The British Empire and the Neo-Latin Tradition: The Case of Francis Williams

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The eighteenth-century Jamaican writer Francis Williams is a figure of considerable interest for two main reasons. In the first place, he appears to be the earliest black writer from the British Americas, and indeed the earliest black writer from anywhere in the English-speaking Atlantic world. His career predates that of better known figures like Phillis Wheatley (1753-84) from North America, or Black British writers like Olaudah Equiano (c. 1745-97) or Ignatius Sancho (1729-80). Secondly, Williams was known mainly as a writer of Latin verses, something which made him an important symbolic figure for writers on both sides of the great debate about slavery in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For defenders of white racial superiority, such as the Scottish philosopher David Hume or the Jamaican historian Edward Long, it was essential to belittle Williams' intellectual accomplishments, while for anti-slavery writers like the Scottish clergyman James Ramsay or the French priest and politician Henri Grégoire, Williams was a major exhibit in their campaign to persuade Europeans of the humanity and equality of black people.2

In the past three decades, Williams has attracted the attention of many modern writers in the fields of Caribbean, Black British and African American history and literature, who have given him at least a passing mention, and sometimes more extended discussion. Recent examples include Thomas W. Krise, who finds space for Williams in his anthology Caribbean, and Vincent Carretta, who puts Williams into an appendix of his Penguin Classics edition of the Complete Writings of Phillis Wheatley. All of these writers depend heavily, however, directly or indirectly, on the account of Williams given by Edward Long in his History of Jamaica (1774). With the exception of a recent study by Carretta ('Who was Francis Williams?'), which uses a much wider range of biographical sources, all of them appear to accept at face value Long's statements about the facts of Williams' life, and nearly all of them, whilst recognising the prejudice evident in Long's account, rely uncritically on the translation which Long provides of the Latin poem which Williams addressed to George Haldane, Governor of Jamaica, on his arrival in the island in 1759, and which remains the only work definitely ascribable to Williams which has survived (see Appendix).

I do not intend here to discuss Long's view of Williams, except in passing, or the tendentious nature of his translation of Williams' poem, which I have dealt with elsewhere (Gilmore 1998). Nor will I discuss the wider issue of Williams as a symbolic representative of black racial capacity. What I would like to do in the space available is to try to present some sort of context for the poem itself, and to look at what it is saying.

Francis Williams was born in Jamaica towards the end of the seventeenth century – his baptism was recorded there in 1697 – and he died there in 1762 (St Catherine Copy Register No. 1, pp. 40, 332). He was the third son of John and Dorothy Williams, who were free black people. This was an extremely unusual status in Jamaica, or indeed the entire Caribbean, at the time, when most black people were enslaved and Caribbean societies existed for the purpose of producing slave-grown sugar for export to Europe – exports which helped to create the wealth which led to the Industrial Revolution and Britain's commercial and military supremacy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is also clear that Williams and his family were rich – again, highly unusual even for free black people in that time and place – and that, even if they were at times on the receiving end of prejudice and bigotry, they could also call on the help and influence of powerful acquaintances among the white oligarchy of Jamaica. Francis Williams received at least some of his education in Britain – he himself says in his poem 'Insula me genuit, celebres alure Britannii' (l. 43), and he was admitted as a member of Lincoln's Inn in 1721. However, he had returned to Jamaica by late 1724 and he would appear to have spent the greater part of his life there.3

Edward Long suggested that Williams' poem was a 'rare phenomenon' – he meant because it came from the pen of a black writer. Modern writers on Williams have tended to view the poem in the same way, for somewhat different reasons, simply because they have been unable to locate any sort of context for it. For example, Locksale Lindo, a twentieth-century Jamaican classical scholar, says that:

Williams' ode, interesting as it is, suffers from its isolation, and can be placed only with the greatest difficulty in the history of Caribbean Literature. There is no evidence to show what, if any, indigenous material existed from which it could draw, nor is there any evidence of contempo-
rury or immediately subsequent literary activity on which it could exert some influence.

