Duality, Genre and the "Modern Mulatto":

Response and Representation in

Contemporary British Fiction

By Cassie Adjei

Contents

Chapter 3: National and International Identification, and the State of

Belonging

Chapter 4: Gender

Chapter 5: Young People's Literature

Acknowledgements

With thanks to Dr John Gilmore, and to Dr Joanne Collie

for beginning this journey with me

Declaration and Inclusion of Material from a Prior Thesis

This thesis is my own work and has not been used for any previous

publications or been submitted for a degree at Warwick, or any

other university

Duality, Genre, and the "Modern Mulatto":

Response and Representation in Contemporary British Fiction.

Abstract 2015

Within the last few decades much interest has arisen around the growing field of black British and "multi-ethnic" literature, yet the presence of protagonists of mixed origin in these works has been widely overlooked. The aim of this thesis therefore is to explore these characters across a range of genres, using Mixed Race Studies and other critical approaches in order to discover whether contemporary British writing challenges or perpetuates preconceived notions about mixed race subjectivity.

Thematically structured, the thesis uses selected texts by authors such as Jackie Kay, Charlotte Williams and Lucinda Roy to investigate how contemporary literature provides a platform for self-expression in the form of the autobiography; explores gender and sexuality; challenges notions of British national identity and national narratives; and (re)considers the problematic concepts of "race" and "belonging".

Furthermore, in the last chapter, the thesis discusses the presence of the mixed race character within picture books for children and young adult fiction. In this section the thesis suggests that such characters can become a strategic tool for

the promotion of a culturally diverse nation, whilst also providing young people

with coping strategies against racism and introducing the reader to alternative

histories.

Wishing to employ a comparative and interdisciplinary framework, the thesis

draws upon research from a range of different fields, analysing the discourse of

"race" and the construction of "mixed race" with the support of writers such as

Robert J.C. Young, Frantz Fanon, Stuart Hall, Miri Song, Suki Ali, and Jayne O.

Ifekwunigwe.

List of Abbreviations

BLG – Black Lesbian Group

BNP – British National Party

CEHR – Commission for Equality and Human Rights

CH4 – Channel 4

CRE – Commission for Racial Equality

EDL – English Defence League

FGM – Female Genital Mutilation

LM – Liberation Militia (from *Noughts and Crosses*)

ONS – Office of National Statistics

UKIP – UK Independence Party

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Introduction

Aims of the Thesis

In the last few decades interest in "multi-ethnic" literature and studies of black British writing has increased, and many authors and texts have now been brought into the canon of popular literature. Yet discussion about the canonical status of mixed race characters and authors still remains a peripheral concern. With the recent emergence of the field of Mixed Race Studies, however, it is timely to begin making further enquiries about this situation, and to consider if such texts (and their authors) might be linked, to a greater degree, with this new discourse. One way in which this could be achieved perhaps would be through the construction of a sub-genre for texts which deal with mixed race subject matter; an idea that has already been put in the practise in the United States. Yet the existence of "interracial literature" as it has sometimes been termed can be brought into question in the first instance.[1] What would such a literature look like, and would it have to be written by a mixed race person, or would it be about the themes in the texts, or the characters? Who would benefits from such writing, and how would it be perceived in relation to black British writing? These questions will hopefully be addressed within this thesis;

---

[1] In *Neither Black nor White, Yet Both* (1997), for example, Werner Sollors' proposes interracial literature to be: 'works in all genres that represent love and family relations involving black-white couples, biracial individuals, their descendants, and their larger kin – to all whom the phrasing may be applied, be it as couples, as individuals, or as larger family units' (1997, p.3).

however, the main aim of the research is to explore mixed race representation in contemporary British fiction. This will be undertaken through the analysis of a number of selected texts which feature a mixed race protagonist.

The first aim of the thesis is to consider the way in which race, the mixed race individual and interracial mixing has been viewed historically, and how it is viewed presently. This, it is hoped, will create a backdrop against which literary representation can be further discussed, but will also highlight the types of preconceived notions of race and interracial mixing that abound in contemporary British society. With this in mind, the thesis will then examine whether the selected texts perpetuate or challenge these preconceived notions. In addition, the thesis seeks more broadly to uncover how such texts have created new and innovative ways of exploring race and mixed race subjectivity in relation to theoretical notions of gender, sexuality, national identity and hybridity, as well as how such texts have provided a platform for alternative voices to be heard through the use of storytelling and a variety of literary genres. Finally, the thesis aims to consider what can be learnt from the texts about contemporary Britain and how the presentation of the mixed race character differs when placed within the context of Scotland, Wales and England respectively. This will in turn raise further questions regarding Britain as a culturally diverse nation and will link to a discussion both for, and against, children's literature being adopted as a means of promoting an ethnically diverse state.

The Texts

Though there are many works of creative art which would qualify for analysis in the discussion of this particular topic, including poems and plays, due to the time and word limitations, and for comparative ease, this thesis will focus on novels, short stories, and autobiographies. As chapters frequently switch between different texts, it might be useful, at this early stage, to provide a brief synopsis of each, as well as some clarification of the mix of the characters to be discussed. This in itself is problematic as to discuss intermixture purely on a national basis (i.e. English/Nigerian) leads to the reliance on countries and colour being synonymous (i.e. English is equal to white), a concept that will receive further critical thought in chapter 2. For this reason mixes here are represented both racially and nationally in the description of each text as follows:

Lady Moses (1998), by Lucinda Roy charts the early life of Jacinta Moses (white English/black Sierra Leonean) in a suburb of London, and follows her journey to self-discovery through her time in the United States and Africa.

Sugar and Slate (2002), by Charlotte Williams is an autobiographical account of growing up mixed race (white Welsh/black Guyanese) in Wales and also follows the author through a series of geographical locations including Nigeria, Sudan, Guyana and Wales.

The Rainbow Sign (1986), by Hanif Kureishi, is another autobiographical piece in which the author (white English/Asian Pakistani) considers his position in both England and in Pakistan.

The Buddha of Suburbia (1990), by Hanif Kureishi, is a novel about Karim (Asian Indian/white English) who is growing up in a dull London suburb where his father masquerades as a Buddhist guru. The novel follows Karim's adventures within the world of the theatre and his move to the capital.

Through Thick and Thin (2010), is the autobiography of Gok Wan (Chinese/white English), a celebrity fashion designer who has had a number of series on Channel 4.

Sister Josephine (1997), by Joanne Traynor, is a novel about the childhood of a mixed race girl (white/black) growing up in foster care, and her subsequent experiences while working as a nurse.[2]

Red Dust Road (2010), is an autobiography by the poet, playwright and novelist Jackie Kay (white Scottish/black Nigerian) as she muses upon her own experiences as a transracial adoptee.

---

[2] The country of origin of the protagonist's parents are not indicated in the novel.

Trumpet (1998), one of Kay's most famous novels, is based on the story of a famous trumpet player who, after his death, is discovered to be a woman. The novel features two mixed race characters, Joss, the trumpet player, and his adopted son Colman, and is set in Scotland. The mix of these characters is unclear. Joss has a white Scottish mother but the origins of his black father are not disclosed, and Colman does not know the origins of his birth parents.

Strawgirl (2002), a book for children by Jackie Kay, tells the story of the eleven-year-old Maybe (black Nigerian/white Scottish) who is joined by a magical friend made of straw after her father dies in a car accident. Together they combine their strengths to save Wishing Well Farm from the two brothers who wish to build a supermarket on the land.

Why Don't You Stop Talking (2000), is a collection of short stories by Jackie Kay. "Big Milk" features a mixed race protagonist; in "Timing", the voyeuristic narrator's race is not disclosed but the story is concerned with the subject of an interracial relationship; and "Shell's" narrator is the mother of a mixed race son.

The Icarus Girl (2005), by Helen Oyeyemi, is about Jess, a mixed race eight-year-old girl (black Nigerian/white English) who, on a visit to Nigeria, finds a strange new friend who appears to be residing in her grandfather's compound. The friend re-emerges when she returns to England and slowly begins to exert a negative influence over Jess' life.

The Edge (2002), by Alan Gibbons, is another book for children. The novel follows Danny (white English/black Caribbean – undisclosed island), a fifteen-year-old who moves in with his grandparents in the north of England after escaping London with his mother where they have been victims of domestic violence.

Hero (2001), by Catherine R. Johnson, is also written for children. A novel based in the nineteenth century, it recounts the tale of the twelve-year-old girl Hero (white English/black Barbadian). After her white grandfather dies, her father is captured in a bid to return him to slavery, and Hero and her cousin embark on a mission to rescue him.

The *Noughts and Crosses* series comprises of four novels by the Children's Laureate, Malorie Blackman, and is written for an adolescent audience.[3] (Black/white mix – locations in the novel are fictitious). *Noughts and Crosses* (2000), starts the series by introducing the love affair between the black Sephy Hadley and the white Callum, and ends with Sephy's pregnancy and Callum's execution. *Knife Edge* (2004), follows Sephy from the birth of their mixed race daughter Callie Rose as she battles against the prejudice that she faces in her divided society. *Checkmate* (2005), sees the emergence of Callum's brother Jude who tries to turn Callie Rose against Sephy and the Hadley's through the revealing of her origins. Radicalised, Callie Rose turns to terrorism herself.

---

[3] Malorie Blackman was elected in 2013.

Double Cross (2009), finally concludes with the continuation of Tobey and Callie

Rose's relationship and an exploration of Tobey's struggle with urban gangs in

Meadowview.[4]

Methodology

This thesis aims to adopt a predominantly Mixed Race Studies framework to

support critical textual analysis.[5] Although the main emphasis of research is on

contemporary British texts, the thesis will also draw upon research on an

international level, particularly considering writing from the United States,

where Mixed Race Studies and ideas regarding mixed race subjectivity have

become a source of public tension, celebration and debate. The history of the

United States is vastly different from Britain, having been subject to slavery and

segregation, both of which Britain has not directly experienced. Comparison

between the locations for this reason must be undertaken with a degree of

caution. Nevertheless, many of the experiences, emotions and responses both

made publically, by wider society, and privately, by mixed race individuals

themselves, in the United States share significant similarities to those

experiences, emotions, and responses found in Britain (as evidenced by many of

the sociologically-based texts which will be discussed throughout this research).

For this reason, such sources should not, it is felt, be deemed entirely irrelevant.

---

[4] The thesis will also feature a number of illustrated children's texts. These plot lines will be
explored further in chapter 5.
[5] See chapter 1 for a full discussion on the field of Mixed Race Studies and its origins.

Furthermore, as Mixed Race Studies is a growing field (and far more advanced in the United States than here in Britain) it is hoped that some of the discussed topics within the thesis may be fruitfully expanded upon, developed and bolstered by using, theoretical concepts and frameworks from this region.

Although emphasis has been placed on Mixed Race Studies and literature, the thesis also aims to be interdisciplinary in its approach to the analysis of the topic, additionally drawing on a number of different academic fields/discourses such as Sociology, History, Gender Studies, Cultural Studies and Politics. (Cultural Studies in particular is called upon, for example, in chapter 1 when a range of what can be broadly referred to as 'texts' (Turner, 2003, p.71) within the field of Cultural Studies – such as newspaper articles, television programmes and information from websites – are adopted in order to build up an understanding of the public's perception of mixed race subjectivity).

Chapters

As many of the texts often share overlapping topics, literary motifs, and are linked to certain genres, a thematic approach towards the exploration of mixed race representation has been adopted, creating the following overall structure to the thesis:

Chapter 1: Representation will provide a historical background of the "mixed race presence" and the ways that this "community" (if it can be so considered)

has been represented and theorised in the fields of Science, Sociology and Literature, from the 1850s to the present day. The chapter will then consider the current climate of mixed race representation and what constitutes public knowledge, understanding, and perception of race in contemporary British society.

Chapter 2: Creating Self: Telling and Naming will begin by considering the themes of journeys and storytelling within the selected texts, and will explore how journeys in particular structure many of the narratives discussed within the thesis. The chapter will then look at autobiographical writing and the ways in which agency can be obtained from both the owning of, and through the telling of, life stories. Following on from this, the chapter will analyse in detail the concept of naming within the selected texts, identifying how this is linked to identity construction and why the naming of an individual becomes a further means by which ownership of self and self-definition can be established, even in the face of adversity.

Chapter 3: National and International Identification, and the State of Belonging will firstly use established theorists to explore the position of issues of race and interracial mixing within the wider meta-narrative of nationalism and what it means to be English or British. The chapter will then proceed to discuss the works of Williams and Kay, exploring their contribution to the debate on mixed Welsh and Scottish identities. In addition, it will be argued that mixed race characters must, at times, find alternatives locations by which they

can create a positive sense of self when Britain fails to offer them the support or environment by which to achieve this. The discovery of the Africa as such an alternative space is a commonality between a number of selected texts and the re-imagining of the continent is therefore at the heart of this chapter.

Chapter 4: Gender will consider the intersection between gender and race from a feminist perspective. Initially, the texts *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate* will be explored in relation to their portrayal of the mixed race female as an object of attraction and repulsion; the symbolism of hair styling in the texts; and where the mixed individual figures in the construction of the aesthetics of beauty. The chapter will then consider black masculinity and the "mixed race gaze", employing the works of feminist writers such as bell hooks, Patricia Collins and Heidi Safia Mirza. Finally, this chapter will consider intergenerational relationships between white mothers and mixed daughters, and will end by using Queer theory to offer alternative readings of Kay, Kureishi and Wan's works.

Chapter 5: Young People's Literature will conclude the thesis by exploring literature produced for children and young adults, outlining some of the key concepts behind theories of children's literature, including the importance of hidden and deliberate ideological structuring, and the use of pictorial representation. These areas will then be linked to the discussion of race and mixed race representation. The chapter is divided into picture books for the younger reader (approximately, 3-6 years), issue-based novels for the older

child reader (approximately, 11-14 years) and texts for the young adult (approximately, 13-17 years). The thesis aims critically to consider the style and textual formatting of such works, and to analyse their relationship to issues of cultural diversity, hybridity and the production of self.

Points of Reference

Discussing "Mixed Race" as a concept can be problematic for a number of different reasons. Firstly, the term relies upon the existence of race itself which, in recent times, is often no longer considered to be a 'biological matter' (Spickard, 1992, p.12). If the term were to be accepted, though, then to one extent or another everyone would have mixed ancestry due to prominence of migration and the interaction of populations throughout human history. If then, as Thornton suggests, 'technically we are all interracial' (1992, p.322), is it possible to articulate a separate mixed race identity at all?[6] Pro-identity academics have consistently argued that, although race as a biological concept is somewhat defunct in the twenty-first century, race is still relevant if perceived as a social construct, and part of lived experience. Further, despite the lack of credibility of mixing as a biological act, interracial relationships and mixed race people can be recognised as a social phenomenon within society, both historically and within the present day. It is this particular perspective on which the thesis is based.

---

[6] For a discussion of these issues, see Zack, 1993; Olumide, 2002; Song & Parker, 2001.

Yet if mixed race does exist, then who should be included? Since '[r]acial

identities are not fixed but are in a constant process of reproduction,

contestation, and transformation in relation to broader societal and structural

changes' (Rhodes, 2013, p.54), this varies greatly. In the past, for example,

"whiteness" has excluded certain minority groups and nations (such as the Irish)

that today would automatically be aligned with this category (Young, 1995). As

Moreno writes: 'The categorisation of who is permitted to be white and who is

marked as non-white fluctuates, and is a highly politicised and contested

matter' (Mahtani & Moreno, 2001, p.71). Indeed, what constitutes whiteness

itself has become an interesting field of research and a number of academics

have taken up the challenge of deconstructing it (Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg,

1993; Knowles, 2005).Yet despite being more inclusive than the category of

whiteness, mixed race as a controversially formed "racial category" also has its

own grounds of inclusion and exclusion, and some academics have already

commented on feeling rejected because their mix is not clearly definable

(Mahtani & Moreno, 2001). Equally, those who have been transracially adopted

may also have similar experiences to mixed individuals but maybe excluded on

the grounds of not being biologically mixed.

In clarification, for the purpose of this thesis then, the majority of discussion will

be around individuals/characters that have parents who are from different

socially defined racial categories, i.e. black/white, white/Asian for example. The

thesis does not, however, support the use of such categories, or even consider

them to be true or accurate: it is simply how society today constructs race, through the media, governmental bodies, and institutions such as schools and the health care/social welfare systems. It is the way that individuals define themselves, but perhaps it is time that such categorization is challenged. Essential to the thesis will be the discussion of arguments surrounding objective and subjective notions of race, demonstrating how self-perception and society's perceptions of the racialised identities of its citizens can greatly differ.

The topic of self-definition, in particular, labelled by Song as, 'the issue of agency and choice' (2003, p.74), has become a 'key theme in the growing literature on being multiracial' (2003, p.74). In the opinion of some academics, individuals have little choice over how society categorises them. Alibhai-Brown, for example, goes as far as to suggest that it is virtually impossible to self-define: 'Mixed race individuals do not have the luxury of thinking of themselves in purely personal terms. Their identity exists with a location and connects to how a family sees itself racially and culturally, and, ultimately, the self-definitions of communities and nations' (2001, p.100). On the same topic, discussing identification options, Aspinall and Song write that: 'We do make choices, but we don't, individually, determine the options we choose' (2013, p.51), suggesting that racial categories are pre-determined, and any given individual will only have a finite number of racial options available to them. (In the case of mono-racials, this is usually just one option, so there is no choice here; mixed race individuals of African heritage in the past, have also only had the category of "black" available to them. At the opposing end of the scale,

however, pro-identity academic Maria P.P. Root argues that there are in fact

numerous options available to mixed individuals. In her seminal text, *The*

Multiracial Experience: Racial Borders as the New Frontier, Root declares the

importance of being permitted to self-define through her "Bill of Rights for

Multiracials". Root's starting point is a personal one as she states: 'Countless

numbers of times I have fragmented and fractionalised myself in order to make

the *other* more comfortable in deciphering my behavior, my words, my

loyalties, my choice of friends, my appearance, my parents, and so on' (1996,

p.3).[7]

Root then continues by listing the rights in her suggested bill which include the

right to 'identify [herself] differently than strangers expect [her] to identify', and

the right to 'identify [herself] differently than how [her] parents identify [her]'

(1996, p.7). Furthermore, Root also asserts that through the right to identify

differently in different situations, a person's choice of identification can also

change over periods of time and under varying circumstances (1996, p.7).

(Root's ideas are paralleled by British-based Aspinall and Song's research, which

documents the way that a mixed individual's racial positioning is constantly

altered and transformed depending on their environment, who they are with,

and their state of life (2013)). Thus, while this thesis acknowledges that there

are restraints on identification imposed by any given society, it, in principle,

follows Root and other pro-identity academics in its recognition that individuals

---

[7] Author's Italics.

do have options and should have the right to self-define. The thesis will later come to examine the approach taken by the authors of the selected texts on this particular issue.

Finally, linked to the theme of self-definition is the contentious issue of terminology. 'When I was young', Small writes, 'I used to struggle to find a perfect analytical language, and now I just struggle to find a language that does not lock me into an inescapable cage' (2001, p.128). A bleak outlook perhaps, but many writers/academics have grappled with the issue since terms range so diversely from the colloquial to the derogatory. The struggle to obtain the most effective terminology is well documented in the work of Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe. In *Scattered Belongings: Cultural Paradoxes of "Race", Gender and Nation* (1999) Ifekwunigwe writes of the many names that have been ascribed to mixed race individuals:

> In varied cultural contexts, countless terms are employed to name such individuals – "mixed race", mixed heritage, mixed parentage, *mestizo, mestiza, mulatto, mulatta*, creole, colored, "mixed racial descent", mixed origins, dual heritage, dual parentage, "multiracial", "bi-racial", multiethnic to the more derogatory half-caste, zebra, half-breed, mongrel, *oreo*, Heinz Fifty Seven (1999, p.16).[8]

---

[8] Author's italics.

Despite this vast array, Ifekwunigwe selects the word métis(se), a French word

originally with derogatory origins, that has been appropriated in

Senegalese/French to mean a person who, 'by virtue of parentage embodies

two or more world views' (1999, p.18). Unlike conventional terms, Ifekwunigwe,

in 1997, perceived *métissage* to be 'a mind set or a newfangled shorthand way

to talk about the now universal constructs: oscillation, contradiction, paradox,

hybridity, creolization, mestizaje, 'blending and mixing', polyglot, heteroglossia,

transnationalities, multiple reference points, multiculturalism, so-called

multiraciality, 'belonging nowhere and everywhere', and endogenous and

exogenous roots' (1997, p.131). By 2001, however, Ifekwunigwe had rejected

the term *metis(se)*, believing it to be 'exoticising' and 'further marginalising

'mixed race' subjectivities' (2001, p.44). In this instance, she resorts back to

using the term mixed race as she sees it as a commonly accepted expression

and one that is 'part and parcel of the English vernacular' (2001, p.46).

As it did for Ifekwunigwe, the issue of the correct terminology to employ for the

purpose of this study has taken a degree of consideration. On the one hand,

"dual heritage" or "multiple heritage" are presently popular terms with policy

makers and within some academic departments. These phrases are helpful as

they are not directly implicated in the thorny issue of race, and are widely

considered to be 'politically correct' terms of address (Aspinall &, Song, 2013,

p.162). Yet the notion of "heritage", has also been used as a cover to speak in a

way which conceals racism – i.e. British heritage as "white heritage" for

example. Furthermore, the terms lack specificity and could be used to describe other non-race-based subject positions such as English/French.

Alternatively, there is "mixed race". The 'most widely used term in Britain, colloquially and in scholarship' (Aspinall & Song, 2013, p.160), it remains problematic due to its embodiment of 'the word 'race', a discredited concept that carries much historical baggage' (Aspinall & Song, 2013, p.160). Yet, conversely, the fact that the term does not 'retreat from a racialised discourse' (Ifekwunigwe, 2001, p.46) and in fact directly addresses race, affirming its importance as a social construct that influences an individual's lived experience, may also be seen as a positive attribute. Additionally, it is the term used most frequently by writers within the theoretical field of Mixed Race Studies, and since this will be the predominant framework chosen for the thesis, it seems appropriate to adopt the term mixed race to allow for consistency.[9]

Before discussing the selected texts in more depth, it is important to look a little more broadly at the subject of mixed race: its historical origins, its representation in sociology and the arguments surrounding the new field of Mixed Race Studies. Since this research is based on literature, the field of black British fiction will also be discussed. The following literature review will both present an overview of the topic and critically consider some of the research

---

[9] Since black and white are not referred to as "black race" or "white race" – the term mixed may also be used in a similar way in the context of this thesis to mean the mixed race individual.

that has previously been undertaken. The aim of the literature review is also to establish gaps in knowledge, some of which this thesis aims to fill, and some of which may be contributed to through further, future, work.

Chapter 1: Representation

1.1 Literature Review

Review Part 1: Historical Background

Interracial mixing has always existed; and has been present throughout history wherever there has been trading, migration or the general movement of peoples across the globe (Song & Parker, 2001; Olumide, 2002); however, the concept of intermixing or racial amalgamation was brought to the forefront of scientific and social discourse in the early part of the 1800s through the work of evolutionists and anthropologists. This period of "scientific racism" has been explored in a number of contemporary critical books (Young, 1995; Füredi, 1998).

The most comprehensive, perhaps, is by Robert J.C. Young who explores the relationship between science and empire. In *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Practice* (1995), Young focuses attention on ideas surrounding the evolution of the human species, recounting the various views concerning hybrid individuals throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century. These shifted from seeing races as being distinct species (and therefore unable to reproduce) through to the concept of race as species variation, where races could mix, but would produce inferior offspring (Zack, 1993). The interaction between 'colonial officialdom' and 'British social anthropology' (Füredi, 2001, p.30) duly noted by

Frank Füredi meant that these so-called sciences had a direct effect on British

Imperial rule which had in the past accepted (or chosen to overlook)

amalgamation for its own personal gain. As Jill Olumide suggests, in the early

days of Empire: 'Race mixing [had] been constructed as beneficial to the

establishment of transnational trading' as well as a ''perk' for men wishing to

underline the power accruing to positions of sexual, class and/or racial

dominance' (Olumide, 2002, p.179).

In the slave-owning plantations too, miscegenation was an active way of

propagating produce which could then be sold. Since, as Naomi Zack writes,

slave identity was passed down the maternal line, the active abuse of slave

women by plantation owners created more slaves (Zack, 1993). Yet

miscegenation became less and less popular as the colonial regime changed

shape and with the support of supposed "scientific fact", races were

encouraged to remain apart.[10] Produced by this process was a strange

relationship of both fear and desire that is analysed throughout Young's work,

an idea supported further by Suki Ali when she writes: 'The fear and desire for

Other bodies informed the building of Empire both in terms of creating national

and racial identities and in managing these in ways that disciplined gendered

and classed bodies' (2005, p.156). Such ideas will be of particular significance

---

[10] This change was one of both governmental policies on the management of the colonies and of demographics. In the early days of Empire, the territories were not considered suitable environments for women, but as the situation became more secure and settled, white wives began to join colonial officers and civil servants. Relationships between men and locals or slaves were then discouraged – although it did not stop them from happening (Zack, 1993).

when the thesis discusses the relationship between race and gender in chapter 4.

 Within the twentieth century, negative ideas regarding interracial relationships and the mixed race individual still remained in abundance. In 1927 the School of Social Science at the University of Liverpool decided to meet to discuss the "problem" of the coloured population in the city, (an event reported and analysed by both Schaffer (2008) and Ann Bland (2007)). A first report had been carried out by Rachel Flemming.[11] Fleure and Flemming had recently undertaken research on the lives of Anglo-Chinese children in Britain with the Eugenics Society, a group who 'existed in order to campaign for those changes in social policies and habits which its members perceived would improve the racial stock of the nation' (Schaffer, 2008, p.51).[12] This was followed in 1930, by the commissioning of "An Investigation into the Colour Problem in Liverpool and Other Parts", also known as the *Fletcher Report* by Muriel Fletcher, a probation

---

[11] Flemming was an assistant of H.J. Fleure, an anthropologist and geographer who worked at the University of Aberystwyth (Schaffer, 2008, p.16).

[12] Fleure and Flemming's research was based on anthropometry, a means of biological analysis that involved taking measurements of the subject's body and categorising them through supposedly racialised features such as skin colour, size of lips, shape of nose and size of head, (known as craniometry) (Bland, 2007, p.72). Today, as Bland identifies, the '*comparative* methodology' (2007, p.71) used by these researches can be recognised as having been highly flawed. Despite this, however, in the nineteenth to early twentieth century, it 'contributed to various political agenda' (2007, p.71) and influenced much of the current scientific and social thinking of the time. This was the case when Flemming relayed her discoveries. Fuelled with concern about ethnic mixing in the Liverpool area, an executive committee and eventually the Association for the Welfare of Mixed Race Children was established – see Lucy Bland (2007, p.74) for further comment on this. This group 'reconstituted', according to the Swann Report, in 1937 under the name 'Liverpool Association for the Welfare of Coloured People' (Swann, 1985, p.734).

officer who had studied at the university there. This report explored mixed

families, concluding that the social conditions frequently left them subject to

failure. Under the guise of Sociology, Fletcher continued to perpetuate much of

the social criticism that had been surrounding interracial relationships through

Eugenics. Painting a pessimistic picture in the *Liverpool Review*, Fletcher

suggests that white women, initially attracted by the 'negro' who is often 'well-

dressed [and] generous with what money he has' (1930, p.422) finds herself

trapped in a 'repugnant' lifestyle where her home becomes like a 'club for any

coloured men in port' (1930, p.422). Further, such women give birth to half-

castes (the real tragedy) that are 'slightly below the average in intelligence'

(1930, p.423), and have 'extraordinarily low' 'moral standards' (1930, p.423).

British opinions about racial intermixing also found influence overseas in the

United States. As Füredi suggests, seminal works by the American sociologists

Robert E. Park and Everett V. Stonequist were premised upon Lord Lugard's

accounts of the indigenous peoples of the British colonies (Olumide, 2002,

p.49). Expanding on Park's theories of the marginalised Jewish community in

the United States, Stonequist's *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and

Culture Conflict* would also come to influence British writing on the subject of

hybridity (Olumide, 2002, p.49). 'Irrational, moody' and '"temperamental"',

writes Stonequist (1937, p.148), the 'marginal situation produces excessive self-

consciousness and race-consciousness' (1937, p.148), resulting in '"Inferiority

complexes" being a 'common affliction' (1937, p.148). Although Stonequist

argues, 'the marginal type appears in every major race, among unmixed groups

as well as among racial hybrids' (1937, p.211), the racial hybrid is the 'most obvious' type (1937, p.10) since such an individual's 'very biological origin places him between the two races' (1937, p.10).

Towards the end of the Second World War, the reputation of the Eugenics Movement was severely damaged and opinions had to change. Perhaps, as Olumide notes (2002, p.45-47), this moment was firmly cemented by the creation of UNESCO, in 1948 when the committee set about creating a new and improved perspective on race. Through UNESCO, race became officially known as an 'unstable physical phenomenon which carried no meaning about the inherent psychology of different populations' (Schaffer, 2008, p.122). Arguing that there is no scientific evidence to prove that different races are less capable or intelligent, UNESCO rejected biological concepts of race in favour of a more sociological perspective. Schaffer argues that this shift in the 1950s meant that more progressive research was undertaken on race through the field of Sociology which resulted in a change of attitude toward migrants and migration. Rather than the usual perpetuation of the negative images of race, Schaffer argues that sociologists were 'generally more sympathetic to the presence of Britain's new black population' (2008, p.153) and would sometimes lobby the government to educate the general public about these new citizens. Yet Sociology, at this early stage, still perpetuated many negative stereotypes about the mixed race individual and the interracial family unit which required further challenge. An example of such a study maybe evidenced by Anne Wilson's 1979 text *Mixed Race Children*. Wilson felt that academia had long provided a

negative portrayal of mixed race life, serving mainly to reauthorize the claims

that such individuals suffered from social isolation and maladjustment. Wilson's

ambition was to explore the mixed race experience in a more objective way and

to consider the ways that mixed race children came to define themselves

racially: 'mixed race children have their own views of who they are which do not

necessarily conform to popular stereotypes' (1987, p.x).[13]

Wilson's study, however, shows some fundamental flaws, only focusing on

children with one 'white European parent and one black Afro-Caribbean parent'

(1987, p.vii), Wilson neglects other mixes such as Asian/white, disregarding

them due to 'extra factors' (1987, p.58) that would influence the results. This is

problematic as she continually refers to the "mixed race experience", and how

mixed race children feel and interact with society, when her research is only

based on one particular "racial" mix. Moreover, she assumes that those who do

not see themselves as either black or mixed race are misidentifying. Finally,

Wilson also mentions at the beginning of the text that children who have a

rounded sense of racial identity are those whose white mothers were willing

and/or able to become involved in the 'black community and life-style' (1987,

p.ix). Wilson does not explain what is meant by "black-lifestyle" and implies that

children brought up in predominantly white families are not able to access their

---

[13] Wilson's research was based on a 1939 study that was conducted by Kenneth and Mamie Clark on black children in the United States. In this study black children were shown a black doll and a white doll, and asked questions about which they preferred and identified with. To make the identification more realistic however, Wilson used images of different coloured children and asked a series of questions regarding who her subjects identified most with (Wilson, 1987).

"appropriate" racial identity and therefore cannot be adjusted individuals.

