

## Caryl Phillips and the Caribbean as Multicultural Paradigm

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In a poem entitled 'Not from Here', the late poet and publisher John La Rose, who was born in Trinidad but lived in England for much of his life, addresses his offspring in these words:

You were not born here  
my child  
not here.

You saw daylight  
among our islands  
the sun was always there.

... What we leave  
we carry ...

The saliva we swallow  
must ever dwell  
down there.<sup>1</sup>

That Caryl Phillips should have chosen the full version of this poem as an epigraph to *A New World Order* (2001) is not surprising for, like his own writing, La Rose's text encapsulates the dilemma faced by first and sometimes second generation Caribbean migrants when they reflect on their displaced identity. Confronted, like new immigrants anywhere, with the difficulty of fully belonging to the society where they have settled, they cannot but register the sense of an unavoidable, almost atavistic attachment to their birthplace, which, Phillips suggested in an interview conducted in 2002, might very well affect all Caribbean people 'no matter where [they] travel'.<sup>2</sup> In spite of his own errancy and fluid identity, he too claims this feeling of inescapable rootedness, particularly in relation to his literary production:

For me it's always been particularly important to remember my roots ... It's been very important to me that I remind people in Britain and in the United States that they can't co-opt me as some sort of exotic addition to their literary tradition ... I always try and remind them that there's a place from which they can't uproot me

and that is the Caribbean. They're never going to be able to uncouple me from the Caribbean because I am part of that long tradition of Caribbean people who've moved beyond, but who continue to feel rooted here.<sup>3</sup>

Admittedly, there may be some paradox in invoking a feeling of belonging in relation to the Caribbean, whose cultural tradition has been repeatedly acknowledged as essentially nomadic, open, and impure. At the same time, this tension between diasporic existence and local essence has proved a formidable ferment for the creative imagination of the writers of the Caribbean diaspora,<sup>4</sup> as testified by their prolific and highly original literary production in the last few decades. Caryl Phillips is without doubt one of the most distinguished representatives of this outburst of talents.

My intention in this essay is to examine the role played by Phillips's native Caribbean in his exploration of human nature, not only as a source of creative inspiration but also as an epistemological tool that provides him with a world-view able to accommodate the complexities and ironies of postcolonial societies. In other words, I would like to argue that, while Phillips has been wary of idealizing the Caribbean, he has adopted its inherent racial heterogeneity and rich cultural makeup as a paradigm that might be useful for multi-ethnic nations in crisis all over the world. As he himself puts it: 'The Caribbean offers the quintessentially post-modern, multi-racial, multi-cultural model that Europe and the US [are] now grappling to come to terms with.'<sup>5</sup>

Phillips's interest in the Caribbean as a model of sorts that might contribute positively to the future of humanity is by no means unique. Following from C.L.R. James in the 1950s, then Wilson Harris in the 1970s, several commentators, among them Kamau Brathwaite, Edouard Glissant, and Antonio Benítez-Rojo, have written on the Caribbean as an epitome of creolization and hybridity. Much criticism has been produced in the last decade or so on their concepts and theories which the scope of this essay does not allow me to cover. Suffice it to mention here J. Michael Dash's excellent syntheses where he highlights the ubiquity in recent cultural studies of the 'Creole model' which, he points out, is not exclusively Caribbean even if it first developed from the turbulences of the former plantation societies in the New World.<sup>6</sup> Dash also warns us of the danger of 'the ideological appropriation' of the notion of 'creolization' because, he fears, this could result in erasing its essentially 'dynamic and unpredictable nature' and in viewing it as a merely homogenizing process, wherein Caribbean societies are 'mere adjuncts to imperialist metropolises'.<sup>7</sup>

If Phillips's preoccupations with the Caribbean need, to some extent, to be examined in the context of this wide-ranging debate,<sup>8</sup> it is also important to view it singularly, so as to work out the artist's idiosyncratic take on his birthplace. What seems to distinguish Phillips's position is a reluctance to resort to generalization or what he calls, in a review of Edouard Glissant's essays, 'the discourse of abstract theoretical speculation'.<sup>9</sup> In short, Phillips's is a decidedly pragmatic, hands-on approach wherein the Caribbean occupies a central place not as a merely conceptual pattern of thought to be described from a distance but as a paradigm, that is, a set of practices that, as we will see, he promotes in his non-fiction through a concrete commitment to Caribbean culture, and which he also develops, if only obliquely, in his fiction through an imaginative exploration of individual lives.