Lindo 1970: 79

Now that Latin is no longer widely taught, there is a tendency to think that it is rather odd for anybody to be writing Latin poetry, and particularly odd for anybody from the Caribbean to be doing so. It might be possible to draw interesting parallels between Williams and Latin writers from the classical or immediately post-classical period of African origin such as Terence, Lactantius or Augustine, or with a figure like the sixteenth-century black Spanish Neo-Latin poet Johannes Latinus (Spratlin 1938). However, the most useful cultural context for Williams is almost certainly that of his own time, in which the study of the Greek and Roman classics in general and the composition of Latin verse in particular enjoyed considerable prominence.

At least one nineteenth-century writer of Barbadian origin wrote verses in classical Greek which his British contemporaries thought worthy of preservation, but he would seem to have been something of an exception. Although not one, but two Barbadian churches boasted seventeenth-century fonts with palindromic inscriptions in Greek, when in 1836 the Bishop of Barbados wanted to include Greek quotations in a locally printed charge, there was apparently no Greek type available, and the quotations had to be supplied in manuscript. 

Latin, on the other hand, has been more prominent in Caribbean history and literature since the days when some of the earliest works describing the Caribbean for a European reading public, such as one of Columbus’ letters and the Decades of Peter Martyr, were first published in Latin. Material ranges from the Jesuit Andrew White’s rather elegant Latin prose of a Relatio Itineris in Martinlandum in 1633, which includes some of the earliest description of the recently established English settlement in Barbados, to the appalling dog-Latin of a begging letter addressed to the Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica in the mid-eighteenth century by a penniless Italian stranded on the island.

One type of source material which offers something more than anecdotal evidence about the use of Latin is that offered by epitaphs and monumental inscriptions. A survey of published collections of such material for the British Caribbean suggests a proportion of Latin to English perhaps not very far removed from that to be found on monumental inscriptions in England in the eighteenth century. While we recognise that this is somewhat slender evidence, it suggests that although Latin in the Caribbean was used only by an elite for special purposes, this was perhaps no more the case than it was in England. If a Latin epitaph was intended as a status symbol, it probably did not need to be understood in its entirety (or at all) by the relatives of the deceased, or by more than a small proportion of the general public, in order to achieve the desired effect. However, one does wonder just who was supposed to be impressed by the Latin inscription set up 1797 over the door of the slave hospital at Orange Valley in Trelawney, Jamaica (Wright 1966: 262). Nevertheless, it is clear that at least in the larger Caribbean colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there would always have been enough people like Robert Hooper, the Attorney General of Barbados who died in 1700, and who was described on his monument as ‘Vir haud vulgariter eruditus et egregio Ingenii acumine ornatusissimus’ (Oliver ed. 1915: 12) to provide a readership for such inscriptions, and to feel that one of the distinguishing marks of such a ‘man uncommonly learned and greatly distinguished by an exceptional sharpness of intellect’ was a good command of Latin. Edward Long’s father, Samuel Long, might feel that ‘Plain English wrote in an easy manner is more agreeable to the reader than high flights and forced conceits, larded with scraps of Latin and Greek without any coherence’ and Edward Long himself felt that ‘Scholarship’ (i.e. classical scholarship) was more important from the point of view of prestige than of practical use: ‘if it be of any real value, it must arise from the Honour of getting Rank’. In spite of this, and in spite of his having bridled at the schoolboy task of turning most of a book of the Iliad into Latin hexameters, Edward Long made sure that his son got a conventional classical education: we find him praising his son Edward Beeston Long (born in Jamaica) for his efforts at Latin verse composition and for ‘a very elegant and affectionate Epistle written in Classical latin, such as Pliny, ought not to have been shamed of’, as well as supervising a younger son’s blundering efforts to construe Ovid (Howard ed. 1925 vol. I: 102, 125, 141, 150, 154-5, 160).

