

Theatre as Alter/“Native” in Derek Walcott

SERIES IN LITERARY STUDIES

Summary

‘Theatre as Alter/“Native” in Derek Walcott’ attempts a close and detailed politico-aesthetic analysis of his major plays. At the core of this book lies the attempt to answer the question of how postcolonial artists and intellectuals have dared to imagine radically different ways of living in the face of oppositional, binary choices. And as the title suggests, Walcott’s plays carve out critical spaces for new narratives of “becoming” and alternative priorities, entangled in contesting identities inscribed by race, language and ethnicity. Theatre, as Walcott knew, would be instrumental in demystifying Caribbean “Absence” and “Void” and generating an alternative version of dominant reality. By a deliberate unseating of the Western texts, filled with banal stereotypes and their representational biases, and by triggering “re-action” to the scripts of the colonizers in profoundly paradoxical ways, Walcott’s plays affirm the Caribbean identity. This study seeks to demonstrate how his plays open an alter/“native” universe in terms of aesthetics, dramaturgy and the performative, and reclaims ‘New World’ identity in terms of negotiation rather than negation—undermining the claim of “solid”, “authentic” culture. Placing the arts at the forefront of nation-building, Walcott situated his plays at a crucial juncture between the passing of the Empire and the newly-born Federation in his archipelago.

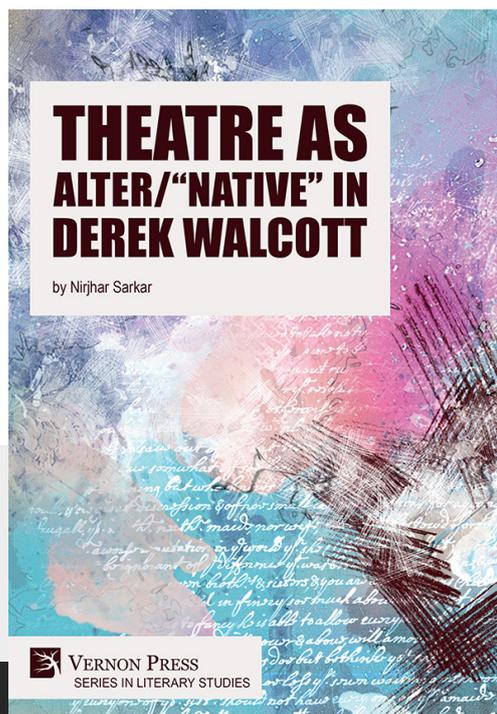
About the author

Nirjhar Sarkar is a Professor in the Department of English at Raiganj University in India. He has published research essays in ‘Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal’ and ‘Postcolonial Text’ (Miami University Press) as well as contributed to the volume ‘Border and Bordering: Politics, Poetics, and Precariousness’ (ibidem Press, 2021).

This compendium entitled ‘Theatre as Alter/“Native” in Derek Walcott,’ authored by Dr. Nirjhar Sarkar is a critically detailed, structurally extensive, and theoretically formidable work which holds its focal point on the exploration of the dramaturgical aesthetics of the Nobel Laureate Derek Alton Walcott, whose theatrical oeuvre is less probed in contrast to his poetry. This particular monograph by Dr. Sarkar is posited on a structured fivefold division. It uses a nuanced, scholastic idiom, but counterbalanced with a lucidly probing analysis of the socio-cultural and political issues intrinsic to the theatrical realm of Walcott – viz. the status of the creolized theatre, the construction of a heterogeneous cultural identity in Caribbean theatre, and the process of ‘decolonization’ that is held as an autonomous extension of Caribbean cultural nationalism in general and Walcott’s works based on adaptation in particular. Walcott’s select plays and adaptations have been dealt in this monograph and minute analytical discussions of these works offer strategic critical assistance to readers to trace the genesis of alter-“native” theatre-aesthetics in Walcott’s dramaturgy, as part of an overarching cross-cultural discourse in the Caribbean archipelago. Hence, the monograph is irrefutably a significant entry, in particular to international Walcott scholarship, and certainly to Caribbean theatre as a whole.

Prof. Dr. Subhadeep Paul

Department of English
School of Literature, Language & Cultural Studies
Bankura University, India



January 2023 | Hardback 236x160mm | 179 Pages | ISBN: 978-1-64889-431-2
Also in Paperback (\$34/€31/£28) | ISBN: 978-1-64889-653-8

SUBJECTS Performing Art, Theater, Literary Analysis

VIEW/ORDER ONLINE AT vernonpress.com/book/1509

VERNON PRESS
SERIES IN LITERARY STUDIES

12% DISCOUNT ONLINE
USE CODE AT CHECKOUT

FLYPR12



VERNON PRESS
www.vernonpress.com

\$ 55

€ 46

£ 40