Today there is a substantial amount written about mixed race children and young people that has chosen to address some of the assumptions made by early writers in this field. The most noted is Tizzard and Phoenix's research into young mixed race people and transracial adoption (2002). Miri Song is another good example having interviewed mixed race siblings (Song, 2010a) and conducted research on identification choice in mixed race youth (Song, 2010b; Song & Hashem, 2010) in addition to contributing to other areas of the field (Song & Parker, 2001; Song, 2003, 2012).[14] Further, sociological study has made provision for intergenerational research as presented by Mark Christian's *Multiracial Identity: An International Perspective* (2000) which comparatively analyses the experiences of "Liverpool born blacks" (mixed race people in the Liverpool area) born between 1925-1945 and those born between the years 1965-1975.[15] Psychology, too, has combined with the Social Sciences to investigate public perception of mixed race attractiveness which will be discussed later in this chapter (see Sims, 2012; Lewis, 2010), and, in the field of anthropology/ethnography, Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe has paved the way with a radical overhaul of the role of the ethnographer and the way in which racialised disciplines can be overturned. Ali writes that: 'Racialisation is a term which reinforces the psychosocially dynamic process of 'racial positioning', and is

---

[14] Others researching mixed race children and young people include: Goodyer & Okitikpi, 2007; Ruebeck, Averett & Bodenhorn, 2009; Katz, 1996; Choudhry, 2010; Ali, 2003; Alibhai-Brown, 2001; Patel, 2009; Jacobs, 1992.

[15] Christian also explores the importance of regional identification, writing a chapter on mixed race issues in South Africa and Jamaica (2000, p.87-102). Another useful text is James F. Davis', *Who is Black?* (2001) which discusses the history of intermixture in the United States.

often shorthand for talking about the way in which, for example, discourses themselves are 'raced' and often how this takes the form of 'racism'' (2003, p.2). The issue of a field such as sociology itself being inherently racist is reflected in publications such as Caballero and Edwards' "Lone mothers of mixed race children" which recounts the derogatory and racist remarks written by researchers in the field notes of the 1960s study on white single parents (2010, p.10). Yet, in *Scattered Belongings: Cultural Paradoxes of Race Nation and Gender* (1999), Ifekwunigwe considers her own positionality in relation to her ethnographical subjects. Viewing herself as both an 'insider and outsider', Ifekwunigwe suggests that she is able to 'blur the boundaries between subjective experience and objective social scientific enquiry' (1999, p.56) whilst additionally selecting a non-Eurocentric mode of analysis for considering the narratives of her mixed race (or *Metis(se)* as Ifekwunigwe terms them) interviewees. Selecting to see them as *griottes,* a traditional Senegalese story teller, Ifekwunigwe writes: 'I invoke the concept of the *griotte* as a feminist textual strategy that both destabilises the conventional authority of the ethnographer and forces a tension between orality and literacy or rather the spoken word and the written word' (1999, p.58).[16]

---

[16] Author's Italics. Ifekwunigwe's use of the image of the griotte is also interesting as through her feminisation of what is usually a male story teller (griot), Ifekwunigwe reconceptualises the position to make it available for her female data set (1999, p.57). Unconventional approaches such as this have sometimes been subject to a cynical response. Mark Christian, for example, has complained about Ifekwunigwe's decision to use French/African constructs in her writing and her enlisting of the notion of 'orphan consciousness' (Ifekwunigwe, 1997, p.146) (see chapter 4) which Christian feels portrays the mixed race individual once again 'as 'a victim', psychologically tortured and forlorn' (2000, p.103). Ifekwunigwe is not the only one to experiment with unconventional modes of literary analysis. Alice Tepunga Sommerville in *Mixed*

As research and interest in mixed race subjectivity has increased alongside the

mixed population, it has to some seemed imperative that a new discipline be

created to accommodate the changing academic landscape. This discipline has

come to be known as Mixed Race Studies, described by Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe as

'one of the fastest growing, as well as one of the most important and

controversial areas in the field of 'race' and ethnic relations' (2004, p.18). Until

Maria P.P. Root first published *Racially Mixed People of America* in 1992 and

then *The Multiracial Experience* in 1996, there was little that was collectively

written on the subject of mixed race identity. However, over the last two

decades Mixed Race Studies as a discourse has flourished in Britain too with a

publications such as *'Rethinking' Mixed Race* (2001), *The Colour of Love* (1992),

Mixed Feelings: the Complex Lives of Mixed-Race Britons (2001) and Olumide's

Raiding the Gene Pool (2002). By 2004, Ifekwunigwe had, in addition to the

above, created *The Mixed Race Studies Reader*. Summarising the reasons for its

production, Ifekwunigwe comments: 'At this moment in time, with the

proliferation of college courses, edited books, autobiographical texts,

magazines, websites, conferences and support groups on 'mixed race' issues, it

is now appropriate and necessary to mark this intellectual moment and

historically locate its foundational scholarship' (2004, p.137). Such texts lay an

---

Race Literature (2002), deploys the image of the 'Waharoa/gateway' as part of a Māori
theoretical framework to analyse contemporary interracial fiction from New Zealand (2002,
p.201). The inclusion of such essays within Brennan's collection then begins to deviate from
conventional Western-orientated textual analysis dominated by Eurocentric modes of thinking
and critical approaches.

excellent foundation to the field and present some interesting questions,

however, they remain sociologically-based and new research needs to take on

the challenge of mobilizing Mixed Race Studies into a broader academic

framework, considering areas such as Art, Geography, Literary Studies and

Media Studies in far more depth. Similarly, up until recently, there have been

few publications which take an inter-disciplinary or Cultural Studies approach to

the analysis of texts featuring mixed race protagonists.[17] Furthermore, work

needs to be undertaken to consider the importance of interracial relationships

in contemporary British fiction and the function of whiteness (in particular

white mothers) within texts, in addition to how texts are constructed for

differently aged readers.[18]

Whilst Britain debated the way in which mixed race subjectivity should be

discussed in the world of academia, the nation was undergoing a radical period

of transformation, made explicit through the reconfiguring of the national

census. Unlike the United States, where the census of 2000 was subject to wide

debate, in Britain 'there was near unanimous support for the proposal to

enumerate mixed-race on the 2001 census from governmental departments,

the Commission for Racial Equality, and within Working Groups that had been

---

[17] This process has now finally begun with *Crossing B(l)ack: Mixed Race Identity in Modern American Fiction and Culture* (2013). In the text, Dagbovie-Mullins explores American fiction from the tragic mulatto texts through to the present day.

[18] Although a number of texts/articles look at multicultural children's literature (Evans, 2010; Cole & Valentine, 2000; Bista, 2012), there is little to specifically address the representation of mixed race individuals/family units within writing for children.

tasked with proposing and justifying modifications for the ethnic question on the 2001 census' (Thompson, 2012, p.1418). According to Thompson, the mixed race category seemed a nonsensical response to the changing face of Britain: 'the addition of multiracial options on the 2001 census for England and Wales and Scotland was part of an overarching reframing of ethnicity, nationality, and other signifiers of identity, all of which supported an unofficial but nonetheless symbolically important promotion of multicultural Britain' (2012, p.1419).[19]

Similarly, in contrast to the United States, Britain has not experienced a mixed race movement as such (this Aspinall attributes to the 'absence of a state-sponsored policy of hypodescent' (2004, p.255)), yet a significant contribution has still been made by mixed race pressure/support groups such as People in Harmony, Intermix and Mosaic who have aimed to influence social policy.[20] Such groups receive little critical attention in writing on mixed race in Britain despite the fact that: 'The emergence of various grass-roots organizations for multiracial people in Britain suggests an embryonic yet real growth of a mixed consciousness – at least for a sector of the mixed population' (Song, 2010b,

---

[19] Some minimal opposition was raised, Charlie Owen reports, from a black Labour MP Bernie Grant who sided with the argument that mixed race people were black, and thus the census should reflect this, however, according to Owen, he gained little support (2001, p.149).
[20] In the United States the "Multiracial Movement" as it has been termed began in 1970s when a variety of grass root interracial organisations became established. As Kim M. Williams has written, the era of the 1970s was a time of great change in race relations (2003, p.86). The 1960s had brought the Civil Rights Movement into public view, culminating in the Civil Rights Act of 1965, desegregation, and the end of legislation prohibiting interracial relationships in 1967. Such developments provided, for the first time, "political opportunities" for multiracial definition (Williams, 2003, p.93).

p.340).[21] Song goes on to recognise that an organisation like Intermix for example, 'emphasizes an inclusive conceptualisation of mixed experiences, and counters the negative societal assumptions held about mixed people and their families' (Song, 2010b, p.340). Yet the activities of such groups in the Britain still remains under-researched. The work of such groups should be put into context with the fact that "mixed race" is 'one of the fastest growing of all ethnic groups' (Song, 2010b, p.337), with mixed race individuals contributing to 2.2% of the population of the England and Wales (ONS, 2012), up on the 1.2% in 2001 (Song, 2010b, p.338).[22]

So far, the thesis has outlined some of the ways in which mixed race individuals have been historically positioned, both locally as well as globally. How, though, have they been portrayed within the context of the literary past? The next part of the chapter hopes to address this question through a discussion of black British literature.

Review Part 2: Literary Representation and Black British Literature

As Yasmin Alibhai-Brown points out, there has always been a fascination with interracial mixing. This can be seen in works as early as Shakespeare's *Othello*

---

[21] Jill Olumide writes briefly about People in Harmony, see (2007, p.27-29). See also Brown and Douglass (2003) for more on the "Mixed Race Movement" in the United States.
[22] Miri Song (2012) has also written on the subject of the categorisation of mixed race in the census.

(1603), *Titus Andronicus* (1593) and *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) (Alibhai-Brown, 2001, p.28-29). Further research, however, is required to explore the portrayal of mixed race characters in this period. One very famous black British literary figure (of mixed race) from the 1850s is Mary Seacole who wrote her autobiography, (published in 1852), about her experiences in the Crimean War. Although Mary Seacole has been claimed as a black British icon, in her autobiography within the first passage, she highlights her white roots through her Scottish identification:[23]

> I am a Creole, and have good Scotch blood coursing in my veins. My father was a solider, of an old Scotch family; and to him I often trace my affection for a camp-life, and my sympathy with what I have heard my friends call "the pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious war". Many people have also traced to my Scotch blood that energy and activity which are not always found in the Creole race, and which have carried me to so many varied scenes: and perhaps they are right (p.1-2).

Like other black writers of the time, Seacole, it might be argued, attempts to illustrate her commonality with the reader in the hope that common ground will

---

[23] In *Representing Mixed Race in Jamaica and England*, Salih considers Mary Seacole in more detail. Although Seacole's *Wonderful Adventures* is an autobiography, Salih suggests that Mary Seacole herself can be read as a 'text' relating to black Britishness (2010, p.124). She too uses the phrase "Modern mulatto" for her coda on page 164.

allow her the platform she requires to be heard.[24] Commonality within this

period is often portrayed through a demonstration of shared religious vigour,

education and a specific code of morality. Some of these areas are displayed

within Mary Seacole's autobiography as illustrated by Seacole's reaction to the

'indecent women' for example, who are 'in no hurry to resume the dress or

obligations of their sex' (p.20) and who ride mules in an 'unfeminine fashion'

(p.20).[25] What is also clear in Seacole's text, though, is that "mixedness" is a

means by which the reader is encouraged to identify with the author. Only 'a

few shades duskier' than the 'brunettes' whom the readers 'all admire so much'

(p.4), Seacole's physicality as a black woman is tamed, her mixed body

repositioned as closer to whiteness. This works in collaboration with her

British/Scottish connection as established in the earlier quotation. It is also

interesting to note here that all Seacole's positive qualities are attributed to this

British connection, pandering perhaps to the ego of the white reader by

associating Scottishness with courage and glory. In turn she is not always

complimentary about her "black background", mentioning how the term 'lazy

Creole' (p.2) is often applied to the people of "her nation". In addition, later in

the text, when describing the natives of Cruces whom she regards as 'skilful in

thieving' (p.43), Seacole further degrades the black Caribbean's when she

comments: 'I speak of the majority, and except the negros – always more

---

[24] See chapter 2 for more discussion on who can speak and on the positionality of the
autobiographical voice.
[25] An attempt to illustrate shared codes of morality with the white reader can also be found in
those narratives written by Olaudah Equiano (1791) and Harriet E. Wilson (1859).

inclined to do a dishonest night's labour at great risk' (p.43).

In this text, then, there is much distinction between the honest, noble and worthy white man (particularly the soldiers who become Mary's sons within the text) and the "Others" with whom Seacole shares similarities but to whom she also does not always wish to bear resemblance. Nonetheless, like the abolition narratives of this period, Seacole also presents the plight of the 'poor mortals' who were 'enslaved' (p.14,) and, when it is suggested by a drunken reveller that Mary would get the respect she deserves if she were not a 'yaller woman'(p.47), but were bleached, Mary replies:

> …I don't altogether appreciate your friend's kind wishes with respects to my complexion. If it had been dark as any nigger's, I should have been just as happy and as useful, and as much respected by those whose respect I value; and as to this offer of bleaching me, I should, even if it were practicable, decline it without any thanks (p.48).

Considering this passage, and the way in which Seacole both familiarises and distances herself from blackness should bring into question the degree of outside influence that might have affected the narrative within the text, and the way in which the seeming "truth" of this black female autobiography might have been manipulated for political gain or to pander to the accepted literary trends and tastes of the time. Yet, despite this, Seacole has found popularity with some scholars of Mixed Race Studies such as Jill Olumide who places her

'among the heroes and heroines of mixed race, whose lives are not

characterised by physical nor psychological degeneracy and confusion, but by

determination to challenge or to side step the racialised positions allocated to

them in the social domain' (2002, p.65).

Also writing briefly on mixed race characters in the literary past, Tizzard and

Phoenix identify that there were a small number of wealthy West Indians of

'mixed parentage' present in Britain in the nineteenth century (2002, p.19) who

'were the offspring of rich white West Indian planters and black women, sent to

England to be educated and 'finished'' (2002, p.19). Due to their presence in

high society, these individuals were sometimes noted in the literature of the

time. As Tizzard and Phoenix write: 'In Britain, the only people of mixed

parentage with whom novelists were concerned, and then rarely, were West

Indian heiresses' (2002, p.27).

Tizzard and Phoenix give the examples of Miss Lambe in Jane Austen's

unfinished novel *Sandition* (1817) and Miss Swartz in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*

(1848). Showing through *Vanity Fair* the willingness by some to entertain the

idea of inter-marriage, if it involved gaining wealth, Tizzard and Phoenix write:

> …the father and sisters were anxious to welcome a West Indian heiress
>
> into the family for the sake of money, but the son refused to comply.
>
> 'Marry that mulatto woman? I don't like the colour, sir. Ask the black that

sweeps opposite Fleet Street, sir. I'm not going to marry a Hottentot

Venus' (1847, cited in 2002, p.31).

What was more often the case, however, with previous historical periods was

that the mixed race individual was of lower social status. As Stephen Small

suggests: 'Historically, most Black people of mixed origins in Britain had Black

fathers and white mothers, parents who were usually working class, poor and

powerless' (2002, p.173).

This meant that although interracial unions existed, and mixed race individuals

were present throughout history, their social status, and that of their family and

parents inhibited their representation within literature. As Tizzard and Phoenix

argue, in the main: 'British-born people of mixed parentage did not arouse the

interest of novelists, perhaps because they were very few in number, and both

their parents were usually poor, and often servants' (2002, p.27-28). Tizzard and

Phoenix's literary observations nonetheless really serve only as an introduction

to their qualitative research. Despite the authors' dismissing the possibility of

further historical characters, it would be interesting and valuable to explore the

social history of mixed race individuals, particularly around the times of slavery

and the post-emancipation period, to see if there is any new documentation or

literary figures to be uncovered. A worthy project Olumide suggests, since she

believes that: 'There is no shortage of bibliographical writing about people in

mixed race situations. It is, however, frequently subsumed within other group

accounts. What we lack is a coherent account both of the history and the

personalities involved in what has been perceived, down the years, as race mixing' (2002, p.65). Such exploration, it is felt, would allow for further critical consideration of the alliances and activities of black and migrant populations within Britain, and would perhaps raise further questions about the "integrity" of the notion that whiteness is synonymous with Englishness (a concept explored later on in chapter 3).

More generally speaking, the work of revealing the lives of migrants and the black population has already begun in some capacity, however, as historians Fryer and Sandhu have started the task of recovering black history through their works *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (1984) and *London Calling: How Black and Asians Imagined a City* (2003), and in literature, critical attention has been given to black writers in eighteenth/nineteenth century Britain such Olaudah Equiano, Grogenshaw and Ignatius Sancho. For many academics in this field, such authors, along with Seacole, have been become part of a long line of writers who begin the canon of black British writing. If these earlier figures lay the foundations for the field, it may be possible to argue that the next cluster of writers that formed and shaped it were a part of the Windrush generation of the 1950s-1960s.[26]

Citizens from the West Indies, like many others, they travelled to Britain after

---

[26] There have been a number of social historians who have written about post-war migration and those who experienced it as well as the politics of immigration throughout the second part of the twentieth century – see Mullard, 1973; Cashmore, 1989; Phillips & Phillips, 1998.

World War Two seeking adventure, employment and a chance to visit the 'mother country'. In their writings their characters frequently depict the dichotomous struggle of the migrant, often feeling both part of Britain, whilst simultaneously rejected by it (a position articulated through a number of the selected texts too). Thus, in *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), for example, Moses' narrative is recounted as he attempts to negotiate inadequate accommodation, cold weather, racism, and his own sense of disappointment, which Lima suggests were feelings and experiences often shared by this generation of 'immigrants raised on images of Britain as the epitome of civilization' (2004, p.63). And yet, despite all this, texts such as *The Lonely Londoners* are also marked by an odd affection for the "motherland" and a 'respect for [British] authority' (Weedon, 2004, p.85).

Although such writers are classified as black British, it is important to note that blackness and Britishness within this era were not words that could be easily coupled. The Pan-African movement in the early part of the twentieth century (as well as the Black Power and Civil Rights movements of the United States), may have led to the forging of an international black consciousness, but its agenda was widely 'anti-imperial' (and consequently 'anti-British' (Donnell, 2008, p.11)). Further, writers were in fact West Indians living in Britain and their novels reflect a diasporic experience where home was elsewhere, meaning that affiliation to Britishness, other than as a post/colonial subject, was not really required or necessarily desired.

For the next generation of writers of the 1970s-1980s the situation was very different. These writers were no longer migrants with a homeland overseas who could wistfully write from a 'stance of reminiscence or remembrance' (Sesay, 2004, p.106), but were British born and acutely aware of the discrepancy between the way in which they were treated compared to their fellow citizens of non-coloured origin. Donnell notes that in this era a shift occurred in affiliations with blackness, moving debate away from international black connectivity and towards a struggle for a black British consciousness. 'For this second generation', she writes, 'the conscious orchestration of identity around blackness was crucially concerned with the need to express resistance and to protest against a white national British culture that appeared fairly definable and hostile' (2008, p.14). This was the era of riots, anti-immigration legislation and police brutality, thus the struggle for not only equality, but also inclusivity and agency within the national space became paramount. As Arana describes then, this was the era of the counter-movement which chose to write in challenge (Arana, 2004, p.21).

By the 1990s however, the solidarity behind political blackness was experiencing problems of fragmentation, as groups within the collective begun to push for the need to 'articulate difference' (Donnell, 2008, p.14). Such issues were most clearly defined by Stuart Hall in his article, "New Ethnicities". Hall begins by outlining how 'the term 'black' was coined as a way of referencing the common experience of racism and marginalization in Britain and came to provide the organizing category of a new politics of resistance, among groups

and communities, with, in fact, very different histories, traditions and ethnic

identities' (1996, p.441). However, Hall argues that a mixture of the influences

of feminism and poststructualism along with a general recognition of the

diversity of the "black experience" led to the reformulation of blackness which

resulted in the 'end of the innocent notion of the essential black subject' (1996,

p.443):

> What is at issue here is the recognition of the extraordinary diversity of
>
> subject positions, social experiences and cultural identities which
>
> compose the category 'black'; that is, the recognition that 'black' is
>
> essentially a politically and culturally *constructed* category, which cannot
>
> be grounded in a set of fixed trans-cultural or transcendental racial
>
> categories and which therefore has no guarantees in nature (1996,
>
> p.443).[27]

Hall suggests that what resulted was a 'new politics of representation' (1996,

p.445) which steered towards the concept of ethnicity, rather than race (1996,

p.446). However, this 'significant shift' that 'moved away from political

definitions of black based on the possibility of Afro-Asian unity' (Gilroy, 1987,

p.39), on a practical level led to individuals looking towards other modes of

identification as noted by Yasmin Alibhai-Brown: 'In the UK the black label

began to be applied only to Afro-Caribbeans and others of African heritage.

---

[27] Author's Italics.

Asians, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus took on more specific and inherited name tags' (2001, p.99).

Certainly black identity politics have been challenged since the 1990s by mixed race academics and even Hall's re-envisioning of the 'new politics' of blackness (Hall, 1996, p.445) has come under scrutiny. In her book *Mixed-Race, Post-Race* (2003) Suki Ali, for example, commends Hall's move away from essentialist notions of black Britishness (2003, p.10), but remains critical of his repositioning of black subjectivity. As a person of mixed Asian/white background she writes: 'While the recognition of cultural translation is useful, I still do not recognise my 'mixedness' in these 'new ethnicities'' (2003, p.10). Indeed, there are still numerous debates surrounding notions of blackness in Britain today and these areas of contestation are often responsible for problematising discussions on the canon of black British literature.

One of the primary issues today in the field of black British literature lies in how it can be defined. As Walters suggests, currently the canon can be perceived in numerous ways:

> …as literature written by people of African descent who were both born and reared in England, literature written and published by expatriate writers from Africa and the Caribbean who published on both sides of the Atlantic […] literature composed by authors who did not necessarily

establish literary careers in England but published in England, and lastly literature written by people who are simply dark in color... (2004, p.182).

Furthermore, questions should be asked about who can be included within the canon here, in 2015. Challenges have already arisen in relation to the restrictive nature of the term "black British" from as early as the 1980s as McLeod reports, noting D'Aguiar's seminal paper "Against Black British Literature", written in 1988 (cited in 2002, p.56). However, as McLeod recognises, at this time "black" was still a label that carried immense 'political urgency' (2002, p.57) and thus continued to be of value and merit. Is this the case today? Could, for example, literature written by the Chinese/Welsh writer Peter Ho Davies really fit under the umbrella of black British writing? And should black British texts have to focus on "Black experience" to be valuable (Donnell, 2008, p.15)?

Most importantly perhaps for the purpose of this thesis is the question 'how does black British literature position itself in terms of mixedness?' For the most part, it seems that texts featuring mixed race characters and/or by mixed race authors have been included into the canon of black British literature without too much thought. Certainly, when Arana and Ramey refer to the 'neo-millennial generation of black British writers' (2004, p.3) in their book *Black British Writing* (2004), they include those 'Born in England or Scotland or Wales, often to racially mixed families' (2004, p.3). This general inclusion (a consequence of the umbrella style usage of the term black) has also resulted in writers such as the Pakistani/white writer Hanif Kureishi being considered to be

a black writer in the past. Still, being mixed as an identity independent of

blackness, however, is often only mentioned in passing, and when it is,

comments tend to follow the trajectory of the troublesome mixed race position

(a concept discussed in detail in the final part of this chapter). This can be

further illustrated by Weedon's comments. Negotiating identity and belonging

maybe challenging, Weedon remarks, but 'being of "mixed race" or of "mixed

heritage" is perhaps even more problematic' (2004, p.91). Nevertheless others

have found some use in the hybrid position taken from a literary perspective.

Writing, for example, about *Lara* by Bernadine Evaristo (1997) which features a

central mixed race character, McLeod emphasises the transnational nature of

the piece, expressing concern that the label of "black British" might be

'spatially' constricting (2002, p.57), preventing 'transnational pathways' (2002,

p.58) from being fully acknowledged.[28]

Overall, however, arguments surrounding the incorporation of supposedly

interracial texts into a black canon, have been far more heated in the United

States than in Britain, and one writer in particular raises an interesting

argument about this phenomenon. In "The Mis-Education of Mixed Race",

Michelle Elam is strongly opposed to what she calls the 'revisioning of literary

history' (2009, p.137) where critics reimagine black writers (who happen to be

---

[28] As the thesis will explore, the interaction between different geographical localities and the way in which such localities influence subjectivity and identity are vital to the thematic structure of many of the selected texts. Linking to this, as will be seen, is the way that transnational connections can also include discussion and exploration of whiteness, either through territory (see Wales in *Sugar and Slate*) or ancestry, as revealed through the discussions on relationships with white mothers.

mixed race) as 'misunderstood trailblazers' (2009, p.138); their texts being then 'relieved of their blackness, celebrated and canonized through a process in which bi- and multiraciality becomes an index of heroic self-definition' (Elam, 2009, p.138). Elam's ideas can be applied to the British context if taking, for example, the comment made by Olumide when she claims Mary Seacole as a mixed-race 'heroine' (Olumide, 2002, p.65). Seacole, as it has been suggested, writes proudly of her mixed heritage, yet her self-perception is arguably based on how she is socially defined: as black. She is, however, also a prominent figure of celebration in black British history (and there it is also important that she remain). So should she be considered as anything else?[29]

Such articulations as Elam's can perhaps be rendered problematic due to their investment in the position that to express an interest in a "mixed identity" is somehow to disown a black one (the modern equivalent of the older version of "mixed race people are race traitors" line of thought). Unfortunately, such a stance is also exhibited in comments by the British academic Kwame Dawes in 1999. Dawes draws upon an image of a famous black vagabond, Johnson, who wore a ship on his hat to remind the public of where he came from and why he was there, (i.e. slavery). Using this as a metaphor, Dawes discusses mixed race authors as follows:

...the children of the earlier generation, born in England and often to bi-

---

[29] See previous discussion on self-definition earlier in the chapter.

racial parents, do not carry the ship comfortably on their heads. They are

introducing something of a dilemma in the British literary scene because

they are often either unwilling to or incapable of wearing that ship that

points to an immigrant identity or an identity of 'otherness'. Many of

them will reject any lineage with the writers of the fifties and sixties and

quite arrogantly (if understandably), and, perhaps foolishly, assert a new

invention: the black British voice (1999, p.19).

Dawes may not be being entirely unreasonable as his comments refer to the

tendency for modern writers to emulate the American style gangster fiction

rather than drawing influence from what he considers to be "authentic" black

experience. Importantly, though, the blame is still placed upon biracial writers

whom Dawes perceives to be distanced from, or disinterested with, "genuine"

black British issues.

Ending the literature review with the words of Dawes in mind, the thesis will go

on to discuss exactly what the selected texts (which are predominantly written

by mixed race authors) have to reveal about mixedness, blackness and the

remembrance of the past. However, a final area needs to be explored in order

to complete this introductory part of the thesis. So far, this chapter has

presented a range of different ways in which mixed race subjectivity has been

discussed throughout various historical times periods and over a number of

academic disciplines. Yet, in order to discuss contemporary literature it is

important to outline some of the most recent manifestations of thinking around

the concept of intermixing. This will be undertaken in the following final part of the chapter.

1.2 Modern Myths and Public Perception of Mixed Race

In a speech in 2007, Trevor Phillips, the head of the then CRE (now the CEHR), commented that mixed race individuals:

> …show the highest employment rates of any minority group. But they also exhibit the highest rates of lone parenthood and family breakdown, in some cases three times the average. They suffer the highest rates of drug treatment … Many talk of identity stripping – children who grow up marooned between communities (cited in Berkeley, 2007, p.11).[30]

As the above quotation goes to prove, the mixed race position is still considered problematic at the highest and most influential levels. It is not then surprising that (art and specifically for the purpose of this thesis, contemporary literature) might arguably have a lot to challenge. The first part of this chapter has carefully considered the representations of mixed race people in the past, but how are mixed race people perceived by the public today? It may be helpful to outline some of the major perceptions, preconceived notions and stereotypes

---

[30] Quotation taken from *Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice* (2007).
The comment, Song remarks, is somewhat 'typical of how some analysts and policymakers conceive of the 'mixed' population in Britain' (2007, p.5).

that currently reside in the public realm and are commonly perpetuated by the media where the combination of 'sex, race and sometimes class' can make a most profitable subject matter (Alibhai-Brown, 2001, p.16). Although it may be argued that not all of the nine points constitute myths, for ease of reference both here and throughout the thesis, they have been labelled as such.[31]

Myth 1) Mixed race people are confused and trapped between cultures

'One of the salient features of the social construction of mixed race', Jill Olumide writes, 'has been its characterisation as a marginal, detached and confused state in which individuals so designated are condemned to wander in search of belonging and acceptance' (2002, p.5). Such notions have sparked debates in the past as to whether it is fair to have mixed race children at all. This can be seen reflected in the works of the earlier discussed Fletcher who writes of the intermixing in Liverpool in 1930: 'The most serious aspect of the colour problem is the position of the unfortunate half-caste children' (1930, p.423). Turning to the media to provide an example of this myth in action it may be useful to consider the article "I love my mixed race daughter – but why does she feel so alien?" in which Lowri Turner tells The *Daily Mail* about her worries as the white mother of a mixed race daughter. Her use of language has

---

[31] Alibhai-Brown (2001) discusses contemporary representations of mixed race in *Mixed Feelings: The Complex Lives of Mixed Britons* (2001) which includes a section entitled: 'Old myths and national fantasies' (2001, p.91).

connotations of the contamination of whiteness as she describes how she has 'injected' her 'dark-skinned, dark-haired girl' into their all white family. Reigniting the "what about the children" debate, Turner goes on to agonise: 'She has a tiny foot in two cultures. How will she negotiate a path between the two?' (Turner, 2007).

This notion of identity confusion is still present today in the speeches and the writings of politicians and also within the Social Sciences. Writing on the subject of the mixed race individual Sengstock, states: 'There is no question that their biracial background has the potential for producing problems including feelings of ambivalence' (2009, p.46). Trying to recover a little positivity she continues to write that, 'despite the problems, it is reassuring to note that so many mixed-race individuals are generally well-adjusted and comfortable with their mixed identity. However, this process is not an easy one' (2009, p.46). Similarly, writing about mixed race children, Kwame Osuwu-Bempah suggests: 'Various investigators in Britain and the USA report that most, if not all, young adult children from black and white sexual liaisons are confused and feel uncomfortable identifying with one side of the parental line against the other' (2005, p.39). Osuwu-Bempah intends this statement to support the argument for mixed race subjectivity; however, the language adopted, and the sentiment that the mixed race individual cannot purely identify as black if they so choose renders the suggestion problematic. Even writers who are generally pro-mixed race identity cautiously propose that there "may" be or "might" be problems with mixed race children as can be viewed through Stephen Spencer's

comments, for example: 'Children born with dual ethnic heritage may face identity issues. They may feel ambivalent in terms of their identification. From an early age, incipient racism by peers and teachers might lead to a fluctuating identification' (2006, p.222).

Myth 2) Mixed families have low social status

In the past twenty years society in Britain has seen a rise in the concept of a new 'social type' of citizen (Bottero, 2009, p.7), described by Wendy Bottero 'as a council estate dwelling, single-parenting, low-achieving, rottweiler-owning cultural minority, whose poverty, it is hinted, might be a result of their own poor choices' (2009, p.7). It is perhaps not surprising that interracial mixing has become entwined with representations of this particular social group, since historically interracial relationships have been seen as the preserve of the loose and morally derelict (see Fletcher as discussed). In comedy sketch shows popular on British television, representations of this nature are prevalent. This can be evidenced, for example, in *Harry Enfield and Chums*, aired between 1994 and 1997 on BBC1. Writing regarding this series, Callabero discusses a sketch featuring Wayne and Waynetta, also known as the Slobs. In one episode, Waynetta, wanting a 'brown baby like all the other mums on the estate' (cited in 2007, p.22) is handed a black child. More recently *Little Britain* (2003-2006 on BBC1 and BBC3) has also mocked the "council estate dwellers" with the character of Vicky Pollard who has become the comedy "pin up" for lower status culture. In one episode, Caballero notes, Vicky has a boyfriend named

Jermaine whose "black" influence is made apparent as Vicky starts speaking in patois. Again interracial activity becomes associated with promiscuity and immorality as before their arrival in the sketch, Vicky and Jermaine have been 'making baby' behind the waterslides (cited in Caballero, 2007, p.22).