A blunter expression of Samuel Long’s doubts was given by a character in J.W. Orderson’s Creoleana, a novel set in the Barbados of the 1790s. When the father of John Goldacre, the young hero, expresses the wish that he had spent more money on his son’s education, his wife demands: ‘And what’s the good of all that grammar, Latin ... and outlandish gibberish they make such a fuss about? It won’t buy the hair of a nigger, nor an acre of land ....’ But young Goldacre is painfully aware that money is not enough to fit him for the hand of the heroine, and when he is free of his parents’ immediate supervision, he sets out to get a proper education, which includes securing himself ‘the able assistance of Mr. Cater, a man of unimpeachable morals, and of great classical attainment’.
Mr. Cater was to be found in Bridgetown. As early as 1676 there were teachers of Latin in Barbados (Bradenbaugh and Bradenbaugh 1972: 396-7), and while the history of education in the Caribbean is a story of fluctuating fortunes, until the middle of the twentieth century the ‘education of a young colonial’ in the region meant, for the privileged few, the same sort of classical training which was long regarded in Britain as providing the best which Western civilization had to offer. Sometimes, at least, the Caribbean was able to offer this kind of education to a standard at least equal to that which prevailed in the ‘Mother Country’ – as Eric Williams (the later Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago) found at Oxford in the 1930s, when his performance in an unseen translation from Ovid enabled him to put down ‘a tall English chap with a long nose and an air the quintessence of superciliousness’ with the retort, ‘You see, we speak Latin in Trinidad.’ But while a few still-surviving Caribbean schools date back to the eighteenth century, and in that period it was sometimes possible for upper-class youths to be tutored by the local clergyman, it was often (elsewhere as well as in Jamaica), as Long put it (2002 [1774]: vol. II, 246-7):

... the custom for every father here, who has acquired a little property, to send his children, of whatever complexion, to Britain, for education. They go like a bale of dry goods, consigned to some factor, who places them at the school where he himself was bred, or any other that his inclination leads him to prefer.

A glance at the pedigrees and genealogical histories compiled by antiquarians of a previous generation shows that many sons of planter families were sent to some of the best-known schools in England, and that many went on to university. The Creole who went to Edinburgh had most probably decided on a career in medicine – one bibliographer notes twelve medical dissertations in Latin published at Edinburgh in the second half of the eighteenth century by Barbadians alone. Those who went to Oxford or Cambridge – still, until 1838, the only universities in England and Wales – found themselves in academic communities in which (whatever their failings in terms of narrowness of curriculum and lack of research in the modern sense) classical scholarship was treated with respect, and the ability to write Latin verses was regarded as the mark of an educated gentleman.

In England, the eighteenth century was perhaps the modern period when the composition of original Latin verses was most highly prized as an intellectual activity. In the words of Leicester Bradner’s wide-ranging survey of Anglo-Latin poetry (1940: 226):

The eighteenth century represents the height of classical culture in England. Education in the great public schools consisted of a wide acquaintance with Greek and Latin writers and a smattering of mathematics... The ability to write Latin verse was implicitly accepted by most educators as one of the signs that a boy was proceeding satisfactorily in his work. The result was to spread this ability over the literate part of the population to a greater degree than ever before or since. At the same time the quality of the output – at least that part of it which got into print – improved considerably.

Well-known figures in English literature, such as Addison, Gray and Johnson, wrote Latin poetry as a matter of course. It was still possible for a man like Vincent Bourne to acquire a considerable reputation for his poetry in Latin alone – because he did not also write English poetry, he is now generally forgotten. Numerous anthologies and collections of Latin verse by modern writers were published in Britain, and some of this material has been the focus of scholarly attention in recent years. Latin verse was considered particularly suitable for commemorating great events, or for tributes to monarchs and other distinguished personages. One of the major outlets for Latin verse was the anthologies published by the two universities in honour of such occasions as a royal visit (or, more rarely, a visit by the nobleman who was the university’s chancellor), a notable victory, the death of one sovereign and the accession of a new one, or a birth or marriage in the royal family. As Bradner comments, ‘Such collections gave many members of the university an opportunity to appear in print, no matter how small their poetical ability, and they were therefore popular in academic circles’ (1940: 99).

