Derek Walcott: Foreword

Marta Dvorak
Volume 28.2 is an exceptional issue devoted to the poetic works of Derek Walcott, winner of the 1992 Nobel Prize for Literature. The project began when Walcott’s volume of *Collected Poems* was chosen for the 2005-06 programme of the prestigious French Agrégation national competition. Since for English language and literature students, the choices of authors have traditionally revolved round a British or American canon, the choice of a West Indian poet, playwright, and cultural theorist was a momentous event in the French literary landscape. I consequently hosted an international conference at the Sorbonne Nouvelle on 17-18 March which Derek Walcott attended, and at which he participated in a writers’ session involving a fellow Caribbean writer, E. A. Markham. The papers given at the conference by reputed international scholars, many of whom are specialists in the field of Caribbean literature and acknowledged Walcott specialists, have resulted in this selection of essays discussing issues such as intertextuality, polyphony, performance, writing and reading practices, poetry, language, and society, as well as questions of reception in an age of an increasingly transnational readership. The articles are followed and enriched by Derek Walcott’s entirely original talk and discussion with fellow writer Archie Markham, which was taped then transcribed by Kerry-Jane Wallart, to whom I extend my warmest thanks.

Readers will have the opportunity of discovering the journal’s new MLA format, and the addition of a book review section. Queries or books to review can be sent to Chantal Zabus, 14 rue du Doyenné, 1180 Brussels, Belgium. Readers and subscribers will be pleased to see that we have made up for the delays which accompanied the publication and distribution of the two preceding issues, and that this spring issue is not only out on time, but out earlier than has been customary. Finally, a simple reminder that during this period of transition, the web site of the journal will remain for a short time at , before being transferred to the site of the Sorbonne Nouvelle (www.univ-paris3.fr/recherche/sites/edea.htm).

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