The latest manifestations of this phenomenon, however, can perhaps be viewed through the BBC3 series *Lee Nelson's Well Good Show* (BBC3, 2010-2011) and *People Just Do Nothing* (BBC3, 2014). In *Lee Nelson's Well Good Show* the persona of the host, Lee Nelson, is similarly shown as a portrayal of council estate culture. In the opening sequence, Lee Nelson travels on the back of his friend Omelette, to the television studio. However, before he leaves the flat, he says goodbye to a child whom the audience assume to be his mixed race son (who is about ten years old), leaving him with different instructions each episode to follow while he is away. In the first episode of the first series, for example, Lee Nelson says: 'You'll be alright on your own yeah? Yeah!!! If there's any trouble don't call the old Bill, everything in the flat's stolen' (*Lee Nelson's Well Good Show*, 2010). The same phenomenon can also be observed in *People Just Do Nothing*, a mockumentary about an illegal radio station set up by white youths in a council flat. Again, the white Miche has a mixed race daughter named Angel who is clearly not the child of her current white partner Grindah. This, though, is covered up by Miche's comment that she used a lot of fake tan whilst she was pregnant, supposedly explaining her daughter's appearance (again the notion of lower class white female promiscuity is perpetuated through Miche's alluded to infidelity) (*People Just Do Nothing*, 2014).

In the past, comedy has clearly reflected societal stance on racism and some of the jokes and characters that were broadcast in sitcoms such as *Till Death do us Part* from the 1960-1970s would not be permitted with today's strict guidelines on use of offensive language (Malik, 2002).[32] Contemporary comical, representations, though, also reflect what society thinks about intermixture, as without preconceived notions and recognition of "types", such sketches would lack any "comic value". Some might argue that the comic presence of mixed race and interracial relationships is normalising and progressive. Yet it might be worth considering Simon During's note of caution on exaggerated portrayals here. Discussing women as an example, During suggests that just repeating a stereotype is not a liberating act: 'Being aware that one is being positioned into stereotypes of femininity say, and gently making a joke of it by camping the stereotypes up, implies no liberation from that position. If anything it implies a tolerance of being positioned' (During, 2005, p.200)

Myth 3) Interracial relationships do not last

Combined with the image of the estate is the single parent. According to the Runnymede Trust in 2010 '61% of children in mixed race households grow up in

---

[32] Children's literature also can be seen to reflect the attitudes of society (see chapter 5). See Malik's *Representing Black Britain: Black and Asian Images on Television* for more on this topic.

single parent families' (*Runnymede*, 2010).[33] Although research has shown that black fathers separated from their white partners are frequently still involved and contributing to their children's upbringing (Caballero & Edwards, 2010), it is often assumed that the black fathers in particular are the absent ones. This Patel writes, has created the term 'baby father' (2009, p.xv). White women then, with mixed race offspring, have been in the past twice stigmatised: firstly for being a single parent, and secondly by the presence of their child that proves that they were "immoral" enough to have been intimate with a black man. This is reflected in Alibhai-Brown's comment that: 'Many white single mothers are still likely to be regarded as feckless and immoral and if there is a black-looking child in the pram, the silent (or at times not so silent) social disapproval is greater' (2001, p.184). The position is also evident in Caballero and Edward's research of lone white mothers (2010), and McKenzie's research on white mothers on a Nottingham council estate, published in 2013, where she found that women often felt judged by others when out with a mixed race baby as mixed children acted a 'signifiers and ultimate proof' of the women having 'sexual relationships with black men' (2013, p.1348).[34] Certainly, as this thesis argues, the white mother in literary representation remains both troubled and troublesome, too, as will be evidenced in chapter 4.

---

[33] This Information from the Runnymede Trust comes from a fact sheet accompanying a speech given by MP David Lammy in 2010 on black fatherhood.

[34] This research is particularly interesting as it outlines, how, among the residence of the estate itself, being linked to black Caribbean culture is advantageous and women actively adopt the speech, the cooking and have mixed race children to increase their social status within their small community (McKenzie, 2013).

Relationships between white men and women of colour are less frequently

represented in popular culture. Where these do appear, emphasis may still be

placed on an unequal power balance. An example of this is the issue of the mail

order brides as portrayed in *Little Britain* where the relationship between the

Thai bride Ting Tong and Mr Dudley is clearly one of master and servant. The

subservient Ting Tong may be available as a companion, but her main role is to

meet Mr Dudley's sexual requirements. Interestingly, on the subject of mixed

Thai/English relationships, Jessica Mai Sims writes that these 'sexualised

stereotypes' (Sims, 2007, p.11) have resulted in Thai women with British

husbands being labelled as a "Ting Tongs" and being asked inappropriate

questions about their status in Britain and their choice of partner (2007, p.11).

An exception is perhaps the sitcom *All About Me*, aired between the years 2002-

2004 on BBC1. The comedy starring Meera Syall and Jasper Carrott explores the

combining of two families, one Asian and one white British, who all live under

one roof in fairly uneventful domesticity.

Myth 4) The mixed race family unit does not work

Constantly debated in the area of social policy, is the issue of transracial

adoption and the idea that white parents are not capable of fully understanding

or empathising with black children. This dilemma has resulted in every effort

being made to place children with guardians of a similar racial/ethnic

background (Tizzard & Phoenix, 2002; Ballis Lal, 2001). This is a slightly

controversial issue since there have been those in the past who have

60

experienced white adoptive parents as culturally insensitive, or unable to offer

guidance on how to cope with racism. However, there are also children who

have had a positive experience of transracial adoption and research has

suggested that their integrations into such families are no different from

placement with a family who is of the same race (Olumide, 2002; Tizzard &

Phoenix, 2002). Either way, what is problematic with this is the assumption that

white people cannot bring up non-white children. This places a judgement on

those white single parents of mixed race children, deeming them unable to

provide their child with what is required to develop a healthy sense of racialised

self-awareness. This, Suki Ali suggests, can sometimes be based on the

assumption that "black" culture is in some sense entirely distinct from the

experiences of the white British, and that it can only be truly found through

links and connections of ancestry:

> Transracial adoption is often bound up with concerns about 'national' and
> 'ethnic' identifications as it implies that black people (for example) must
> automatically have a *different* and bounded culture that came from
> different 'roots' than those of white Britons, and that this cultural
> knowledge is passed on through 'the family' (2003, p.8).[35]

---

[35] Author's italics.

This statement is a relevant one within this thesis, as many of the texts considered feature the lack of black father and issues around ancestry and familial connections as well as adoption.

Myth 5) Black and mixed race youth are more likely to be involved in crime

Media portrayal of black and mixed race youth is often negative with television programmes and newspaper articles frequently centring on issues related to crime and more specifically gang crime. Highly publicised in the media has been Operation Trident by the Metropolitan Police to tackle "black on black" crime. There is, of course, no such operation for "white on white" crime. The association created between black people, youth and crime often leads people to fear the black male presence in particular. Suspicion by the general public as well as institutional racism within the police force has led to further feelings of isolation within this group. More recently, the fear of the Other has extended to include Asian youth, too, as the nation has been gripped by the threat of terrorist acts (see discussion on multiculturalism in chapter 3.1). Criminality then becomes a trait of the "Other", something that defines "them" from "us". Tizzard and Phoenix noted in their research how '[i]t was not only white people who had absorbed this stereotype' (2002, p.229), since although some of their mixed race respondents were the victims of this myth, others also indicated their fear of supposed "black criminality" too (see Tizzard & Phoenix, 2002, p.229).

Myth 6) Black and mixed race boys do not achieve academically

> …all black and mixed white and black Caribbean heritage pupils are
>
> consistently below the national average across Key Stages 1, 2 and 4
>
> (Runnymede Fact Sheet, 2010).

Government statistics have long since been used to measure the abilities of certain ethnic groups. Although researchers would argue that such data is not designed to reflect a test on intelligence (in the present day anyway), the constant negative results of research regrettably create the impression that black and mixed race boys are particular under-achievers. Where statistics have demonstrated issues with achievement, researchers have also often failed to recognise the socio-economic position of such children and their families as dominant factors (those who are financially disadvantaged generally have access to a lower standard of education – the issue here then is not race). The scholar Leon Tikly, perpetuating this myth further, offers a reason why mixed race boys, supposedly, do not academically achieve. This, he argues, is due to their need to prove their blackness. Since whiteness, Tikly asserts, is associated with being "posh' and/or 'geeky'" (2007, p.14), and blackness, within youth culture is considered to be "street" and therefore "cool", mixed individuals (or at least half-white ones), have to prove their black status by creating 'rebellious 'Black identities'' (2007, p.14) in order to fit in. Tikly does not, however, account for the fact that when white children are acting 'street' it is not considered to be seen as a desire to be black (2007, p.14).

Myth 7) Mixed race individuals are "just black"

As it will be viewed in the next part of the chapter, society generally defines mixed race people by the laws of hypodescent meaning that mixed individuals with a black parent are automatically perceived as black. In terms of government statistics as earlier mentioned, there was no mixed race category up until the 2001 census (Owen, 2007, p.1), meaning such mixed race individuals had no choice but to define themselves officially as "black other". This is not to suggest that it is wrong for individuals to align themselves with black identity; indeed, there are many mixed race individuals who still feel comfortable with this today, as will be discussed.

Myth 8) Mixed race people are the future – just look at those celebrities…

Despite all the negative representations, within the twenty-first century a new portrayal of mixed race people as representing the future has arisen (Song, 2001). In 2009 the media reported that: 'Ten per cent of UK children 'now part of mixed family'' (*Daily Mail Reporter*, 2009). Newspaper articles such as this one, usually accompanied by pictures of happy, smiling, mixed race families, declare how the mixed race group are fast becoming Britain's largest ethnic minority (Doughty, 2011). Such individuals, it is believed, will change the nation's perception of race in the future: 'The old, polarising debate about black and white is changing and the next generation will not see race in the same way

we see it' (*Daily Mail Reporter*, 2009). Certainly Stephen Spencer's idea that

mixed race people are 'a living challenge to […] absolutism' (2006, p.222),

defying categorisation through their position of being between two or more

different cultures seems a positive and optimistic one. Yet it glosses over the

reality of individual and collective experiences of racism.

Celebrity culture too has adopted Spencer's views on mixed race subjectivity,

and mixed race people in the media have, to an extent, come "into fashion".[36]

In this instance, celebrities such as Leona Lewis, Myleene Klass, Lewis Hamilton

and Theo Walcott come to represent the changing face of Britain and their

photos frequently appear in articles about the multicultural state, the growing

population of mixed race individuals, and the way that the nation has

supposedly become an equal platform for all regardless of race/ethnicity

(Kaniuk, 2010; King, 2009). This new trend mirrors the mixed race writer Danzy

Senna's observations in "Mulatto Millennium", when she comments: 'Strange to

wake up and realize you're in style' (2004, p.205).

---

[36] The United States has an abundance of mixed race celebrities. Tiger Woods, for example, is a figure that features quite frequently in discussions of mixed race for his creation of the identity "Cablinasian' (Caucasian, Black, American Indian, Asian)' (Spickard, 2001, p.76). This, Halter writes, has made him 'the ideal representative of the global marketplace' (2000, p.172). Similarly, Mariah Carey's transforming image has been discussed by Lisa Jones. Initially a white pop singer, after her "exposure" as mixed, Carey suddenly became marketed as a black RnB performer (Jones, 1994). Carey, alongside Halle Berry similarly features in *Crossing B(l)ack* (2013) where Dagbovie-Mullins discusses how the mixedness of Berry and Carey has affected the film roles that the pair have been offered (see *Crossing B(l)ack* chapter 5).

Others have taken the images of mixed race celebrities stating that 'Racially

Diverse Celebrities are Most Attractive' (Kaniuk, 2010)) or even further, touting

them as 'a new ideal of physical beauty' (King, 2010). Michael B Lewis, for

example, in his article "why are mixed-race people perceived as more

attractive?" argues that heterosis, or the concept of hybrid vigour advocated by

Charles Darwin, where 'cross-breeding within species leads to offspring that are

genetically fitter than their parents' (2010, p.136) is responsible for this. Lewis

proceeds to suggest that heterosis may also be responsible for the success of

Halle Berry, Tiger Woods (described by Nakashima as 'the busiest symbolic tool

in the history of fictional or nonfictional mixed-race characters' (2004, p.269))

and Barack Obama in the United States: 'although mixed-race people make up a

small proportion of the population, they are over-represented at the top level

of a number of meritocratic professions' (2010, p.138).[37] Such discussions, it can

be argued in an age of equality, are at best counterproductive, and at worst

---

[37] In the United States, much has been written about Barack Obama as a signifier of the racial 'healing' of a nation (Dariotis & Yoo, 2012, p.99). Obama's choice to define himself as black (as in myth 8) is questioned by some of the writers in *Obama and the Biracial Factor: the Battle for the New American Majority*, however, who feel that Obama in fact employs a range of identifications which have supported him both in his campaign and in his presidency. Thus, as King-O'Riain writes:

> While Obama continues to identify himself as black and has not officially identified himself as mixed race personally, politically or publically, he continues to invoke *both* whiteness and blackness and the connections and experiences that come with them in his speeches, his public comments, and his books (2012, p.114) (Author's Italics).

Whereas King-O'Riain recognises how this has been useful within the political context of the United States, Miletsky is a little more critical, suggesting that perhaps Obama really sees himself as mixed but says he is black for political gain (2012, p.142). Aside from Barack Obama, various identity battles have also been waged by other mixed race celebrities in the United States. For more discussion on Tiger Woods, see Halter, 2000, p.171-172; Spencer, 2004, p.219, and McClain DaCosta, 2007, p.166-167.

dangerous. Commenting on this very article by Michael B Lewis, the politian

Oona King aptly writes:

> …now it seems that mixed race genes are being hailed as the latest
>
> Darwinian 'must-have' accessory. If you spent your childhood being called
>
> a 'mongrel' in the playground, the recent research by Cardiff University,
>
> which seems to show that mixed-race people are more attractive and
>
> more successful, may bring a wry smile to your face (King, 2010).

In chapter 1, the thesis considered the ways in which the mixed race individual

has been seen throughout different historical periods and within the context of

various academic disciplines, and has highlighted the how intermixing has been

seen and perceived mostly in a negative light. This, as it has been shown, has

continued into the twenty and twenty-first centuries with the notion of the

"modern myths" which, with the exception perhaps of "myth 8", are

fundamentally pessimistic.[38] In contemporary British society such perceptions

can have a detrimental effect, both to the way in which mixed race people are

perceived by others, but also on the ways in which such individuals perceive

themselves, the reason why such myths should be challenged. Do all works of

contemporary British literature challenge the myths, though, or do some works

perpetuate these preconceived notions of interracial mixing and mixed race

---

[38] In some ways it may seem that myth 8 contradicts the other myths, but this version of the
mixed race individual in fact co-exists alongside the others within contemporary British society.

subjectivity? In chapter 2, the thesis will begin to explore some of the major

themes within the selected texts, particularly focusing on the relationship

between travel, writing and naming, and the creation of the self; through

literary analysis, whilst also beginning to address this question.

Chapter 2: Creating self: Telling and Naming

2.1 "Telling the Story": Journeys, Empowerment and the Voice

> I was born into a long journey. I've crossed huge physical and
> psychological spaces to bind the great triangle of Africa and the Caribbean
> and Britain […] It is a journey of constantly grappling with the landscapes
> we encounter, changing them and redefining them, of corrupting the
> pure… (*Sugar and Slate*, p.191).

Within the selected literature, mixed race individuals are often portrayed as the product of migration, crossings, movements and the diaspora, resulting in many of the text's adopting travel and journeys as their central theme. In the first instance, such a position can have negative connotations, implying a lack of belonging for the protagonists; this equates to the notion of the mixed race position as a confused and troublesome identity. This lack of stability is present within Charlotte Williams' autobiography *Sugar and Slate* when she describes how she and her sisters were born into 'an exile', 'a state of relocation' (p.11), due to her parents continual traveling, leaving Charlotte and her siblings in a

state of perpetual flux.[39] This positioning gives rise to a duality, a sense of in-betweeness, frequently returned to within a number of the selected texts, where the mixed race individual is trapped between two (or more) different worlds, cultures and sometimes languages (as described in myth 1).[40]

However, this hybrid experience, produced out of movement, travel and transit, can also be a cause of creativity, and a space which leads to possibility and potential. This is noted by Leverette who writes of her own experiences:

> Because I see myself as both black and white, I, like many other persons born to parents of different races, sometimes think of myself as moving in the space that unites the two, as traveling from one shore to another given certain contexts, and other times as sailing the river that forms the meridian between two shores (2006, p.79).

In Leverette's view then, such a position may also be seen as one of unification and cross cultural connection.

Whereas the mixed race individual of the selected texts is often born into "the journey" of their parents, many of the central mixed race characters are also involved in physical journeying themselves throughout the course of their

---

[39] For consistency with the other texts, autobiographical authors will be referred to be their first names throughout the course of this research.
[40] An extreme example of this can be seen in *The Icarus Girl*, as discussed in chapter 3.2.

respective narratives. In *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate*, this necessitates a modern reconstruction of the historical movements of black people across the globe and involves the geographies of Africa, Britain, the Caribbean and the United States. Throughout these journeys the characters display a growing awareness about their own personal connection within these routes and water-ways, and how such journeys both mark the experiences and identities of their ancestors, and in turn, transform their own (see chapter 3 for further discussion on this). However, the trope of movement within the novels, also allows for characters to reposition themselves in relation to new and alternative spaces. If as Mahtani writes, the 'politics of identity is intrinsically tied to a politics of location' (2001, p.66), then what it means to be mixed race invariably shifts within the different localities that are visited by the characters in the selected literature.[41]

Journeys undertaken by the mixed race protagonist are not just physical, however, but are metaphorical too. Such journeys act as passages of psychological change in which characters must undergo a process of "coming to terms" with their mixed identities. In this way, the motif of the journey seems almost to transcend the selected texts and becomes a way of framing a rather constructed notion of the "mixed race experience" in addition to functioning as

---

[41] Mahtani's comments can also be applied to the constructions of mixed race identity within the national space too, as the national politics of Scotland, Wales and England also shape and formulate what it means to be racially assigned within the British state (see chapter 3 for further discussion).

a device for exploring the complex interactions of the discourses that govern

place, race, gender and nation. As this journey is often plotted against the

character's experiences of growing up, from an uninformed child into a racially

aware adult, the reader is also brought to new awareness at the same time as

the characters, causing the texts to take the form of the bildungsroman. What is

rather peculiar about this plot structure, however, is the way in which it mimics

'The Life Cycle of the Marginal Man'– a sub-heading in the aforementioned

1937 text by Everett V. Stonequist whose works pathologised mixed race

subjectivity, portraying it as highly problematic and troubled. Stonequist

describes the process of becoming a marginal man in three phases: '(1) a phase

when he [the marginal man] is not aware that the racial or nationality conflict

embraces his own career' (1937, p.121), '(2) a period when he consciously

experiences this conflict' (1937, p.122) and '(3) the more permanent

adjustments, or lack of adjustments, which he makes or attempts to make to his

situation' (1937, p.122).

In the initial stages of the selected texts, then, the mixed child protagonist lives

in peace and security, blissfully ignorant and/or disinterested in their hybrid

positioning (as in Stonequist's phase 1). In *Lady Moses*, for example, Jacinta

initially has a positive sense of self developed by her secure interracial family

unit, and at five years old, she feels blessed with a 'fair-skinned mother' (p.10)

whom she 'admired' (p.8), and a 'dark-skinned father'(p.10) with his 'beautiful

dark face' (p.8). Similarly, in *Strawgirl* by Jackie Kay, Maybe begins her journey

within the nurturing environment of Wishing Well Farm where she lives with

her Nigerian father and white Scottish mother. Preparing the barn for a local

gathering, her father reminds Maybe not to forget that she is 'an Igbo': 'Never

forget that' (p.5), yet Maybe remains disinterested in her father's words, not

wishing to acknowledge anything that will mark her out as different: 'If she just

forgets it', she thinks, 'she can get by. Be like the rest of them' (p.5-6).[42]

The next stage of the plot is the introduction of the "tragic event" which most

frequently occurs in the form of the black father's abandonment or death,

causing the mixed race protagonist to enter a phase of identity crisis, (as in

Stonequist's phase 2). (In the United States the character of the "mulatto" has

frequently been associated with tragedy within literary representation. The

connection here between these works and contemporary British texts is also

both unusual and apparent).[43] After the "tragic event", the protagonist is left

---

[42] *Strawgirl* and *Lady Moses* are used here as examples of the "mixed race journey", but, as the thesis will demonstrate, this narrative structure is present in one form or another throughout the majority of the selected texts.

[43] Falling into the genre of American melodrama or 'sentimental fiction' as Raimon terms it (2004, p.5), texts featuring the tragic mulatto followed a specific trajectory – characters were usually born to a slave mother and a white father through forced union (i.e. rape, concubinage or coercion) leaving the protagonist caught between two different worlds. Frustrated and alone, the mulatto/a reacts either by rebelling or attempting to "pass" as white as in Nella Larsen's *Passing* (1929) and *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900), or concealing their black blood and entering into a world of privilege. Finally, the protagonist's "real identity" is discovered and the protagonist usually dies.

The tragic mulatto text has been written by both white and black writers with varying motivations and approaches to representation. At times such literary characters have been used to illustrate the consequences of miscegenation (similar to the pseudo-scientific writing mentioned earlier), at others, the mulatto has become the figurehead of the abolition movement. Depending on who wrote them, and why, characters were portrayed as either identifying as black or being visibly white, as Naomi Zack writes:

> In fiction written by blacks, duty and decency required that the person of mixed race
> identify with blacks. In fiction written by whites, it always ruined the life of a person of

exposed to racism and their position as a mixed individual becomes

problematised. In *Lady Moses* this happens when Simon Moses has a heart

attack and dies in hospital. It is at this moment that the world of the mixed race

protagonist starts to unravel and the "problematic nature" of their hybrid

subjectivity is revealed to the reader. Waiting in the hospital for her mother,

Jacinta is advised by a little boy that his 'ma wouldn't let him play with wogs'

(p.20). Unaware of her racialised positioning in society, Jacinta considers the

boy's reaction to her, but concludes that she is a 'genius and not a wog at all'

(p.20). However, when her mother, frustrated with her singing, tells her that

she doesn't 'want to hear any more of that ridiculous nonsense' and further

that the 'nurses were right not to let 'coloured' children onto the wards if they

didn't know how to behave' (p.22), Jacinta's sense of self is shaken: 'She'd never

called me a 'coloured' child that way before. It made me shrivel up and

remember how white she was' (p.22). The moment of racial recognition is a

concept highlighted by Frantz Fanon, who writes: 'As long as the black man is

among his own, he will have no occasion, except in minor internal conflicts, to

experience his being through others' (1968, p.109).[44] However, when

confronted with racism and prejudice he 'comes into being through the other'

(1968, p.110).

---

mixed race, who believed in a purely white ancestry, to discover the existence of a black ancestor (1993, p.129).

See chapter 4 for more on this.

[44] The concept of "own kind" is problematised a little later in discussions of the *Rainbow Sign.* See also the notion of "the gaze" in the discussion on Gok Wan in chapter 3.

This moment of "coming into being" is then paralleled with the decline of the

relationship with the white mother – a development that becomes the next

phase in the mixed race protagonist's psychological journey. In *Strawgirl*, when

Maybe's father is killed in a car crash, her mother takes to bed, disassociated

from her daughter and reality: 'her eyes stared at Maybe in an odd way, as if

they were dead to the world and hardly able to take Maybe in' (p.46) and, in

Lady Moses, Louise, enveloped in grief after losing her husband, attacks Jacinta

and is sent away for rehabilitation whilst Jacinta is first looked after by their

neighbour Alfred, and is later fostered.[45]

The rest of the novel then becomes a mission or, as Leverette describes it, a

'quest' (2006, p.79) towards psychological stability and most frequently, a

deeper engagement with, and understanding of, blackness (paralleling

Stonequist's third phase, of 'adjustment' (1937, p.123)).[46] In some

circumstances this involves physically traveling to "find the lost black father" by

"returning" to his ancestral homelands. This is the case for Jacinta who goes to

---

[45] A life changing event resulting in racialised self-awareness and insecurity maybe premised on lived experience for Ifekwunigwe at least, as she writes that events such 'as getting married, the birth of the child or the death of a parent' can hurl 'the *metis(se)* individual into a heightened state of bi-racialised self-consciousness' (1999, p.191).

[46] What can be gained from considering the parallels between Stonequist's work and contemporary fiction is to note that previous negative representation of the mixed race individual as a marginal and deviant figure still persists today. It is difficult to say, however, the reason as to why such parallels, specifically with this American 1930s sociologist, might exist other than to reiterate the earlier stated point that there has always been an exchange in ideas surrounding race between England and the United States. It is also worth noting that some American texts featuring mixed race characters also appear to follow the same plot structure – see Leverette (2006) for further discussion on this.

Africa in an attempt to find her sense of self, but such a plot structure is also recognisable in other texts such as Jackie Kay's autobiography *Red Dust Road*, where, when Jackie's father's rejection acts as the "tragic event", Jackie feels compelled to visit Nigeria, with or without his welcome: 'at least the land might welcome me, and I might feel some connection to the place' (p.169). In fact, within most of the selected text featuring a mixed race protagonist the black father is a central and integral figure. The source of "cultural knowledge" (a term introduced when discussing myth 4 (Ali, 2003)), and a seemingly essential element for the creation of a positive sense of self, he initially guides the young protagonists towards (most often) an "acceptance" and unification with blackness and an interest in African consciousness. Initially, in the case of *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate*, this is attempted through the medium of storytelling.

In *Lady Moses*, the primary story teller is Jacinta's father Simon. Simon's influence can be felt throughout the novel, as the oral traditions of African culture conveyed through Simon's stories interrupt the structured social realism of the text. Frequently, Simon's stories are so influential that they merge into Jacinta's reality. This can be observed when Jacinta imagines herself riding her 'father's elephant among the traffic on Lavender Sweep' (p.6) or later, swinging her daughter Lady 'onto the elephant' to ride with her (p.288). By the end of the novel, the two worlds converge, when, in Africa, Jacinta is confronted by a rogue elephant and "becomes" the Jacinta in her father's stories through this interaction (Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013, p.61).

Yet Simon's intention is not to entirely "Africanise" his daughter, but to teach her instead the value of the hybrid/diasporic space which they both inhabit. When Jacinta asks her father why their story is important, her father replies that without it 'there is a big hole in the world, and people will not know how to talk to each other' (p.14). Simon explains that it is her duty to pass on their story, because of her cross-cultural position: 'You and I are the first Moses to be from many lands and many peoples. It is our job to tell the story of what this is like because it is important' (p.13). Here, then, Simon positions the diasporic and mixed race individual in the role of ambassador, negotiating geographies, crossing borders and creating metaphorical bridges. The act of bridging, Olumide writes, involves 'making links between two or more cultural backgrounds of relevance to individuals or partnerships' (2002, p.97). For Olumide, such an act leaves the mixed race individual in a position of vulnerability '*between two camps – across bridges'*, but it also commits those who are 'mixed race to interpreting between two 'sides'' (2002, p.98).[47] With her father's death, however, Jacinta is forced into the role of the lead story teller and sole cultural negotiator, and the novel itself becomes her life story. Yet without her father's presence, the transfer of her "cultural knowledge" remains incomplete and Jacinta must travel to Africa to find both the lost father, and ultimately, herself.

---

[47] Author's italics.

Charlotte Williams' autobiography *Sugar and Slate*, is another prime example of a text heavily focused on the importance of storytelling.[48] Here, numerous recountings interweave throughout the narrative creating a 'textual collage' (Donnell, 2007, p.2) and, like in *Lady Moses*, Charlotte's father is a dominant storyteller as well as a published author. As with Jacinta, Charlotte is able to understand her diasporic upbringing, and ultimately herself, better through her father's stories as they provide her with an 'interpretative framework for her narrative' enabling her 'to map her own routes of reconnection' (Scafe, 2010, p.137). However, the concept of the story, which brings Jacinta and her father together, also becomes a means of creating a safe distance between Charlotte, her father and their problematic past: 'We kept it safe; like printed words in a book, we re-read the lines over and over again and agreed them' (p.110).[49]

Despite this difference, as in *Lady Moses*, Charlotte's dual heritage position is seen to be a point of connection, an opportunity to bring together different stories from both black and white ancestry, and a chance to illustrate, through her example, the interconnectivity of different cultures and societies. Interestingly, though, in *Sugar and Slate*, the emphasis of the sharing of cultural knowledge relates to both Charlotte's African and Welsh roots. Charlotte terms this interaction as the reception of 'cultural memory' (p.24). The transference of

---

[48] For comparative ease with the novels, authors of autobiographies throughout the thesis will be referred to by their first names.

[49] Denis Williams is a complicated person, both 'charming and gentle' (p.21), and yet he is also violent to Charlotte's sisters. He abandons the family, moving to Guyana where he starts another family.

"cultural memory" from either side, however, is extremely difficult. With an absent father, her mother is in charge of the family and there are no other relatives to teach Charlotte about African and Caribbean culture. Without her father's "cultural knowledge, Charlotte's white mother becomes fully responsible for the construction of Charlotte's "cultural memory" which means that it is a predominantly white Welsh culture that Charlotte is in line to inherit (p.24): 'It was ma who shaped our cultural memory, passed to us in her stories and her way of telling them; in the songs of her childhood that reached out to us and formed us. We were *cariad*'' (p.23-24).[50]

This is problematic, though, because although her mother assumes that her mixed daughters are included within this cultural framework, and have full access to the information which she aims to transmit, Charlotte finds this not to be the case:

> She [Charlotte's mother] spoke with the assumption that we shared a time and a place with her, the assumption of shared memory that was marked out with places and events and people we should know. In her coded memory there was a whole range of collective meanings, a pattern of ancestral motifs and a plethora of moments to which we only had limited access. She spoke with a history. She belonged. The language was

---

[50] Welsh: meaning 'sweetheart, darling' (p.24).

hers and so was the place; past, present and future. Our inheritance was partial and distorted but freely given (p.51).[51]

Accordingly, Charlotte feels a sense of "dislocation', caught up in a vacuum with little reference […] history-less' (p.101).

One response to the position of being 'history-less' (p.101) suggested by the selected texts is to construct a history through the production of a fictitious story. When in Jackie Kay's novel *Trumpet*, Colman enquires about his grandfather's origins, for example, Joss replies that he could be from anywhere:

Look, Colman, he said. Look, Colman, I could tell you a story about my father. I could say he came off a boat one day in the nineteen hundreds, say a winter day […] Or I could say my father was a black American who left America because of segregation and managed to find his way to Scotland where he met my mother. Or I could say my father was a soldier or a sailor who was sent here by his army or his navy […] And any of these stories might be true, Colman (p.58-59).

To Joss, ancestry does not matter: 'You pick the one you like best and that one is true' (p.59), reinforcing Kamali's point that: 'when a lineage does not present

---

[51] See section on white mothers – chapter 4.3 for further discussion of Charlotte's mother.

itself as an obvious context for individual identity, the making of oneself becomes the central act' (2009, p.208). In *Sugar and Slate*, Charlotte, too, recognises that in the absence of a 'collective historical event to refer to' (p.26) narrative can be invented in order to 'define […] presence' in an 'inherited country' (p.26). This is both positive and yet problematic, as whereas Joss is initially satisfied by the fictitious creation of memory, Colman finds that this does not fully equip him to deal with the complicated and critical issues that surround his identity as both mixed and adopted.

The same can be suggested for the author herself. In her autobiography *Red Dust Road*, Jackie Kay also reiterates the importance of the story for those who are adopted in creating a sense of self and in coming to terms with being rejected by birth parents.[52] Jackie's own mother, like Charlotte's in *Sugar and Slate* is the initiator of creating fictive "cultural memory" for Jackie.[53] This is perhaps due to her mother's imagination and her sense of curiosity about the origins of her 'exotic and special' children (p.45) (Jackie's brother is not her biological son either). Most importantly, her mother creates stories as a form of consolation for her adopted offspring: 'I wonder if mum gave us these stories because she thought they compensated for being given up for adoption' (p.43).

