

# Altering Boundaries: The Art of Translation in *The Angel at the Gate* and *The Twyborn Affair*

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The imaginative writer is not a spokesman for any group but for the riddle of community.

- Wilson Harris <sup>1</sup>

This statement by Wilson Harris clearly runs counter to the opinion of critics who, when defining Commonwealth literature, tend to do so in terms of oppositions. They set up the national element against the international, the indigenous against the metropolitan, "high versus low culture and European versus national society."<sup>2</sup> In doing so they transfer to literature social and political distinctions or even antagonisms. Comparative studies between various areas of the Commonwealth are thriving but comparisons with British and American writers have so far been relatively rare. Rather than the widening scope provided by some notable exceptions,<sup>3</sup> the tendency has been to introduce into Commonwealth literature itself the same kind of distinction as between the indigenous and the metropolitan and to see within each area "a 'little tradition' of the folk or the past,"<sup>4</sup> nationalist in outlook and realistic, which contrasts with a "great tradition" viewed as a variant or a re-working of the great tradition of English literature more concerned with form and sometimes with experiment.

This kind of categorizing often ignores that England too has a "little tradition" of popular or regional writing with which, if we do make comparisons, the so-called little traditions of the Commonwealth should be paralleled. Similarly, the debate between social realism and experiment is not necessarily linked to the contrast between indigenous and metropolitan. It has also prevailed in England since the beginning of this century. One need only remember the argument between Henry James and H.G. Wells or Virginia Woolf and Arnold Bennett. Realism and experiment, whether conscious or not, have co-existed since the early days of fiction: *Tristram Shandy* is contemporary with the rise of the realistic novel and *Wuthering Heights* with *Dombey and Son* or *Vanity Fair*. Moreover, for some post-war English novelists, adherence to realism has been a way of asserting their Englishness. Yet one may wonder whether there is such a thing as an international tradition in literature. There are writers in different countries responding in a similar way to similar circumstances and therefore developing comparable features in their writing. Hence the parallels we draw between the modernist writers of the early twentieth century. Though these writers were no nationalists, their imagination was essentially nourished by a local, national background. The best example is, of course, James Joyce.

When dealing, in particular, with writers like Wilson Harris and Patrick

White, I find such terms as indigenous and metropolitan, national or international wholly inadequate. They have delved deeply into the roots of their respective countries and translated into art the experience of their people, but neither of them has expressed its national identity in a restrictive sense. On the other hand, both write with an awareness of the achievement of their predecessors in Europe but have developed far beyond them, and the form of their novels has grown out of their highly individual vision of largely regional material. It doesn't make sense to assimilate them to a central cultural tradition precisely because their eccentric position has given shape to their art.

We know that Caribbean history has been the very mainspring of Harris' art of the novel. The process of erosion and breakdown in which his characters are involved leads them into namelessness, which is the condition of the victims of conquest. This process is followed by, or parallel with, the possibility of reconstruction and re-birth, which suggests that the catastrophes of history need not be absolute but offer the possibility of a new beginning. His refusal to invest in absolutes has also fashioned Harris' style, the startling opposites or paradoxical images and the fluidity of the mode of writing with which his readers are familiar.

Since *Black Marsden* Wilson Harris has been driving away from Guyana as a source of inspiration. It still figures prominently in *Genesis of the Clowns* but generally the Caribbean has become one component among many in his work. It is not because Guyana recedes from his memory, as *Genesis of the Clowns* shows. True, his imagination has been stimulated by landscapes more recently visited or lived in: London, Edinburgh, Mexico and India. But this variety of geographical settings illustrates a new development in his fiction, a different emphasis on issues that have always preoccupied him, namely a cross-cultural approach to experience and to art.

The major theme in Harris' novels has also widened in scope since *Black Marsden*. The transformation into a dialogue of the confrontation between stronger and weaker individuals or groups has not disappeared but it is now superseded by his intense concern for imperilled humanity around the globe. It is clear in his latest novels, and I will only mention the devastated nameless territory in *Black Marsden* or the allusion in *Da Silva da Silva's Cultivated Wilderness* to "millions on the brink of starvation or on the brink of the grave."<sup>5</sup> In that novel da Silva's Commonwealth paintings dissolve the "uniform" of empire and make possible the displacement and mutation of what Harris sees as "the fixed boundaries" of a central culture or tradition. To use Harris' own words, "the whole landscape of the metropolitan world is re-vised."<sup>6</sup> It is in this light that I wish to look at *The Angel at the Gate* and to concentrate on two related aspects in it, the use of myth and the nature of personality.