It is therefore not surprising that these anthologies include a few Latin poems by Caribbean writers, though they seem to have been generally ignored by students of Caribbean literature. We find a figure well-known in Barbadian history, Christopher Codrington, expressing his devotion to William III in 1690. In 1713 two Barbadians appear in an Oxford anthology in honour of the Peace of Utrecht: one of them, John Maynard, has a poem on the Asiento, which offers, in elegant hexameters, an apology for the slave trade as rescuing its fortunate victims from a barbarous Africa given to cannibalism and human sacrifice, while the other Barbadian, John Aleyne, contributed a poem on the South Sea Trade, which was reprinted in a general anthology of Latin verse in 1717. Another Barbadian, this time a Cambridge man called James Edward Colleton, published a poem on the death of George I (1727), and an Antiguan, John Gilbert, sang the praises of the Duke of Newcastle, Chancellor of the
in one form or another, by many Englishmen of the period. But in the conclusion of his poem Alleyn reminds his listeners or readers that he is not an Englishman at all, but a Barbadian:

Tu quoque luxurians nativo Nectare Tellus,
Chara mihi Patria, exultes; Tu debita jungas
Gaudia; Te posthac supreme in limite Regni
Non distare querar; non terminus Ultimus ANN\R
Sceptri eras: Anglicum nunc ipsum resipies Austrum,
Teque Orbis mediae video, Imperiique Britanni.

For Alleyn, the third generation of his family to have been born in Barbados, his patria, his Fatherland, is not England, but Barbados. Alleyn’s loyalty to the rule of Queen Anne, to the British Empire, is combined with an intense local patriotism, and his praise of Harley and the treaty he has brought about leads up to an assertion that it is no longer the metropolis, but the Caribbean colony which is at the centre of the Empire. Superficially this is stated in geographical terms, but Alleyn’s description of Barbados points out its economic importance: it is a land abounding in its native nectar, the cane juice from which was obtained the sugar which was a source of wealth to England as well as Barbados. Implicit is the suggestion that the Peace of Utrecht will bring England increased profit from the sugar industry as well as from the possibility of Chilean gold.

When we look at Francis Williams’ poem to Governor Haldane side by side with these other Latin poems by Caribbean writers and the anthologies of which they formed part, the poem addressed to Haldane begins to seem less unusual. It is not just that Williams was, as Long put it, ‘fond of this species of composition in Latin, and usually addressed one to every new governor’, though we may note the assumption that every new governor at least ought to have been able to appreciate such a tribute. Wherever he learnt to compose Latin verses (something which remains uncertain), Williams is writing in a well-established genre, and he shows his awareness not only of Latin poets of the classical period, but also of modern Latin writing by the way in which he suggests that Buchanan would have been better qualified to sing Haldane’s praises. Long criticised Williams for comparing Buchanan to Vergil, but it is a most adroit piece of flattery on Williams’ part, for Haldane, like Buchanan, was a Scot, and the achievements of George Buchanan (1506-82) as a Latin poet were a matter of national pride well into the eighteenth century. The black Jamaican and the sons of white Creoles are writing in the same genre: Long complained
that Williams' "strain of superlative panegyric" was "scarcely allowable even to a poet", but the work of the other poets shows that Williams is doing no more than what is characteristic of this type of poem at the period, and is, indeed, to be found in earlier examples in English, such as Aphra Behn's "pindarick" on the Duke of Albemarle's voyage to Jamaica (1687), or the anonymous 1718 ode on Governor Lawes' arrival in the island (the earliest known example of Jamaican printing). If John Gilbert hails the Duke of Newcastle as a Macenas, the poem immediately before his in the same anthology (by an Englishman, Edward Tew) goes a step further and compares the Duke to Apollo. When we read Codrington saying that the Caribbean wants to weave her laurel wreaths into the "sacred hair" of William III ("sacris texere sarta comis"), or Colleton referring to the recently expired George I as "Divus" as though he were a deified Roman emperor, it will not seem to us quite as much a matter for criticism as it did to Long that Williams should call Haldane "the Caesar of the West" — nor will we be terribly surprised to find a later colonial governor, who was a member of a prominent Creole family from the Leewards, calling himself "Imperator & Gubernator Insularum Caribearum" on a Latin inscription erected in Antigua in 1780. Echoes of Vergil, Horace and Juvenal in Alleyne suggest the bias inherent in Long's criticism of Williams for using the same sort of echoes — criticism intended to suggest that the black poet was little better than a plagiarist, even though the recycling of phrases from classical authors was a widespread and accepted feature of modern Latin poetry. Alleyne's praise of Barbados can be paralleled by Williams' defence of his status as a black poet in a white world. The other poems make that of Williams look rather less of a "rare phenomenon" — it is written within a set of established conventions, something which Long did his best to disguise in his attempts to put down Williams. This, I feel, makes it easier to appreciate Williams' position: he is unusual because he is black, not because he is a Caribbean poet writing in Latin.