---

[52] As in the analysis of *Sugar and Slate*, Jackie Kay is referred to by her first name Jackie as she is the protagonist as well as the author of the autobiography.
[53] The idea of the white mother imparting social history to the mixed daughter is interesting if considered in light of Zack's suggestions that traditionally the passing of oral social history is part of the realm of the feminine, falling upon female members of the family (Zack, 1993, p.54).

Jackie's mother's explanation of how Jackie's parents met and her consequent abandonment is made to sound both romantic and exciting. Telling the young Jackie about how her father was '*betrothed*' (p.42) to a woman in the far away land of Nigeria, Jackie feels as though she and her birth parents are part of a 'fairytale' (p.25): 'There were the stories of my original parents having no choice, and the stories of my mum and dad having choice. "We *chose you:* you are special"' (p.43).[54] The combination of being told that she was chosen by her parents and that it was only circumstances that led to her biological parent's rejection of her allows Jackie to feel 'empathy' (p.44) rather than anger or self-hatred towards herself and them: 'It was a heartbreaking story and it was mine'(p.44). Within the telling of the story, too, her mother and Jackie become co-conspirators: 'In a way my mum and I loved it, the story of me. It was a big bond, the story' (p.44). This later leads the two into dangerous territory as they track down Jackie's birth mother's cottage and Jackie's mother rings the bell whilst Jackie hides.[55] Later in life, however, Jackie makes a more concerted effort to find her birth parents. Despite no longer being a child, Jackie still has a sense of her own adoption as somehow imagined: 'That's the strange thing about being adopted: the story of your adoption seems like the story of some stranger, or even the story of a fictional character. It's hard to make it real [...] The whole business of being adopted seems on one level to be a fantastic fiction' (p.134).

---

[54] Author's italics.

[55] This scene is reminiscent of "Big Milk", a short story by Jackie Kay which will be discussed in chapter 4.

Throughout the autobiography Jackie's birth parents are portrayed as intangible fictions – 'ghosts' (p.149) floating in and out of space and time. Jackie struggles to "trace" them in the double sense, both physically searching for her lost parents, but also tracing their image as if they are hidden behind a sheet of paper: 'All I used to have is a tracing: his name and where he studied. Now, slowly, I think I'm starting to fill him in a little. Tiny details illuminate, like the sparkle in a stone, tiny glittery details shimmer like mica' (p.138). Furthermore, blurring the line between fact and fiction, Jackie imagines her mother to be Shirley Bassey and her father a young Paul Robeson or Nelson Mandela. Yet on meeting them she discovers both her parents to be 'troubled', flawed individuals which leads Jackie to the conclusion that leaving things to 'the imagination was not so bad at all' (p.46).

So far, it has been suggested by the selected texts, that the process of identity formation for the protagonists involves the collection of narratives, both past and present, fictitious and real; yet for one character in particular such a combination remains insufficient. In *Trumpet*, despite Joss' earlier reservations, the decision to reveal his roots is triggered by his imminent physical death which seems somehow to ground Joss in reality, rather than the imaginary. Like Kay, Colman is adopted and so Joss' father is not his biological ancestor. By the end of *Trumpet*, though, there is a desire towards the collation of all narratives in order to support the mixed race individual and to produce a sense of self:

You wanted the story of my father, remember? I told you his story could

be the story of any black man who came from Africa to Scotland. His story,

I told you, was the diaspora. Every story runs into the same river and the

same river runs into the sea. But I've changed my mind, now that I am

dying (p.271).

Yet equally important in identity formulation are the narratives of others, of

migrants and the displaced; they too are part of the wider story (and journey) of

hybridity and are thus essential elements in the construction of self.

In *Sugar and Slate*, Charlotte literally gathers and collects such narratives: 'goin'

home stories' (p.101), 'boat stories' (p.11), stories that are 'buried below the

immediate moment' (p.11), fusing them together to allow for a collective

memory where she can finally be at the centre. The importance of other

people's stories is reflected in a chance meeting whilst waiting for a plane.

Charlotte speaks to Paris, a black Caribbean who was raised by white English

parents. She asks him if she can write about him, and when he enquires as to

why, Charlotte explains that his journey is part of her story too – one of a 'global

consciousness' (p.186) in her mind – the story itself is both wide and yet

intimately personal: 'It's a kind of place in itself isn't it – the story I mean – like

home, a good place to be?' (p.186).

This is an area reflected upon by the Canadian academic Minelle Mahtani.

Researching multi-ethnic women Mahtani finds interest, not in the prospect of

exclusion, but inclusion, places where individuals feel they are at home, and how for the multi-ethnic this can be over a multitude of spaces simultaneously. Mahtani demonstrates how mixed race women can be at both the centre and the margin, not 'rootless or homeless', but instead 'moving through categories, and developing scattered senses of belongings with a diverse range of collectives' (2001, p.187). This can be seen in *Sugar and Slate* when Charlotte Williams finds home in the stories of the diaspora.

The discourse of narrative is one that has been associated with power (Hall, 1997) – an issue especially relevant to post-colonialists. This is reflected by Krishnan when he writes: 'Throughout the body of theoretical work associated with post-colonial studies, the control of narratives of self, other and society has been cited as a central means through which colonial intervention operated and continues to operate, with ramifications in both the symbolic reproduction of violence and its material effects' (Krishnan, 2014, p.11). When others have control over representation and narrative, this can act as a form of oppression. The next part of the chapter will discuss this concept in more detail.

2.2 Who Can Speak?

In their article "Voiced Bodies/Embodied Voices", Crispin Sartwell and Judith Bradford write that: 'Racing and gendering are social and political processes of consigning bodies to social categories and thus rendering them into political,

economic, sexual and, residential position' (1997, pp.191-192). It can only be

from this position that the body is able to vocalise: 'voices emerge precisely

from bodies; it is bodies that speak or write' (1997, p.192). As a white male,

Crispin Sartwell recognises that his physical body has meant that his voice has

been taken as the voice of "reason" (1997, p.193); authority; the default;

"blank' in the race and gender taxonomy' (1997, p.193); and the universal,

allowing him to 'speak *for everyone*' (1997, p.193).[56] As much as he may wish to

detach himself from this subject position, his body renders this process

impossible: 'No matter what I say, my voice gets heard through the norms that

govern white male voices' (1997, p.193).[57] According to Bradford, if those who

are not male or white wish to have a voice, then there are a number of

challenges that they must face. First the speaker/teller must get to a place

where they can be heard (a platform that may be political/academic/literary)

and secondly, once there, they must have the confidence to write or to speak

(Bradford, 1997, p.195). However, in order to be heard they must still adopt the

language of the white male voice.

This is a concept that has been developed further by Postcolonial Theory,

particularly through the writing of Gayatri Spivak who has written extensively

on the subject of who can speak for whom. In one of her seminal pieces, "Can

the Subaltern Speak?", Spivak has suggested indigenous elites and academics,

[56] Author's Italics.
[57] Further arguments relating to this can be viewed in Richard Dyer's book *White* (1997).

replicating the voice of the white male attempt to represent the subaltern populations, failing to recognise that these people have no means of entry into the discourse that controls them as subject (Spivak, 1988). Interestingly questioning this, Bradford points out, however, that to "have a voice" is not simply about vocalisation: 'Almost all humans speak' (1997, p.195). The point is that not all humans get listened to, as they write: 'Is the problem that' they (the oppressed) 'cannot speak? […] Or is it that no one who "counts" listens to them?' (1997, p.197). Perhaps, then, part of the issue is who counts and who does not. Or, as Ahmed writes, regarding autobiography, '[w]hose (life) stories matter?' (1998, p.136).

The accusation of not hearing has for a long time been levied at the white community by both postcolonial writers, and particularly black feminists such as bell hooks and Patricia Collins, who have criticised the way that white feminists have sought to speak on behalf of women of colour (hooks, 1992; Collins, 1991) without listening to their points of view. This same argument has been mirrored by the American academic Rainier Spencer who has been critical of what he terms the 'matricolonial project' (2006, p.80), namely white mothers insisting that they know best about their mixed children's subjectivities (2006, p.80). Both Maria P.P. Root and Rainier Spencer have commented on the fact that this process has led to the infantilization of mixed race individuals who are deemed either naïve, or incapable of speaking for themselves (Root, 2003; Spencer, 2006). Nevertheless, whoever speaks on behalf of mixed race individuals may not share the opinions of the majority. Often, in discussions on race, "token"

individuals are deployed with varying motivations, and positions to "speak on behalf" of communities (Williams, 2010; Bradford & Sartwell, 1997). Considering the wide range of experiences and intermixtures (which may or may not include whiteness), a single voice for all mixed race people does not seem realistically obtainable, and yet is it better than no voice?

Transferring these arguments to fiction then and re-focusing on the position of the author, the question becomes who can write for whom? Considering who should write for children and young people, Krishna Bista points out that: 'Authors and critics of multicultural literature are locked in an ongoing debate about whether it should be written by a member of the ethnic group or can be written by an outsider' (2012, p.318). On the one hand, Bista believes that '[l]iterary creation depends on the imagination and experience of authors rather than whether the author comes from a particular group' (2012, p.318), but on the other, those who write from outside a community may lack 'cultural knowledge' (p.319) and therefore authenticity.

This may be an issue in terms of the selected texts, especially if the diverse range of experiences of mixed race people is considered. To further problematize the situation, the extent to which authors are responsible for those they represent should be questioned. In conversation with Richard Dyer, Kay suggests that this is an issue when constructing black characters: 'if a black writer writes negative black characters then they get accused of negative racial stereotyping' (Kay, 2008, p.57). This, Kay argues, is not the same for the white

writer. Yet, the issue still remains that negative representations are likely to be

taken as further solidification of some of the myths as discussed in chapter 1.

(This is, for example, why Dawes takes such issue with the latest spate of black

urban writing in black British literature whose focus is on sex, crime, drugs and

guns, perpetuating myth 5 (Dawes, 1999)).

Returning to the selected texts, this issue of representation is particularly

interesting in the context of *The Buddha of Suburbia,* a novel written by Hanif

Kureishi in the 1990s in which the mixed race protagonist Karim is tasked with

finding a suitable Asian model to base a theatrical character on. Initially he

chooses his father's friend Anwar and portrays him waving his stick at the youth

in the street, which Tracy, a black actress, strongly objects to. Accusing him of

hating himself and black people, she questions him as to why he feels it is

acceptable to pander to views of the 'white people' (p.180): 'Your picture is

what white people already think of us. That we're funny, with strange habits […]

To the white man we're already people without humanity, and then you go and

have Anwar waving madly waving his stick at the white boys. I can't believe that

anything like this could happen' (p.180).

Karim seems to have an epiphany during Anwar's funeral. In a moment of

realisation he recognises his affiliation to the attending Asians and is guilty

about his choice to side with what Tracy terms as 'white truth' (p.181):

But I did feel, looking at these strange creatures now – the Indians – that in some way these were my people, and that I'd spent my life denying or avoiding that fact. I felt ashamed and incomplete at the same time, as if half of me were missing, and as if I'd been colluding with my enemies, those whites who wanted Indians to be like them (p.212).

Yet this change of heart is only short-lived and neither the experience with the Indians nor Tracy's theoretical or moral arguments prevent him from continuing with his performance, this time using Jamila's newly arrived husband Changez, allowing the white audience to laugh at his jokes concerning 'the sexual ambition and humiliation of an Indian in England' (p.220).

Similarly, Pinsent points to the perilous territory entered into by Malorie Blackman in her to be discussed *Noughts and Crosses* series where black characters are dominant over whites:

Not only does she [Blackman] make the dark-skinned Crosses the dominant rank, but also she attributes to them many of the worst characteristics of rulers throughout the world, whether black or white. As a black writer, she is clearly on dangerous ground; for oppressed groups, it is always more congenial to claim this if 'we' were in power, society would be much more just than it is when 'they' are in power' (2005, p.198).

Thus the debate has wider implications for the novel and the works of other writers who choose to represent ethnic minorities, the mixed race individual and non-British cultures as discussed earlier in the chapter. Does *The Buddha of Suburbia* itself portray Asianness as strange, or the mixed race individual as a character without moral qualms, ruthlessly exploiting the status that his identity provides? Does Kureishi's 'comic treatment of minorities' as Ranasinha writes tread a 'precariously fine line between humour and caricature'? (2002, p.65). Is Blackman right to portray her black characters systematically adopting all the same negative traits associated with the dominant and powerful even in a created dystopian world?

In *Lady Moses* the power to self-represent is conveyed in slightly less problematic terms. Jacinta considers that people of colour (like herself) have not had the chance to create narrative or to have control of their own destinies:

> I feel like someone who's in a story, and the story is going to turn out badly. I've read the end, you know, but I can't change it. Someone else has already written the words. Sometimes I think all people of color feel like that – as if the words have already been written and the story always runs backward, to pain (p.351).[58]

---

[58] This is an example of layered re-fictionalising: Jacinta is a character in a novel, writing that she feels like a character in a story. Additionally, she has already been written into fiction by her father as the Jacinta of her father's African stories.

Extending from her father's standpoint of the importance of the story then, Jacinta sees how it is the task of those "represented" people to take ownership of their own narrative. Jacinta does this by asserting her position as the speaker. The reclamation of the pronoun "I" has been written about in a number of contexts – most prominently in feminism (see Butler, 2006, p.xxvi). As Sara Ahmed articulates, white women, for example, have gained 'partial access to the privilege of the authorial 'I', through the negation or exclusion of Black women' (1997, p.154). Texts such as *Lady Moses* work to reclaim the authorial 'I' right from the onset as Jacinta states at the beginning of the novel 'I start with a capital letter 'I'' (p.6) firmly positioning herself as the subject, but also the owner of her unfolding narrative. While in fiction featuring a mixed race protagonist, the issue of storytelling and the ownership of narrative as a means of creating agency is a prevalent theme, such ideas are also instrumental in the creation of autobiographies that deal with mixed race subjectivity and selfhood.

2.3 Who can Write? Writing Selves Through Autobiography

Autobiographical writing is both interesting and problematic and has become an 'important testing ground for critical controversies about a range of ideas including authorship, selfhood, representation and the division between fact and fiction' (Anderson, 2001, p.1). Initially, autobiography can perhaps be seen as a practice which allows for 'a reflective understanding of the self' whereby through 'self-narration the process of plotting a meaningfully trajectory out of

and for one's life' may be achieved' (Barat, 2000, p.166). However, as Barat

suggests, such writing also offers snap shots of a very specific time, now past,

which can only exist in the author's representations, meaning that, 'in the very

act of re/creating the truth of the past they betray it' (Stanley, 2000, p.14).

The use of autobiography as a genre has its advantages and disadvantages,

particularly when expressing the life experiences of oppressed and/or minority

groups. Advantageously, autobiographies may be given more serious

contemplation, as the narrative may be received as more authentic than fiction

(it is, after all, a "true" story and not one dreamt from an author's sub-

conscious). Yet appearances can be deceiving, as autobiographies are edited

and manipulated to form a linear narrative; events may be reordered,

overarching themes may be added, and the autobiographer him/herself

becomes a character who can be portrayed in the light that the author wishes.

(It is also worth noting that less desirable attributes, experiences and feelings

may be edited, omitted or removed).

Yet, despite the autobiography's emphasis on the portrayal of real life, Laura

Marcus points out that, in fact:

    Very few critics would demand that autobiographical truth should be

    literally verifiable – this would, after all, undermine the idea that the truth

    of the self is more complex than 'fact'. Thus, it is claimed, the 'intention'

to tell the truth as far as possible, is a sufficient guarantee of

autobiographical veracity and sincerity (1994, p.3).

Supposing, however, that autobiographies are seen as "truthful' depictions of

life' (Anderson, 2001, p.99), the voice of the autobiographer can thus become

an authority figure, representing a type of person or situation. When

considering standpoint theory, which suggests that writers should write from

their own particular position in society in order to ensure that certain otherwise

marginal voices have the opportunity to be heard, the autobiography then

becomes extremely useful in the projection of the minority voice (Huddart,

2008). Applied to the case of the mixed race individual, the autobiographical

figure may be seen as the "real" spokesperson for the experience, more akin to

sociological research than fiction. For many, this can be seen as a clear

advantage of the genre, as Anderson writes: 'The idea that autobiography can

become 'the text of the oppressed', articulating through one person's

experience, experiences which may be representative of a particular

marginalized group, is an important one' (2001, p.97). For this reason, the

creation and analysis of autobiography is frequently linked to 'feminist,

working- class and black criticism and historiography' (Marcus, 1994, p.1). For

such groups, autobiography becomes a useful tool for collective empowerment

and a 'literature of resistance', whilst also being a means to affirm 'fellowship'

amongst the oppressed (hooks, 1992, p.59).[59]

Similarly, postcolonial writers and critics have also expressed interest in the use of autobiography; considering both its function and its form, as well as its drawbacks. Autobiography, as a concept is deeply rooted in patriarchal Western culture and has a long history dating back to the works of St Augustine and Rousseau (Huddart, 2008). Under these circumstances it has been felt by some critics that the genre often 'privileges one particular way of writing a life' (Huddart, 2008, p.2) – the White Western one – over others. Some postcolonialists have, however, suggested that it is possible to reject what they perceive to be the 'ethnocentric and paternalist' nature of autobiography (Huddart, 2008, p.2) by renaming the genre "Life Writing" and allowing for an extended range of texts (in the wider Cultural Studies sense) to be included within it. This strategy is also mirrored by academics outside of the discipline, such as Rosen (1998) who seeks to incorporate diaries and letters into the discussion of autobiographical narrative, and Barat (2000) who advocates for the recognition of oral narrative as part of the genre. Furthermore, the rejection of self-reflection in favour of a literature which can 'intervene in existing social relations' (Scafe writing on Lionnet, 2009, p.294) has also been a popular means of reconfiguring autobiography to suit the purpose of the minority voice. Yet the use of autobiography as a form for the vocalisation of the minority standpoint evokes previously asked questions of who should be allowed to speak, and

---

[59] Hooks, is of course writing here about the role of autobiography for black women.

95

indeed should writers have to "speak" autobiographically at all? Felly Nkweto

Simmonds' "My Body, Myself: How does a Black woman do sociology?"

questions the assumption that black writers should have to speak subjectively

about race. Whereas 'Black academics (and students) are expected to talk about

issues of 'race' as personal experiences', Simmonds writes, white academics

that are so called "race' experts' are afforded the luxury of privacy and

objectivity (1997, p.226).[60]

Similarly, the mixed race academic Sara Ahmed asks the question: 'Why, and

under what conditions, does [the] auto-biographical gesture become possible or

desirable?' (Ahmed, 1997, p.153). Furthermore, Ahmed ponders if it is possible

to 'perform' the role of autobiographer 'without being implicated in a discourse

of authenticity, whereby the remembering of [her] gendered and racialized

encounters would become readable as representative' (Ahmed, 1997, p.153).

Yet, if no one is prepared to speak, either because they dislike the obligation of

it, or for fear of speaking on behalf of another (and thus denying them agency),

how can it be possible to challenge hegemony at all? As Donnell writes: 'in

accepting the injunction not to speak for another, we also accept the silence of

many' (2000, p.135). Despite these complexities then, this thesis insists that

autobiographical writing, particularly for the minority/oppressed group

---

[60] This concept interlinks with Audre Lorde's comments that the minority must always exert valuable energy explaining themselves to the majority. This may be women educating men, black people educating white, gay people educating straight, etc. (1995, p.533).

participant, can still be seen to empower 'the subject through his/her cultural inscription and recognition' (Anderson, 2001, p.97), and create a space for the development and/or the documenting of both the passive private self and the active political one.

Where, though, do autobiographies by mixed race authors fit into the scheme of this argument? To answer this question, it might be useful to look at the texts, *Through Thick and Thin* and *Red Dust Road*, but first *The Rainbow Sign* by Hanif Kureishi will be considered. Like many minority written autobiographical pieces, the text is heavily focused on the documentation of the rise of the politicised self. Growing up in London, Hanif becomes politically aware and active by observing the political atmosphere of the capital and through his own personal research and reading. ''Keeping the accounts'' (p.11) as he terms it, Hanif writes down the speeches of Enoch Powell and points the reader to how his own world experiences clash with popular political opinions of the time. When quoting Duncan Sandys, for example, who in 1967 stated that 'The breeding of millions of half-caste children would merely produce a generation of misfits and create national tensions' (p.11); Hanif responds: 'I wasn't a misfit; I could join the elements of myself together. It was the others, they wanted misfits; they wanted you to embody within yourself their ambivalence' (p.11).

The political climate and Hanif's reaction to it is further evidenced in Part 3: England, when Hanif returns from Pakistan and finds, despite his optimistic hopes, that politically, nothing has changed. Exploring the positions of both of

the leading political parties of the era, Hanif effectively again demonstrates a form of "keeping the accounts" for the purpose of highlighting the issue of politics to the reader. Hanif, considers the Conservative Scruton's comments on how members of society automatically gravitate to 'one's kind' (p.31). Hanif then, once again, provides his own commentary on the matter: 'Who exactly is of one's kind and what kind of people are they? Are they only those of the same 'nation', of the same colour, race and background?' (p.32). Turning to the Labour party, Hanif remarks: 'The Labour Party occasionally wishes blacks to serve it, it does not desire to serve blacks' (p.32).[61] Kureishi's politically charged autobiographical writing thus both documents the growth of his political self, but also provides a creative platform to express a political standpoint, which it is hoped may raise the reader's awareness of bias and discrimination within society, and encourage political engagement. This in some way goes to demonstrate Lionnet's point, as noted by Scafe, that autobiography should be used as a form of social intervention and a means by which to incite political action (Scafe writing on Lionnet, 2009, p.294).

Kureishi also demonstrates how national politics and identity politics also conflate. National politics, causing him to feel excluded (see chapter 3 for further discussion) mean that Hanif's identity politics are challenged. Searching for support, he finds sanctuary in his readings of James Baldwin, and the

---

[61] Paul Gilroy also writes on the national politics in the 1980s (1987, p.59).

adoption of the role model of Mohammed Ali. Such readings allow Hanif a means of coping with the racism he experiences (the reader sees evidence of such racism through Hanif's nickname of 'Pakistani Pete' (p.9)). In an era when 'the term "Black" tended to highlight the discrimination and marginality faced by non-White peoples' (Song, 2003, p.99) then, through identification with black identity politics, Hanif is able to find a degree of solace.

The promotion of black identity politics is also present within Kay's autobiography *Red Dust Road* when Jackie Kay discovers black solidarity. Jackie is first aware of this when, going to university, she finds that black people are nodding at her: 'at first I didn't know what was going on, and why they nodded at me, then I caught on and liked it, *loved it*, the secret camaraderie of black people – was fizzing out and spluttering before my eyes' (p.182).[62] Whilst at university, the British Movement target Jackie, erecting a poster that reads: 'The Women's Collective are an ugly bunch of degenerative bastards. Would you be seen with that wog Jackie Kay?' (p.180). However, through her strong identification as a black lesbian, Jackie is able to find a voice and will not be silenced.[63]

Designating the self as "black" has been, for many mixed race people, a

---

[62] Author's italics.
[63] Jackie goes on to join OWAAD (Organisation of Women of African and Asian Descent) and becomes a founding member of the BLG (Black Lesbian Group) due to her identification with the Black power and gay movement.

proactive political move; however, being on the borders between two different

countries and cultures also provides a useful viewpoint allowing for comparison

and additional observation, a position particularly adopted by the mixed

race/diasporic autobiographer. Hanif's position in *The Rainbow Sign*, for

example, allows him to carefully expose the relationship between the

English/British and Pakistanis, when he reflects that: 'The Pakistani middle class

showed the disdain of the British for the *émigré* working class and peasantry of

Pakistan', and yet, '[t]o the English all Pakistanis were the same; racists didn't

ask whether you had a chauffeur, TV and private education before they set fire

to your house' (p.29).[64] However, Hanif is also able to observe the locations'

connectivity: the financial ties that bound the two countries, the money sent

home by relatives, the drugs that entered the market smuggled from the

Pakistani borders. By means of historical and fiscal connection, Hanif notes how

the two countries' futures are, like himself, 'intermix[ed]' (p.38) for better or for

worse: 'The two countries, Britain and Pakistan, have been part of each other

for years, usually to the advantage of Britain. They cannot now be wrenched

apart, even if that were desirable' (p.38).

Through Thick and Thin is another interesting autobiography to consider.

Written by television stylist Gok Wan, the balance of self-reflection and the

creation of a passive political self against political action sits in opposition to *The*

---

[64] Author's italics. Kureishi uses England and Britain almost interchangeably – see chapter 3 for discussion on the problems with this.

Rainbow Sign and *Red Dust Road* in some ways. Whereas Hanif and Jackie both externalize their angst by becoming more politically active, Gok's processing of his circumstances maybe read as rather passively internalizing. Drawing on Helena Jia Hershel's analysis of the building of mixed gendered and raced self-esteem, Gok's experience can be read as a dislocation between the societal and parental gaze, creating internalized disruption. Hershel suggests that the building of self-esteem starts with the parent. The parental gaze helps the child to feel safe. Leaving the family home and encountering a racially diverse (or not so diverse) society means that the child both 'encounters strangers' and realises the 'strangeness' of him/herself (1997, p.113). Self-awareness, Hershel suggests, is then formulated through self-reflection in society, termed, 'the gaze of the community' (Hershel, 1997, p.113). What is reflected back by society is most frequently distorted by the discourse of race, and for those non-white individuals what often results is a 'negative gaze' (1997, p.114). Hershel concludes that 'the gaze of the community, when different from the parental gaze, challenges the core self and reflects back as the public self' (1997, p.114).[65]

Analysed through this lens, it is interesting that Gok's autobiography reflects this closely: Gok's sense of self-esteem is initially built on and bolstered by his loving parents who are associated with the safe indoor spaces of home and the family restaurant. Yet the 'gaze of the community' effects Gok's 'core self'

---

[65] See chapter 3 and 4 for more discussion on the concept of "the gaze".

(Hershel, 1997, p.114) as outside the family home he and his siblings are viewed as 'half breeds' (*Through Thick and Thin*, p.31): 'The Wan family stood out in a sea of white faces. There was my Chinese dad, my big, apron-wearing English mum, and three fat, mixed-race kids. We came in for torrents of abuse whenever we set foot outside the front door' (p.31).[66] For Gok, the bullying and harassment are compounded with his social rejection as an overweight gay teenager to the point where he develops anorexia, an internalized response of body modification and self-harm in order to gain control. Furthermore, Gok's reaction to the bullying which he receives in school is also a process of self-modification, as he styles himself a new image. Arriving confidently in new clothes, protecting him like a 'suit of armour' (p.56), Gok is able to feel a little differently about himself and his body.

If, political action is viewed as an essential aspect of the minority autobiography, the message of changing the self, rather than changing society's attitudes, might be a potential criticism. The seemingly lesser radical approach adopted by Gok Wan might also be attributed to the fact that the text is a celebrity autobiography and, therefore, it might be assumed to be a product of commercialisation rather than a literary or academic contribution to political or intellectual debate. As Linda Anderson suggests, there have been clear demarcations in academia between texts 'written by the few who are capable

---

[66] Here again, the dichotomy of the public/private space is established, as earlier seen in the discussion of *Sugar and Slate*.

of sustained self-reflection' and those written by pop stars and celebrities, their 'popular counterpart' (Anderson, 2001, p.7).

However, the use of autobiography here (in this case of *Through Thick and Thin*) has clear potential for addressing some of the negative myths regarding mixed race individuals. Firstly, Gok supports the idea that interracial relationships work, as his parents have been married for many years (opposing myth 3):

> In the sixties, interracial marriages were virtually non-existent and they encountered a lot of prejudice and ostracism because of it. But they loved each other, stayed together and they've devoted their entire lives to the family they've created. Their love for one another is so great, that I sometimes think that there could not have been any love in the world until they met (p.11).

Added to this, myth 4 that "the mixed race family unit does not work" is also deposed through Gok and his family's love and devotion towards each other. This is highlighted by Gok's personal letters to each member of his family at the end of the text alongside the tales of the family's intimacy, interdependency and interconnectivity, summarised in Gok's use of a food metaphor: 'we were strong, like a bowl of noodles, each ingredient strengthening and creating the dish, making it a whole' (p.31).

Myth 2, relating to identity confusion, is also addressed in *Through Thick and Thin*. While, intercultural interaction is frequently portrayed as conflictual and only remedied by an act of navigation and negotiation on both sides, in Gok's description of his mother, she happily assumes Chinese culture without conflict or cohesion, adopting it 'immediately and wholeheartedly' (p.24). It is also Gok's mother who is keen for her children to attend Chinese supplementary school to ensure that Gok and his siblings learn about 'Chinese traditions' (p.24) and culture. In this instance, there is no confusion for Gok, and (aside from the street racism) the experience of being mixed, overall, is presented within the text as quite a pleasurable one. Additionally, an unusual consequence of *Through Thick and Thin* is that it may challenge myth 7, that all mixed race individuals are "just black". There are a few British Chinese writers, Peter Ho-Davies and Timothy Mo are some examples, but virtually no representation for the experience of individuals of mixed Chinese/English origin, so in some ways *Through Thick and Thin* may serve as a reminder that mixed race individuals come in various mixes – not just white/black, and thus the autobiography provides a different perspective on the mixed race experience outside of the black/white binary.

Gok's media presence might also arguably serve to normalize the idea of interracial mixing (as seen in myth 8). Popularity, and visibility may make this so. Furthermore, these positive messages about self-worth and the potential of interracial mixing and mixed race subjectivity, it might be argued, reach a wider audience than some of the literary texts. Following Van Krieken's research into

the public's relationship with the celebrity, it might be suggested that many readers may already be familiar with Gok through his television appearances and have developed a 'para-social' relationship with him (2012, p.83) making them more willing to absorb his messages and outlook.[67] In the context of a Cultural Studies framework which incorporates all "texts" as inherently useful then, this thesis would support the idea that discussion of such autobiographical works by mixed race authors may also prove valuable.

This section of the chapter has considered the way in which choosing autobiography as a form of self-expression can be useful for political purposes, and as a means to contradict preconceived notions about race and interracial mixing. However, the last point of discussion relates to the potential for the autobiographical process to be accepted as a healing one. Despite the success and positivity surrounding *Through Thick and Thin*, there is also a sense that Gok may have used the genre as a way of coming to terms with some of the more challenging aspects of his personal life (p.360).

For other writers discussed, however, the proximity to the pain itself, may have initially made choosing expression in this genre a drawback. In *The Rainbow Sign*, for example, Hanif acknowledges the desire to disassociate himself from story. 'When I originally wrote this piece', Hanif notes, 'I put it in the third

---

[67] A 'para-social' relationship, Van Krieken suggests, is 'a long-distance intimacy' where a viewer feels that they know a celebrity as they would a friend due to reading about them and seeing them on the television (2012, p.83).

person: Hanif saw this, Hanif felt that, because of the difficulty of directly addressing myself in what I felt then, of not wanting to think about it again' (p.35). Naomi Zack (1993) has written that before identification can take place in the first person, there must first be an acknowledgement of such a racial identity in the second and third – meaning that in order to create a positive subjectivity it must be acknowledged by others. This may offer an explanation as to why Hanif struggles so much with addressing the text using the pronoun I, but more significantly, the comments illustrate how Hanif's sense of identity has been tarnished so much by his experiences in Britain, that he finds it hard to directly connect himself with the narrative on the page.

The pain evoked by the autobiographic expression can be balanced against the necessity to tell the story as a survival strategy. Talking about *Red Dust Road*, for example in an interview with Maggie Gee, Kay comments: 'I always think that telling stories and survival are intimately connected, and that the imagination has a great power to heal as well as to enthral' (Kay, 2010, p.19). This concept applies more widely to the selected texts, as similar sentiments are expressed in *Lady Moses* when Jacinta suggests that black people must tell the story to stay alive. She learns this in the children's home, where the children 'wanted stories like some people wanted drugs' (p.215): 'It was there I'd learned to tell stories the way that black people need to tell them: to save our lives' (p.215).

