by alien cultures. Even though the Europeans bring agony to the blacks, the poet remains so

forgiving, instead of blaming them he acknowledges: “*Albion too was once /A colony like ours*” (44-45). This realization makes the poet to empathize with the colonizer, and hence his rage is overcome by compassion and understanding. His struggle between emotion and reason comes to an end as he states “*All in compassion ends / so differently from what heart arranged / 'as well as if a manor of thy friends*” (49-50).

Walcott expresses his rejection of the extremist Euro classicism, as he has defined in “Another Life” by seeing “*the colors of Hispanic glory/ greater than Greece, / greater than Rome*” (286). This shows the growth of a mature transcultural writer, who wishes to move on and create something ‘new,’ despite history in a world which is always anew and startling. The inherent complexity in Walcott’s identity, further, strengthens his position as a transcultural writer, because it allows him to not remain stagnant under any fixed category.

8. CONCLUSION

Borders continually dissolve in Derek Walcott’s poetry. His poems signify an evolution or an ability to cross national, cultural and linguistic boundaries. Walcott crosses and transgresses the geographical, physical and canonical boundaries. Moreover, this analysis reveals Walcott’s celebration of hybridity and cosmopolitanism of the Caribbean culture. At last, Walcott can identify himself as a cosmopolitan figure, who can accept himself and others. Walcott’s transcultural poetry probes, engages and at times transcends differences and divisions through poetic imagination. His poetry could arguably be perceived as participating in the creation of an international wishful myth of a racial paradise as it stands beyond man-made boundaries Walcott's transculturalism is a unifying force. It unites the colonizer with the colonized. It, also, connects the Old World with the New one while, simultaneously, acknowledging the gulf between them. In this process, Walcott takes a nomadic position. His transculturalism comes from ‘nowhere,’ as he writes in “Origins”. He is a ‘nameless,’ coming into the world from ‘nothing’. He stands at the moment of flux between the diverse cultures of the world, ready to accept them as they are. Walcott's transcultural poetics is an individual attempt to balance the old and new, the inside and the outside of the Caribbean world. He has, successfully, done so by creating a transcultural identity beyond boundaries for himself and the whole Caribbean society. Accordingly, the Caribbean realities inspire Walcott to have a vivid universal perspective and transcultural human vision that accommodate everyone, even though atrocious, as part of humanity. His transcultural poetics unites the broken pieces of the fragmented Caribbean identities and leads one back to the original status of cosmopolitan oneness. His cosmopolitan poetic persona celebrates hybridity and diversity so as to find new metaphors and make his own tools like Crusoe. Walcott employs the transcultural perspective regarding the cultural fusion of identities, and this strategy shows his global poetic vision for regeneration and positive celebration of life. This transcultural vision departs from the postcolonial stand of usual resistance, as it creates a

universal myth of a utopian, racial paradise in which the Self and the Other interact peacefully to establish a unique, dynamic transcultural community with equal access to resources, opportunities and power. Walcott believes in this transcultural fusion of all races that transcends racial, cultural, regional and linguistic demarcations. His transcultural poetics speaks up for the artist's ability to transcend his or her private circumstances and reach out to touch the whole world.

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