

West Africa Review (2000)  
ISSN: 1525-4488



This is when there are no foreign ships lying near you. If you have a competitor, you must regulate matters in such a way as to injure him, for he who is first loses little time, and to save time is a great advantage.

{ *West Africa in the Mid-Seventeenth Century, An Anonymous Dutch Manuscript*

**3. Robert Hayden (USA), from "Middle Passage" (with its concluding lines: "Voyage through death/to life upon these shores")**

Aye, I ad, I have seen these factories...  
Have seen the nigger kings whose vanity  
and greed turned wild black hides of Fellatah,  
Mandingo, Ibo, Kru to gold for us.  
And there was one--King Anthracite we named him--  
He'd honour us with drum and feast and conjo  
and palm-oil-glistening wenches deft in love,  
and for tin crowns that shone with paste,  
red calico and German-silver trinkets... (1962)

**4. Derek Walcott (Saint Lucia/Trinidad)**

The claim [on the New World] which we put forward now as Africans is not our inheritance, but a bequest, like that of other races, a bill for the condition of our arric(ort4(our)-275(-274(osa)28(v)28(er.))-424(Or)-275(ou28(w)nur)-275ce,sori(-2743ard no worcisge.



\textsl{Not yet has my heart or head  
} . \textsl{In the least way realized  
} . \textsl{They and I are civilized}.

#### 8. Michelle Cli (Jamaica), *Abeng*

*Do-fe-do* [that is, fighting among themselves] mek guinea come a Jamaica.

-proverb

The people in the Tabernacle...had been told in school that their ancestors were pagan. That there had been slaves in Africa, where Black people had put each other in chains. They were given the impression that the whites who brought them here from the Gold Coast and the Slave Coast were only copying a West African custom. As though the whites had not named the Slave Coast themselves....

Before the slaves came to Jamaica, the old women and men believed, before they had to eat salt during their sweated labor in the cane field, Africans could fly. They were the only people on this earth to whom God had given this power. Those who refused to become slaves and did not eat salt flew back to Africa; those who did these things, who were slaves and ate salt to replenish their sweat, had lost the power, because the salt made them heavy, weighted down.

{*Abeng* (1984) Note(made)-3323(ere)-fnacause5((p)-e(5(7(Gold4)-323(old4)-0 -e)]TJ 0 -ld4)-con)-28(o-l

Jesus God, that must have been something to see....Wow!...[My great-granddaddy could yyyyyy..."

**10. Louise Bennett (Jamaica)**

``Back to Africa'' (1947)  
Back to Africa Miss Matty?  
Yuh noh know way yuh dah-sey?

.....

*Unambiguous Diaspora Slavery/Ambiguous African Wonders: 11 Ways of Wondering About the Connection.*

7

taken away as slaves with the collaboration of their own brothers,