Recalling hooks' earlier suggestion of autobiography as fellowship, it can then be suggested that the act of sharing painful experiences, related to by an

oppressed or marginalised collective, can also bring people together, making them stronger, and allowing them to feel less alone. For the author, and the collective readers, the writing of the story, and the expressing of the pain therefore becomes a 'therapeutic' process (Pilgrim, 1995, p.152). In *Lady Moses*, for example, Alfred suggests that the writing of the story will help to 'heal' (p.5) the residents of Lavender Sweep: '*You know it will heal us if we write it all down*' (p.5) and for Hanif too, in *The Rainbow Sign*, the act of writing breaks down 'strong feelings' of hurt and pain, rendering them 'weak' and endurable (p.35).[68] Perhaps, Hanif ponders, 'this is why I took to writing in the first place' (p.35).[69]

2.4 Names and Naming

 Whereas autobiography, the act of writing and the telling of the story have been portrayed as a constructive and useful response to oppression (as well as a means of observing heritage and marking cross-cultural interaction), so too can the act of naming and/or renaming. Discussing what he terms "mixed race literature" within an international context, Brennan suggests that 'successive naming', the changing of a name at a 'critical juncture', 'multiple naming' and 'the acquisition and use of multiple names' (2002, p.24) are all common

---

[68] Author's italics.
[69] See also Olumide (2002, p.65-67) for a brief discussion on Kureishi's autobiographical writing.

phenomena in literary works featuring a mixed race protagonist, or where the authors are themselves of mixed origin. This is definitely reflected in the selected British texts as names connect characters to their roots and help to construct their identities, a theme perhaps most noticeable in *The Icarus Girl* by Helen Oyeyemi. Here, the protagonist is an eight-year-old girl called Jess who visits her family in Nigeria. Whilst there, Jess' Nigerian grandfather complains to Jess about her mother marrying a white man: 'I don't know who your father is; I don't know his people, I don't know what his *name* means and where it comes from' (p.27).[70]

Names, then, provide direct connections to shared ancestry and the presence of a name that is unrecognisable within the family line is a source of great angst. Bearing this in mind, the interracial relationship and the mixed race child signals a disruptive break within clear lines of blood, heritage and lineage. Equally, emphasis is placed on what the name means, particularly in texts with an African influence, as in many African cultures the name itself is very important. Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe, for example, writes that in Ibo tradition, 'one names children on the basis of events that are transpiring at the time the mother is pregnant or at the moment the child is born' (1999, p.30). The importance of naming is also similarly reflected in *The Icarus Girl* when Jess' grandfather considers her father's surname:

---

[70] Author's Italics.

Harrison – what does that mean, Harry's son? Harris' son? Now, take

Oyegbebi – it means "Kingship lives here". He tapped his breastbone.

Here. Here is where Kingship lives. I am a princely man, and my children

therefore should be proud and strong. Everyone who hears my name and

knows my people should know that (p.27).

For Gbenga Oyegbebi, names tell something of an individual's personality and

the character of "their people"; thus not knowing the meaning of Jess' father's

name also translates as not knowing her father.

This is partly why Jess is troubled by the introduction of the Nigerian name

Wuraola: 'Of course, she knew that Wuraola was her Yoruba name, the name

that her grandfather had asked in a letter for her to be called when her mother

had held her Nigerian naming ceremony' (p.19). Yet Jess is confused as there is

a disconnect between her already formulated sense of self and the introduction

of this new Africanised one, whose name holds a meaning which is somehow

supposed to reflect who she is.[71] To Jess, 'Wuraola' is someone else, and her

first thoughts are that she might be stealing 'the identity of someone who

belonged' (p.20). Later, as her concerns intensify, Jess begins to wonder

whether it is possible to '*become* Wuraola' (p.20) as is expected of her.[72]

---

[71] See discussion of the ongoing colonialist portrayal of Africa in chapter 3.5.
[72] Author's Italics.

Nevertheless, throughout the text, Jess struggles with all the names that are assigned to her: even her own name does not appear to fit. Hiding in the cupboard at the beginning of the novel, Jess hears her mother shouting her name: 'the sound of her name was strange, wobbly, misformed' (p.3): and Jess does not answer. Later, as Mafe points out, Jess's grandfather calling her Wuraola, also gets little response. For Mafe, Jess' inability to answer to her name is part of a 'larger crisis around her hybrid status' as Jess fears 'that once she completes the interpellation process by answering back, she must then commit to a fixed subjectivity – entirely English or entirely Yoruba' (2012, p.24).

Turner suggests that '[t]he function of language is to organize, to construct, indeed to provide us with our only access to, reality' (2003, p.11). If this is the case, the transition from one form of naming to another causes a disconnection between the "originally named self", and "the newly named self". For Jess, therefore, her naming and renaming as Jess, Jessy, Jessamy and Wuraola creates a psychological fragmentation – a result of her hybrid positioning.[73] This naming/renaming dilemma is also one that is faced by Colman in *Trumpet* in a different context when he finds that his pre-adoption name is William Dunsmore, and ponders if he would be a different person if he had "owned" this name. Once again, naming returns to the issues of definition, and who is responsible for this defining. Is it the self or others, and to what extent can the

---

[73] The portrayal here reinforces myth 1, that the mixed race individual is confused and trapped between cultures.

definition and choices of others (family, social systems, etc...) really allow for

individual agency?[74] In this way, like the act of vocalisation – (speaking out and

speaking up), naming also becomes a source of power, and for those with little,

it is a means of having some control over their own lives and the lives of their

offspring. This is why 'Naming/renaming has been an "issue" for black folks' Lisa

Jones writes, as in the times of slavery the act of naming was the only claim to

ownership of themselves or their children that slaves might have had (1994,

p.18).

In *Trumpet* too, Joss takes naming very seriously, seeing the symbolic act of

nicknaming (in itself a form of renaming) as a source of power and something

that white people do not understand. When Millie giggles at some of the names

given to Jazz players, Joss slaps her: 'white people always laugh at black

people's names' (p.5). Naming/renaming can be also seen in *Strawgirl* with

Maybe, whose name reflects her indecision, and the protagonist of the novel

Hero, named Hero, reminding the reader that she is a tough strong fighter like

her father.[75] Similarly, the act of naming also becomes important in *Lady Moses*

as Jacinta (named after an aunt who ran away from her father's ancestral village

in Africa (p.7), providing initial connection to ancestry) renames herself Simone

Madagascar. This renaming occurs just after her mother has had a nervous

---

[74] See discussion on self-definition in the introduction for debate on this.
[75] See chapter 5 for further discussion on *Hero*.

breakdown and thus the motivation behind the renaming here is to disassociate from Louise, and realign herself more fully with Simon, her dead father, along with his African roots (Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013, p.56). Later, Jacinta also claims ownership of her daughter through bestowing the name 'Lady' upon her, after the child is rejected by her father, due to her disability: 'I'd given Lady her name. I'd claimed her as mine' (p.253).

This chapter has highlighted the importance of the narrative structure of the journey within the selected texts, and has considered the way in which the "telling of the story" is often essential not only for the mixed race character's psychological wellbeing (as seen in *Lady Moses* and *The Rainbow Sign*), but also becomes an intrinsic part of how texts explore the protagonist's relationship towards black fathers and the non-British facets of the their identities. Furthermore, the chapter has illustrated how the genre of autobiography is a useful tool within this framework, providing a platform for positive self-expression whilst allowing authors to highlight issues of racism, provide political commentary, and explore interracial relationships. Whether or not autobiographies written by mixed race authors differ greatly from those created by other minority authors remains a little debatable. Certainly the motivation for writing such texts is definitely similar. Yet the selected autobiographies do demonstrate a propensity to focus on transnational spaces and to specifically address some of the mixed race myths of chapter 1.

One integral feature of this chapter has been to begin to explore the ways in

which identities can be constructed. The selected texts have demonstrated that this may be attempted through the acquisition of numerous narratives from different places, times and peoples, but in some ways this has been shown to be an individual response to a lack of firm, sociologically ascribed positioning (or negative typing), and may not always be sufficient for everyone. In the next part of the chapter, the construction of identity will be considered in further detail, moving from a micro to a macro level. Here, the way in which authors and their mixed race characters navigate the complexities of ownership and belonging on a national and international scale will be addressed, with parts 3.1-3.4 looking at notions of Britain and Britishness and part 3.5 considering how Africa, as a geographical region, is often seemingly portrayed as having a significant degree of importance in the quest for an individual's positive sense of self.

Chapter 3: National and International Identification, and the State of Belonging

3.1 National Identity and Britain

The nation, according to McLeod, is 'one of most important modes of social and political organization in the modern world' (McLeod, 2000, p.68). It is a common understanding that individuals have a nationality and are citizens of one country or another. But what is a nation-state and how does it become such an integral part of a person's identity? From a geographical point of view a nation is described as being a specific physical locality, and yet nation-states arise from socially constructed divides which are usually the product of imperialism, colonisation and/or war. In this sense, although physically present, nation-states can also be recognised as fictitious – a socially designated space, in which individuals in the vicinity are, through the process of socialisation, led to believe in their own membership and/or citizenship (or not, as will be described shortly).

This is the premise of a notable contribution from Benedict Anderson who writes that the nation is 'an imagined political community' (2006, p.6), 'imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them' (2006, p.6). Thus, Anderson argues, a fictitious bond binds a group of individuals together.

114

This does not happen naturally; nationhood must be rehearsed, revised and repeated in order to make sure it has a maximum impact. This is done through the repetition and performance of ideological ideas, as Billig writes: "we' are constantly reminded that 'we' live in nations: 'our' identity is continually being flagged' (1995, p.93). One example of the "flagging" of the nation, Billig suggests, can be observed through newspapers, which 'address their readers as members of the nation' unconsciously grounding citizens within a national space (1995, p.11). Furthermore, through sports, the 'national cause' is supported (1995, p.11) and even in day to day references, the nation is invisibly present. Taking the example of the way in which the newspaper refers to the prime minster, Billig writes: 'This is not any prime minster: it is *the* prime minster of 'our country' (*the* country). However, the phrase of 'our country' is omitted; it is unnecessary. The definite article accomplishes the deixis, indicating Britain as the centre of reader's and writer's ('our') shared universe' (1995, p.108).[76]

What of contemporary Britain? Here the nation is a complex site of order, surveillance and power like any other. Issues of national security and the nation's homogeneity are paramount, and this clashes constantly with the ongoing positive depictions of Britain's cultural diversity, seen frequently promoted in many of the selected texts (children's literature in particular – see chapter 5). The concepts of cultural diversity, multiculturalism/pluralism and

---

[76] Author's Italics.

multiracialism are present in the writing of the 1980s. In the Swann Report of 1985 a plural, multiracial society was seen as enabling '[a]ll ethnic groups […] to participate fully in shaping the society as a whole within a framework of commonly accepted values, practices and procedures, whilst also allowing and where necessary, assisting the ethnic minority communities in maintaining their distinct ethnic identities within a common framework' (1985, p.5). Such a notion of multiculturalism formed the Labour government's policy in the late 1990s, headed by Bhikhu Parekh, whose report in 2000 shaped much of the government's thinking (Fella & Bozzinni, 2012).

Yet, as Fella and Bozzinni suggest, the political climate was also changing. 2000 saw a peak in asylum seekers into the UK, and this created a general unrest in the population who were beginning to feel that the government had lost control over immigration. Furthermore, in 2001 there were riots between Pakistani and white youths in the north of the country. The expansion of the EU saw the arrival of many Eastern Europeans particularly from Poland in 2004. Here, the government was blamed for not creating transitional measures to prevent a wave of migration. Finally, after the shocking events of September 11th 2001 in the United States, in 2005, Britain saw its own terrorist attacks on the 7th July when a small group of Muslim British citizens turned to extremism. Many of these events have created a public distaste for the idea of multiculturalism. In some more extreme cases (combined with general disillusionment and distrust of mainstream politician's), this has led to the rise of Right Wing political groups such as the BNP who achieved a high number of seats in local elections in the

mid-2000s; UKIP, who has recently become the British representative on the European Council in 2014; and the EDL who have thrived on the fear and islamaphobia which has developed post 9/11 and 7/7 (Rhodes, 2013; Fella & Bozzinni, 2012).

Initially, it is clear that multiculturalism as a concept fails to address the topic of racism which lies underneath the image of a society where all cultures are respected and valued, but the idea is further problematised by Britain's position as a liberal society. Fundamentally, liberalism is inherently based on the principle of allowing citizens a degree of freedom to practise their religions and hold on to their own cultural backgrounds; however, issues occur when certain cultural practises within those cultures do not share the same degree of liberal intent. Parekh, in his interview with Jahanbegloo clarifies this by suggesting that there is a difference between cultural diversity, which can easily fit with a liberal standpoint, and moral diversity which is about the 'diversity of values, virtues, and conception of the good life' (2011, p.2). In Parekh's view, then, it is moral diversity which creates many of the cultural clashes and conflicts that are viewed in British society in areas such as burkha wearing, forced marriages, FGM, and the radicalisation of young Muslims.[77] Trying to find the balance between liberalism and the assertion of "British values" continues today with

---

[77] It is interesting to note that Parekh (2011) also stresses that there are still aspects of great value in such cultures. Parekh suggests that British culture could learn to appreciate society, community and family over individualism, a position encouraged in Buddhist led societies, for example.

117

the current government as reflected in David Cameron's Munich speech which calls for 'Muscular liberalism' (2011) (also cited in Fella & Bozzinni, 2012) in dealing with Islamic extremism, an idea that also punctuates the very latest round of debates, where faith schools have been heavily criticised for gender inequality and indoctrinating the young with views of extremism.

All these factors have led to a distancing 'from an explicit celebration of state multiculturalism, towards a greater emphasis on social cohesion and the integration of black and ethnic minority groups' (Rhodes, 2013, p.59). This has been traced back to 2001 when the Parekh Report was abandoned, and a new report written by Ted Cantle which 'singled out multiculturalism as the main problem for British Ethnic Relations' (Fella and Bozzinni, 2012, p.64) was introduced. To Cantle, multiculturalism was seen as divisive, creating isolated pocket communities with little interaction, and thus the concept was dropped in favour of the idea of community cohesion, where the focus became placed on managing 'micro-communities to gel or mesh into an integrated whole' (Lynch, 2001, p.71). Interestingly, Cantle also calls for a more homogenous version of British society formed through a 'meaningful concept of 'citizenship'' where 'a clear primary loyalty to this Nation' is established (2001, p.20). In the next part of the chapter, the thesis will consider how writers have sought to portray Britain in relation to some of the areas mentioned. Are characters "loyally" British first before other cultural affiliation for example, and does British society actually allow this to happen?

Furthermore, the thesis will consider if Britain itself is a homogenous state, "gelled" and "glued" by examining the different countries that construct it. Frequently, it is Britain as a whole that is discussed, but how do opinions vary in different parts of Britain? Do Scotland and Wales share the principles and sentiments of Westminster? It is not just issues surrounding multiculturalism that permeate through Britain, but also the viability of the union between England, Scotland, Wales (and Northern Ireland) that often take precedence. Recently, this very issue has been at the heart of the state with Scotland's referendum on independence which took place in September 2014. Although the Scottish people voted in favour of remaining part of Britain, the results were extremely close, with 55% voting no and 45% yes (BBC News Scotland, 2014). Following on from this particular question, the chapter will be divided into three sections exploring England, Scotland and Wales individually. Each section will focus on the author's portrayal of the country in question, its relationship to England, in the case of Wales and Scotland; how the mixed race individual fits within national narratives, concepts of multiculturalism, and formulations of national identity; and, most importantly, what can be learnt from the texts about the complex exchanges and inter-changes between nation, self and Other.

3.2 England

In the introduction to *The English Question*, Wright asks two very important questions. 'Where does England fit into the reconfiguration of Britain', and 'what does it mean to be English'? (2000, p.7) Certainly, now nearly a decade and a half into the twenty first century, it seems that England has lost its way and part of the issue relates to the construction of Englishness itself. The Empire, which at its height provided England with a sense of security and superiority is long over. However, as Gardiner points out, the Empire was in fact the British Empire and not just the English one (2005, p.20). Indeed '[t]he complex and symbiotic relationship of English to British identities is a difficult one to unravel' (Hickman, 2000, p.98) and it is common to hear English politicians, academics and writers using the terms 'British' and 'English' interchangeably.

In 'multinational states', Mycock suggests, it is common for 'one ethno-nation' to orchestrate 'the construction of both state and national culture' (2013, p.16). For Britain, this has meant England's dominance within the union has led to the prioritisation of 'English political, economic and cultural values, institutions and practises' (Mycock, 2013, p.16). Such convolution has resulted, Gardiner suggests, in England actually believing that it is in fact Britain (Gardiner, 2005,

p.4).[78] So, 'what is Englishness once it is separated from Britishness?' (Hickman, 2000, p.96), and how do ethnic minorities living in England see themselves in relation to Englishness? *The Buddha of Suburbia*, one of the earlier texts explored in the thesis, was published in 1990. As discussed previously at the beginning of the chapter, the end of the multiculturalism, and the supposed "break-up of Britain" (term coined by Nairn, 1981) have all shaped thinking about England and Englishness today. However, much of what *The Buddha of Suburbia* has to offer in terms of rethinking notions of Englishness and the experience of being part of an ethnic minority in England is still highly relevant.

The first area of note in *The Buddha of Suburbia* is the way in which the construction of England and Englishness is demonstrated through the text to be heavily linked with Empire and the country's colonial past. This can initially be identified through the Asian characters: Haroon, Anwar and Jeeta. Growing up in the time of the British Raj and being frequently reminded of the superior nature of England has left all with high expectations of what the motherland will turn out to offer. Haroon initially plans to return to India in triumph as a 'qualified and polished English gentleman lawyer and an accomplished ballroom dancer' (p.24); instead, he becomes a servant of the state. Princess Jeeta, too, with her aristocratic Pakistani origin, expects more than a life as a corner shop keeper. Even though the times of Empire are long gone, however, the principals

---

[78] This "British State – English culture' imperial bind', Gardiner comments, is also still prevalent in universities around the globe (2011, p.6).

of Imperial rule are still often evoked by the characters to form commentary on the modes of behaviour of others. Shadwell, for example, considers what the imperialists would have made of Karim: 'What a breed of people two hundred years of imperialism has given birth to. If the pioneers from the East India Company could see you. What puzzlement there'd be' (p.141). Equally, Auntie Jean, who is less than impressed with Haroon's affair with Eva, questions what the Queen would think if she knew that one of her civil servants was acting in this immoral manner.

In contrast to the English-born Asian Jamila, and to the mixed race protagonist of the novel Karim, however, the Empire is to be simply rebelled against: 'we stared defiantly into the eye of the Empire and all its self-regard' (p.227). Karim's rebellion takes the form of his sexual relationship with Helen whose father (who Karim nicknames 'Hairy Back' (p.227)) tells him that his daughter 'doesn't go out with boys. Or with wogs' (p.40), clearly making a distinction between the two.[79] Jamila also recalls how inferior her Asian background is considered to be when she spends time with Miss Cutmore who attempts to 'eradicate everything that [is] foreign in her' (p.53), treats her parents like 'peasants' (p.53) and eventually attempts to colonise her (p.53). Sentiments

---

[79] This is a similar experience in some ways to Jacinta in *Lady Moses* when she is told by the boy in the hospital that his 'ma wouldn't let him play with wogs' (p.20), as earlier discussed.

such as these in the novel are combined with the on-going threat of race-based violence causing further distance and resentment to Englishness to emerge.

Casual racism, it seems, is an almost intrinsic part of the England of the novel and the white side of Karim's own family engage in it: Uncle Ted, leaning out a train window, shouts: 'That's where the niggers live. Them blacks' (p.43). More widely, for the British Asians in the novel, England and Englishness are both associated with whiteness and the National Front, where racist thugs beat up ethnic minorities, 'shoving shit and burning rags through letter-boxes' with 'mean, white, hating faces' (p.56). (Unfortunately, this interlinking between English nationalism and Far Right movements is still present in contemporary society (Gardiner & Westall, 2013, p.6)). This association along with the violence leads the characters in the novel to feel disassociated from the national space, and for this reason they are unable to easily claim an English identity, even under the circumstance of England being their country of birth.

The idea of Englishness being synonymous with "whiteness"' (Ifekwunigwe, 1999, p.xiii), however, is more than just a sentiment expressed by the National Front or Far Right, but is in fact more systemic. As Paul Gilroy writes: 'The politics of 'race' in this country is fired by conceptions of national belonging and homogeneity which not only blur the distinction between 'race' and nation, but rely on that very ambiguity for their effect' (1987, p.45). With this "blurring" of whiteness and Englishness, those who are non-white enter a subjugated position where by belonging to an ethnic minority automatically excludes them

from being English, an experience well-documented by writers and academics. Black British journalist, Gary Younge, for example, comments: '"Englishness" was never something that we claimed' since the word England represented 'a hostile nation of proud white folk […] underpinned more by it sense of former colonial glory than any ideas of its present meaning' (2000, p.111).

Despite the exclusive nature of Englishness that can render those who are non-white as outsiders or strangers, Englishness can also be transformed into a position of diversity. This approach is highly dependent on two factors: Empire and post-war immigration. 'Imperial England' Gardiner states, was both 'everywhere and nowhere' (Gardiner, 2005, p.4); inter-connected to its wider network of colonies, stretching over vast continents and peoples, England was, in a sense, without defined borders. Such a position meant that the image of white England, was 'continually being contested' (Young, 1995, p.2) leading to an underlying 'uncertainty' within the construction of national identity (Young, 1995, p.2). As decolonisation and post-war immigration occurred, though, seeing many of the once colonised arriving into the country which they perceived as motherland, the concept of white England came to be entirely untenable. Thus, as Young alludes to, England has a very ambivalent view of "the Other" where on the one side, England rejects its relationship with its non-white subjects and yet, conversely, there is no Englishness without the colonial, the post-colonial, the migrant. Complicated though it may seem, it does not require much to see the ethnic influence of others within English society. As Younge suggests, black culture has become youth culture (2000), and the Indian

curry is one of nation's most favourite dishes. It is this form of Englishness that the mixed Karim embodies as he states in the opening of the novel: 'I am considered to be a funny kind of Englishman, a new breed, as it were, having emerged from two old histories. But I don't care - Englishman I am (though not proud of it)' (p.3).

However, the portrayal of cultural interactions and mixedness in *The Buddha of Suburbia* is double edged, namely through the notion that cross-racial interaction is marked by a desire towards self-progression, and personal gain, making the act seem both shallow and superficial. Haroon, for example, is a prime example of this. After reading '*Yoga for Women*' (p.5), he decides to turn towards the path of Buddhist enlightenment and proceeds to give classes in white English homes, where he is seen as mysterious and 'exotic' (p.31).[80] Through this he is able to obtain both financial gain, and sexual gratification through his relationship with Eva, in addition to winning a degree of respect (or so he believes) from the white middle class residents of suburbia. Similarly, Eva pragmatically changes her cultural identity in order to increase her social status. Supporting Haroon with his performance as "the Buddha", she herself becomes "Asianised", wearing a turban (p.30) and provocatively 'pumping out a plume of Oriental aroma' (p.9). The text's message therefore seems to be that those who do not adhere to this level of ethnic flexibility, such as Anwar who holds fast to his belief in an arranged marriage for his daughter Jamila, cannot survive; those

---

[80] Author's Italics.

who utilise culture as a tool and are willing to hybridise their outlook, ideas and opinions can expect to prosper.

Karim's mixed position gives him a degree of additional ethnic flexibility which allows him to be able to easily perform different roles within the novel with some ease, his shape-shifting best symbolised by his ability to take on the role of Mogwli in Shadwell's stage version of *The Jungle Book*. Although the role seems to be a quick way to move on in an upwardly mobile English society, the effects on Karim when he looks into the part a little deeper are to his detriment. Karim is shocked to discover that the director Shadwell's idea of a costume is 'a loin cloth and brown make-up', which causes him to resemble 'a turd in a bikini-bottom' (p.146) and is equally concerned when Shadwell asks him to perform his lines with an Indian accent:

> "I think it should be an authentic accent."
>
> "What d'you mean authentic?"
>
> "Where was our Mowgli born?"
>
> "India."
>
> "Yes, not Orpington. What accent do they have in India?"
>
> "Indian accents".
>
> "Ten out of ten" (p.147).

Whereas shape shifting was seemingly beneficial at first then, providing Karim with initial leverage, within his new role he soon finds himself cast as the

126

"Colonial Other", ridiculed and rendered inferior and uncivilised for the entertainment of the English audience. This does not go unnoticed by Haroon: '"Bloody half-cocked business", he said. "That bloody fucker Mr Kipling pretending to whitey he knew something about India. And an awful performance by my boy looking like a Black and White minstrel!"' (p.157).

Despite this Othering of Karim, his Englishness (and controversially his proximity to whiteness) causes him to be rejected as an inauthentic Other. It is, for example, a source of great disappointment to Shadwell that Karim looks Indian but cannot speak Punjabi or Urdu and has never felt the 'dust' (p.141) of India in his nostrils. Where Asianness – whether it be Chinese (in the case of Haroon), or Indian (in the case of both Haroon and Karim) within the novel is considered as fresh, exciting and destabilising, Karim's Englishness becomes a real let-down: 'Everyone looks at you, I'm sure and thinks: an Indian boy, how exotic, how interesting, what stories of aunties and elephants we'll hear from him. And you're from Orpington' (p.141).[81] To Shadwell, Karim is an imposter, a 'half-caste' (p.141) masquerading as an Indian. Whilst Karim shakes with 'embarrassment' (p.142) under Shadwell's heavy questioning, Shadwell himself

---

[81] Ranasinha suggests that performance as a theme in the *Buddha of Suburbia* is futile as Karim's theatrical performances simply 'mirror the ways in which society attempts to define racialized minorities in terms of reductive identities' (2002, p.70). Further, Ranasinha writes that 'on the one hand, the simulation of cultural identity suggests a degree of agency on the part of the performer: he/she is in control of his/her self-construction rather than being defined' (2002, p.73), but on the other, characters such as Haroon who believe that they are creating something innovative and different within their performances are in fact just reconstructing themselves within the framework of another stereotype (2000, p.73). There may be some truth in the argument, but do such performances really offer no room for negotiation or subversion?

revels in his enquiries and dramatically emphasises Karim's tragic positioning: 'belonging nowhere, wanted nowhere. Racism. Do you find it difficult? Please tell me' (p.141). Furthermore, Karim's white mother also reaffirms the idea of Karim as inauthentic, his Indianness not just diluted, but removed by his English heritage. When Karim points out: 'Aren't I part Indian?', her response is 'You're an Englishman, I'm glad to say' (p.232).

So where does the mixed race individual fit in with notions of contemporary Englishness? In many ways Karim's position mirrors his author's own. In the earlier discussed *The Rainbow Sign*, Hanif cannot identify as a Pakistani: 'It was a word I didn't want used about myself. I couldn't tolerate being myself' (p.12) and yet when he goes to Pakistan, he is ridiculed for calling himself an 'Englishman' (p.17). Equally, in *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Karim, is not viewed as an Indian, and yet his racial negotiations do not truly give him the possibility of full identification with Englishness. He is still just an Englishman 'almost' (p.3), and is subjected to being called 'Shitface' and 'Curryface' (p.63). Yet, Karim does not simply remain a victim, but instead engages in simple acts of resistance such as breaking into a cockney accent when playing Mogwli and riding in the racist Hairy Back's car without his consent. Thus, although it might appear that Karim is defining himself within the "tragic mulatto" tradition as a figure with an 'odd mixture of continents and blood, of here and there, of belonging and not' (p.3), the transpiring context of ethnic capital within the novel may challenge the reader's opinions of Karim as they view how his racial positioning can be pragmatically used for his own personal gain.

The last point to make relating to Kureishi's novel, however, regards its emphasis on the importance of constituting a regional identity. The London suburbs come to represent middle class white England within the text, not a place where Karim feels at home: 'In the suburbs people rarely dreamed of striking out for happiness, it was all familiarity and endurance: security and safety were the reward of dullness' (p.8). Comparatively, the capital of *The Buddha of Suburbia*, seems to offer potential for Karim to find a sense of belonging in amongst the curious and eclectic mix of citizens. When Karim reaches London, despite the crowds and the noise, he is excited. The city is dirty and vibrant, dangerous and yet safe, a place for disgust and curiosity. Walking among its districts, he sees a mixture of people from 'rich ladies' to 'addicts' (p.127): 'There were small hotels smelling of spunk and disinfectant, Australian travel agents, all-night shops run by dwarfish Bengalis, leather bars with fat moustached queens' (p.127). Most importantly, London gives him the sense of belonging that he has been craving, a means by which he can construct an identity. Thus, even though Karim is disconnected from narratives of Englishness, he and his family have a connection with the capital's streets, a personal history steeped in regional space, along the Old Kent Road, from the dance hall where Karim's parents met, to Dr Lal's surgery (p.113). Here, then, Kureishi proposes the possibility of regional identity, produced in the absence of national association.

Regional identity holds great importance for people of mixed origin. This has been documented in sociological research firstly by Tizzard and Phoenix with young people in London reporting that many of their respondents felt 'in some sense excluded by white people from English culture, and from being English' (2002, p.227); however, they 'identified most easily with being a 'Londoner'' (2002, p.227-228). Similarly, Mark Christian discusses mixed race identity in Liverpool, firstly considering the use of the term "Liverpool-Born-Black" with his interviewees (Christian, 2000). Here, then, racial coding has become inherently linked to geographical/socio-local space. This term was not just a colloquial one but entered into the realm of official reporting as illustrated by the Swann Report, that actually describes a "Liverpool Black". Part of the definition reads as follows:

> There is a long-established community in Liverpool of African, mixed African and English, or African and Liverpool-Irish-descent, with some Asian descent as well […] It is this group of long established families that we call 'Liverpool Blacks'. Many are blood relations of Liverpool 'whites' and have 'black' grandparents and great-grandparents born in Liverpool; they speak 'scouse' with a vocabulary, grammar and intonation identical with those of 'white' Liverpudlians… (*Swann Report*, 1985, p.733).

Regional identity within England, it has been demonstrated, has proven useful for those who cannot locate themselves specifically within the discourse of Englishness. Yet, the idea of regionalised (and/or devolved) identities is also

significant when exploring literature from other parts of Britain such as Wales

and Scotland where authors assert the importance of non-English national

identities within the state space. The extent to which these identities can be

fully adopted by the authors, and their characters, however, is once again

questionable as shall be revealed in the next part of the chapter focusing, first

on Wales and then on Scotland.

3.3 Wales

'There is no such thing as a black Welshman – you can have a black Briton but

you cannot have a black Welshman' stated Nick Griffin of the BNP in an

interview with Jon Snow (CH4 News, 2009). His comments raised controversy

and angry reaction amongst many in Wales and more widely across Britain.

Griffin's remarks were in fact foolishly dismissive of the history of Wales, (a

point made by Snow) which has had a large population of black people living in

Cardiff for the last two centuries. Yet, despite this, the issue of race in Wales

seems to remain unaddressed, a point most critically raised by Charlotte

Williams' *Sugar and Slate* which documents the author's life growing up mixed

and Welsh.

In *Sugar and Slate*, Charlotte feels as though both race, and subsequently

racism, in Wales are considered to be non-existent: 'There was no such thing as

"black" where I grew up' (p.48), and even if it did exist it was 'just an ugly

rumour spreading into Wales from across the border' (p.177). In "Passport to

Wales? Race, Nation and Identity", Williams explores this concept further by suggesting that in the national construction of Welshness, racism cannot exist. '[T]he narratives of the Welsh nation are inscribed with notions of egalitarianism, solidarity, hospitality and tolerance', Williams writes, and does not include the snobbery associated with the English (1999, p.77-78). This particularly applies to rural and North Wales, where Welshness is built upon the notion of *gwerin*, a term which signifies 'a heroic Welsh people rising from their subjection to claim nationhood' (Adamson, 1999, p.58) and a concept which has been suggested to transcend 'social divisions such as class' (Williams, 1999, p.78).[82] For Williams, this is problematic as it has led to racism being seen only in terms of a 'feature of British hegemonic nationalist ideology' (1999, p.76) and thus a ''no problem here'' approach is often adopted in Wales (Williams & Johnson, 2010, p.67).[83]

As a child, Charlotte finds the lack of national concern for race transposes into a direct lack of positive images of black people by which she might gain a sense of self: 'I never saw a proper black person in a book. I never saw a black person in the street. I never saw a black person on the telly except The Black and White Minstrels when we went round to Auntie Maggie's' (p.46). Due to a lack of black

---

[82] Italics to denote change of language.