When referring to the use of myth in modern fiction, one naturally thinks of Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist* and *Ulysses*. In his famous essay on *Ulysses* T.S. Eliot wrote that the "[mythical method] is simply a way of controlling, or ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history."<sup>7</sup> Very significantly also,

Eliot used as an epigraph to *Notes towards the Definition of Culture* an item from *The Oxford English Dictionary*: "Definition: 1. The setting of bounds; limitation (rare)-1483." In spite of his affinity with much of Eliot's poetry, Wilson Harris' enterprise is a very different one. I have already suggested that in his approach to culture, rather than setting up boundaries, he tries to alter them and to find parallels between cultures. As to myth, he has written considerably on the subject. I shall simply refer to his description of myth as a "medium of transformation,"<sup>8</sup> or as "a capacity for the conversion of deprivations and humiliations that may plague a culture and lead to violence and despair."<sup>9</sup> Clearly then, myth plays an essentially dynamic role. Important words in these quotations are "transformation" and "conversion." Indeed, in Harris' critical writing words like "change," "re-vision," "mutation," "alteration," "re-dress," "translation" recur with increasing frequency to emphasize the need to alter the entrenched biases of any central cultural tradition. This to him is the meaning of "beyond nationalism." But any formerly eclipsed, now resurgent culture that would try to assert itself as sovereign would need to be similarly altered.

"Deprivations and humiliations that may lead to violence and despair" are largely what *The Angel at the Gate* is all about.<sup>10</sup> Harris describes in this novel a world in crisis and on the brink of catastrophe. Several characters are unemployed; Sebastian, a major character, is also a drug addict. Instances of violence abound, including the Brixton riots in 1981. It is, as the protagonist Mary Stella Holiday thinks, "a time of fires [and] of famine" (p. 15), and there is, of course, the constant threat of atomic warfare. These images of despair, violence and destruction cohere into the symbolical "funeral [procession] of an age" (p. 38), a recurring image in Harris' fiction. But parallel to it there is the "miracle child," John, the three-year-old son of Sebastian and Mary Stella. The child in Harris' fiction has been so far a "psychic" or expected child, as much a product of renewed sensibility and imagination through dialogue as of physical intercourse.<sup>11</sup> Even in earlier novels the child is linked with what Harris calls an "annunciation of humanity" (pp. 31, 52), and in this novel John is "third party" between his quarrelling parents and evidence of a possible redemption. In spite of his miraculous role, this white child is not presented as an idealized "son of man" (pp. 102, 123). Indeed this possibility of seeing in him an absolute saviour is altered by the appearance of a black "daughter of man" (pp. 90, 102, 123) who descends from the same grandfather and, in her father's mind, the Jamaican Jackson, has been conceived by himself rather than her mother. This is one of the many ways in which absolute situations and images are converted and altered in the narrative. It is here that myth plays an essential role.

The particular myth dealt with in this novel is that of Mary and Joseph, the humanized parents of Christ.<sup>12</sup> It is already present in Harris' first novel and an ambivalent Joseph figure has appeared in most novels since *Black Marsden*.<sup>13</sup> In *The Angel at the Gate* this ambiguous historical figure, devoted guardian of mother and child yet rather laughable cuckold, offers a remedy to a diseased society represented by the "holy"<sup>14</sup> family of Sebastian, Mary and

John, which as in ancient times is utterly deprived. He supports them financially through Mary's work for him at Angel Inn. But more importantly, he is Mary's spiritual "ancient" (p. 31) lover and he nurses her psychologically by compiling her automatic narratives<sup>15</sup> and through discussions conducted under hypnosis. It is the material of these narratives and conversations that the narrator "translates" into the novel. He is the "no man's land writer" (p. 23) or "translator of Mary's . . . book of fictional lives" (p. 100) as these emerge from her unconscious self. Jean-Pierre Durix rightly said that Mary is "the eternally abused woman and . . . creative muse [of *Palace of the Peacock*] . . . become a modern visionary character."<sup>16</sup> But here the creative muse and potential mother of humanity is ill.