There is something specious in using a writer's background as the only basis for critical analysis. What I would like to do here, however, is refer to some elements of Phillips's life in an attempt to apprehend the development of his thought. In other words, I am ultimately interested here in what Barthes called 'ergography' rather than in biography, in the writer's work-story rather than in his life-story. With this in mind, it is important to dwell on the fact that Phillips's 'discovery' of the Caribbean of his birth almost exactly coincided with the beginning of his writing career and may therefore be seen as the fountainhead, or at least as one of the major sources, of his artistic undertaking. The primordial role played by the Caribbean in his evolution as a man and as an artist is somehow illustrated through the structure of *The Atlantic Sound* (2000), an essay where the writer meditates on the notion of home in the context of the African Diaspora and its history.<sup>10</sup> The long journey at the heart of this book, taking the author to England, Africa, America and finally Israel, significantly starts from the Caribbean, described elsewhere by the author as 'the crucible which formed [him]',<sup>11</sup> and therefore an element which cannot be discarded from any examination of his cultural identity.

Raised and educated in Britain, Phillips visited his native Caribbean for the first time in 1980, just after his first play, *Strange Fruit*, had been produced. As suggested in a recent televised interview, the impulse behind this first visit was basically to understand Caribbean society and, more importantly perhaps, the West Indian facet of his identity that his parents and his educators had, for different reasons, kept under wraps.<sup>12</sup> For all the confusion that this first encounter triggered off,<sup>13</sup> it proved very fruitful, both personally and professionally. Not only did it help

Phillips to come to grips with his own complex background, since, as he writes in *A New World Order*, 'Wherever one happens to be in the Caribbean, at least two or more continents and cultures have already provided the bedrock upon which one's identity has been forged. It is a birthright that embraces Europe, Africa and Asia.'<sup>14</sup> This first journey to St Kitts also acted as a catalyst for curiosity and open-mindedness, since the realization of the impurity of Caribbean blood, suggestive for Phillips of both 'transcendence and connectivity',<sup>15</sup> enabled him, as it did many other Caribbean writers and thinkers, to transgress 'boundaries with unselfconscious ease and eloquence',<sup>16</sup> in particular 'to easily slip the restrictive noose of race'.<sup>17</sup>

Phillips's first, formative visit to his birthplace was followed by a residence of two years in St Kitts in the late 1980s and by regular visits which continue to this day. More importantly, it has given rise to a lifelong involvement, at once emotional and intellectual, with the region which, as the rest of this essay will attempt to demonstrate, feeds his imagination and reflection in crucial ways.

In some twenty-five years, Caryl Phillips has published an impressive number of essays and articles – more than one hundred of them – covering such topics as literature but also sport, film and politics. This variety aside, however, it is interesting to note that the Caribbean constitutes a unifying thread in almost half of them. To mention just a few examples, these include review articles on major literary figures from the Caribbean, including Patrick Chamoiseau, Maryse Condé, V.S. Naipaul, or Derek Walcott, as well as a piece on crime in St Kitts, one on the St Kitts and Nevis participation in the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, another on Caribbean migration to Britain and an introduction to a new edition of E.R. Braithwaite's 1959 novel *To Sir, With Love*. Clearly, such a pervasiveness conveys the extent of Phillips's involvement with his birthplace. This implies a dynamic relationship whereby the author is influenced by the Caribbean and its culture in the widest sense, and is also one of its most dedicated champions. Not that this dedication blinds him to the weaknesses of the place, for there is in Phillips's non-fiction a will to present the Caribbean in all its complexity, away from the clichés, both positive and negative, that have entrapped the region for far too long.

Rejecting the view of the Caribbean as paradise, he has, for example, repeatedly commented on the region's tendency to parochialism, on its streak of philistinism and on the neo-colonialism that defines the area's links with the United States. In a 1992 essay entitled 'Living and Writing

in the Caribbean: An Experiment', he writes:

The lack of understanding of the role of a writer was in many ways liberating, but after a month or two things became rather wearing. It seemed to be that the only members of society who were afforded any status were cricketers and calypso singers. I did not resent this, for I love both calypso and cricket, but what I felt myself yearning for was some kind of affirmation of my values. In short, I began to resent the lack of interest in the arts. Poetry, theatre, music, literature, painting; these activities were not encouraged or cherished, except by the odd eccentric individual. Certainly, a government which seven years ago saw the local library burn down, and has still done nothing about building a new one, cannot claim to have any interest in literacy, let alone the arts ... On St. Kitts, the sole government concession to the arts is the cable-television network with fourteen channels of American programming twenty-four hours a day.<sup>18</sup>