[83] Charlotte Williams has a similar battle in *Sugar and Slate* with a country of origin that she cannot lay claim to. Without the instant collective history that allows her to be built into the national framework, as discussed in chapter 2, Charlotte is immediately categorised as the "Other", leaving her open to being bombarded with questions about her difference – illustrated in an interrogation style paragraph on page 49: 'Are you from Africa? I bet it's hot in your country. Are you feeling cold? Do you eat this sort of food where you are from? Are you that colour all over? Can you speak English?' (p.49).

figures with whom she can identify, Charlotte appropriates the white Dennis the Menace, reimagining him as closer to her:

I could see he wasn't coloured like me but he was definitely some kind of white-black boy. It was his hair that grabbed my attention first, not his defiant manner or the fact that he had my dad's name. Dennis the Menace's black hair was fuzzy and wild and free. My heart sang to look at him (p.42-43).

Despite her isolation, Charlotte's white mother is represented as a strong and empathetic character who has also been subject to discrimination as she is dismissed from nursing in an English hospital when her lack of English is taken to be incompetence. This is indicated by Charlotte when she suggests: 'Maybe they didn't understand that Wales was another country with its own language and its own people' (p.20). Charlotte's mother also feels like an outsider whilst living in London and, therefore, it is she who is 'the real dark stranger' (p.10), whereas her husband, having being schooled under the British in the Caribbean is 'the English one' (p.10).

Charlotte's mother knows that she must fight the English for recognition of her family and makes no reservations in her dislike of them, telling her daughter that 'Winston Churchill did nothing for us' (p.41). This aspect of her personality is exposed further when she reprimands an English woman who pushes in front of family as they board the boat to Africa. Charlotte's mother, being 'Welsh'

(p.8) and therefore not 'taking orders from anybody' (p.8), shouts at the woman, calling her 'Bloody Sais' (p.8).[84] The captain excuses the woman's behaviour as being due to her lack of knowledge of the colonies and of 'coloured people' (p.8), illuminating the reason behind the woman's rudeness. Of the encounter with the English woman, Charlotte considers: 'This battle would be part of what we were and what we would be' (p.8), yet this battle that is her own and her mother's was not just against the English, but against her mother's 'own people' too (p.83).

This theme of colonial-style conflicts and imperial exploration continually punctuates the text. At one point the family are themselves the colonial adventurers, driving through the Welsh countryside. With Charlotte's father present, on one of his rare visits, they explore 'the interior' (p.53), but mainly Charlotte casts the family as Maroons, the indigenous tribe of the Caribbean that became intermixed through the harbouring of runaway slaves from the plantations. As a 'Maroon community' (p.35), Charlotte's mother and her daughters must stake out a 'territory' (p.35) and in so doing create a hybrid space within the homogenous Welsh society. Their house in Llandudno becomes such a place. With its Arabic name and filled with African artefacts, it is the family's 'safe haven', a 'sanctuary' from the 'peculiar' 'outside world' that surrounds them (p.35).

---

[84] 'Welsh: "Bloody English"' (p.8).

This inside/outside binary reflects a central theme in a number of the selected texts. Of this dichotomy, Scafe writes: 'The public/private contradiction that lies at the heart of the auto/biographical genre is a problem that continues to engage critics and theorists' (2009, p.294). Here, Scafe is referring to the issue of the functionality of the black woman's autobiography as both a mechanism of campaign against racism and an exploration of the internal workings of the self (a concept explored in some detail when considering Kureishi's *The Rainbow Sign*). Feminists have considered this dichotomy to be linked to gender – the outside, masculine realm of the public and the domesticated, maternal and feminised private. Yet it might be useful to read this theory in terms of the public self, the self which is available to the outside world and the internalised self, its creation and the space that it creates, and is created for it. In *Sugar and Slate* the 'carving' of such a space (p.49) is both an internal (the creation of "home") and an external activity. Externally, for Charlotte and her sisters, this means finding their identities individually: 'The space I carved out was mine alone and my sisters were carving out their own identities in the same way' (p.49). Like Karim in *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Charlotte too views "outside" behaviour as performative, a 'charade' to 'fit in' (p.49) and 'an invention' to meet the expectation of others (p.49). Freedom and a sense of belonging are only created within the internal space: 'That's how it happened that we had an inside life and an outside life, a private and a public, and in the public we had to make it seem as though it all fitted wonderfully' (p.49).

The recognition of Welshness and the desire to "fit in" is also a constant theme within *Sugar and Slate*, and throughout Charlotte's journey across the continents it is her longing for Welshness that seems a continual factor. As Charlotte considers, though, Welshness is not always achievable, even for the white Welsh, due to issues of regional and linguistic identity. This has been explored a little further by Andrew Thompson and Graham Day who have written about Welshness as a moving entity with different levels of Welshness ranging from Welsh learners, to Welsh born Welsh, Bangor Welsh to Cardiff Welsh (Thompson & Day, 1999, p.42). In *Sugar and Slate* Charlotte describes how Wales is a country of contradictions: 'There is the north Welsh Wales they call it and a very different South connected only in name. The Welsh and the English, the Welsh speaking and the English speaking, the proper Welsh and the not so proper Welsh, the insiders and the outsiders' (1999, p.169).

In the Caribbean forest, Charlotte argues over the issues of language with some Quebecois workers who have their own struggles for linguistic recognition:

> You can't be Welsh unless you can speak the bloody language. It's ridiculous. At one time in history a whole generation were robbed of the language. At another, a whole generation of us were discouraged from using it. When we were growing up, speaking Welsh wasn't the way to get on – a good English accent and a good English education was. And now we're seen as outsiders in our own country because we can't speak Welsh (p.144).

When Welshness is based on a linguistic affiliation to the country, Charlotte

finds herself doubly disadvantaged by her colour and also by her inability to

speak the language.[85]

At university, Charlotte discovers that the colonial struggles are absent from the

curriculum, but that the intra-British conflict between the English and the Welsh

is the subject that her peers are most engaged in, all sharing the single-sided

view that the English are the oppressors, speaking 'the language of the overseer

and the landowner' (p.173), with the Welsh clearly the oppressed.[86] Charlotte

questions this: 'it was as simple as black and white, and yet not so simple at all'

(p.171). Black people in Wales, perceived as less of a threat and less involved in

the English/Welsh conflict as earlier mentioned, are largely forgotten. As

Williams articulates in "A Passport to Wales. Race Nation and Identity": 'The

role of black people in Wales is essentially silent and passive, geographically

contained and making no public demands on Welsh national Identity' (1999,

p.75). Essentially excluded from Welshness, and not English either, Charlotte is

left behind in the push for Welsh nationalism.

Towards the end of the autobiography, however, on returning from the

---

[85] See Charlotte Aull Davies for some interesting discussion on gender politics, Welshness, and incorporating Third World feminist approaches into considering Welsh nationalism (1999).
[86] This concept is again reflected in Graeme Macdonald's comments on Scottish writing which has attempted to show 'literary solidarity with the global post-colonial and/or 'minor' world literatures' (2010, p.85).

Caribbean after discovering her husband has had an affair, Charlotte's need for security is paramount. Gramich writes that it is Charlotte's absence from Wales which helps her identify her sense of belonging: 'The narrator of *Sugar and Slate* must leave Wales in order to understand her sense of belonging to it; only then can she return' (2007, p.192). Yet Charlotte's relationship with Wales is not that straight-forward, as she returns to the country to rediscover the feeling that Wales does not wish "own" her. It is at this point that Charlotte decides to try to find a way that she can "own" it. Allowing the country to undergo a reconstruction in her own mind, she begins to reposition herself by discovering links between her dual-heritage position and the land. Extending the previous discussed on the subject of the creation of narrative, Charlotte deconstructs Welsh history. Using the physical marker of Penrhyn Castle as a 'monument' to her 'double historical heritage' (p.175), Charlotte begins to break down the myth that Wales is 'unsullied by ruthless imperialism' (p.34). Charlotte recounts how the castle is built on the profits of the slave trade and how the plantocracy and slateocracy are interlinked: 'The plantocracy sponsored the slateocracy in an intimate web of relationships where sugar and slate were the commodities' (p.175). Reconsidering the position of the Welsh in the binary of exploiter/exploited, she ponders how the Welshman Richard Pennant used other Welsh people to help produce what Charlotte refers to as the 'Welsh Empire' (p.175). Wales, in Charlotte's representation, is not completely free of colonial guilt and yet she is also keen to expose links between the production of sugar and slate, and the cost of human labour. Charlotte sees her grandparents as interlinked to her, and her father's ancestors, through their shared

experiences of English/Welsh exploitation: 'We meet with the legacy of these two intertwined histories and struggles over freedom and identity and in my split memory we speak the same language' (p.176).

The interconnection of the sugar and slate narrative and Charlotte's ancestors, does not help to 'ground her physically' (p.177), but it does provide Charlotte with 'a vantage point' (p.177) on which to grow her sense of self. She must also look to discover the black presence that is missing from Welsh history and the way that Wales has shaped international black history. Linking Wales to global events, Charlotte recounts the history of the Cardiff riots of 1919 and how this seemingly insignificant disruption had a ripple effect around the Caribbean as black people who were sent home after the violence began to attack white sailors in Trinidad, blocking the port (p.171). Equally, Charlotte details how 'the memories of the Cardiff race riots were etched in black consciousness and became the touchstone for black people fighting against the colour bar during the Twenties and Thirties' (p.171). However, in order to create visibility and recognition for herself, Charlotte feels she must delve further into history and remedy the 'sickening pieces of cultural amnesia that had conveniently managed to disassociate the Welsh from any implication in the facts of black history' that render black people in Wales 'with an invisible present' (p.177).

For this purpose, Charlotte turns to a reconstructing of the black presence in the Welsh past. Although the Cardiff black population, of which her friend Suzanne is a part of, has been documented for 'a hundred and fifty years' (p.168), this

regionalised blackness is not available to Charlotte. Envious of Suzanne's

belonging 'to something called a black community' (p.168), Charlotte feels as if

Suzanne has 'history on her side' (p.168). Instead, Charlotte looks for the more

remote members of her tribe, the other 'maroons' (p.35) like her own family,

hidden by history, that had once dwelt on the margins of Welsh society.

Charlotte recounts the story of the Congo boys of Colwyn Bay, a group of

Africans taken from the Congo and transported to Wales to be educated in

"Welsh civilisation" in 1892. Through the telling of their story Charlotte is able

to find common roots, and a platform of understanding, whilst also providing

the disempowered boys with agency and a place in the Welsh historical

narrative. The 'recovery of Black Welsh subjects' (Donnell, 2007, p.2) also offers

agency to the contemporary black Welsh population. Charlotte suggests that in

a similar way that those visiting slave forts can access the past and the present

simultaneously, and gauge from this their place in the world, the experience

with the Congo boys might have the same effect:

> It is as though through each retraced step the slave experience is owned
>
> by them. They have to go back to make themselves in the present. In one
>
> single moment they are the past, the present and the future all rolled into
>
> one – the recollection, the recreation and the reinstatement of the whole
>
> thing gives them [the black Welsh] profile (p.26).

Such representations are neatly described by Suzanne Scafe who writes:

'Williams historicises her self as subject, providing an authenticating

architecture of narratives within the autobiography itself that construct a genealogy of 'black' Wales' (2010, p.138). It is really through these connections that Charlotte is able to "find" her Wales: 'We look back so that we can recognise and retrieve a lost past, so that we can reaffirm all the elements of it. That way we manage to carry forward a sense of ourselves selecting and reinventing a culture and integrating it into the present' (*Sugar and Slate*, p.190).

Despite all the conflict, however, Charlotte feels close to Wales, making the metaphoric link between herself and her country of birth. Both are 'mixed up' (p.169) in different ways and both know what it means to be marginalised; it is these similarities, along with the beauty of Wales, that cause Charlotte to feel a sense of genuine affection for the land: 'There can be few places more magnificent in the architecture of the landscape, […] There are few places with such a sensitive complexion that rises and ebbs in a thousand hues to complement different days, different lights, different times of year' (p.170). This loyalty and affinity to a national space is not just found in Williams' works, however, but is also present in the writing of the next author to be discussed. 'What a country!' writes Jackie Kay in her autobiography: 'Stunning. Nothing like it, our ain wee country' (*Red Dust Road,* p.124), but just like Williams' works, Kay's writing is filled with ambiguity as she reflects upon the issues of visibility and the acceptance of mixed race and migrant populations within Scotland and its national narrative.

3.4 Scotland

Over the last 300 years, Scotland's history and its politics have been intrinsically tied to that of Britain. Yet to what extent do Scottish people today, believe in British identity? As earlier mentioned, some affinity to the joint state entity must remain, as proven by the decision in the recent referendum. Given that the boundaries of England and Britain are often blurred, though, it is not surprising that some Scottish people feel unable to, or choose not to, identify as British. At the same time, Scotland has its own heritage, languages and specific traditions and cultures, much of which has been supressed historically by the English, adding further cause for a call towards a Scottishness independent of English influence.

The pulls towards Scottish autonomy resulted in the devolution of powers to the Scottish parliament in 1999, an event which scholars of Scottish history, politics and literature argue played a major role in the re-assessment of Scottishness and its relationship to England, but also allowed for the questioning of the position of ethnic minorities within the construction of Scotland's national narrative (Macdonald, 2010; Brown, 2007). The response provided by the SNP to a multi-ethnic devolved Scotland has been to attempt to construct a Scottishness based upon civic, rather than ethnic grounds (Mycock, 2012). This "new Scottishness", has created interesting discussions, criticism and debate, and for Jackie Kay, the author explored in the next part of the

chapter, 'it is', Brown suggests, this 'post-devolution Scotland's specific articulation of inclusive citizenship, and the reconstruction of the nation's social and symbolic space enabled in this articulation, which inform much of her writing' (Brown, 2007, p.220).[87] Mixed race, Scottish, and transracially adopted, Kay's personal experiences and thoughts about nation and identity have been usefully documented within her autobiography, but are also heavily present and identifiable within her novels, which will be discussed in this part of the chapter. Within these works, Kay's vocalisation of Scottishness is highly complex as she positions both herself and her characters, simultaneously 'inside and outside of Scotland' and its national space (Brown, 2007, p.221).

Initially, it can be noted that Kay's texts are clearly set out as works of contemporary Scottish literature. This is made primarily apparent through her geographical referencing and allusion to recognisable Scottish tradition.[88] Kay begins with the setting of Scotland itself, writing both of the Scottish landscape and cityscape. (This technique is referred to by Brown when discussing *The Adoption Papers* as 'engaging space as a social symbolic entity' (2007, p.222)). In

---

[87] Mycock raises questions over the SNP promotion of Homecoming 2009 which seemed to encourage white people of Scottish ancestry to return home without acknowledging Scotland's role in the colonies which resulted in black populations also having Scottish predecessors in places such as the Caribbean (Mycock, 2012, p.62).

[88] It is not always possible to frame mixed people into a national narrative but there is always the possibility of hybridisation of the nation's position. This hybridity primarily exists within Kay's use of language in *Strawgirl* and *Trumpet* where there are a number of linguistic shifts from standard to vernacular language at certain points in the text. In *Trumpet*, Joss' language at times uses specifically Scottish vocabulary; affectionately referring to Colman as his '*wee man*' (p.64). (Author's italics). In *Strawgirl* too, Maybe has a 'lilting Highland accent' (p.10) that is pointed out by the narrator, who also occasionally slips in a Scottish word or phrase, calling Maybe a 'wee lassie' (p.10).

her autobiography, *Red Dust Road*, Aberdeen, 'the Granite City' (p.132), is

constantly in focus. As an ever-changing backdrop to "her story", Aberdeen

becomes a sympathetic background, transforming to mirror Jackie's mood: 'The

granite is either the colour of sparkling silver or the drab colour of porridge or

fog, depending on your way of seeing it. Aberdeen is depressingly dull and grey

or majestic and magical' (p.132). Similarly, Jackie positions herself as "inside"

Scottishness through her birth and her genealogical past. Scotland is linked to

Jackie's conception: 'In my mind, I was conceived between the Dee and the

Don, a confluence of rivers, the mouth of two rivers' (p.133). Furthermore,

Jackie imagines the ghostly figures of her parents past dancing in the dance halls

of Aberdeen, and envisages her adoptive father as a young man on 'Spean

bridge' as she drives by (p.123).

Such geographical positioning is also present in *Strawgirl* and is used by Kay to

centre the reader within Scotland. In the opening lines, the reader is directed to

the very site of the story's action, along the B1Q7 Road toward Maybe's stone

farm house on to Wishing Well Farm. Kay writes in the present tense as though

the narrator is travelling with the reader, leading the way: 'There is one last,

very large hole in the mud road before you come to the house. Easy does it'

(p.1). The reader, having thus "arrived", is then introduced to Scotland through

a cultural activity, the barn dance, which Maybe and her father are organising,

situating the family in maintained Scottish tradition. The Scottish setting is

further affirmed by Kay as Maybe sings a Scottish folk tune (p.5), and thinks

about how no one in the north of Scotland knows what an Ibo is (p.7), whilst in

the distance, the approaching storm gives rise to Maybe's father's reference to the inconsistency of the Scottish weather (p.7).

In *Trumpet*, too, meteorological referencing creates a bleak portrayal of the Scottish environment, supported by Kay's use of personification which gives the natural world of Scotland a level of agency. The wind is described as '[s]lapping' Millie's face, 'screaming in [her] ears' and '[r]unning its strong fingers through' her hair (p.25). Despite this, as Millie crosses the Scottish border, she feels a sense of '[r]elief' (p.2). Scotland, and specifically Torr, is a location of safety, away from the glare of the world, a site where Millie can relax and grieve amongst the memories of Joss. For Joss too, Scotland and the crossing over of the Scottish border takes on a symbolic meaning: 'The minute I hit Carlisle, I know I'm in my own country' (p.187). Arrival into Scotland in this instance is marked as a homecoming, a return. Within Brown's notions of inside/outside Scotland, for Joss, at least, there is a sense of being "inside" of the nation, of feeling Scottish, of belonging (Brown, 2007). The position is reaffirmed when he lives in England by both physically returning to Torr and also consuming Scottishness through items that remind Joss of home such as 'tattie scones, slices of square sausage, bottles of Barrs irn bru. Short bread. Black bun' (p.139). Doing this, Joss believes, is a way of keeping the family 'in touch' with Scotland and maintaining their Scottish roots (p.139).

By Comparison, however, Colman's perception of Scottishness and national identity are far different from his father's. As McLeod attests: 'The co-ordinates

of race and nation matter little to Colman who, as a mixed-race Briton and a Scottish male living in England, is understandably frustrated at the apparent necessity to make irresolvable choices' (McLeod, 2012, p.150). Although mixed race, like Joss, Colman's hybridity seemingly disrupts national affiliation in a way that Joss' on the surface does not. Joss is unable to understand Colman's position: 'you were born in Scotland and that makes you Scottish' (p.190), yet Colman 'doesn't feel Scottish' (p.190) at all. Nor does Colman, living in England, feel English, a position that he also symbolically contemplates whilst on the train crossing the border between England and Scotland. Like other protagonists explored within this thesis, Colman displays the characteristics of the archetypal figure of the in-between (as in myth 1). His situation is further complicated by the fact that he is adopted and so does not know his roots, only that he is mixed race.

How can Colman feel Scottish when society continually tries to categorise him as anything but? Detachment from a location can often be the result of being continually asked the question "where are you from"? This particular phenomenon that results in individuals not feeling accepted in their nation of origin is written about by a number of researchers/academics (Rocha, 2012, p.680, and Olumide, 2002, p.131) and is reflected in Colman's thoughts as he lists the places where people think he might have been born: 'People are always coming up to me and asking me if I'm from Morocco, Trinidad, Tobago, Ghana,

Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Jamaica. Some asshole the other week was convinced I came from Hawaii' (p.58).[89] Not knowing where his birth parents are from further complicates the situation, but even if Colman was aware, this would not stop people from questioning his Scottishness due to his features.

It is perhaps here, that Kay's characterisation allows for a critical appreciation of civic based Scottishness, as she questions to what extent a mixed or minority individual can be Scottish, when they meet the civic criteria, but do not ethnically seem to fit. Such experiences are further captured in *Red Dust Road*, where Jackie is also continually subjected to the 'where are you from' question, each time being forced to disclose that she is adopted to satisfy the enquirer (p.192) and whereas regional identity has been shown to offer some degree of potential (as seen in the position of the Londoner), when Jackie attempts to claim to be a Glaswegian she is labelled a 'foreign-looking bugger' (p.193). In these ways Jackie can be perceived to be outside of Scotland (Brown, 2007).[90]

Yet despite this, the possibility of a more open Scottishness is not entirely disregarded by the works of Kay, who ultimately reaches a similar conclusion to

---

[89] A similar situation can be viewed in *Sister Josephine* when the protagonist is asked the same question: 'I usually told people I was from the Caribbean. That gave them a bit of a holiday. They went off for a couple of seconds under the palm trees sunbathing. I like watching their faces when they did that' (p.73).

[90] As in *Sugar and Slate* and *The Buddha of Suburbia*, all of Kay's mixed protagonists suffer racist insults offering further disengagement for the figures of Kay's works. Similar, to *Sugar and Slate* where racism was perceived to be an English phenomenon, Graeme Macdonald (2010) writing about *Trumpet* amongst other Scottish texts, argues that black post-devolution writing exposes racism to be a Scottish issue rather than just a British or more specifically English one (2010, p.81). See also Donald and Gosling 1995 for sociological research on racism in Scottish schools.

Williams (and, to an extent, Kureishi) who call for the hybridisation of national

spaces to allow for inclusion. This is effectively summarised in some ways, by

the image of Joss whose skin colour – that usually sets citizens apart in national

discourse – is firmly placed inside Scottish identity when it is described as the

colour of 'Highland toffee' (*Trumpet,* p.11). Positive hybridisation of Scottish

space is also established through the Nigerian influence within *Strawgirl* too,

which, at the end of the novel, transforms the Scottish barn dance into a

celebration of both Maybe's Scottish and Nigerian roots as she sings her father's

folk song: 'How far it had travelled, her father's song' (p.261) and dances the Ibo

dance.

Similarly, Joss, although staunchly Scottish, salutes the achievements of the

United States and is influenced heavily by Jazz music deriving from this region.

In fact, Scottishness, although playing an integral role in the formulation of Joss'

sense of self, is ultimately just one of numerous layers of identity which become

exposed and unravelled through the playing of the trumpet. In one of the most

poetic descriptions in the text, Joss deconstructs himself, peeling away layers of

his identity as he plays, revealing the individual components of himself and

discarding them all whilst he is engulfed by the music: 'So when he takes off he

is the whole century galloping to its close. The wide moors. The big mouth.

Scotland, Africa. Slavery. Freedom' (p.136). The deconstruction takes place as

though it is a journey, through history, space and time, from Scotland to Africa, and it ends with the word freedom, not only for the slaves, but for Joss too.[91]

This particular passage also contributes to the theme of intertwining Scottish history with that of black people of America and the Caribbean, thus combatting what Matt Richardson refers to as 'social death' (2012, p.361).[92] This notion Richardson suggests, stems from a concept originating in the times of slavery. For the slaves, life was so demoralising and so degrading that, Richardson argues, they died a social death due both to the indignity of the regime and to the fact that they became socially invisible (2012, p.362). Richardson then applies this theory to *Trumpet*, arguing that due to their lack of agency, black people are socially dead to Scotland, and even if their image is present, it is presented as a negative one (2012, p.363). In the context of *Trumpet* and Colman's remembrance of seeing a black man on the bus, Richardson writes that: 'Black men have no history and no place in Scotland except in the nightmarish visages of the mugger/nigger, or the debased "ape'' (2012, p.369). Highlighting the linked nature of Scotland, slavery, and jazz music, as the novel does, goes someway to remedying social death as it establishes a sense of connection between the Scottish land and histories of black people across the globe. Yet, Kay, like in Williams' portrayal of the Congo Boys in *Sugar and Slate*,

---

[91] As Pinto (2010) suggests, through these international influences Kay's work also evoke the notion of the Black Atlantic.
[92] See chapter 4.5 for more on Matt Richardson.

also contributes to the reconstructing of, in this case, Scottish national narrative by asserting the presence of black characters through the means of a fictional portrayal of the past. Writing of the account of Joss' father, whose presence is seen through the fog and mist of memory and time, Macdonald argues that such a 'passage presents a deliberate millennial challenge to those embedded notions of Scottish heritage and national belonging that ensure black and Asian presence remain opaque' (2010, p.94). Restoring the visibility of black characters in this way, it may also be argued, is further present within *Red Dust Road* where Kay re-writes her Nigerian father into the history of Aberdeen, searching him out through the university and the streets of the city. It might be argued that the insertion of black/minority ethnic characters into works of literature provides a temporary respite from the more conventional depiction of the national landscape, but does not directly alter national narrative, and to a degree this is correct. Yet what is achieved perhaps is a challenge to the notion of history as fixed and immutable, a stance that could potentially encourage others to search a little deeper and explore alternative experiences both of Scotland and Scottishness, as well as elsewhere in Britain.[93]

As it has been argued so far in this chapter, the relationship between Britain and the mixed race individual is often ambiguous, and although texts frequently

---

[93] What is required is a more comprehensive historical study to reveal the presence of BME communities within Britain more generally, as earlier recommended by Tizzard and Phoenix (2002), in addition to a further drive towards an integrated history where, such individuals are received into the British historical narrative and their contributions celebrated. This has begun with the invention of Black History Month. Yet the fact that a designated space has to be made for Black history and culture also reveals that it has not been accepted into the more general framework of historical discussion.

conclude with the re-imagining of British space in order to accommodate the protagonists whether this be in England, Scotland or Wales, full integration and acknowledgement of the character's mixed identities it seems, is never fully realised. Due to this, many of the characters within the selected texts throughout the course of the narratives seek out international spaces in their attempt to find a place where they can feel accepted and achieve belonging. This is seen in Charlotte's emphasis on global connectivity in *Sugar and Slate* and through the influence of the United States in *Trumpet*. In *The Buddha of Suburbia* too, the characters of Jamila and Karim play subversively with a range of different locations, almost trying to find one which might fit: 'Yeah, sometimes we were French, Jammie and I, and other times we went black American. The thing was we supposed to be English, but to the English we were always wogs and nigs and pakis and the rest of it' (p.53).

Perhaps one of the most frequent responses to feelings of rejection or a lack of belonging in the selected texts, though, is an attempt to find a secure sense of identity through an affiliation to Africa. The first issue with this is immediately apparent: Africa is a vast continent, not a single country, or even a region, and yet it is Africa as a whole which is continuously referred to, drawn upon, and discussed in a number of the selected texts. Africa is the site of the ancestral homeland, generally linked to the missing father (with the exception of *Icarus Girl*) and the answer to being rejected in Britain, it seems for many of the characters, involves a trip there. For this reason, the section of the thesis would

not be complete without discussing mixed race subjectivity and its relationship, within the selected texts, to Africa.

3.5 International Identity and Africa

With the exception of Colman who feels uncomfortable when his mates 'wank on about being African with a fucking cockney accent' (*Trumpet*, p.191), mixed race characters in many of the selected texts seem to find significance in the symbolic meaning behind the African continent. Indeed, the importance of Africa to black people around the world cannot be overlooked as it has been commonly viewed as the original homeland of those from the Caribbean and America whose ancestors were displaced by slavery. This view was promoted through the Pan-African movement which began in the 1900s, bringing together the African diaspora under the shared knowledge that they were all 'brothers and sisters and sons and daughters of Africa' (Ackah, 2002, p.5). Through the movement, 'messages of pride, unity and progress' were disseminated to 'people of African descent' (Ackah, 2002, p.11) still denied in many instances their 'basic rights and freedoms' (Ackah, 2002, p.12). Furthermore, as Song suggests, Africa became part of wider '"trans-coding" strategies' (2003, p.21) where 'negative imagery' that had in the past been used in the 'representation of Black people' was substituted by 'a range of positive images of Black people, Black life and culture' (Song, 2003, p.21).

Part of the Black Power Movement and 'Negritude' created the notion of the aforementioned 'orphan consciousness' where the African diaspora are left with a sense of loss and a longing for an unknown Africa (Ifekwunigwe, 1997, p.146). Although Ifekwunigwe's sociological research with mixed race women shows that '[t]he *métisse* women re-insert themselves as active subjects' and create their own space in 'the re-telling of English-African diaspora histories' (Ifekwunigwe, 1997, p.146), it is none the less the case that orphan consciousness can be observed within the selected texts.[94] This is apparent both by means of direct reference, as Charlotte in *Sugar and Slate* describes herself as 'an unclaimed orphan of some "elsewhere" place' (p.101), but also indirectly in the mixed race protagonists' longing for connection to an unknown homeland. This longing usually materialises in the desire to "return" to Africa which becomes part of the wider notion in the selected texts of roots.

The desire for roots is, Jill Olumide writes, a 'feature of mixed race experience, whereby people reach a point of wishing to investigate and reclaim a part of their ancestry that has either been denied or denigrated' (2002, p.67). In a number of selected texts, the young mixed race protagonists are often linked to Africa or identified as African whilst in Britain. In *Red Dust Road*, Jackie finds that her classmates look at her 'whenever Africa is mentioned', 'sneakily turning round to stare and pull faces' (p.39). Such a situation is also reflected in *Strawgirl* where the class laugh at Maybe being an '*eeeebo*' (p.21). It is not till

---

[94] Author's italics.

later in the journey of the protagonist, usually after the loss of the father, that the interest in roots arises.[95]

In *Red Dust Road*, Jackie Kay yearns for her father's ancestral village which she takes as her own despite the fact that her father expresses no interest in further contact with her. When a student who she is supporting discovers Jackie's father's geographical origins, Jackie is overjoyed and plans a trip there: 'at least I would get to see where my father and his father before him lived; at least I'd get a sense of the place I come from' (p.169). Jackie is aware that she will not get the welcome that her other Nigerian friends receive when they "go home" with celebration and drumming, but she hopes that 'the land might welcome' her if nothing else (p.169). Wishing to discover how 'one place bleeds into another' (p.203), Jackie decides to take a road trip across Nigeria. This decision converts her passive position – where she has sought her biological father's acceptance and approval and has been denied – to a position of pro-activism: 'This September I'm taking off, out on the open road, travelling from Lagos to Epe, Epe to Ore, Ore to Benin, Benin to Agbor, Agbor to Asaba, Asaba to Onitsha, Onitsha to Ukpor. I've taken matters into my own hands, and I'm going East' (p.178).[96] If, as has been suggested in the previous chapter, the act of naming is empowering – in this instance the act of naming out loud, and the

---

[95] Author's italics.

[96] This links to an earlier point regarding the portrayal of activism and passivism within the context of political empowerment – see discussion in chapter 2 on *Red Dust Road* and *The Rainbow Sign*.

repetition of the words also allude to the idea of ownership. With each city name, Jackie can "own" this territory and push closer and closer to the heart of Nigeria.

Similarly, in *Sugar and Slate*, Africa is always in Charlotte's psyche. Despite being born in Wales, it is Africa which makes Charlotte think of the 'beginnings of herself' (p.4). Why, Charlotte asks, 'do we carry Africa around with us like this?' (p.14):

> That's my Africa. A whole mixed up jumble of things. A body map. An ancient echo. A reminder of something that might have been. An explanation. One of my conversations with Wales. Just there and always there waiting for me to make sense of it all. That's my Africa. The Africa in the mind of Wales (p.93).

