V. S. Naipaul's account of the 1972 Trinidad killings and his novel *Guerrillas* (1975) provide a significant example of the relationship between fiction and non-fiction. The long essay and the novel were written one after the other, if not simultaneously, in the early 1970s around stories recognizably alike. On re-editing the essay in 1980 Naipaul explicitly related fiction and non-fiction and suggested a hierarchical interpretation of their relationship: his journalism "bridged a creative gap" but led finally to those novels — alluding to *Guerrillas* and *A Bend in the River* — which otherwise would not have "offered" themselves to him. An initial interpretation of such a relationship would then be novelcentric: assuming that "The Killings in Trinidad" was in some way preparatory to *Guerrillas*, a comparison between the two enables us to understand better Naipaul's poetics and how he works as a novelist. But it is clear that the essay has not been merely ancillary to the novel and that in the light of Naipaul's later literary production, and the subsequent revision of his text, a reading of the relationship of fiction/non-fiction exclusively in terms of preparatory phase-main achievement would only be limiting.

The essay, to begin with, exists in two different editions, one published before and one after the novel, which prevents us from considering it as, strictly speaking, preparatory. "The Killings in Trinidad" was published for the first time in two parts in the London *Sunday Times Magazine* in 1974 but was revised and expanded for the volume edition of 1980 and given the new title of "Michael X and the Black Power Killings in Trinidad". Both articles delve into the case of Michael X — alias Michael de Freitas and Abdul Malik — and the two murders with which he was involved in 1972. Nevertheless they are not the same article. The changes due to the new editorial form — such as the abolition of photographs and subtitles and the division in four parts according to the content, instead of the arbitrary serialization in two instalments — together with many additions and the long final "Postscript" make the new edition a completely different artifact. Besides, it is endowed with new connotations. Edited by Naipaul himself it is more authoritative and, combining old and new parts, it has acquired an ironical overtone, which is peculiar to it alone. In fact, although by the 1980s Naipaul knew a great deal more about the Michael X case, he did not rewrite the whole article, nor did he explain by degrees the obscure elements, but instead hybridized the original by emphasizing some points and enriching it with more extended quotations. In other words, he withheld until the end almost all the information gathered in the meantime so as to render the "Postscript" a completely alternative narration to the rest of the article. Only in the "Postscript" are the unclear facts explained and the perpetrators, reasons and
dynamic of the murders revealed. The reader too knows more and is therefore likely to approach the essay in a different way, certainly more as an authorial work by Naipaul and prompted by *Guerrillas* than as a reportage on the killings in Trinidad. Being "Michael X and the Black Power Killings in Trinidad" different from "The Killings in Trinidad" and published after *Guerrillas* we cannot exclude that the novel may, in its turn, have led to the essay.

It is not possible to state to what extent the publication of *Guerrillas* determined the choice to republish and partially rewrite the essay, although even a superficial reading of the "Postscript" supports the hypothesis of a possible influence of the novel on the article 4. What is certain, however, is that their relationship can no longer be read as necessarily unilateral.

The volume edition of his 1970s and then 1980s non-fiction has also rendered more difficult adherence to a hierarchical, novel-centric perspective. From the 1980s onwards, in fact, Naipaul has shown an increasing interest in forms other the novel and, by the 1980s, an interest in such non-fiction writings for their own sake. When, in 1983, Naipaul edited *Finding the Centre*, again a volume edition of essays previously published in magazines, he seemed to have no doubts about the literary value of his non-fiction. His aim then, he said, was "narrative", and even if the reader "will... see how the material could have served fiction or political journalism or a travelogue... the material here serves itself alone" 5. The same, even if unacknowledged by Naipaul, applies also to the volume edition of "The Killings in Trinidad", which may in turn be read for itself and, to some extent, as narrative.

And yet, in writing "The Killings in Trinidad" Naipaul's intention was certainly not merely narrative. The essay is in fact so multifaceted that it is almost impossible to arrive at a satisfactory definition of its nature and meaning. It focuses on marginal characters and events located in a place which is, in Naipaul's definition, nothing more than a dot on the map, "The Killings in Trinidad" is itself a political gesture: Naipaul is self-avowedly creating an alternative to traditional journalism by denying the assumption, as he said, that "if you are unimportant all that had happened to you could be ignored" 6. Moreover, in dealing with the case of a racial leader who was transformed into a murderer by myths and ideologies, political and moral judgement are foregrounded.

