



Myth and History in Caribbean Fiction: Alejo Carpentier, Wilson Harris, and Edouard Glissant

Barbara J. Webb

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At a time of growing interest in postcolonial writing, this volume offers a comparative study of three major Caribbean novelists: Alejo Carpentier, Wilson Harris, and Edouard Glissant. Despite differences of language and background, these writers from Cuba, Guyana and Martinique have much in common. Each has written extensively on the shared heritage of the peoples of the Caribbean and each has been influential in redefining the poetics of the novel in the context of New World culture. Barbara J. Webb shows how these writers use the myths and legends that arose from the clash of Amerindian, African, and European cultures in the New World as vehicles for historical inquiry. Their fiction can be seen as creative explorations of a violent history of rupture and exploitation and of the possibility of new beginnings. Through close readings of ten novels, Webb examines how Carpentier, Harris and Glissant interpret such folk traditions as the maroon legends, the myth of El Dorado and carnival in their different approaches to problems of cultural identity, historical reality, and literary creativity.

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