For the mixed race protagonist, the desire to explore Africa is initially built on the image of a "fantasy Africa". For Joss in *Trumpet*, this image is so powerful that it renders him reluctant to visit the physical continent itself:

> We never actually got to Africa. Joss had built up such a strong imaginary landscape within himself that he said it would affect his music to go to the real Africa. Every black person has a fantasy Africa, he'd say. Black British people, Black Americans, Black Caribbeans, they all have a fantasy Africa. It is all in the head (p.34).

155

For Joss, then, "fantasy Africa" becomes intrinsically tied to music and history, and represents a point of connection and 'political solidarity' with others of African and Caribbean descent (McLeod, 2012, p.148).

Kay's *Red Dust Road* also deals with the issue of a "fantasy Africa", but unlike Joss' this version of Africa is a predominantly negative one. In a section entitled "Imaginary Africa", Jackie Kay describes how she learnt from school that Africa was a hot hostile place, primitive, backward and many miles away from Glasgow (p.38). (This, it might be recalled, is similar to Hanif Kureishi's experiences when the class at school is told that Indians live in 'mud huts' (*The Rainbow Sign*, p.9)). In *Lady Moses*, too, an imaginary Africa is created through the combination of both black and white perspectives of the continent. Jacinta's white husband, Manny, originally experiences Africa when he is sent there to work as part of the Peace Corps, yet Manny finds a stronger connection to the continent through having a half-African wife. Through her he is able to disassociate himself from the United States: 'I was the ideal family he'd wanted ever since he'd been fascinated by Africa as a boy. I would legitimate his claim to difference, and explain his inability to fit into the country that had created him' (p.231).

In Manny's image of Africa, everything is 'natural' and unspoiled (p.229); it is the ideal place to bring up their daughter. Later, though, when it comes to the point that Jacinta decides to "return", Manny admits that he finds Africa

terrifying because of the disease: 'I couldn't take it' (p.251). Jacinta's fictitious

Africa is also based on her black father's narratives (it should be noted that at

this stage in the novel Africa is a male-orientated patriarchal space – its

gendered transformation will be investigated in chapter 4). Before her travels,

Jacinta considers Africa:

> I had never been to Africa. I didn't know who my father was. I had to find
>
> him in the contours of his own continent. I needed to find him in a place
>
> where blackness was a given cause for celebration. The African Americans
>
> in this country fascinated me because they took this land as their own.
>
> Black Britons didn't do that in the same way. We were always aliens; in
>
> the corners of our eyes was the fear of repatriation. I wanted to find a
>
> home like the Africa of Simon's stories – a place where no one would
>
> question my right to put down roots (p.216).

When Jacinta eventually travels to her 'dad's homeland' (p.229), however, the

"real Africa" is quite different from the imagined one.

The first point of interest is the way that the "real Africa" juxtaposes with the

representation of England. Whereas in Lavender Sweep 'the grayness of London

sweeps in through the drawn curtains' (p.4), Africa is both intensely bright and

colourful to the point of disorientation.[97] The colours of the people's clothes, for

example, are 'so bright that reds, greens, yellows and blues don't look like

themselves; they're hyperboles on cotton and linen'(p.264) and objects come at

Jacinta before she has 'a chance to put them in order' (p.263). The light also

leaves reality in a state of flux as the tangible is changed and deconstructed

through the progression of the day: 'Objects in shadow became voids, they lost

the essence of what they were in sunlight and turned inside out into their

opposites' (p.263). However, this African space also becomes a transformative

and creative space, unconstrained by Western notions of reality. In Murunghi,

for example, Jacinta loses 'track of time' (p.290), unaware of how long she has

stayed:

> I didn't know whether Lady and I had been there for a couple of days or a
>
> week, and I didn't care. No one wore a watch. I discarded mine soon after
>
> I arrived because it tied me to a way of thinking that was out of place in
>
> Esther's village (p.290).

For Jacinta, then, Western time restricts her creativity: 'My concept of time in

England and America hadn't allowed me enough room for poetry' (p.290). Freed

from such constraints her creative writing begins to explore and experiment,

deconstructing notions of the real in the same way that she experiences within

---

[97] This contrast is also noticeable in *Red Dust Road*, where Aberdeen is described as grey and
drab, but Nigeria is hot and colourful.

the African space: 'Often I wrote about things that were not quite themselves […] a banana tree became a series of yellows and earlobe greens, until I hardly knew what the images represented – shape and color were the same thing' (p.264).

While, in *Lady Moses* the reformulating of reality, however, leads to expanded creativity, comparatively, for the mixed race protagonist of *The Icarus Girl*, the result is psychological instability. From the opening of the text Nigeria is an ominous territory. On the plane, Jess, prone to screaming attacks, throws a tantrum:

> It was Nigeria. That was the problem.
>
> Nigeria felt ugly.
>
> Nye. Jeer. Reeee. Ah (p.9).

For Jess, this 'leering' 'mother's country', 'looming out from the across the water' (p.9) holds little possibility of security or welcome. On arrival, the combination of oppressive heat and the bustle of the people further disorientate both Jess and the reader: 'They were surrounded by the folds of clothing, the gesturing hands, the smell of ironed clothes and sweaty bodies. Jess felt the heat was intensifying, even though she could see chinks of sunlight through the gaps in the milling gathering around them' (p.14).

This destabilisation of reality within the African space becomes a geographical

backdrop which supports other forms of deconstruction, including that of

identity, symbolised through the numerous ways that Jess is named and then

renamed.[98] Through this technique the reader is asked to question who the

"real" Jess is, or if indeed she is real at all (the fact that she is, of course, a

fictional character further problematises this key aspect of the text).[99] Jess

queries this, along with the reader. An example would be on the first page of

the novel when Jess conceptualises that speaking out loud creates reality: '*I am

in the cupboard*. She felt that she needed to be saying this so that it would be

real. It was similar to her waking up and saying to herself, *My name is Jessamy. I

am eight years old'* (p.3).[100] Ultimately, then, the novel concludes that there is

no essential self, yet it must be, it seems, through Africa as the site of

disconnection, liminality, of ghosts and tradition, a site which defies Western

logic, that such a conclusion can be reached. This is, in itself, problematic as it

reinforces colonial-style notions of Africa. The portrayal of Africa has been

considered by academics such as Krishnan. Quoting Wainaina, who mockingly

advises authors wishing to write about Africa to ensure that the words

'Darkness', 'Timeless', 'Primordial' and 'Tribal' are present, Krishnan makes the

point that such images of Africa are expected by Western readers and are

required in order to make texts marketable (cited in Krishnan, 2014, p.1).[101]

---

[98] A feature of the "mixed race text", as suggested in chapter 2 (Brennan, 2002, p.20)
[99] This is similar to the re-fictionalising of Jacinta in *Lady Moses* as earlier footnoted.
[100] Author's italics.
[101] See also Tunca (2012) for discussion on Helen Oyeyemi as an African writer, as opposed to a black British one.

Whilst, in *The Icarus Girl*, Africa is an ominous presence, associated with fragmentation, deconstruction, the realm of TillyTilly, and the site where all the 'trouble' began: 'it all STARTED in Nigeria' (p.6); in contrast, for Jackie Kay, the African landscape offers a sense of connection, reflected through her feeling of déjà vu: 'I feel such an affinity with the colours and the landscape, a strong sense of recognition' (*Red Dust Road*, p.213). In an autobiography ever searching the faces of others for resemblance to herself, it is also significant that Jackie observes: 'As we go further and further east, I notice the shapes of the people's faces change to mirror the shape of my own' (p.210).

Furthermore, when Jackie arrives she discovers a red dust road like the one she has dreamt about leading up to her ancestral village. In her dream she is dancing on the road and carrying her brother as a baby towards the village. Since roads are an important metaphor within the text, the dream becomes symbolic of both finding roots, and routes:

> I take off my shoes so that the red earth can touch my bare soles. It's as if my footprints were already on the road before I even got there. I walk into them [...].The road welcomes me; it is benevolent, warm, friendly, accepting and for now it feels enough, the red, red of it, the vivid green against it, the long winding red-dust road (p.213).[102]

---

[102] Like in *Lady Moses,* the use of vibrant colours can also be observed.

For Touray-Theodotou, it is this 'anthropomorphised representation of the road' that 'connects [Jackie] most to Africa' (2014, p.17). Nevertheless, the image works in contrast to the moment when Jackie discover that her father's house is empty and that there is nobody to 'acknowledge' her as a member of the village: 'It's all wrong, it feels all wrong. Nobody Knows me. There's nobody to welcome me' (p.215).

If, as it has been argued, the mixed race protagonist struggles to find belonging in Britain, is it possible that he or she can belong to and/or find a home in Africa? Before writing her autobiography, Jackie Kay pondered on the relationship with Africa in an interview:

> …there is a kind of difficulty in being black *and* British or African-Scottish or whatever, however you want to put it, in that you are born here, you are brought up here. Then you call this country Africa your roots, but how much of it is your roots when you've never been there and you don't know traditions and you don't know culture and you don't know language and you could be rejected by the people there (2008, p.60).[103]

Africanness (perhaps like the Englishness that Karim seeks for in *The Buddha of*

---

[103] Author's Italics. It is interesting to note that Africa is referred to as a country – further evidence of the problematic conflation of the continent.

Suburbia) once again proves an elusive identity, and while the mixed race individual is seen as "Other" in the context of Britain, they can often be perceived as "stranger" in the representations of visits to Africa.

The first example of this can be seen in *The Icarus Girl*. When Jess and her family arrive in Nigeria she hears a man shout out *'oyinbo'* (p.17).[104] Jess asks what this means and is told by her mother that it is 'somebody who has come from so far away that they are a stranger' (p.16). It is not clear who this comment is aimed at: Jess or her white father Daniel. It is Daniel whose difference is initially most evident to Jess however: physically ill at ease with the environment, her father stands sweating profusely. Jess is surprised: 'she hadn't expected to see him so… well, out of place. His face was wet with perspiration and flushed pink, and even the way that he stood marked him out as different' (p.13).

The Nigerians also solidify Jess' recognition of her father's difference through their gaze as they 'glanced pointedly at him as they passed; their glances were slightly longer than usual, but not outright stares – more the kind of look that Jess herself gave when passing a statue or a painting. The acknowledgement of oddity' (p.13). Here, then the "Nigerian gaze" is an inquisitive one, reconstructing the white body as an object of curiosity.[105] Yet within the Nigerian space this same gaze is also directed at Jess as illustrated when she

---

[104] Importantly, African space offers new modes of labelling the mixed race individual in indigenous languages here.
[105] See chapter 4.2 for a discussion of the "mixed race gaze".

visits the Ibadan University Zoo where the other visitors stare 'so deliberately'

at her that she is 'forced to lower her head and look at the shapes her feet were

leaving in the sandy-coloured gravel that lined the paths' (p.29). Jess wonders at

being 'half a world away, still feeling alien, still watching the ground' (p.29).[106]

In this sense then Jess, like her father, is an '*oyinbo*' as she does not "fit"

physically into the environment.[107] Neither does Jess "fit" culturally,

emphasised through her failure to conform to the Nigerian family's social

hierarchy.[108] Due to this Jess is both "strange to" and also "estranged from"

Africa. This position can also be noted in a number of the selected texts through

the concept of the mixed race protagonist in Africa as white.[109] In *Red Dust*

Road, Jackie Kay, has a moment when she believes that she is being called an

Igbo in the market of Ukpor, but the marketers are in fact shouting 'Oyibo'

(p.215), 'a pidgin word for white person' (p.216)). Within this new system of

identity politics then, Jackie's position of blackness is challenged. It is this

linguistic misrecognition that causes Jackie to assess her position as being mixed

race as opposed to black: 'It's the first time that I've properly understood what

it means being mixed race. It is not a term I've ever embraced, and I've always

felt more black than white; but now here suddenly in Nigeria, people are

---

[106] It is interesting that this experience happens at the zoo, as though Jess becomes one of the attractions herself.
[107] Author's italics.
[108] 'You oyinbo are strange', remarks Jess' grandfather (p.239).
[109] In *Sugar and Slate* too, Charlotte also hears this phrase – although it is again not clear to whom it is directed: 'Dusty bare foot children with pot bellies and protruding belly buttons, call out "*o-yimbo*", white person, or they just stand and stare' (p.36). (Author's Italics).

following me around Ukpor market touching my skin' (p.216). Thinking of the notion of estrangement, Dagbovie-Mullins also comments, on *Lady Moses*, that while Jacinta's 'brown skin connects her to her blackness in England, it estranges her in Africa' (2013, p.54). This is certainly the case as, like Jackie, Jacinta is labelled as 'Poro', also meaning white (p.297): 'I was making a fuss the way all white people did because I was having to endure things Africans endured every day' (p.297).

Esther, however, whose role in Jacinta's attempts to assimilate as African will be discussed further in chapter 4, stretches to identifying her as black but still does not afford Jacinta Africanness:

> I have seen many like you. Black Americans, black Europeans, coming here to claim the land. They sit on top of it like a chicken on a borrowed egg. They see nothing. Hear nothing. They go away thinking they are African because they have bought some gara fabric and a mask (p.273).

Africa can be additionally complicated by means of geographical displacement. Charlotte's father in *Sugar and Slate* is from the Caribbean, not from Africa, causing the continent to become displaced by both a historical/geographic divide as well as a generational one causing further "estrangement". Africa in *Sugar and Slate* becomes a third party location, with a slightly different portrayal. Nonetheless, Charlotte has direct experience of Africa when she lives there as a child.

165

Within *Sugar and Slate*, a shift of positionality takes place as soon as the family

see the horizon of the coast:

> There is Africa below and we are safe Britannia. That's how I first saw
>
> Africa. It said British in Dad's passport and British in Ma's and that meant
>
> all that was good and right and ordinary. Africa was the real stranger. The
>
> body map was not mine. It was all outside to me (p.13).

Charlotte and her family, once excluded in Wales, now adopt the position of the

dominant class, living in privilege with servants. This has two interesting

dimensions. The first relates to the position of the oppressed and the oppressor.

As Olumide writes: 'A person might be both privileged and marginalised in

different situations' (2002, p.7). This is due in part to the way in which power

flows through social systems, an idea conceptualised by Michel Foucault.

In "Power/Knowledge" Foucault suggests that, though the state is a 'meta-

power' (1986, p.64) it cannot operate without a 'whole series of power

networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge,

technology, and so forth' (1986, p.64) and thus the effects of power, rather than

being vertical, i.e. flowing from the dominant to the subordinate, should be

seen as circular and freely flowing. As Stuart Hall neatly articulates, when it

comes to power: 'we are all to some degree, caught up in its circulation –

oppressors and oppressed [...] power relations permeate all levels of social

existence and are therefore to be found operating at every site of social life'

(1997, p.50).[110]

Due to the circular nature of power, under a different set of circumstances,

Charlotte and her family move from the position of victims of racism, to that of

perpetrators of racialised aggression. Since this shift is also grounded

specifically in relation to the discourse of colonialism, this passage can also be

read from a postcolonial perspective. Charlotte quickly makes the "them"/ "us"

distinction when she writes that Africa is below but 'we are safe Britannia'

associated with all that is 'good and right and ordinary' (p.13). Here, physically

looking down on Africa, Charlotte aligns herself and her family with an Imperial

notion of British superiority over Africa and the African.

In the case of *The Icarus Girl* overtones of imperial power caught up in the

mixed race family unit can also be identified in a passage on page 17. When Jess

and her parents travel in a taxi from the airport in Nigeria, her mother decides

that she and the driver should speak in English:

> Mr Harrison stamped his feet to applaud his wife's sense of fair play.
>
> 'Bravo Sarah!' He beamed at her, his hair standing on end as usual, and
>
> Jessamy smiled too, in preparation for the unifying smile, the smile that

---

[110] This theory is not without its critics. Discussing the unequal power relations between men and women, Bartky writes that Foucault: 'treats the body throughout as it were one, as if the bodily experiences of men and women did not differ and as if men and women bore the same relationship to the characteristic institutions of modern life' (1998, p.63).

they would all be smiling because it was important that they could all

understand and share this country too. It didn't come (p.17).

What is interesting about this interaction is the change of name, the English

Daniel in this context suddenly becomes Mr Harrison and Jess' black mother is

"just" Sarah. Daniel here evokes the very British notion of 'fair play' (p.17) and

commends his wife on its adoption. Jess, unable to see the power dynamics that

are at play, waits for the 'unifying smile' which never comes because the family

can never share a mutual perception of Nigeria. Finally, Jess' mother begins a

'discussion with the driver about several places that she'd used to know in the

Lagos area. In English' (p.17).[111] This adoption of the language of the coloniser is

further reiterated through Sarah Harrison's assuming of an English name (and

with it an English identity) which contrasts with Adebisi Oyegbebi, her Nigerian

maiden name. If, as it has been argued, the mixed race figure is "estranged"

from Africa then so too is the diasporic black parent. This can be recognised in

Jess' wonderings about the thoughts of the Nigerian customs officer: 'He had

been thinking, who is this woman who has a Nigerian maiden name in a British

passport, who stands here wearing denim shorts and a strappy yellow top, with

a white man and a half-and-half child?' (p.13). Jess further wonders if her

---

[111] The re-inscribing of Englishness or Britishness onto African space can also be observed in
Sugar and Slate when Charlotte and her family are on the boat and a man, described by
Charlotte as the 'colonial boy', tells passengers about Khartoum: 'Lord Kitchener laid down that
it should be built on a grid in the form of a Union Jack' (p.11).

mother has also 'looked at herself from his side of the counter and found herself odd and wanting' (p.13).

Similarly, in *Sugar and Slate*, Charlotte's black father struggles with his dual position as a black Caribbean and a Westernised writer. This is best evidenced in the Lionel/Lobo divide where Charlotte uses the image of psychological divisions of her father's psyche as illustrative of his dilemma. The concept of Lionel and Lobo originates from one of Denis Williams' (Charlotte's father's) published stories which is about a man with two names: 'Lionel is the civilised one, the educated man, and Lobo is the savage […] Dad is both Lionel and Lobo' (p.20). At different points in the autobiography, Charlotte's father wishes to embrace, or perhaps to inhabit, Lobo. In Wales, for example, her father evaluates himself in the mirror and is shocked at both seeing Lionel dressed before him, and the fact that he has a white wife: 'There's nothing wrong with you Lobo. I'll get the whiteskin woman outa your mind…" He stared at his dandy reflection, hardly believing it to be himself' (p.54-55).

Denis' sympathetic shift towards Lobo here is highlighted further by his linguistic shift into patois: 'wha' hap'nin tuh meh?' (p.55). Sometime after this, Denis' manuscript blows away through an open window into the Welsh night, and the girls and the neighbours run 'chasing and plucking the pages' of Denis' life out of the 'privet hedges of little Wales' (p.56). It is at this point that Denis realises he can no longer stay (p.55). Despite this, and the fact that Denis' poems and writing also focus on Africa and draw upon African traditions which

he admires and respects, whenever he comes into contact with other black

men, seeing the Lobo in them, Denis asserts his inner Lionel. This is strongly

demonstrated in the treatment of the sewage men who empty the cesspit,

known as Jonnies.

Charlotte and her sisters antagonise their Jonny, spitting 'at his skin, at his dirty

task, at his blackness' (p.22). When one of the Jonnies angrily responds,

Charlotte's father emerges: 'More matty haireds were now at the gate watching

on as the Lionel in Dad came face to face with the Jonny man' (p.22). Charlotte's

father's response is to shout at the Jonny with his 'British top lip' (p.23).[112]

Similarly, Charlotte, reflecting on their servant Joseph who assisted the family

whilst they are in Nigeria, realises that 'Joseph's ordinary black self was a threat

to [her] father, to who and what he'd become; a black British colonial in another

British colony' (p.120).

The Lionel/Lobo divide where the "savage" can be promoted to the "civilised"

man is also described by Fanon when he writes: 'The colonized is elevated

above the jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's

cultural standards' (1968, p.18). This form of mentality (the adoption of Lionel

---

[112] In some ways Charlotte begins to engage in what would in the American and South African context be considered to be mulatto elitism, a phenomenon evident in circumstances where mixed race individuals formed a buffer class between black and white society (Zack, 1993). It has been mainly suggested by writers such as Naomi Zack that such groups received a level of privilege acquired through their partial access to white heritage, although scholars, such as Stephen Small, question the accuracy of this, particularly in relation to the position of mulattos in times of slavery (see Small, 2002).

over Lobo) is passed on to Charlotte and her sisters in *Sugar and Slate*, even though Charlotte believes that she 'knew something about Lobo back then' (p.23) being 'wild', 'boundless' and 'savage' herself (p.23). Yet any signs of Lobo result in her chastisement: 'Behave yourself child. Don't go jumping about like a monkey' (p.21). Charlotte, being 'like Ma' (p.21) and thus favoured by her father does not receive physical punishment, but her sisters are not so fortunate: 'Damn Savage…. What do you think you are, a savage? he would ask' (p.22). Through this Charlotte reveals part of the cause of her colonial thinking and a reason perhaps as to why she associates Britishness with safety, privilege and self-esteem. Later, however, Charlotte challenges this when she takes up the post of colonial mistress in the Caribbean. (See chapter 4 for further discussion on this).

In *The Icarus Girl*, the battle between coloniser and colonised is also fought out internally by Jess through the creation of Jess' 'symbolic alter ego' TillyTilly (Mafe, 2012, p.24). The idea of twins and twinning here is deliberate as it provides a means by which Jess' duality and hybridity can be explored. TillyTilly, in one sense can be read as the ghost of the traumatic colonial/postcolonial past of Nigeria which haunts Jess, both in Africa, and when she returns to England (Ouma, 2014, p.197). TillyTilly also comes to represent loss, though, not only through her presence as a dead child or a potential manifestation of Fern, Jess's dead twin, but also because she serves as symbolic of the loss of African heritage, an effect of the diasporic experience and potentially a result of interracial mixing. Indeed, the character of TillyTilly in this sense becomes a key

figure in the manifestation of Bhabha's notions of 'postcolonial hybridity', a

position which 'can produce a state of unhomeliness, an eerie sense of cultural

dislocation' (Mafe, 2012. p.22). With TillyTilly, Jess becomes physically trapped

in spaces without a sense of belonging, culminating with her eventual

imprisonment in the ghostly bush, 'a wilderness for the mind' (p.318), and

although TillyTilly tries to reassure Jess that this is not a problem, to Jess,

careering between the two localities of the real world and the bush is not a safe

position to be in.[113]

TillyTilly is a dual character within herself; her good side and bad side reflected

in her own double naming, and despite the danger which she presents she is

also a means by which Jess can access Africanness, as she, in a sense becomes

Jess' 'Yoruba self' (Mafe, 2012, p.24). If, as Bryce argues: 'The doubling effect of

biracialism simultaneously presupposes a loss of the spiritual link to Nigeria

through physical displacement' (2008, p.63), TillyTilly then is evoked by Jess as a

means of correcting this. TillyTilly gives Jess confidence to stand up to the

bullies at school and sheds light on Jess' 'personal and cultural histories' (Mafe,

2012, p.27).[114] Through TillyTilly, Jess is better able to understand her unusual

symptoms and behaviours as, through the introduction of Nigerian mythology,

she reaches her revelation: '*I scream because I have no twin*' (p.172).[115] Despite

---

[113] Author's italics.
[114] A comparative exploration of TillyTilly and Strawgirl from Kay's children's novel of the same name here would be interesting.
[115] Author's italics.

the necessity of TillyTilly's ultimate demise, Jess' experiences with her African

"Other" leaves her rising out of the bush by the end of the novel into what Mafe

terms as a 'new millennial postcolonial landscape', more aware of her position

in culture and history (2012, p.33).[116] In light of the myths of chapter 1,

however, it is not clear that this is an entirely positive outcome to the novel as

no assurance is given of Jess's future stability, yet, unlike the other texts for

adults where the protagonists reach adulthood and formulate a positive sense

of racial identity, at the end of the novel, Jess is still a child and thus the

formulation and recognition of mixedness or blackness may have not yet

occurred.

Whereas Jess' relationship to Africa is ambiguous in *The Icarus Girl*, in other of

the selective texts, African identity does seem to allow for a sense of belonging

in a way that English, Welsh or Scottish identities do not. As Dagbovie-Mullins

writes, in *Lady Moses*, 'Jacinta views Africa as her homeland' (2013, p.52).[117]

Indeed, this is the case since Jacinta finds that although Africa is at times

awkward, inconvenient and frustrating, with intermittent electricity supply and

wildlife in the food (p.268), in many ways she finds what she has been 'looking

for' (p.341) and is able to claim an African identity for both herself and her

daughter, Lady: 'I am African' (p.331). This is supported by John Turay, discussed

---

[116] Author's italics.
[117] The interchangeability of the national and the continental is of course recognisably problematic here; however, the discussion reflects what is happening within the texts. At the end of this chapter the issue is addressed further in a brief discussion on Africa being represented as a whole and rarely viewed in terms of the diverse array of countries which collectively create it.

further in chapter 4, who readily accepts Jacinta's assertion of Africanness. John

allows for Lady's inclusion into African identity, based on the 'cassava leaf soup

test' (p.331), in a similar way to that in which Jacinta's father tells her in the

opening of the novel that she is African when she gets her ears pierced: 'He said

African girls in his village always had their ears pierced, so now I was an African

girl' (p.28-29): 'John said [Lady] was a real African if she liked cassava leaf. That

was the main test of heritage, he claimed. And she had passed' (p.331).

Similarly, in *Red Dust Road*, despite being rejected by her father, Jackie is able to

assemble a sense of belonging through interactions with her brother, Sidney.

On the day of her flight back to Britain, Jackie makes contact with Sidney and

arranges to meet him in the grounds of the New Nation Stadium. Although they

have never met, and Sidney only discovers her existence an hour or so before,

he is excited and jubilant, instantly declaring her to be his: 'sister' (p.267).

Belonging, for Kay is, in the end, granted through connections with people after

all. When Sidney speaks about her 'heritage' and her 'right' (p.273) Jackie feels

overwhelmed and elated. It is Sidney's acceptance of Jackie that offers her

closure, symbolised through the final departure of the ghost of her adoption:

> The empty ghost, the waiflike figure that has stalked me for years seems
>
> to be taking off her pale polka-dot dress, slowly, in the sports stadium
>
> changing rooms, and hanging it on a peg. She opens a locker, with her
>
> own key, found after years of fumbling, and disappears into the depths
>
> (p.276).

The portrayal of Africa in the selected texts is both varied and interesting, and demonstrates clearly the importance of Africa and Africans in the construction of identity for the mixed race protagonists. Yet it is crucial to note that it is not without its problems. Kamali has, for example, commented that Western writers seem only interested in 'performative evocations of Africanness' and are rarely 'concerned about discovering any continuity with African tradition' (2009, p.214). This appears to be the case in some of selected texts which seem self-centred, only focusing on Africa as a theoretical concept to use for their own means. Africa too is a huge continent, yet it is Africa as a conceptual space that is frequently returned to in the texts rather than considering the continent as being comprised of many different countries and cultures. *Red Dust Road* and *The Icarus Girl* at least set the scene in Nigeria and make specific reference to geographical location, "grounding" the reader in a similar way to the earlier considered analysis of the novel *Strawgirl*. In contrast, in *Lady Moses* the reader is only vaguely aware that Jacinta is in Sierra Leone through references to the Mendes and Temnes. Similarly, in *Sugar and Slate*, Africa is referred to repeatedly rather than the specific localities of Nigeria and Sudan. Nevertheless, in the West where the African continent is frequently associated with images of war, natural disaster and economic hardship, the selected texts support a body of literature, including contemporary African and Postcolonial texts, which offer an alternative representation. With the exception of Jess, struggling to escape 'the wilderness of the mind' (p.318) in *The Icarus Girl*, the dusty routes of Africa

lead to creativity, inner peace and the construction of new knowledge which might be read as both refreshing and welcome.

In this chapter, the thesis has considered geographical location and how it is linked to creation of both subjectivity and agency. Whereas 3.1-3.4 illustrated how mixed race protagonists both re-invision national space and reposition themselves within national narratives within Britain, 3.5 focused on how, when there is no offer of selfhood within the British space, international locations and ancestral connections are explored by mixed race protagonists, leading to an eclectic mix of hybrid and diasporic experiences portrayed within the selected texts. It is not only national or international space which plays an important role in the identity construction of the mixed race protagonists within the texts, however: another connecting facet is gender. As the next chapter will reveal, geographical space and gender are heavily linked, as seen by the characters of Jacinta and Charlotte as married women abroad. However, first it would be useful to consider the intersectionality of race and gender in a little more detail.

Chapter 4: Gender

4.1 The Mixed Race Female: Attraction and Repulsion

In "(Un)-natural boundaries: mixed race, gender and sexuality" Allman writes that: 'Race and gender are mutually co-constructive, shifting and historically situated idea systems that not only shape how individuals and groups perceive themselves and others, but also aid us in organizing and trying to make sense of ourselves as embodied beings' (1996, p.278). Issues of race and gender are regularly played out over space and time, and on the bodies of men and women across the globe (Allman, 1996). Women, as the carriers of future generations, have especially found their bodies (and sexualities) subject to patriarchal control and order. Women's bodies have also at times come to symbolise the nation and consequently the invasion of the woman's body and her violation has, in certain circumstances, been interpreted as the degradation of the State (Olumide, 2002, p.160-161).

The case of the mixed race female body is an area of complex interest. Streeter has commented that in the United States: 'The twin spectres of hypodescent and antimiscegenation laws compose the pillars of the metaphoric gate that separates whiteness from blackness. The black/white woman is the symbolically charged gatekeeper of this boundary' (1996, p.307-308). This positionality was usually portrayed as tragic within literary representation, hence the tragic

mulatto figure – mentioned briefly at the beginning of chapter 2 – was in fact often a mulatta. As Eve Allegra Raimon suggests: 'The very tragedy of the figure's fate depends upon her female gender' (2004, p.5).

The mulatta, belonging 'nowhere, a fact that damaged her psyche', was 'vulnerable to marginalization in both black and white communities' (Streeter, 1996, p.310). Yet she was also considered a tragic figure due to her feminine beauty and passivity. 'A man' elaborates Lisa Jones, 'might work his tragedy out through violence, whereas a woman can be plain doomed, attractive and worthy of clemency' (1994, p.50-51). Flawed from birth, subject to unwanted sexual advances, and always at risk of suicide, the tragic mulatta has very few options available to her other than to 'get black or die' (Jones, 1994, p.51).

Although Britain has not had a tradition of the tragic mulatta literature, there are still tragic elements to the portrayal of the mixed race figure, including the loss of the father and the portrayal of the mixed race individual as a character who is trapped between worlds; but one of the most prominent features is the depiction of the mixed race female protagonist as sexually alluring and vulnerable, yet dangerous due to her association with blackness. This dichotomous position will be further explored through the analysis of *Lady*

Moses and *Sugar and Slate*.[118]

For the two protagonists of *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate*, being a mixed race woman is a position of both repulsion and attraction. In *Sugar and Slate* Charlotte finds herself outside of society's notions of attractiveness where association to whiteness has become 'a yardstick of beauty' (Weekes, 1997, p.115): 'there was as yet no official sanction of the idea that black could indeed be beautiful. Images of black beauty were thin on the ground' (p.65). As Debra Weekes writes in "Shades of Blackness, Young Black Female Constructions of Beauty": 'The signifiers of hair texture, skin shade and shape of lips and noses are reacted to in terms of their approximation to whiteness' (Weekes, 1997, p.114). This is recognised by Charlotte when she writes:

> I knew they couldn't see the white in me although I tried my best to show it. It wasn't only them either. *I'd* bought into the whole way of thinking about black people that didn't amount to anything very positive – things about fuzzy hair, thick lips, big backsides, the usual. It all added up to the word "ugly" (p.66).[119]

For many black feminists, hair, in particular, is a problematised 'physical

---

[118] Suki Ali also suggests the link between mixed race subjectivity and gender in her comment that 'experiences of mixedness are mediated through gender (and sexuality for that matter)' (2007, p.7).