A way of coping with this illness is through the splitting of her personality into Stella and Mary, respectively the wife and sister of Sebastian. In Mary's book Stella says, "I am a mask Mary wears, a way of coping with truth" (p. 44). Mary and Stella's dual role as sister and wife seems to have developed out of a passage from a Father of the Church, Paulinus of Nola, quoted as an epigraph to book three in *The Eye of the Scarecrow*. In the passage quoted sister and wife are the attributes of the mother of God.<sup>17</sup> In this context, however, the division into two selves becomes a way for Mary Stella of facing her despair, of breaking down what would otherwise remain a monolithic diseased personality. Stella enacts one possibility in Mary Stella Holiday. She has attempted suicide and dies a few days later though, as she tells Mary, she will come and go.<sup>18</sup> Actually, Stella helps Mary to another process of translation, i.e., a miniaturization of the world and the formidable issues men have to cope with. Possibly, like Oudin in *The Far Journey of Oudin*, her post-mortem perspective enables her to view the globe as "a match-box world."<sup>19</sup> What happens is that for Mary, who travels imaginatively to India with Marsden and who afterwards visualizes his various existential facets and roles in the mirror of Angel Inn, the world is reduced to apprehensible proportions when the bale that falls from a passing lorry and strikes Marsden is transformed into Planet Bale. On this miniature world the terror of atomic fire becomes a new dimension, "the seed of conversion" (p. 89) by which fire becomes creative energy.<sup>20</sup>

This illustrates the way in which what Harris sees as "variable forces" function in the novel. Since his first appearance in Harris' fiction Joseph Marsden himself has embodied such variables, at once subject to "daemonic possession" (p. 30) or "prey of the furies" (pp. 96, 100, 104) and agent of liberation. Now at the end of his life, "his body . . . whittled or sliced by fate" (p. 29), he is essentially a spiritual guide and, as opposed to Sebastian, who is a "hollow tree" (p. 44), he is the stick on which God leans (p. 30). His house, Angel Inn, is "a bridge into other worlds" (p. 23). There is a bit of Joseph Marsden in all the other male characters, including Khublall the Indian and Jackson the Jamaican, who are so many "living masks" (p. 23) for him. Mary's spiritual marriage with Marsden bears fruit through her perception of the conversions that take place in their lives and of parallel situations in the cultures they represent. Marsden, the Joseph figure, is thus in a sense the

father of humanity, not a single or absolute creator but one who has evolved out of many partial selves ("possession by inventive angels and inventive devils" [p. 30]).

What strikes in this novel is the way in which character and myth and the metaphors through which they are presented destabilize our accepted version of reality. The narrative develops out of a series of frustrating incidents and desperate situations whose "translation" reveals the seed of a creative alternative. When Mary takes little John to Paradise Park where a gang of youths have slaughtered beautiful birds, he waves scissors of blossom at a duck and creates a "garden of Eden" which counterbalances the "garden of tragedy" (p. 69). In Mary's visionary writing he becomes associated with the twelve-year-old Indian child-bride in whom the knife of violence was changed into "phallus of the sun" (p. 69). That girl is reminiscent of Mary's ancestor, the young slave girl sold by Marsden's ancestor in the eighteenth-century Angel Inn, a horrible deed now redeemed by Marsden's care for Mary. A cat-and-mouse metaphor runs through the major part of the novel, symbolizing among other things Mary's struggle with her double, Stella (p. 59). Towards the end of the novel, however, "the mouse arises and kills the mystic cat in . . . reversed epic" (p. 117). Though it takes place in Mary's visionary writing, this extraordinary feat is in the nature of myth and parallels Heracles' strangling the serpents in his cradle. Finally, the angel figures (for there are more than one), though essentially unpromising characters, are also potential annunciators of change. The unemployed Sebastian is in the same position as Indian Khublall and Jamaican Jackson, and there is a suggestion that because it is itself imperilled, Europe is in a better position to understand the Commonwealth. There is also the incident of the man who knocks violently on the Holidays' door and awakens Stella who is lying naked on the bed. Shocked out of sleep, she runs naked to the window and the man exposes himself. Stella is horrified but she realizes that his arrival has actually saved little John from swallowing the valium tablets she had carelessly left on the table. The man is thus both beast and angel; his gesture of rape and violence is the same as the gesture of love. Harris seems to suggest that we cannot foresee the consequences of our actions and that to recognize the nature of violence, in which all men are involved, is to open the way to the possibility of transmuting it into saving energy, to convert, as he says, "the 'strike' or the blow, into reciprocal forces"<sup>21</sup> and to erect what he calls a "rainbow-bridge" (p. 17) between cultures.