The essay, despite the title, deals only cursorily with the killings which occurred in Trinidad in 1972 and is largely concerned with the personal history of Michael X, a mulatto from Trinidad fashioned into a successful Black Power leader in the London context of the 1960s, "made" and "undone" in England. In 1971, having had problems with the law, he was in fact forced to return to Trinidad, where he "flourished" for one year. He set up an agricultural commune with the help of Hakim Jamal — an American Black Power hunter — and his English girl Ann Gale Benson. At the beginning of 1972, in less than two months, Michael X, now Abdul Malik, committed two murders, those of Gale Benson and Joseph Skerritt, a co-worker in the commune. Soon apprehended, he was not sentenced and convicted until two years later, in 1975, but the complete truth about the two murders was known only in 1979, when Stanley Abbott, the last surviving accomplice, was sentenced and put to death.

Narrative for narrative's sake is not what strikes one initially in Naipaul's account of the Trinidad killings and the Michael X story. A personal obsession, a strong political opinion and a parenthetical inclinations are instead recognizable at first sight. From the very beginning Naipaul takes sides, stating clearly and with a sense of urgency his attitude: Malik and his retinue, black and white, are childish con-men, trapped into performing a Black Power program which, in the end, will turn out to be nothing more than jargon, words, fiction. Malik was made by words, and the reason for his final failure was his belief in the possibility that words could become real. But before stating his diagnosis plainly — "London words, London abstractions... words, and more words" he will say on p. 28 — he tries to convey it with other indirect means 7. Thus, in order to underline the discrepancy between the signifier and the signified, the key-words of Malik's jargon are ostentatiously marked by inverted commas. Mohammed Akbar is the "muslim" name of Steve Yeates — one of Malik's accomplices and co-workers — who, in the "commune", the "organization", performed the role of "Supreme Captain of the Fruit of Islam, as well as Lieutenant Colonel (and perhaps the only member) of Malik Black Liberation Army" (p. 11). This stereotyped and grand definition, which does not need inverted commas, since its absurdity is self-evident, is repeated four times (pp. 11, 15, 70, 90) with only slight variations 8. Malik, in his turn, is said to have done "agriculture", "to have been Black Power leader", underground black "poet", black "writer", a black Muslim refugee from "Babylon", in revolt against "the industrialised complex" (pp. 11-12). The use of the inverted commas is obtrusive — it is even reinforced in the 1980 edition — and allows the reader to recognize immediately Naipaul's distance from the subject. Likewise, ridicule precedes criticism on the portrayal of the relationship between the three main characters, Hakim Jamal, Gale Benson and Malik. By interweaving neutral information and personal comments, in a way that closely resembles the theatrical aside, Naipaul creates a comic situation:

Jamal was an American Black Power man. A few months before, when he was being taken around London by Gale Benson, he had described himself to the *Guardian* as "excruciatingly handsome, tantalizingly brown, fiercely articulate" 9. That was his style. From Trinidad he wrote to Yeates, in the United States: "Money is a white thing — the thing they protect. The heaviest thing they have to carry". And Jamal was anxious to lighten the load. He was full of schemes for black uplift that needed white money... (p. 13) (emphasis mine).

The effect is still further reinforced in the following lines by the clash between subject and register:

He was in some ways like Malik. But Malik did black agriculture and black communes, and Jamal did black school and black publishing; and the two men did not clash. (*Ibidem*) 9.

The symmetry with which the two leaders' activities corresponds conveys the idea of a childish and simplenised attitude towards ideas and projects which were instead sustained with apparent seriousness. Again, what impresses is the insistence with which Naipaul renders ridiculous Malik and his associates.

Naipaul's attitude is clear from the first paragraph. The article opens with the foregrounding of a corner file, which suggests a premeditated murder:

A corner file is a three-sided file triangular in section, and it is used in Trinidad for sharpening cutlasses. On December 31st, 1971, in the country town of Arima, some eighteen miles from Port of Spain, Steve Yeates bought such a file, six inches long. Yeates, a thirty-three-year-old Negro, ex-RAP, was the bodyguard and companion of Michael de Freitas — also known as Michael X and Michael Abdul Malik. The file, bought from Coolie's Hardware, cost a Trinidad dollar, 25p. (p. 11).