Phillips's demystification of the Caribbean also includes a refusal 'to see the Caribbean region as ... a mere exotic backdrop', which seems to have prompted him to take part in the adaptation of V.S. Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur* for Merchant Ivory, as he explains in his foreword to his screenplay.<sup>19</sup> There is a similar rejection of the prejudice that views the Caribbean as a tropical 'place to indulge in mindlessness'<sup>20</sup> in Phillips's numerous endeavours to publicize the richness and vibrancy of its literary traditions, not least through a stint as editor of the Faber Caribbean Series in the 1990s. One of the aims of this series was, in his words, to 'change people's idea of the Caribbean and show them that there's more to its cultural life than calypso and limbo dancing'.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, the series was stopped after the publication of a dozen titles including translations into English of works initially written in Dutch, French, or Spanish, but its spirit is important to understand Phillips's relationship to his birthplace. For, in addition to being an eye-opener on the region's artistic achievements, the Faber Caribbean Series also partook of an effort to 'remap the region where Europe first encountered the New World',<sup>22</sup> that is, to see it not as a provincial backyard, but as a multilingual, multicultural area open to its inner diversity but also to the world at large through its dynamic diaspora.

This idea of the Caribbean as a lively cultural crossroads is very much at the heart of Phillips's fiction too, although it does not surface discursively as it does in his non-fiction, even in his first two novels, *The Final Passage* and *A State of Independence*. Both are set (only partly so for *The Final Passage*) on a Caribbean island, strangely similar to St Kitts, but which remains unnamed as if Phillips wanted to indicate that his approach is first and foremost regional, not narrowly national. Trapped between the sea and the canefields, the inhabitants of this island are

imprisoned by the smallness and predictable circularity of the place, but also by a lack of historical consciousness which keeps blighting their lives even when they escape to Britain, the so-called 'Mother Country'. Phillips's vision of the Caribbean in his early fiction is free from nostalgia and is uncompromisingly critical of the perpetuation of colonialism and of slavery in Caribbean societies. Still, there is in his depiction of his birthplace a tenderness for a form of solidarity, absent from the coldness of Britain, that is particularly embodied by his female characters, notably by Patsy Archibald in *A State of Independence*.

Phillips has written six more novels since these two early works. None of them takes place in the Caribbean, with the notable exception of *Cambridge* (1991), which is almost entirely set on a Caribbean plantation at the turn of the nineteenth century. Often perceived as a historical novel of sorts, *Cambridge* provides a subtle analysis of the intricate human relationships inherited from slavery, and based on colour and class ranking that still affect life in today's New World. For this reason it could be seen as Phillips's most Caribbean novel to date.

Nevertheless, one could also argue that, in spite of being apparently absent from Phillips's other works of fiction, the Caribbean and its heritage still affect their deeper structures, particularly their characterization and fragmented narrative techniques, but perhaps even more crucially their world-vision. As the author himself points out,

My Caribbean heritage has been important in that it provided me with an alternative view of looking at the world. The socio-cultural and racial fusion, and confusion, of the Caribbean seems to me to better reflect the reality of the real world – as opposed to the relative 'narrowness' of the view of the world as seen from the USA or Europe. I'm happy to explore and absorb this alternative view and feed it into my writing.<sup>23</sup>

Phillips has expressed this idea even more directly elsewhere – 'if I write something that's not set in the Caribbean, as far as I'm concerned, it's Caribbean'.<sup>24</sup>

Before briefly examining to what extent Phillips's Caribbean heritage might have informed his later novels, it is necessary to insist here on the relevance of an analysis relying upon an author's cultural positionality, although it would be reductive to consider it the only valid approach to a literary text. In a recent article, Timothy Bewes strongly objects to any examination of Phillips's slavery novels from the perspective of their 'Caribbeanness', for, he writes, 'the notion of cultural identity can have nothing but incidental relevance for our engagement with the actuality of the literary text'.<sup>25</sup> For him, such a critical approach 'restates the most

basic and immediate utterance of the work'<sup>26</sup> because it focuses on 'its banal, purely empirical point of departure'.<sup>27</sup> However, the equation between identity and text (both as content and form) is not as straightforward as Bewes makes it out to be. What is at stake then in a cultural approach to Phillips's novels is not so much a question of facile and obvious representation. The aim of such a mode of analysis is rather to try and retrieve the hidden, sometimes hardly visible, marks left by a writer's origins and historical background in his literary production in order to unearth the subterranean clues that it contains and therefore hopefully understand better what he is trying to tell us. In addition, in the case of Phillips at least, such a critical approach is also one of the ways of demonstrating the coherence of his artistic project, which is, as this essay suggests, impregnated with the existential outlook inherited from the area's early experience of multiculturalism.