Turning to Patrick White, it seems almost too facile to apply to him and his protagonist in *The Twyborn Affair* Wilson Harris' view that

The artist is both feminine and masculine; the male artist is fashioned internally, seized internally by the women of all ages and climates that he creates or attacks, renders violent or summons into sensuous beauty, in his fictions or sculptures or paintings.<sup>23</sup>

White himself expresses much the same idea when he writes

I see myself . . . as a mind possessed by the spirit of man or woman according to actual situations or the characters I become in my writing . . . . What drives me is sensual, emotional, instinctive.<sup>24</sup>

In expressing the artist's capacity to be or become both the male and female characters they create – or the two in one – both novelists put forward a conception of art which refuses to impose a given pattern on their material and to imprison the human personality into a sharply delimited sense of identity. We know that this kind of “negative capability” has led Harris to abstain systematically from presenting any aspect of reality as whole or self-sufficient and that his protagonists' self-effacement or dismemberment is a necessary step towards “mutuality.”<sup>25</sup> In *The Angel at the Gate* he suggests that the function of art is to create “a subtle, therapeutic no-man's land or accent upon cross-cultural human space between ‘possession’ and ‘possessed’ ” (p. 23).

In *The Twyborn Affair* there are indications that White moves some way in the direction of that no-man's land. An early reviewer rightly noted that “the theme of sexual uncertainty [Eddie's sexual metamorphoses] serves principally as an opening into White's greater theme of ontological uncertainty” but he wondered whether White's questioning of “the ordering power of art itself” was purposive or “a symptom of artistic failure.”<sup>26</sup> In my opinion, both the protagonist's experience and the novelist's art are an expression of what Harris calls “alteration of boundaries,”<sup>27</sup> i.e., the dissolution or mutation of the neat categories into which reality and the human personality are too often conscripted. One major reservation, however, is that White's protagonist is never wholly free from a haunting sense of guilt at what the world sees as an “affliction”<sup>28</sup> or a “monstrosity” (p. 267).

*The Twyborn Affair* can be read as a mounting cry of despair, something like the silent cry uttered by Helen, the girl with the harelip. Like *The Angel at the Gate* it presents a diseased society and a world on the brink of catastrophe, World War I and the inter-war period issuing into the “holocaust” (p. 426) of World War II. The novel is divided into three parts in which the protagonist Eddie Twyborn appears successively as Eudoxia Vatatzes, the wife of an old Greek who sees himself as a Byzantine emperor, then as himself, and finally as Eadith Trist, the madame of an exclusive brothel in London. It does not deal with the holy family but Eddie Twyborn and his parents, Edward and Eadie, are clearly meant to represent the family of man.<sup>29</sup> This is suggested in conjunction with the metaphor of the garden, a nursery for human relationships that easily turns from a refuge into a prison. Just as the garden is “an argument for permanence” (p. 79), so the family is, as Eddie says, “timeless” (p. 169). When he returns to Australia, he expectantly meets first his mother, then his father in the garden but the latter, who at the end of the novel turns into a beloved yet terrifying “judge-Pantocrator” (p. 429), is already then “the Judge in the garden” (p. 155). In the first part of the novel Eddie/Eudoxia writes “I have learnt to cultivate my garden” (p. 67). As

Eadith Trist in the third, she does so in her brothel, where the whores are not only a variety of "spring flowers" she "cultivate[s]" (p. 324) but part of herself, "fragments of a single image" (p. 336).

Although in earlier novels, notably in *The Solid Mandala*, White had suggested that human beings can be part of one another, he presents for the first time a protagonist who, potentially, can contain them all and be part of them all. The "mosaic of colour" (p. 111) of his eyes, an expression which like many images in the novel evokes Byzantine art, is "a mosaic of experience" (p. 346) which "[troubles] . . . the certainties of life" (p. 56). I am not denying the difficulty of relationships in White's novel - Eddie's ambivalent relationship with his mother, with whom he nevertheless identifies, his hopeless search for a father, which makes him see a substitute for him in all the older men he loves. I am only asserting that Eddie's ambivalence or androgeneity (his assertion "*I'm my father and mother's son and daughter*" [p. 261] recalls the androgynous son and daughter of man in *The Angel at the Gate*), his mutability and the very fragmentation of his personality open the way for what Harris calls a "community of being,"<sup>30</sup> even if it makes Eddie question his own reality.

There is also in this novel a deep sense of the mystery of both man and God. In the first part Eddie/Eudoxia is approached through a series of partial approximations (Joanie Golson's, M. Pelletier's, Mme Réboa's, and his or her own diary), none of which, however, dispels the mystery of his/her personality.<sup>31</sup> Eddie's incarnations through the novel are also partial approaches to the mystery of being. As to God, his nature ("whether He, She or It" [p. 78]) or even his existence remain uncertain. But Eddie's suspicion that he sees the judge-Pantocrator "through a gap in the star-painted ceiling" when his "great unstable temporal house" (p. 429) falls apart, may suggest that for White, as for Harris, the divine may be found in the human.