But to the exhaustive description of an intersubjective fact — the purchase of a particular object in a definite place and time — Naipaul immediately counterposes words, marked with inverted commas in order to emphasize their status as mere words:
It was charged to the account of "Mr Abdoul Malik, Arima", and Yeates signed the charge bill "Muhammed Akbar". This was Yeates's "Muslim" name. In the Malik setup in Arima — the "community", the "organization" — Yeates was the Supreme Captain of the Fruit of Islam, as well as Lieutenant Colonel (and perhaps the only member) of Malik’s Black Liberation Army. ( Ibid. )

In a few phrases Naipaul hints at a murder, the time and place it occurred, its perpetrators, and even the ultimate reasons for the killings. The rest of the article, circular in its structure and repetitious to the limits of obsessiveness, revolves and elucidates incessantly the same ideas. There is no development, no change, but only piling up of proofs in order to ensure the reader’s unequivocal assent. His prose is at times truly passionate, almost harangue-like, as in the conclusion of the 1973 edition, which closely resembles a peroration.

Some words from the Conrad story can serve as her [Benson’s] epigraph, and as a comment on all those who helped to make Malik, and on those who continue to simplify the world and reduce other men — not only the Negro — to a cause, the people who substitute doctrine for knowledge and irritation for concern, the revolutionaries who visit the centres of revolution with return air tickets, the hippies, the people who wish themselves on societies more fragile than their own, all those people who in the end do no more than celebrate their own security (p. 74). [emphasis mine]

Naipaul makes use of the traditional rhetoric — the quest for the literary precedent, parallelism, anaphora, vortatio, dramatic pauses — in order to kindle the reader’s emotions.

The obsessionality of the article, however, is not wholly explained by Naipaul’s need to interact with society. He himself acknowledged that one reason for its existence was the “creative gap” he experienced from 1970 to 1973. In this period, Naipaul had to face the painful situation of being a novelist without being able to produce novels, having somehow to explain his role in society. In “The Killings in Trinidad” as well as in the other pieces written in these years, therefore, Naipaul presents himself not only as a political journalist but also in his capacity as master of words and literary critic. The entire article is more in the form of a commentary or aside to the reader than an authorial formulation of the way in which events really occurred — at least in the first edition. Naipaul emphasizes that he is dealing with texts — spelling mistakes and deleted words are always pointed out and block capitals are used for slogans on the walls and newspaper titles; when it is impossible to deal directly with events, texts provide the only access to them. For this reason, instead of superimposing an a posteriori order on the events connected with the killings, Naipaul offers, at least in the first instance, the chronology according to which facts have reached the press. Thus, the accidental drowning of Steve Yeates, the mysterious fire at Malik’s house and the deaths of Joseph Skerritt and Gail Benson appear in reverse order. But texts are not only an inevitably bleached and misleading version of facts; if perceptively read, they may yield information which goes beyond the surface meaning of words. It is worth noting that, according to Naipaul, this applies to all texts, Malik’s letters, novels, interviews, as well as items in the local newspapers. In the same way that he can detect homicidal tendencies in Malik by scrutinizing the novel he was writing and discover Malik’s true self in an unpublished letter to his mother, an article about Steve Yeates’ drowning betrays that something is being concealed because of the way it was “presented” (p. 16).

“The Killings in Trinidad” may therefore be read as a piece of literary criticism in the broadest sense. But “The Killings in Trinidad” is also narrative, with much more in common with the novel than with traditional journalism. Naipaul does not see the events connected with the Trinidad killings as historically circumscribed facts, news striking for its exceptional nature and virtually unrepeatable. He sees, rather, a symbolic story which, like a novel, is still meaningful even in a different spatio-temporal context. Had it not been so, Trinidad news from 1972 would have been almost nonsensical not only in New York in 1981, but also in 1974, when the article was first published in the London magazine. Naipaul acknowledges that he is merely recounting an old story, that of the “false redeemer” and the “conquering corruptions of colonizer and colonized”, not at all “killing” news (p. 73). Again, as in a novel, what matters is not the fabula — which may be confused with the words — but the interweaving of motives, the literary texture the story is given. Naipaul legitimates a reading of reality as narrative, since he assumes — and demonstrates — that fiction and reality share the same formal structure: characters and real people, plots and incidents from real life are difficult to distinguish from one another. In the concluding sections of the 1973 edition, for instance, Naipaul writes:

Malik, Jamal, Skerritt, Steve Yeates, Stanley Abbott, Benson: they seem purely contemporary, but instead of concluding the sentence with other historical examples, he adds:

but they played out an old tragedy. If the tragedy of Joe Skerritt and Steve Yeates and Stanley Abbott is contained in O’Neill’s 1920 drama of the false redeemer, the tragedy of Gale Benson is contained in an African story of 1897 by Conrad, which curiously complements it... (p. 73).