To turn now, albeit briefly, to the poem itself. It begins by suggesting that, with Haldane's arrival, Jamaica will once more enjoy peace and the rule of law after a period of upheaval — very probably, as Long suggested, a reference to the turbulent politics of the island under a previous governor, Admiral Knowles. Haldane is praised as a soldier who has distinguished himself in battle against the French, the traditional enemy of Britain in the Caribbean, as elsewhere. He is the victor of Guadeloupe. He is twice referred to as Optimus. His native Scotland rejoices in his genius — perhaps here in the sense of intellectual distinction. Buchanan, that decus patriae of the patria he and Haldane shared, would compare him to Achilles, and there is no doubt Haldane and other readers are intended to take it that the comparison would be a fitting one. He is the Caesar of the West, and Jamaica will not perish while his paternal care continues (I. 44). No doubt with this in mind, earlier in the poem (I. 16) he is promised what Long termed 'somewhat more than antediluvian longevity' though it turned out that 'the poet proved a false prophet, for Mr. Haldane did not survive the delivery of this address many months'. While Long endeavoured to suggest the contrary, this 'adulation' — however excessive it may seem to modern readers — is quite normal for the period. So too are Williams' expressions of conventional modesty: Buchanan would have done a better job of praising Haldane; eloquence wils under a tropical sun.

But there are other aspects of the poem which suggest more than simple sycophancy. Not only the populus, but also the plebecaula, of Jamaica are aware of the fact that their yoke has been lifted (I. 7), and here for once I think we must follow Long's translation, which suggests that the populus referred to the masters, and plebecaula to the slaves. Not many masters would have agreed that slaves had any interest in — or right to be interested in — the politics of Jamaica, in such burning questions of the day as the great controversy of Governor Knowles' administration, whether the island's capital should be Kingston or Spanish Town. In a slave colony, there are some rather curious resonances involved in referring to Governor Haldane, the King's representative, as servus, even Optimus ... servus (I. 13). And just as Christopher Codrington used his praise of William III as an excuse to blow his own trumpet, so Williams makes it clear that his expressions of conventional modesty are indeed purely conventional, something which riled Long considerably. Williams does indeed say that Minerva forbids an Ethiop to sing the battles of great leaders (ll. 21-2). Yes, Buchanan would be more suited to the task. However, for a writer of Latin verses to admit that he was not as good as Buchanan is far from suggesting he was a hopeless scribbler — many would have agreed with the suggestion that Buchanan was little, if at all, inferior to Vergil (l. 26). In lines 29-38 Williams explicitly defends his right to be a black poet and to address such an exalted personage as Haldane: non cute, corde valet — his words derive their worth from his sincerity, and the colour of his skin should not be taken as detracting from this. I believe this is also the suggestion of lines 37-8, with their opposition of candida and nigr/a deliberately calling attention to itself. Candidus can mean not only 'white' but also 'sincere'; corpus can refer not only to a physical body, but also to the substance of an argument. Williams' couplet can thus mean more than the literal 'Go to greet him (i.e.
Governor Haldane], nor let it be a cause of shame to you that you have a white body in a black skin’ – it carries the suggestion that, whatever the prejudiced might be led to assume from his appearance, the poet is inwardly sincere. Writing in eighteenth-century Jamaica, in a society where the habitual abuse of blacks by whites included the stereotype that, as Long put it (History of Jamaica: II, 407), ‘They are excellent dissemblers’, Williams can perhaps be seen here as making a positive assertion of black dignity. He insists, contrary to the whole tenor of Jamaican slave society which was based on concepts of white superiority, that God has given the same soul to all, that *virtus* and *prudentia* have nothing to do with colour, that there is no colour in an honest mind, *nullus in arte color*, which we can perhaps translate as ‘no distinction of race in artistic capacity’. Indeed, he goes on (ll. 39-42) to praise his own accomplishments in no uncertain manner; while Long dismissed this as unseemly boasting, we should remember that for Williams, maintaining his own dignity as a black man and a black poet in a white-dominated world would have been a constant struggle.