The question we may now ask is whether for White also doubt<sup>32</sup> and the breakdown of reality necessarily go together with mutation. Certainly, fragmentation of the self is for Eddie a source of suffering rather than a remedy as it is for Mary in Harris' novel. But it does lead to compassion, a sense of responsibility for the violence and the wounds others suffer, as we see in Eadith's reactions to Annabel's death (p. 320) and Joanie Golson's fall in London (p. 364) or in the way she looks after an old prostitute. Above all, this fragmentation of the self leads to increased vision. In this respect White too uses myth in a dynamic way, though not as a redeeming "medium of transformation." William Walsh has pointed to Eddie's identification with Tiresias,<sup>33</sup> the mythical seer whose sexual metamorphoses are so many partial deaths and re-births. If like him, Eddie, in spite of his "omniscient eye" (p. 329), has not in Eliot's words "foresuffered all," he does have visions of death and possible re-birth, particularly his own (p. 376). The two happen together at the very end when in death Eddie "flow[s] onward" (p. 430) and re-enters his mother's womb (p. 432).

The use White makes of Eddie/Eudoxia's imaginary journey to Byzantium is also very important. It serves as an imaginative link between the three parts

of the novel, for Eddie remains obsessed by it, and it establishes the dual pattern of escape and self-discovery that characterizes his life. In the second part of the novel the Australian landscape plays very much the same role as Byzantium in the first part – a catalyst to the imagination. Like Angelos Vatatzes, “the landscape . . . engage[s] his feelings in a brief and unlikely love affair” (p. 291), and indeed “the bluestone glitter[s] for Eddie/Eudoxia like a Byzantine jewel” (p. 194). When he falls from his mule, he is again Eudoxia carried by Prowse “across the Bithynian plain” (p. 203). In the third part Eadith Trist looks more than ever like a bejewelled Byzantine Hetaira. But mainly there is a clear parallel between the destruction of decadent Byzantium by the Turks, to which Angelos repeatedly alludes in part one, and the impending destruction of a modern, equally decadent society by the new barbarians. There is thus a cross-cultural dimension in the novel, though it does not lead as in Harris’ novel to a revision of metropolitan boundaries.

Translation nevertheless occurs, if not as radically as in *The Angel at the Gate*. One should first mention White’s style, which, more than in his earlier fiction, presents opposites or contradictory images that disrupt an external reality he is otherwise at great pains to create. His expression “hallowed hell on earth” (p. 376) seems to epitomize the conjunction of redeeming and daemonic forces as well as contradictory instincts at play in the novel. Eddie/Eadith suspects that Gravenor is both her “saviour” and her “evil genius” (p. 366). So was Angelos, and the variations on the name Angel in the narrative are the more significant as they designate characters who are all monsters of a kind.

Violence and lust are not transmuted into saving energy in the novel as a whole, although the transmutation occurs through specific incidents. Seeing in the naked Eddie/Eudoxia a Hermaphrodite of great beauty, M. Pelletier yields to a “disgusting . . . regrettable act of masturbation” but “what could have remained a sordid ejaculation becomes a triumphant leap into the world of light and colour” (p. 76). Eudoxia was then entering into the sea and attempting suicide but as he/she swam, the “repulsively oily sea” became “healing water” (p. 80). When Angelos dies, she announces it with “a broken” yet “an awakening voice” (p. 126). The most significant translation, however, occurs when Eadie Twyborn acknowledges her daughter Eadith in her son Eddie, for it does amount to a recognition that the human personality need not be monolithic. At the very end of the novel, when the East End is burning in the London blitz, Eddie sees the east “blazing with a perverse sunset,” a “fiery razzle-dazzle . . . history . . . crumbling” (p. 428). As he dies in the catastrophe, the vision shifts to his mother, with whom he has been previously re-united. She sees the perverse sunset as “unusually fine” (p. 430). That it should take place in the east may suggest a possibility of re-birth conveyed in her final vision of the garden when the bulbul raises his beak towards the sun. If it is a sign of re-birth, it is no doubt very fragile and in this respect recalls Harris’ words at the end of *Ascent to Omai*: “in conformity with the ruin of catastrophe – it retained a living spark, a frail star.”<sup>34</sup>