The isomorphism between fiction and reality allows him to switch unnoticed from one to the other in the same sentence.

In his account, reality has proved to be even more amazing than fiction. In order to render its make-believe qualities, Naipaul more than once makes use of the features of the novel. His favourite model is the thriller, which he more or less consciously parodies, especially in the first parts of the essay. The narrator’s point of view is that of an investigator, gathering clues from mysterious and inexplicable facts and formulating hypotheses. The initial description of a corner file and the lingering on the whereabouts of its purchase not only function as a menacing thriller-like foregrounding; a careful reading of the passage shows that Naipaul is presenting evidence, a bill, playing in this way the part of an investigator following a trail for. It’s not immediately apparent to the policeman or the professional grave-diggers who had been called in, the face distorted and half melted away around bare teeth, one of which was capped in gold. The blue jeans were lowered: white underpants. Not a woman. A man, Negro or Negroid, five feet nine inches tall 10, whose head had been almost severed from his body (p. 10).

Like a novel, the essay elicits from the reader an emotional and imaginative response; but it shares also, unexpectedly, the same indeterminacy of meaning. Although throughout the article Naipaul seems to be consistently condemnatory in his attitude towards Malik and his regime, the conclusion of the 1973 edition is open-ended and confusing. At the end, in fact, with no clear connection with what
precedes, Naipaul inserts "some lines by Lamartine", translated, "typed out on Belgravia paper and photocopied" by Gale Benson's father and sent to her in "one of the last letters [she] received" (pp. 74-75). The poem and the act of quoting it are open to different interpretations: the allusion to whiteness and purity ("Your life also only pure white pages behold") may be read as a sentimental version of Gale Benson, who, in Naipaul's eyes, was anything but pure, and the emphasis on Belgravia as evidence of the "ultimate security" on which Benson could count; or Naipaul may have been struck by her father's presentiment of her imminent death ("On the page where one loves, one would wish to linger. / Yet the page where one dies, hides beneath the finger", p. 75) or it may be seen as another of the fictions of which Gale Benson was victim. The ironic reading would certainly be more consistent with what precedes it, but it is not possible to exclude that Naipaul was sincerely caught and moved by this discovery, or intended that his readers should be.

"The Killings in Trinidad" is the meeting point of these various and conflicting impulses. Different exigencies call for different codes: the languages of novel and poetry, forensic oration, literary criticism and political journalism are alternately employed in a narrative which, although defined as an "expository piece, crisp and matter of fact" 11, defies any genre definition.

In that it is one among the possible literary formalizations of a portion of reality, for which facts are no less a loose starting point than they are for the novel, "The Killings in Trinidad" has a life of its own and is not hierarchically inferior to the novel. Yet it happens to be related to a novel and the analysis of that relationship is most useful in understanding Naipaul's poetics and his changing attitudes towards the novel.

With time, as stated, the position of essay and novel has changed into a symbiotic relationship. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that at some stage and in some way the essay has been preparatory to the novel, if Naipaul is to be given credit for saying that "out of [these] journeys and writings, novels did in the end come to [him]" (The emphasis is mine 12). The similarities in plot, characters and setting are striking: novel and essay are reduced to an abstract fabula they are almost indistinguishable. Two murders occur on a Caribbean island — specifically a young English woman, again a publisher, and a young negro are killed; the figure responsible is again a half-negro leader, become or, made famous in England, who, once forced to go back to his island of origin, assumes muslim pseudonyms and sets up an agricultural commune.

The list of similarities would be almost endless but also misleading, unless we make clear that fragments, and neither the essay nor reality as a whole has been transposed. In fact, although Naipaul owes his fortune in the United States to a misunderstanding of his intention, Guerrillas was not intended to be a political or historical novel 13. For example in the novel the killing of the young ex-member of the commune, Stephens, who, like Joseph Skerritt had become an unbeliever, does not occur before the murder of the white woman, at Stephen's house, not at the commune; the event is public and is the occasion for a riot; Jimmy is a halflman, a Chinese black, not a mulatto and Roche is white and from South Africa, not an American black. It is not possible to find a single example which is a completely faithful transposition of a real character or event into the novel. But as far as fragments are concerned, the similarities are marked, although sometimes out of context, and point clearly to a relationship between the two texts. The Stephen-Skerritt case is a minor, but for this purpose enlightening, example: both are members of the commune who, for unspecified reasons, do not believe in the "cause" and longer; both disappear suddenly (Naipaul hints at their being held hostages) and their disappearance is accounted for in each case with a similar expression:

