



Derek Walcott: A Caribbean Life

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This is the first full-scale literary biography of Nobel Prize-winning poet and dramatist Derek Walcott. It traces the creative contradictions in his life from colonial St. Lucia, where he was part of a tiny English-speaking Protestant mulatto elite in an overwhelmingly French-Creole Roman Catholic black society, to 1999 when, a star of international literature and a symbol of cultural decolonization, he wanted to be Poet Laureate of England. The author had had access to letters, diaries, uncollected and unpublished writings, and conducted numerous interviews in the Caribbean, North America, and Europe. Walcott is seen as someone driven by the need to justify his life and fulfill his talents before an unknowable God, but who, in mastering the ways of the world often regards himself as an example of fallen humanity. Besides offering an approach to Walcott as a poet, dramatist, theater director, arts critic, and teacher, the book shows how his desire to be a painter influenced his vision and the way he works.

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