Finally, we may look at one other aspect of what Williams says about his identity. It seems to be a matter of pride to him that he was nourished by the *celebres Britannii*, the authority of the British King is unquestionably accepted and the defeat of Britain’s French enemies treated as matter for congratulation. However, loyalty to the British Empire is combined with a more local patriotism, which is perhaps more intense. While the *patria* of Buchanan and Haldane is Scotland, the *patriae ... amor* which distinguishes Williams is more ambiguous. *Patria* here could be the British Empire as a whole, but I think it is more likely to refer to the island which gave birth to Williams, and which in l. 43, with its echo of the famous epitaph of Vergil, he contrasts with the *Britanni*. He concludes the poem by expressing the hope that *terra, Deique locus* will continue to see Haldane ruling *Florentes populos*. These are clearly the peoples of Jamaica, and the *terra* in the last line, as it is in l. 4, is Jamaica itself. But what is the *Dei ... locus*? It probably is opposed to *terra*, so that *terra, Deique locus* is, as Long translates it, ‘earth and heaven’. It is tempting, however, to see the *terra as being the Dei ... locus*, in anticipation of the twentieth-century Jamaican play on words: ‘Jamaica, Jah mek yuh’.

Appendix

Text of Francis Williams’ poem addressed to George Haldane, Governor of Jamaica, 1759:

Integerrimo et Fortissimo
Viro
GEORGIO HALDANO, ARMIGERO,
Insula Jamaicensis Gubernator;
Cui, omnes morum, virtutumque dotes bellicarum,
In cumulum accesserunt,
CARMEN.

DENIQUE venturum fatis volventibus annum
Cuncta per extenso lata videnda diem,
Excussis adest curis, sub imagine clarâ
Flices populi, terraque lege virens.
Te ducite, que fuerant malesuada mente peracta
Irrita, conspectu non rediva tuo.
Ergo omnis populus, nec non pleaecula cernit
Haevarum colo te relegasse jugum,
Et mala, que diris quondam cruciatus, insons
Insula passa fuit; condoluiisset onus
Ni victrix tua Marte manus prius inclyta, nostris
Sponde ruinosia rebus adesse velit.
Optimus es servus Regis servire Britannia,
Dum gaudet genio Scotia terra tuo;
Optimus herbum populi fulcre ruimam;
Insula dum superest ipse supertis eris.
Victorem agnosce te Guadaldapu, suorum
Despecti meriti diruta castra ducem.
Aurea vexillis flebit jactantibus Iris,
Cumque suis populis, oppida victa gmet.
Crede, meum non est, vir Marti chari Munerva
Dennegat. Ethiopi bella sonare ducum.
Concilium, canaret te Buchanania ex armis,
Carne Peleide scriberet ille parem.
Ile poeta, decus patriae, tua facta referre
Dignior, alisnon vixque Morone minor.
Flammiferos agitante auro sub sole jugales
Vivimus; eloquium deficit omne foci.
Hoc demum accipias, multa fulgine fuxum
Ore sonatur; non cute, corde valet.
Pollenti stabilita manu, (Deus alme, eandem
Omnia mitis animam, nil prohibente dedit)
Ipse coloris egens virtus, prudentia; honesto
Nullus inest animo, nullus in arte color.
Cur timesse, quamvis, dubitevee, nigerrima celsam
Cassaria occidui, scandere Musa domum?
Vade salutatum, nec sit tibi causa pudoris,
Candida quod nigrâ corpore pelle geris!
Integritas morum Maurum magis ornat, et arder
Ingenii, et docto dulcis in ore ducor;
Hunc, mager cor sapiens, patriae virtutis amorque,
Eximius sociis, conspicuumque factum.
Insula me genuit, celebras aluere Britannii,
Insulae te salvo non dolitura patre!
Hoc precor; o nullo videant te fine, regentem
Florentes populos, terra, Deique locus!