Jimmy's answer to Roche, "I suppose he's run out on us" 14, echoes Malik's report at the trial that "Joe Skerritt had only disappeared" (p. 27). In addition, Roche's visit to Stephen's mother includes most of the details Naipaul recorded in the essay after the visit he himself paid to Joseph Skerritt's mother. In "The Killings in Trinidad" he wrote:

Joe Skerritt was not important, and he is remembered, as a person, only in his mother's house in Belmont. A large framed portrait is pinned to the wall of the small living room. There are framed photographs of his more successful brother, Anthony (in sea scout uniform), who is in Canada, and of his sister, who was many years a nurse in England. ... The house is shabby, and (like Skerritt) looks after her mother, who is senile and shrunken, skin and bones, with thin grey hair tied up tight and sitting on the skull like a coarse knotted handkerchief (p. 72).

In Guerrillas too the visitor's attention is attracted by some framed photographs of the woman's children (p. 107), one "a success" (p. 108) is portrayed in the novel in academic gown instead of sea scout uniform, and is said to be living in England. There is no mention of the other children, but the reference to an old woman is maintained, her mother in the essay, "senile and shrunken"; a neighbour, "smaller than Mrs Stephens, with slacker flesh" and "squashed face" in the novel (p. 107). Stephens is, in effect, Skerritt's counterpart, but more often fragments are displaced and used in different contexts. For instance, many of Jamal's attributes, as well as those of other members of the commune, are "condensed" in Jimmy. Roche is physically and psychologically the opposite of Jamal: he is white and utterly non-charismatic. He is described as a "small man in his mid-forties, sad-faced, with sunken cheeks, deep lines running from his nose to the corners of his mouth" (p. 49), while Jamal saw himself as "excruciatingly handsome, tantalizingly brown, fiercely articulate" (p. 13), and was described by a journalist as "a handsome man, a brigand with a gold ring in his ear... tall and spare" (p. 40). Jamal's self-satisfaction and the consequent relation with the white English woman are attributed to Jimmy. Likewise, Jimmy's machismo is emphasised by reference to a past of sexual violence (p. 28), which was instead a characteristic more of other members of the commune than of Malik.

ragments, not whole units, are moved from one map to the other. The number of similarities in plot and characterization, however, should not obscure the fact that there are also as many differences. Moreover, as far as narrative strategies are concerned, essay and novel could not have been more distinct. Instead of a mixture of conflicting impulses, the code in the novel is consistent throughout; there are no misleading and contradictory time sequences: events are placed in a unique, linear, climactic sequence, with time sequences: events are placed in a unique, linear, climactic sequence, with no temporal oscillations and only brief excursions into the past; both time and space are "condensed" in Jamal, who, as a natural instead of social entity, there are no dates or kilometric distances; days simply pass, places have no names (they are referred to as "the city" or "the capital") but possess connotations: they are dry, smoky, unpleasant. In opposition to the essay, the novel displays a marked tendency towards concentration and generalization at the same time: Guerrillas is set in approximately one week of a non-specified season and year, in a small unnamed island, and almost nothing is perceived as happening until the final rape and murder of Jane, an action eliciting from the reader emotions akin to the Aristotelian ethos (pity) and pathos (fear). By changing the names of the places and the people involved and avoiding any precise time and place — even if all these details might be easily ascertained — Naipaul has created a general paradigm eventually unrelated to historical episodes 15. The time boundaries chosen, more than anything else, are
evidence of a deep divergence between essay and novel: while "The Killings in Trinidad" dealt almost exclusively with the events following the two killings, Guerillas focuses on the few days immediately before the killings, a phase which was almost unknown when Naipaul started the novel, since the trial for Gale Benson's murder had not yet taken place.

It is clear that however preparatory to the novel the essay may have been, adherence to the previous literary map and to history is not the only recognizable trend in the novel. Naipaul is also patently trying to grant autonomy to the new narrative. Hence his intervention is not confined to a reordering of the pieces of reality into a new configuration — which was the principle according to which the essay was written — Naipaul has changed the scale of the map, and in so doing, has created a possible world, alternative to and incomensurable with the real one. Human beings are in fact portrayed as thinking, gesturing and interacting in the restricted world of everyday life, a realm out of the reach of any journalistic reconstruction.