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## NOTES

- 1 "Re-creative Parallels," talk given at the University of Bayreuth, 18 June 1983. No written text is extant and the quotations are from notes I took.
- 2 Bruce King, *The New English Literatures* (London and New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), p. 31.
- 3 See *Enigma of Values*, ed. Kirsten Holst Petersen and Anna Rutherford (Aarhus: Dangeroo Press, 1975); Joseph Jones, *Radical Cousins* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1976); Jeanne Delbaere, "The Divided Worlds of Emily Brontë. Virginia Woolf and Janet Frame," *English Studies*, 60, No. 6 (1979); Guy Amirthanayagam and S.C. Harrex, eds., *Only Connect* (Adelaide: CRNLE, 1981). See also Wilson Harris' forthcoming book, *The Womb of Space*.
- 4 King, *New English Literatures*, p. 42.
- 5 *Da Silva da Silva's Cultivated Wilderness* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), p. 68.
- 6 "Re-creative Parallels."
- 7 T.S. Eliot, "Ulysses, Order and Myth," in *Selected Essays*, ed. Frank Kermode (London, 1975), p. 177.
- 8 In *Explorations*, ed. Hena Maes-Jelinek (Aarhus: Dangeroo Press, 1981), p. 125.
- 9 In "Character and Philosophic Myth," paper read at the University of Göteborg, August 1982.
- 10 *The Angel at the Gate* (London: Faber and Faber, 1982). Further references are incorporated in the text.
- 11 On this subject see Gary Crew, "The Psychic Child in Patrick White's *Voss* and Wilson Harris's *The Tree of the Sun*," Diss., University of Queensland 1980.
- 12 See Harris' reference in "Character and Philosophic Myth" to "the humanisation of the terrible divine" p. 7.
- 13 See *Black Marsden*, Father Marsden and the sinister guide José in *Companions of the Day and Night*, Marsden-Prince in *Da Silva da Silva's Cultivated Wilderness*, and possibly the "daemon of conscience" in *The Tree of the Sun*.
- 14 There is a pun on Mary's name Holiday/holy day.
- 15 These are compared in the novel to the automatic writing of Yeats's wife which gave rise to *A Vision* (p. 82).
- 16 Jean-Pierre Durix, "Wilson Harris' *The Angel at the Gate*," paper read at the University of Bayreuth, 18 June 1983.
- 17 The quotation appears in C.G. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, trans. by R.F.C. Hull, Vol. 14 of *The Collected Works* (1963; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 281.
- 18 Similarly, Sister Joanna's voice comes and goes for Idiot Nameless in *Companions of the Day and Night* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), pp. 46-50.
- 19 *The Far Journey of Oudin* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), p. 12.
- 20 Harris wrote in a recent essay: "The mutability I imply between images and cultures and characterizations is a paradox. It breaks, at certain levels, the conscription of polarised worlds bent . . . on destroying each other. It implies a profound irony and comedy of existence built into paradox, into a creative perception of finitude through the poetry of miniaturisations of the cosmos." "The Quest for Form," *Kunapipi*, 5, No. 1 (1983), 22-23.
- 21 "Metaphor and Myth," in *Myth and Metaphor*, ed. Robert Sellick, Essays and Monographs Series No. 1 (Adelaide: CRNLE, 1982), p. 5.
- 22 "Metaphor and Myth," p. 10.
- 23 "The Quest for Form," pp. 21-22.

- 24 Patrick White, *Flaws in the Glass* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1981), p. 81.
- 25 "Art is mutuality." "The Quest for Form," p. 21.
- 26 Geoffrey Tout-Smith, "Nightmare Uncertainties," *Overland*, No. 78 (1979), p. 67.
- 27 "Re-creative Parallels."
- 28 *The Twyborn Affair* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981), p. 268. Further references are incorporated in the text.
- 29 Note also that Angelos and Eudoxia are often referred to by their initials, A. and E., which suggests Adam and Eve. I am grateful to my student Nathalie Schraepen for pointing this out to me as well as many subtleties in the novel.
- 30 This is also suggested by the variations on a single name: Eudoxia/Eddie/Eadith for the protagonist, Edward and Eadie for his parents.
- 31 All the other major characters are also shown to contain their opposite but are usually unwilling to acknowledge it.
- 32 In *The Angel at the Gate* Wilson Harris uses the expression "curative doubt" (p. 79).
- 33 William Walsh, "Centres of the Self," *Times Literary Supplement*, 30. Nov. 1979, p. 77.
- 34 *Ascent to Omai* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p. 128.