*Higher Ground* (1989), *Crossing the River* (1993), *The Nature of Blood* (1997), *A Distant Shore* (2003) and *Dancing in the Dark* (2005) are not set on Caribbean ground proper, with the exception of a few brief flashbacks in Phillips's latest novel. Admittedly, their topography may be said to be reminiscent of the region either because they take place, like *Higher Ground* and *Crossing the River*, within the infamous triangle of the slave trade – a historical reality that has shaped Phillips's life and outlook in a decisive way – or because insularity is a major element, both literal and metaphorical, in their narratives and characterization, which is surely the case for *The Nature of Blood*, *A Distant Shore* and *Dancing in the Dark* whose protagonists are on the surface very much 'islands of their own', to borrow John Donne's well-known phrase. Likewise, one could underline the role played in these five novels by the sea, a central element in the Caribbean experience and in the writer's own identity construction as he demonstrates in a lyrical essay entitled 'The High Anxiety of Belonging' included in *A New World Order*,<sup>28</sup> but also in a short text called 'Water', which was written in the wake of *Crossing the River* and in which the author reminds us that his life, like the life of all Caribbean people, has been 'determined by a journey across the water. Across the Atlantic Ocean'.<sup>29</sup>

However, it is not so much in the landscape of Phillips's later novels, but in their humandscape, that one can best trace the legacy of the Caribbean. Indeed, most of his characters are displaced people who are trying to come to grips with the ambiguities of an intricate fate made up of dispossession, disruption, and dislocation, all experiences that are part and parcel of Caribbean history. Interestingly, this commonality of

experience allows the various narrative threads that make up Phillips's later novels to overlap and to finally interweave in the reader's mind at the end of the book, thereby defying the myths of purity, race and nation that have attempted to keep his characters apart. It is this ability to view the world in terms of connections, even if these remain in some cases tragically unfulfilled, or of relations, as Edouard Glissant would put it, and not only in terms of divisions, that seems to constitute one of the main facets of the Caribbeanness of Phillips's fiction.

Phillips's last novel but one, *A Distant Shore*, is a good example of this. Set in England but also in an unspecified country in Africa, the novel has on the face of it very little Caribbean about it, except perhaps for a few clues that would not be readily noticed by readers not familiar with the literature of the Caribbean diaspora, especially with neo-slave narratives. Such might be Phillips's description of the African refugees heading for Europe as 'cargo',<sup>30</sup> a clear allusion to their slave-like status, but more importantly the numerous intertextual traces of Olaudah Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative* in the fourth section of the novel,<sup>31</sup> which again stresses how the Caribbean ancestral experience of exile, first forced, then voluntary, has become a globalized phenomenon and how it can therefore help us to come to grips with the societal changes that have more recently affected the industrialized countries, in particular, England. As Paul Leary points out in a guest column published in *The Virgin Islands Daily News*, 'without a single West Indian character, [*A Distant Shore*] is heavily influenced by the experience of cultural displacement so frequently experienced by migrant peoples. It illuminates the pain and consequences of immigration on both the immigrant and the society that receives him'.<sup>32</sup> And, as Leary adds, 'it is also an incisive portrait of an England being transformed into a culturally diverse nation, but not without difficulty'. The obstacles facing the multicultural nation are far from resolved by the end of the novel, as the tragic fate of the two protagonists substantiates: Solomon, the African refugee, is killed by racists and Dorothy, the retired English music teacher, ends up in a mental home. But their clumsy attempts to 'throw bridges across [the] chasms'<sup>33</sup> imbedded in the traditions of a society that has a rather rigid and clear idea of 'who belongs and who's a stranger',<sup>34</sup> in other words Dorothy's and Solomon's defiance of barriers, is not without recalling the cross-culturality that defines the Caribbean, both through its violent past and its long experience of the (occasionally disharmonious) coexistence of people of varied origins.