Naipaul has stepped out of history and into fiction, reshaping events and characters according to his vision and sensibility. Creating a new world in a verbal universe means first of all changing names and, further, contriving and using them in opposition to the laws governing the actual use of language. Denomination is a function of the message. Like time and place, names are deprived of their social dimension. Whereas Jane's surname is never mentioned, even if her passport is examined twice, Roche is almost without a Christian name. He is Roche for the narrator, as Mr Biswas was Biswas since his birth, and he is Roche for Jane most of the time, a hint at the absence of intimacy between the two. He is called by name during a radio interview, but only as part of a strategy, to create an impression in the listener. Meredith, the interviewer, says: "Let's keep it like a conversation, ... I'll call you Peter and you'll call me Meredith" (p. 201). In effect Jane is not a Christian name nor Roche a surname; in that they are symbols rich in connotations and literary allusions, they are, above all, vehicles of Naipaul's vision. Jane, come to the island out of boredom more than political faith, recalls, as Bruce King has pointed out, another literary Jane in search of excitement in the Tropics 18, and in that she is anything but unexperienced, "Jane" is an ironical allusion to Jane Eyre who, as John Thieme has put it, "looks forward to an extended life beyond the narrow confines of her sheltered existence as a girl and a young woman" 17. Peter Roche, despite the redundant reference to stoniness implicit in his name, an "odd but solid" man in Jane's eyes (p. 53), is portrayed in all his frailty (he sees himself, using an interesting mineral metaphor, as having built his life "on sand"), (p. 102). The characters themselves reshape reality by changing names. Jimmy always calls Roche "masta", emphasizing the power relations, which, in the end, govern the intercourse between blacks and whites — Jimmy considers, in fact, the firm which employs Roche as "great slave traders in the old days" who "now pretend that they are ordinary - but is experienced by the novelist as seer. Hence the novelist is a better man — more perceptive or more naive — and a better artisan, capable of communicating his sense of wonder to other human beings. Naipaul has in this way established the premises for a poetics of reality which has come paradoxically to coincide with Romantic poetics of the self. While he recognized in Guerillas and A Bend in the River the poetical potentials of the external world, in his latest novel-autobiography, The Enigma of Arrival, the inner life is chosen as the locus of the novel, and yet the formal principles at work are the same. Selection and invention, reduced to its original meaning of invenire, find out, instead of fabulation or fiction, been firmly established as the new principles of his poetics.

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NOTES


4 Whereas the first edition, despite it was entitled "The Killings in Trinidad", dealt almost exclusively with the Michael X story, the "Postscript" instead focuses just on the two killings and gives prominence to other characters beside Michael X. The change in the subject is due to the fact that the "Postscript" was written after the trials for both the murders had taken place. The expositional technique is well, however, has undergone a radical change; the chaotic and fragmentary account proposed in "The Killings in Trinidad" is replaced by a chronologically ordered exposition of the events connected with the two murders, while scenes and dialogues have taken the place of the citations from letters, articles and books, which constituted the body of the first edition.


7 References are from the volume edition of the article in The Return of Eva Peron, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1983, pp. 11-92. Differences from the first edition will be pointed out.

8 In the first edition "Mohammed Akbar" was in italics and the expression 'the commune', the 'organization', did not appear.

9 On p. 61, again Naipaul writes 'Jamal's black schools and black publishing merged with Malik's black agriculture into a stupendous black cause'.

10 The part in italics was not in the first edition.


12 The Return of Eva Peron, p. 5.

13 As Elaine Campbell has said "A Refinement of Ragen: V. S. Naipaul's A Bend in the River", World Literature Written in English, 18, 1979, p. 395), "accepting the novel on too apparent a level, the American reader discovered in Guerrillas a denunciation of guerrilla warfare, particularly guerrilla activity in the Caribbean".

14 Guerrillas, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1984 (London, Andre Deutsch, 1975), p. 27. Subsequent references are to the Penguin edition and are included in the text.

15 The novel is set just in 1972, as it can be easily inferred from Jane's birthdate and age while the island shares characteristics both of Trinidad and Jamaica.


18 Ibidem, p. 172.


20 The Return of Eva Peron, p. 218.