FRANCISCUS WILLIAMS

Text from Edward Long, History of Jamaica (London, 1774): II, 478-81. I have not followed the eighteenth-century practice of leaving a space before certain punctuation marks, but spelling and punctuation are otherwise as given in Long. The accents are as in the text, and in accordance with the normal usage of the period, as is the italicisation of proper names. I have, however, followed Long's italicisation of some other words and phrases to which he drew attention in order to comment on them unfavourably.

1. 8, relagasse Long suggests this is an error for relevasse.

Notes

1. See the editions of their works by Vincent Carretta (listed in the Bibliography).
2. Hume's dismissal (which is quoted by Long) of the capacities of black people in general, and of Francis Williams in particular, appeared as a footnote to his essay 'Of National Characters'. The essay was first published in the 1748 edition of Hume's Essays Moral and Political, but this particular note was not added until the version of the essay which appeared in Hume's Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects (4 vols, London and Edinburgh, 1753-4). See Green and Grose eds 1964: III, 252. The text of the essay is perhaps more accessible in Copley and Edgar eds 1953: 113-25, with this note at 360.

3. I owe the detail about Lincoln's Inn to Vincent Carretta (personal communication). See also Carretta 2003 for further biographical information. I am presently working on a full-length study of Francis Williams, based on material in archives and libraries in Jamaica and the United Kingdom.

6. See White 1995 (1633) and review by the present writer; also, undated letter, Jacobus (Giacomo) Giuni, to Henry Moore (Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica, 1756-62), in Howard ed. 1925: I, 160-1. Moore was married to one of Edward Long's sisters – 1926: I, 120, 185, 186.
7. Based on analysis of Wright 1966; Oliver ed. 1915 and 1927; and Ravenshaw 1878. In spite of the pseudo-archaic title, this last is a fairly serious piece of antiquarian scholarship.
8. Orderson 2002: 34, 50 (= 1842: 22, 49). Orderson was an old man when he published the novel, and was describing late-eighteenth-century Barbados from personal experience.
9. See the chapter on 'Education of a young colonial' in Williams 1969, especially 34-5, and Greenwood in this volume.
10. A very large part of Oliver 1894-9 consists of accounts of planter families, and similar material for the British Caribbean as a whole fills much of Caribbeana, a periodical he edited. Brandow 1983 brings together many articles of this type.
12. See, for example, Binns ed. 1974 which includes a chapter by Mark Storey on 'The Latin Poetry of Vincent Bourne', Baldwin 1996 and Money 1998. Ljewin 1990 provides a comprehensive survey of modern literature in Latin, including (295) a brief mention of Francis Williams.
13. Brathwaite 1979 and 1979a provide comprehensive surveys of material published in English in the pre-emancipation period for the territories covered, but do not include works in Latin.
14. In Academiae Oxfonensiis Gratulatio (unpaginated). See Harlow 1990 (1569) for biographical details. This poem is not included in Harlow's 'Appendix B: Literary Remains and References' (221-43), which does print an English ed. Codrington published in a similar anthology in 1688 in commemoration of the birth of James II's sister, the Old Pretender.
15. Maynard and Alleyne's poems in Academiae Oxfonensiis Comitia (unpaginated). Alleyne's poem was reprinted in Musarum Anglicarum Analecta ... Vol. III, pp. 28-31 (NB this volume was an unauthorised addition to an earlier collection of the same name by a different publisher). Maynard is identified as the son of Samuel Maynard of Barbados in Foster ed. 1887-92: III, 995. Alleyne (or Alleyne) is specifically identified in both editions of his poem as 'Reynold Alleyne de Barbados Arm. fil.' ("son of Reynold Alleyne of Barbados, gentleman") and full biographical details about John Alleyne[e] (1695-1730) and his family may be found in a series of articles by Louise R. Allen originally published in the Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society and collected in Brandow 1988.
16. In Carmina ad ... Ducem de Newcastle inscripta. John Gilbert was the son of Nathaniel Gilbert of Antigua, and born there – biographical details in Veep 1940-54: III, 46. One of John Gilbert's brothers was another Nathaniel Gilbert, who was Speaker of the House of Assembly of Antigua (1763-9) and responsible for the introduction of Methodistism into the island; see information on the family in Oliver 1894-9: 12-16.
17. It could be argued that this is true even of the three-line fragment we have of a Cambridge composition in Latin verse by Edward Beeston Long, who left Jamaica at the age of five – even if it owes more to imagination than experience, it is a description of a hurricane (Howard ed. 1925: I, 141).