Even if the protagonist of *Dancing in the Dark*, Bert Williams, was born

in the Bahamas, the novel is not actually set on the island of his birth, but in the United States, with the exception of a few scenes that take place in Bert's memory and testify to a rather conventional take on the Caribbean landscape. An example of this is the scene described at the very end of the novel where Bert and his father stand on a beach 'after a sudden downpour and [watch] ribbons of water fall from the palm fronds and groove trenches into their earth'.<sup>35</sup> The strategy behind Phillips's description of the West Indies in those terms remain unclear, hidden as it is behind Bert's enigmatic persona. As one reviewer points out, while this might be viewed as 'sheer tourist-brochure shorthand for the description of the West Indies', it might also 'convey nostalgia for an irrecoverable place of origin',<sup>36</sup> a place where, according to Bert's father, 'a man can walk tall' (p. 154). This said, the West Indian experience of exile crucially informs the psychology of the main character and his personal tragedy. With a mother whose 'light skin and strange green eyes ... [suggest] many worlds in one face' (pp. 22-23), Bert Williams is indeed by birth a man at a cultural cross-roads, but migration to the United States obliges the boy and his family to take up another role:

to learn how to be both of the Caribbean *and* of the United States of America; they begin to learn how to be coloreds *and* niggers, foreigners *and* the most despised of homegrown sons. Eleven-year-old Bert begins to learn the role that America has set aside for him to play. (pp. 24-25)

Clearly, Bert's career as a successful blackface performer is linked to his experience as a West Indian immigrant, to his being an outsider in America, an outsider who is not black enough for some, but too black for others, and therefore needs to 'obliterate [his] true [self]' (p.29). In a paradoxical twist – also a possible confirmation of the spirit of atavism evoked in the John La Rose's poem which is quoted at the beginning of this essay – Bert achieves this compulsory reinvention of the self through masquerading, a typically Caribbean strategy of survival that was already used by the slaves and which is still present in the region's popular culture, whether it be Carnival or other cultural practices involving masking.<sup>37</sup> A bit like Anancy, a Caribbean folklore figure of African origin, Bert is a racial shape-shifter in his professional life – and perhaps also a sexual one in his private life – but his tricks, while challenging borders in a way, do not lead to escape in his case. While bringing him fame and material success, his performance only confirms his 'performative bondage' (p. 6), and it is only through Phillips's empathetic and delicate exploration of his tortured soul that some of

Bert's lost dignity is restored.

It is impossible to guess where Phillips's next fictional projects will take him, but there is a good chance that they will still be informed in some way by the Caribbean and will include, like his earlier works, an interaction between Africa, America, and Europe, all represented, though in varying proportions. 'Within myself I contain many worlds', Phillips says, and 'I want to embrace all of them'.<sup>38</sup> To do so, isn't the Caribbean the best place to turn to?

#### NOTES

1. John La Rose, 'Not from Here', quoted in Caryl Phillips, *A New World Order* (London: Secker & Warburg, 2001). Also anthologized in *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Verse*, eds, Stewart Brown and Mark McWatt (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005), p. 102.
2. Caryl Phillips, 'WINN FM Interview with Charles Wilkin', unpublished, 23 December 2002, Basseterre, St Kitts, p. 3.
3. Phillips, 'WINN FM Interview with Charles Wilkin', p. 4.
4. I owe this reference to 'existence' vs 'essence' to an essay by Gaston Kelman, entitled *Je suis noir et je n'aime pas le manioc* (Paris: Max Milo, 2003), p. 58.
5. Caryl Phillips, 'More to the Caribbean than Beaches', *Financial Times*, 19/20 July 1997.
6. J. Michael Dash, 'Psychology, Creolization, and Hybridization', in *New National and Post-colonial Literatures: An Introduction*, ed., Bruce King (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 45-58 (p. 47). See also, among other writings, his book *The Other America: Caribbean Literature in a New World Context* (Charlottesville and London: UP Virginia, 1998).
7. Dash, 'Psychology, Creolization, and Hybridization', p. 47.
8. See, for example, Antonio Benítez-Rojo, 'Three Words toward Creolization', in *Caribbean Creolization: Reflections on the Cultural Dynamics of Language, Literature and Identity*, eds, Kathleen M. Balutansky and Marie-Agnès Sourieau (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1998), pp. 53-61; and Bénédicte Ledent, 'From a New-World Poetics to a New World-Vision: African America in the Works of Edouard Glissant and Caryl Phillips', *Commonwealth*, 21:2 (Spring 1999) 29-36.
9. Phillips, 'Edouard Glissant: Promiscuities', in *A New World Order*, pp. 172-86 (p. 176).
10. Caryl Phillips, *The Atlantic Sound* (London: Faber & Faber, 2000).
11. 'Pitt à Pawol de Caryl Phillips: entretien', in *Ecritures et Représentations des diasporas*, eds, Bénédicte Alliot and Geneviève Fabre (Paris: Cahier Charles V, Université Paris 7, Denis-Diderot, 2001), pp. 129-40 (p. 136).
12. See 'The South Bank Show', presented by Melvyn Bragg and broadcast on ITV on 13 April 2003.
13. 'Caryl Phillips interviewed by Graham Swift', *Kunapipi*, 13:3 (1991) 96-103, p. 101.
14. Phillips, 'Introduction: The Gift of Displacement', in *A New World Order*, pp. 129-34 (p. 131).
15. Phillips, *A New World Order*, p. 131.
16. Maya Jaggi, 'Beyond Carnival and Cricket', *Guardian Weekly*, 17 May 1998, p. 32.
17. Phillips, *A New World Order*, p. 131.
18. Caryl Phillips, 'Living and Writing in the Caribbean: An Experiment', in *Us/Them:*