18. For the 'Indian laurels' ('Suscepie & haece, Gulielme, suas habet India Laureas'), compare Addison's poem, 'Pax Gulielmi Auspicis Europeae Reddita, 1697', where he says of Codrington, 'India progenuit' ('India gave you birth'). From classical times, Latin poets frequently used singular for plural, and vice versa, to accommodate the demands of metre, and 'India' is thus equivalent to 'the Indies'. On Addison's friendship with Codrington, see Harlow.

19. ' ... ecquis qui ... / quos flavos muniant Indos, / Thesaurum Europae, nitidisque cubilia gaza? / Dignus adest, dignus Sceptrum qui summat ab illo ...'

20. For an introduction to Buchanan as a poet, see Ford 1982, which includes an edition (text, translation and commentary) of Buchanan's Miscellaneorum Liber by Philip J. Ford and W.S. Watt.

21. Todd ed. 1992: II, 222-5: McMurtrie 1942, which includes a facsimile of the 1718 second edition of 'A Pindarique Ode on the Arrival of his Excellency Sir Nicholas Lawes, Governor of Jamaica, &c.' (no copy of the first edition is known to exist).

22. Oliver ed. 1927: 4; 'Imperator' could of course mean 'general' or 'ruler' as well as 'emperor', but the word has clearly been chosen for its grandiloquence. The governor was William Mathew Burt; for the family, see Oliver 1894-4: I, 87-91 and III, 414; and Caribbeana V (1919): 89-96, 315-16.

5

Refiguring Classical Texts: Aspects of the Postcolonial Condition

Lorna Hardwick

This paper looks at the relationships between modern refugation of ancient texts and the development of new literatures and performance traditions in postcolonial contexts. It uses a practice based approach which then becomes the basis for suggesting revisions to some of the conventional assumptions about Western domination in the perfomance histories of Greek drama and in the tradition of epic poetry. I shall include material which demonstrates the capacity of classical plays to emerge from imperial ‘domestication’ and to function as counter-texts, not only in the theatre of newly liberated nations but also within colonising societies. Refugation of classical drama can be an important means of escape from colonisation of the mind for colonisers as well as for the colonised. I shall argues that, although each postcolonial history is different, nevertheless, analysis of rewriting of classical texts in colonised and colonising societies shows that there is a pattern of features that suggest a distinctive role for classical material in provoking awareness and transformation of cultural identities.

The argument draws on research on the impact of classical referents in modern drama and poetry which has been undertaken as part of the Research Project on the Reception of Classical Texts at the Open University. It is based on analysis of examples taken from the database of well over 700 recent productions of Greek drama (published at http://www2.open.ac.uk/ClassicalStudies/GreekPlays) and also relates to work which is currently being developed on the migration of Greek images, metaphors and formal conventions into modern poetry and drama.3 The database of plays includes performances in the original languages in close translation and in free translation, adaptations and versions. It will be obvious that this spectrum takes the term ‘classical referents’ to the limit and includes new works. I have argued elsewhere that the term ‘translation’ now includes a wide range of relationships to the original, including the non-verbal languages involved in translation to the stage.4 My main emphasis here will be towards the creative
N.B. — this is the bibliography for the whole volume, not just Gilmore’s chapter.

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