- Translation, Transcription and Identity in Post-Colonial Literary Cultures*, ed., Gordon Collier (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1992), pp. 219–23 (p. 222).
19. Caryl Phillips, 'Foreword to "The Mystic Masseur" – The Screenplay', *Moving Worlds: A Journal of Transcultural Writings*, 2:1 (2002) 38–41, p. 41.
  20. Phillips, 'More to the Caribbean than Beaches'.
  21. James Ferguson, 'Playing Away', *Caribbean Beat*, September/October 1997, p. 53.
  22. Jaggi, 'Beyond Carnival and Cricket'.
  23. Caryl Phillips, 'Placing Value on the Imagination', interview by Tumelo E. Phali and Shana L. Calixte, *Caribbean Tales Newsletter*, 2:2 (March 2005), <[http://www.caribbeantales.org/ct\\_newsletter/archives/featured\\_storyteller/placing\\_value\\_on\\_the\\_imagination/index.html](http://www.caribbeantales.org/ct_newsletter/archives/featured_storyteller/placing_value_on_the_imagination/index.html)>, accessed 18 March 2005.
  24. Caryl Phillips, 'I Am What I Am Because I was Born There: An Interview with Caryl Phillips', interview by Erika J. Waters, *The Caribbean Writer*, 9 (1995) 102–14, p. 112.
  25. Timothy Bewes, 'Shame, Ventriloquy, and the Problem of the Cliché in Caryl Phillips', *Cultural Critique*, 63 (Spring 2006) 33–60, p. 52.
  26. Bewes, 'Shame, Ventriloquy, and the Problem of the Cliché', p. 53.
  27. Bewes, 'Shame, Ventriloquy, and the Problem of the Cliché', p. 55.
  28. Phillips, 'The High Anxiety of Belonging', in *A New World Order*, pp. 303–09.
  29. Caryl Phillips, 'Water', *Agni*, 39 (1994) 28–30, p. 30.
  30. Caryl Phillips, *A Distant Shore* (London: Secker & Warburg, 2003), pp. 94 and 97.
  31. On this matter, see Lucie Gillet, 'A Distant Shore Caryl Phillips. Traduction commentée du chapitre 4', MA thesis, Université de Liège, 2005–2006.
  32. Paul Leary, 'Try sun, sea, sand ... and books', *The Virgin Islands Daily News*, 9 May 2005, <[http://www.virginislandsdailynews.com/index.pl/article\\_home?id=5097106](http://www.virginislandsdailynews.com/index.pl/article_home?id=5097106)>, accessed 18 May 2005.
  33. I owe this phrase to Wilson Harris, *Selected Essays: The Unfinished Genesis of the Imagination*, ed., Andrew Bundy (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 211 and 239.
  34. Phillips, *A Distant Shore*, p. 3. All further references are to this edition and are included in the text.
  35. Caryl Phillips, *Dancing in the Dark* (London: Secker & Warburg, 2005), p. 214. All further references are to this edition and are included in the text.
  36. Vahni Capildeo, 'Fade to black', Review of *Dancing in the Dark*, *Caribbean Review of Books* (May 2006) 16–21, 32, p. 21.
  37. On this topic see Gerard Aching, *Masking and Power: Carnival and Popular Culture in the Caribbean* (London and Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2002).
  38. Maya Jaggi, 'Rites of Passage', *Guardian*, 3 November 2001, <[http://www.guardian.co.uk/saturday\\_review/story/0,3605,586398,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/saturday_review/story/0,3605,586398,00.html)>, accessed 3 November 2001.