[119] Author's italics.

identification' of racial difference (Root, 1997, p.163) and for Charlotte too, hair comes to represent blackness, and blackness is internalised as ugliness. This belief in the superiority of whiteness expressed through hair causes Charlotte to feel the need to copy white hair styles, an act that reiterates Lisa Jones' sentiments that 'the manipulation of black hair has been key to the assimilation equations since square one' (1994, p.289): 'Black women are told that in order to be attractive and successful, we must emulate a European image of beauty' (1994, p.295).

The secret act of hair straightening in the text illustrates effectively the shame associated with "black hair" and the desire towards whiteness or 'white-washing' as it is termed by Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe (1999, p.74): 'Hair pressing and straightening was a closely guarded family secret. I couldn't conceive of this being public knowledge even to this day' (*Sugar and Slate*, p.68). This secret, however, is not just in Charlotte's nuclear family, but her extended family, illustrated by her aunt who, living 'amongst Europeans', 'must keep it private still' (p.69). When Charlotte goes to London before commencing her journey to the Caribbean, however, she is extremely surprised to see hot combing being openly performed in a salon where a woman is having her hair dressed into a style 'from a picture of a white girl!'(p.106).

Access into the realm of white female beauty is seen by the young Charlotte as a necessity for self-respect and is viewed as essential for self-grooming and maintenance. This is challenged, however, through the presence of the

Barnardo's girl, Simone. 'Classless, homeless, parentless, placeless' (p.72),

Simone's only connection with Charlotte's family is the fact that she has a

'brown face' (p.72): 'We showed her the hot comb and the olive oil and she

touched them like they were emblems of an ancestry she had never had' (p.72).

What is interesting about this description is the way that the hair straightening

becomes neutralised and associated with ancestry. Read on one level it is the

family secret of beauty, passed down from generation to generation – through

her position as an orphan therefore Simone has lost her rights to this inherited

knowledge. On another level, however, the description implies that the

straightening of hair is also part of an ancient past – the desire for whiteness

remains concealed and unquestioned by black/mixed race people as though it is

just another aspect of their history, similar to slavery.

On a third level, however, there is the clear sense that straightening is a

colonial/oppressive measure, as signalled too by the way in which Charlotte

describes the reaction of Simone's hair to the straightening treatment:

'gradually her woolly mass responded and lay down quiet in a distinguishable

English shape. The afro was tamed to a bob, a fringe of short curl at the front,

no frizz and no crinkled hair shaft to give the game away' (p.72). Following

white ideals through hot combing then becomes a means of "playing white".

This is deeply ironic as it implies that black/mixed race women spend money on,

re-enact, and encourage each other to engage in what some believe to be an

act of white oppression. Charlotte acknowledges that it is herself and her sisters

who take the lead with the hot combing and not her white mother: 'Ma had no

role in any of this hair business' (p.68).

There have been a number of writers who have considered the position of

"black hair" and its political connotations (hooks, 1995; Root, 1997;

Ifekwunigwe, 1999). Indeed, Ifekwunigwe reports of her own choices of style:

'those who have known me over the years can trace the emergences, the lapses

and the resurgence of my political consciousness by the particular hairstyles I

sported: relaxed, curly perm, short and natural, braids with extensions and the

ultimate – almost bald' (1999, p.37). Yet, opinions have varied and changed,

from the consideration of the practical implications for hair straightening

(supposedly making hair more manageable for the working environment

(Weekes discussing hooks, 1997, p.116)) to arguments around black

empowerment in the 1960s where the "naturalness" of the afro (in itself a

maintained hairstyle) became part of the 'counter-hegemonic form of *authentic*

beauty' (Ali, 2003, p.79).[120] This, at times, has caused problems for some mixed

race individuals who, unable to produce an afro, have been deemed as

'inauthentic' (Ali, 2003, p.79).[121] Such a "hair dilemma" is further raised by

---

[120] Author's Italics. This is disputed by Charlotte who states: 'Some people say the pressing and straightening is about making your hair more manageable but it wasn't about that at all; not then' (p.73). Interestingly, Suki Ali suggests that hairstyles are not able to offer people of an Asian background the same opportunity for identity formulation (2003, p.82).

[121] bell hooks charts the progress of African American hair post-civil rights, suggesting that the event of equal rights to employment created an 'assimilation' (1995, p.122) of black people into mainstream culture. 'Once again' hooks notes, 'the fate of black folks rested with white power' as it was easier to get a job if you did not wear a 'natural hairstyle' (1995, p.122).

Maria P.P. Root who also suggests that in the United States the 'African-American biracial person may feel tormented by hair that isn't kinky enough. Conversely, she may be forced to grapple with issues of loyalty and authenticity if she straightens or relaxes her kinky hair' (Root, 1997, p.163). Yet, as it has been suggested, without access to the '"black is beautiful"' rhetoric which radically overhauled the idea that black was 'ugly, monstrous, undesirable' (hooks, 1995, p.120), Charlotte's focus still remains staunchly on the re/creation of whiteness.

Sugar and Slate, however, raises the issue that such choices are only available to those who have some level of wealth or status. Participation in a hair straightening regime costs time and money (oils and irons are needed) and requires the assistance of at least one other person to achieve perfection. As an orphan, Simone has neither the financial capacity, nor the care of another to guide her, and as a "looked after" child, she is status-less. Her hair returns to an afro and she is rejected by Charlotte, becoming the representation of the ugliness that Charlotte is trying to avoid both racially and also in terms of class.

> She represented something I feared. She was an unwelcome invasion [...]
> Every bit of her dragged me down from my favoured position. I couldn't
> take her on; I was on the front line myself. She reminded me of what it

was I was trying to escape from. All the Barnardos assumptions. Rivers of them (p.73).[122]

At the time, the young Charlotte does not recognise the wider imperialist overview of her feelings and actions. The older narrative voice however is firm: 'We were after European tresses, we were after being the same as everyone else, we were chasing after the only images of beauty that were presented to us. We were trying to fit in' (p.73).

Despite Charlotte's attempts to "fit in" and to look white she is acutely aware that no one finds her 'beautiful' (p.66): 'I could be – funny, friendly, clever, happy, sporty, musical, loud and gregarious – but not beautiful' (p.67). Furthermore, since 'dating was a measure of beauty' (p.67) and Charlotte could not be beautiful, she accepts that she is un-dateable: 'I accepted my part in an unspoken agreement between the races' (p.67). Besides, there are a 'host of girls standing in the line in front' of Charlotte and thus she feels no assurance of success (p.67). These sentiments are also reflected in the novel *Sister Josephine* when the protagonist, Josephine, also feels like there is little hope that a doctor from the hospital where she works would be interested in her. When Dr Fox takes her out she is shocked and surprised, and she allows him to take advantage of her even though he has a fiancée. Similarly, in *Sugar and Slate*,

---

[122] The automatic assumption that Charlotte and her sisters are Barnardos Children follows myth 4, that the mixed race family unit does not work and that breakdown is inevitable.

Charlotte is equally surprised when Johnny Pritchard asks her out on behalf of

his friend Richard. Excited and exhilarated, she attends the date, meeting

Richard outside the Palladium. 'Confident in his long heritage of superiority'

(p.69), Richard asks Charlotte personal and intimate questions, embarrassing

her, and in the end reveals that the date was a dare. At the time Charlotte

shoves 'the whole scene down deep inside with a whole load of other crap that

[she] was pretending' is not there (p.71). Yet later the narrator ponders whether

Johnny had in fact desired her but was too afraid to admit it: 'He could not

confront his own desire so he sent his stooge' (p.71). Charlotte's experiences

highlight the way in which mixed race individuals can be simultaneously objects

of desire and revulsion, and how this dichotomy can cause them to be

measured as both obscure and yet also strangely exotic: a familiar notion if

thinking back to the earlier arguments about fear the and desire of the Other as

made by J.C Young (1995).

Suki Ali, also theorising on this topic, suggests that "the exotic' functions as a

mediator of racialised (hetero) sexualities both in the popular and in the lived

experience' (2005, p.155), implying that by adopting the concept of the

"exotic", the mixed race individual is deemed more palatable or even alluring.

Such ideas, processed internally, can be accepted or rejected by mixed race

individuals themselves, as Naomi Zack writes: 'The aesthetic purity of white

bodies, the rhythm and elemental sexuality of black bodies, the exotic eroticism

of mixed-race bodies and their fancied debilities – all of these fantastic illusions

are a cornucopia of physical choices for a person of mixed race' (1993, p.163).

The assumption here, however, seems to be that mixed race women always wish to engage in a portrayal of sexuality. Neither Zack (in this quotation), nor the selected texts offer rejecting sexualisation as an option. To some, this may not seem such a negative representation, but as Carol Camper writes of her own experiences: 'Sex was not an indicator of worth but only of gender and availability. I realized that to commodify myself as exotic meant incredible loss' (2004, p.179).

In the case of Charlotte's sister Jan, in *Sugar and Slate*, her belief in herself as an 'exotic beauty' (p.59) causes her to reject her mixedness, however, in favour of an identity that she sees as more glamorous and better suited to who she is: 'They shouldn't call us half-caste, that's a terrible word. We're continental' (p.59). More frequently, however, exoticism is established alongside an acceptance of mixed race origins. In *Lady Moses,* for example, the issue of the "mixed race exotic" is also made present when Jacinta recognises that her race and features shape her relationships with men: 'There were men of course. Men who thought I was exotic' (p.165) and she soon comes to recognise the link between the exotic and sexuality.[123] The belief that mixed race women are sexually available is displayed further on in the quotation from *Lady Moses* as Jacinta notes how those men who express an interest in her; those men who

---

[123] This will also be considered later in this chapter in relation to portrayals of gay men.

find her exotic, are also the same men who 'wanted sex' (p.165) and think that she is 'frigid' (p.165) when their expectations and desires go unfulfilled.

To fully understand the notion of "the exotic", the relationship between the sexuality of white and black women should be considered in more detail. As has been mentioned, white aesthetic beauty has been viewed as a marker of normality, the standard, and in some ways removed from the degradation of sexual lust and desire and asexualised. However, white women have also been responsible for keeping the homogeneity of the white race "pure" (i.e. not "contaminated by blackness"). This has not only led to controls on white women's sexuality, but has also resulted in the prohibition of interracial relationships through legislation (rarely adhered to by men) or by the humiliation or defamation of character for women who chose not to conform (Bland, 2005; Olumide, 2002). Black women, in comparison, have been viewed as sexual, animalistic and deviant (Collins, 1991, p.139). Feminists such as bell hooks and Patricia Collins have argued that this stems from the times of slavery, where black women were viewed as nothing more than livestock to be bought, sold and bred. As black feminists have argued: 'Black women's sexuality has been constructed by law as public property – Black women have no rights of privacy that Whites must observe' (Collins, 1991, p.134).

Those mixed race women, that were half white were also seen as half civilised/ half savage and were sometimes displayed and 'bred to be pets' (Collins, 1991, p.144). Yet by the rules of hypodescent, mixed race women were also black and

therefore inherited the trait of hypersexuality associated with black women. As bell hooks writes, for some the biracial black-white woman became the 'sexual ideal', 'embodying' both a 'passionate sensual eroticism as well as a subordinate feminine nature' (1995, p.127). This is still present in today's society where the notion of the sexually available mixed woman has been identified through the analysis of television, film and advertising (Streeter, 2003; Elam, 2009; Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013).[124] Indeed as Halter writes:

> ...the idealised beauty standard is somewhere in between, a melange of off-white features and khaki tones in a two-way process in which the black-female ideal lightened up from the 1970s Afrocentric period at the same time that the archetypical white woman was darkening, if only slightly, to a more mestizo presentation (2000, p.178).

Furthermore, the black feminist Patricia Collins suggests that this leaves the black mixed woman with a dilemma:

> Biracial Black women who recognize these contradictions struggle with

---

[124] bell hooks notes that 'light skin and long straight hair continue to be traits that define a female as beautiful and desirable in the racist white imagination and in the colonized black mind set' (1995, p.127). This is then reflected in media representations: 'Just as whites now privilege lighter skin in movies and fashion magazines, particularly with female characters, folks with darker skin face media that subordinate their image' (1995, p.129). Additionally, Dagbovie-Mullins writes that the idea of mixed race attractiveness is a notion that 'gets directly and indirectly repeated in advertisements and magazines that use models who physically represent racial mixture' (2013, p.119).

this situation. On the one hand, the biracial girlchild's White mother

positions her closer to Whiteness, and this physical beauty often makes

her more attractive to many Black men. But on the other, she joins the

ranks of Black women and thus inherits the history of rejection (1991,

p.165).

Although it is the black man who Collins refers to in this quotation and who will

be discussed in greater detail a little later, it is Jacinta's relationship with the

white male that is initially considered within *Lady Moses*.

As a lover, Manny seems different from other white men, as he initially does not

appear interested in sex. Manny also appeals to Jacinta as he seems to know

about the "real Africa", having spent time there working for the Peace Corps.

For Jacinta, then, Manny taps into a different type of fantasy: of rescue from her

dull and tedious life in Lavender Sweep. When the two meet, Manny proposes

instantly. Everything about the event and Manny himself seems like a fairy tale.

His name, Emmanuel Fox III, makes Manny sound regal and prince-like. He uses

courtly language to woe her: 'O, milady. Lovely, lovely Jacinta Louise' (p.168),

and he promises to take her and to whisk her away to the 'New World of

fabulous promises' (p.159). Jacinta does not fall for Manny, but rather what 'he

represented' (p.170). Jane Ussher has written that as children, girls are

socialised to believe in the fairy tale as a means of female advancement. Ussher

writes: 'Fairy tales tell us of the necessity of the transformation of women from

base matter into idealized perfection' (p.1997, p.8). Jacinta, like any other

woman, seems to hold this fantasy: 'I'd been waiting for someone to ride into my life, swoop me up and make me into the Potential Jacinta rather than the Actual one' (p.169). The issue of race is never far away, however, as early on in the novel when the couple go away for their honeymoon, Jacinta notes how her blackness and Manny's whiteness seem to complement one another: 'my skin looked even darker against the white of his arm' (p.193). The mysterious maid who Jacinta views at the end of her bed and who says 'something about black and white' and a baby (p.194), also fuels Jacinta's fantasy about the perfection of her black/white union. Unfortunately, these visions of a promising future do not last.

4.2 Relationships

Counteracting the popular belief of the black man as hypersexual (Collins, 1991, p.83), predatory and dangerous, in a number of the selected texts it is the relationship with the white (heterosexual) male characters who pose a significant risk.[125] In *Lady Moses*, the reader observes a number of incidents where Jacinta is subjected to molestation or abuse by white boys and men. Initially this can be seen in Lavender Sweep when Maurice Beadycap steals her diary and forces Jacinta to kiss him to get it back: 'He was up against me again. Lifting me up with his hips so that I was up off the floor. And then his lips on

---

[125] The homosexual Alfred in *Lady Moses* does not display any of the characteristics of the sexually aggressive white male and poses no risk to Jacinta in comparison.

mine, and the shock of his tongue' (p.45). This event has a profound and damaging effect on Jacinta, obstructing her from forming relationships with white males, and although she is also molested later as she is driven to her foster home by her mother's male friend (p.112-113), it is the experience with Maurice that re-emerges as an adult: 'But Maurice's tongue was still in my mouth […] My prejudice against white Englishmen increased as the years went by' (p.165). Jacinta's negative experiences also affect her sexual relationships. Manny's willingness to wait for sex until after the wedding leaves Jacinta relieved since it means that she can 'put off a remembrance of Maurice until later' (p.179).

In addition, relations with white males within the text are also based on unequal distributions of power. As has been mentioned in chapter 2, the act of naming is very significant within a number of the selected texts because it concerns issues of ownership. When the narrative describes the first time that Jacinta and Manny have sex there is mutual pleasure, exhilaration, and desire, but there is also an element of domination: 'But then his will became mine, and there was nothing left but relinquish my hold on who I was and give my names over for Manny to claim them' (p.192).[126] Somewhere in the back of her mind the experience bothers Jacinta: 'there was something I was forgetting' (p.192). This something, it could be argued, is her experience with Maurice.

---

[126] Here again, the link between naming and ownership is displayed.

White male domination is seen in a wider framework later on in the novel when Jacinta goes to Africa. When hunting for the dinosaur (that could be representative of "Mother Africa") Jacinta notices how Lionel, one of Manny's Peace Corps colleagues, changes his demeanour, frightening Jacinta. Suddenly she hopes that the hunting party do not 'find anything' (p.338). As she listens to Lionel talk about the dinosaur in the way that 'white men have talked on that continent for hundreds of years' (p.338), as though the dinosaur 'belonged to him' (p.338), Jacinta believes that Lionel would be prepared to harm her and perhaps cut a piece off as a trophy of his expedition. These issues intensify when Maurice unexpectedly appears. Initially, Manny and Maurice make friends. As white males, they assert their authority and dominance. Manny displays his by attempting to overrule Jacinta's request for Maurice to leave: 'this isn't *your* house, it's *our* house' (p.360), whilst Maurice makes Assie, the "hired help" wash his underwear.[127] Jacinta is disgusted by their behaviour. Watching the two eat a meal that Assie has prepared for them, Jacinta observes their disrespect and recognises the unequal racial and gendered dynamics of their domestic set up: 'I looked at the two white men consuming the food Assie had prepared without regard to the flesh they were eating or the trouble a black woman had gone to in making them something to appease their fat appetites' (p.359-360).

---

[127] Author's italics.

The pinnacle of male domination, however, arrives with the end of the novel as Jacinta flees with Manny through the night to escape the sexual threat of Maurice only to find that Manny is the one that she should most fear. When Jacinta tells Manny that she will leave him, Manny's reaction is both swift and brutal. In his last attempt to own and dominate Jacinta he stops the car, pulls her out, and rapes her whilst their daughter sleeps in the back (p.383). The tension that has been present throughout the novel is in the end realised.

Despite this, interestingly, the novel does not present the white male as fully in control of the discourse of power, but instead suggests that he must continue to engage in power battles in a constant attempt to "fix" his hierarchical position. Manny, for example, ends his alliance with Maurice when he discovers that Maurice is after "his" territory. One night, Manny finds Maurice peeping through the window when Jacinta is 'naked' (p.381). Although he blames Jacinta for not fully shutting the blinds, it is clear that his reaction of chasing Maurice away is a territorial one: 'you're *my* wife' (p.381).[128] More disturbingly still, whilst further violating Jacinta back in the car after raping her, he tells Jacinta that he was abused by his father. This once again problematises the position of the white male as simply the dominant oppressor.

If, as Price suggests then, 'white heterosexual masculinity' becomes a 'standard by which other men are measured and usually fall short' (Price, 2003, p.323),

---

[128] Author's italics.

(also named by Audre Lorde as the '*mythical norm*' (1995, p.533)), Manny's struggles for power can be viewed as a constant battle to achieve this position which eventually results in the act of sexual violence.[129] Yet even if Manny feels that this has been achieved, retaining the position is extremely hard to do. As Kokopeli and Lakey suggest, the white male who meets the mark one day, is not guaranteed to the next, leaving him 'carrying a heavy load of anxiety about tomorrow' (1995, p.453). Further complicating this is Nixon's suggestion that different forms of masculinity also vie for power (1997) hence, in one instance Manny is the dominator (over Jacinta) and yet he too has been dominated by his father's "masculinity" in his childhood experiences. This, of course, does not in any way legitimise Manny's behaviour, yet it adds further complexities to a deeply uncomfortable scene.

In *Sister Josephine*, whilst in care, Josephine is also raped. The first person narrative allows the reader an insight into how Josephine views Martin's actions. For Josephine, Martin is her 'spotty friendly brother' (p.20), her only protection against Gary (her other brother) who is a supporter of the National Front. Initially, even though Josephine is aware that Martin's conduct is inappropriate, she still feels safe and 'close to him' (p.16), and because he is kind to her she chooses to ignore his behaviour, despite the acts of molestation becoming increasingly severe: 'I wanted to think he was a bastard but he still gave me the crackling off his roast pork. He never raised his voice. He never

---

[129] Author's italics.

beat me up. He kept Gary off me' (p.20). When Josephine is raped, however,

she recognises that he has 'gone too far' (p.57) and feels deeply 'betrayed'

(p.57).

Martin is not the only sexually dangerous white male within the text however.

The bullying that Josephine faces with Gary and his friends also has undertones

of sexual aggression. An illustration of this is when the boys use Josephine's legs

as part of a pulley device that they have invented, displaying her underwear.

When Martin sees what is happening he pins Gary down, spits in his face and

slaps him repeatedly. As the level of violence escalates, with Martin smacking

Gary's head against the floor, Josephine recognises that 'somat was different

about this time' (p.22). Martin is indeed acting in her defence, yet, in this scene,

the familiar concept of sexual conquest and territorialism not dissimilar to that

observable between Manny and Maurice in *Lady Moses* again emerges. Equally,

after Martin moves out, racialised sexual aggression is hinted at through

Josephine's fear of Gary's friends' visits whilst her foster parents are out. In

these instances she is made to play 'slave' (p.61) and Gary tells his friends that

as she is not his real sister, just a 'kid from the home', they have 'the right' to do

what they like to her (p.61).

Indeed the threat of sexual violence seems to be such a prevailing feature of a

number of the selected texts that such representations have infiltrated into

literature for children. This can be seen in the later to be discussed novel *Hero*,

by Catherine R. Johnson (See chapter 5). After being captured by the drunken

Tyndall, Hero, the twelve-year-old mixed protagonist of the novel, is taken to the rag house where she is forced to work for her uncle sorting rags. As the book is written for children, the threat of rape is not made entirely overt, but is none the less present when Tyndall holds Hero up against the wall, pushing his leg 'between hers' (p.38). Later, Tyndall returns to the rag house bringing with him a man named Webster who asks him if Hero is 'nice and clean' (p.53); Tyndall replies: 'Oh, she's clean alright, Marty. Nice girl she is, from up west, better than what you're used to, an that's for sure!' (p.53). Even if the younger reader is not aware of the imminent danger, Hero certainly is as she recognises that 'something terrible would happen' (p.38) if she does not act.

Nevertheless, it is not only mixed characters who are at risk within the selected texts. In *Sister Josephine*, Josephine's foster father is accused of the sexual assault of a fifteen-year-old, and similarly in *Sugar and Slate*, the risk of abuse within the Welsh community is revealed through comments made about Charlotte's mother's childhood experiences where she, along with others, was abused by Mr Thomas: 'we don't say a word' (p.18). White male sexual danger, then, is both overt and covert within the selected texts, being either hidden just below the surface of the narrative, or explicitly portrayed in sometimes quite graphic detail.

Having discussed the portrayal of the white male in the selected texts, it would be useful to look at the presentation of the relationship between mixed race female characters and black male ones. Historically, the relationship between

black men and mixed race women has not been seen as an interracial one, predominantly because mixed race women are perceived as being black. Since, in this instance, such relationships do not conceivably involve the "contamination of whiteness" (Root, 1992, p.6) they have been given little critical attention. Yet in a number of the selected texts the relationship between the black male and the mixed race female is intriguing. The first area to observe is the way in which the authors seek to reconstruct the image of the black male and black masculinity.

Early encounters with the black man are recounted in a number of the selected texts. In *Trumpet* it is Colman who views the black man whilst on the bus with his mother and in *Sugar and Slate* it is on Charlotte's arrival in Africa. Descriptions often involve feelings of curiosity and fear, reactions that are not in any way dissimilar from that of the small boy seeing the 'Negro' (1968, p.112) in Fanon's "The Fact of Blackness" (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 1968). *Sister Josephine* offers a prime example of this: after bumping into a black man in the street, the protagonist wonders how the early white explorers would have felt coming across this 'monster', in the jungles of Africa (p.72). Charlotte in *Sugar and Slate* too reveals: 'I was secretly scared of black men' (p.67).

The next area of note relates to the deconstruction of the black male into body parts. A number of the texts describe the racialised features in great depth. In both *Red Dust Road* and *Lady Moses* the black man's hands are focused on. For Jackie Kay, these are Femi's hands which take her back to the memory of 'a

black man who stayed at [her] house' when she was little: 'He was the first black man I ever saw in my life' (p.50). For Jacinta, the hands are her father's with their 'boomerang thumbs', 'pale palms' and 'dark fingernails' (*Lady Moses*, p.10). In *Sister Josephine*, each of Mathew's body parts is listed: 'He had a large mouth, full to the brim with teeth. Frightening white teeth. His nose was splattered right across his face. His lips, when he wasn't smiling, hung out over his chin' (p.72). It should be noted that it is the stereotypical phenotypic features found in "scientific" and colonial observations of blackness that are most accentuated here: bright shiny teeth against the black face, large lips and nose etc. (a reminder perhaps of the way in which Bland noted that anthropologists broke down the body into 'racial markers', as discussed in chapter 1 (Bland, 2007, p.72)). Later, when Josephine gets to know Mathew a little better, she considers his features with greater attention: 'he let me explore the whole of his head. His nutty-shaped eyes, the smoothness all around his temples […] his hair was like a brillo pad' (p.77).

Notionally, the mixed race females in the selected texts show an awareness of the supposed danger of the black man. This danger is rooted in the sexual. Analysing an early sexual encounter with a black man, Ifekwunigwe suggests that mixed women have internalised the negative image of black men. Discussing one of her research participants' experiences, along with her own, she calls attention to the 'interwoven politics of bi-racialization and sexuality'

(1999, p.96). It is not just any man, Ifekwunigwe writes of her subject Similola's story, he is a "sex-crazed Black African man"' (1999, p.96).[130] Yet the black man's body is also curiously alluring. Josephine in *Sister Josephine* is transfixed by Mathew's smiling 'eyes' (p.72) and goes home with him even though they have only just met, whilst Jackie finds the black man who stays in her home 'entrancing' (*Red Dust Road,* p.49).[131] In the case of *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate*, where Charlotte and Jacinta are already married to white men – the black man's body also becomes forbidden and erotic. This is observable in Jacinta's reaction to Helios, the black basketball player in *Lady Moses*: 'His arms and legs were sweat: they shone in the bright lights of the court, highlights slashing his dark arms' (p.224).[132] Although Jacinta is impressed by his skill and how the white crowd will this black man to succeed, it is the way in which the image of the basketball player is constructed that is of most note.

In his essay "Brilliant Bodies, Fragile Minds", Brett St Louis argues that colonisation and the domination of the West has always been based on the dichotomy between the body and the mind. Whereas the (white) West has

---

[130] This is not dissimilar from the aforementioned internalisation by mixed race youths that black men are criminals as seen in the Tizzard and Phoenix research and forming myth 5 (2002).
[131] Back at his house in *Sister Josephine*, Mathew tries to kiss Josephine. Although this is an unpleasant experience, it does not prevent her from staying with him for a few days and thus any black male sexual danger is underplayed by the author. This is similar to *Sugar and Slate* where Charlotte goes to visit the houseboy Tuesday whilst her parents sleep. Tuesday, in just his pants, lifts Charlotte onto his knee where she would 'twist and turn' because she 'wasn't comfortable' (p.38). Charlotte does not see what is wrong with this, but her father angrily dismisses Tuesday from their service as soon as he find out (p.38).
[132] Roy's choice of the basketball player's surname is interesting here as Helios is from ancient Greek mythology and is associated with the sun. This Roy plays on as Helios is the 'the Black son' (p.226) of Africa: 'he was darker than the sun was bright' (p.224).

been associated with mind and thus 'reason and intellect', the (black) colonised

have been linked to the body and with it "natural", 'base appetites and

instincts' (2005, p.125). Such notions were already identifiable in the analysis

within the last chapter on the African space as liminal territory in *The Icarus Girl*,

yet in St Louis' writing it is clear that these notions come to "racialise" (see Ali,

2003, p.2) the discourse of gender.[133] Thus, in Brett St Louis' argument, the

mind/body divide is projected onto the black male and particularly perpetuated

through the image of the athletic black male body which is portrayed as full of

"natural" strength and competitive 'aggression' (2005, p.124).[134] This image, St

Louis describes as 'black hypermasculinity' (2005, p.125).[135]

Returning to the text, Helios' masculinity is heightened not only by his

physicality, but by the way that Jacinta describes Manny who 'could be

mistaken for a teenage boy, especially from the back. A petite, blond, American

boy' (p.222). While the white Manny is just a child, both in appearance and

behaviour (as he sits whining throughout the game), Lawrence Helios

epitomises manhood. There is also a very clear sexual element to Jacinta's view

of Helios which links with the idea of the black body's association with 'base

appetites' (St Louis, 2005, p.125) and the 'invention' of black male

---

[133] See chapter 1 for Suki Ali's theory of the racialisation of discourse (2003).

[134] Issues surrounding black male athleticism have also been written about by Michael Messner who suggests that sport, for many black men, can be the only means to gaining 'public masculine status' (1995, p.173).

[135] The image of black male sporting achievement seems to be a global one. In an intriguing article, Ahn writes about the way in which the mixed black/Korean sportsman Hines Ward has been accepted in Korea premised partially upon this notion (2014).

hypermasculinity, which focuses the attention on '[p]erformance and sexual prowess' (Stuart, 2005, p.175). Later that night, the fantasy is taken forward into the bedroom where Jacinta imagines Lawrence Helios is making love to her instead of Manny: 'I had to stop myself from uttering Helios' name because, in spite of myself it was the basketball player I saw above me' (p.226). In this novel such sexual imaginings act as a fertility enhancer as Jacinta, who, after struggling to get pregnant, is finally able to conceive.[136]

Similarly, in *Sugar and Slate*, Charlotte has a sexualised encounter with a black man when she ventures out into the rainforest of Guyana, and sees Stanton (with whom she is travelling) undress: 'In my whole life I had never had access to a black man as sexual being. I had never viewed a black man as an object of desire in this way. I had no experience of such intimacy and those quite moments became an intimacy' (p.146). Charlotte recognises that for much of her life the concept of the black male has been shaped by negative views and thus '[i]gnorance and stereotype' (p.146) has 'tainted' the image of the black male figure (p.146). What is interesting in this portrayal, though, is the voyeuristic nature of the interaction between the mixed race protagonist and the black man. This should be considered critically. Black feminists such as Patricia Collins and bell hooks write about how black women have been subjected to the "white male gaze" reducing them simply to sexual objects

---

[136] The fact that Lucinda Roy lives in the United States, and Jacinta spends part of the novel there complicates this text's categorisation as a British novel, leading it to also appear in discussions alongside American texts as found in Dagbovie-Mullins' book (2013).

(Collins, 1991; hooks, 1992). The most frequently cited example of this in feminist literature is the case of Sarah Bartmann, a black female, who was displayed as a side show-like attraction in the 1800's (see hooks, 1992; Collins, 1991; Jones, 1994).[137] However, hooks has also argued that the black slave gaze was one of resistance: 'Even in the worst circumstances of domination, the ability to manipulate one's gaze in the face of structures that would contain it, opens up the possibility to agency' (1992, p.116). The gaze, however, seems to become far more complicated in the context of the selected texts. As has been shown in analysis of *The Icarus Girl* in chapter 4, the Nigerian gaze turns whiteness and the half-white into an obscurity. Yet here, in both *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate*, the mixed race female gaze is responsible for the sexualisation and objectification of the black male.[138] Thus, it can be argued, that on some level, texts such as these perpetuate the myth of black sexuality.

Furthermore, both *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate* unquestioningly maintain the preconceived notion that the black sexualised body is closer to nature and the natural world. This can be identified both through the sexual encounters taking place outside within the space of the natural environment, and also through the description of the encounters themselves. In the rainforest of *Sugar and Slate*, Charlotte describes her view of Stanton, linking him to the surroundings through the act of simile: 'now here was Stanton representing

[137] Sarah Bartman is also often referred to by the use of her Dutch name Saartjie Bartmann.
[138] See Hershel's notion of the societal gaze influencing Gok Wan (1997).

something so close and very natural like the forest' (p.146). A similar image is presented in *Lady Moses*, where John Turay is described as the purveyor of the African landscape, constructing the African bush at will: 'I fancied he was making the bush happen – that when he turned and spoke to me he created more of it with his words. As long as he kept speaking, the bush would keep happening' (p.371). Such images form part of a framework for representing African people as "natural" within the text which is highly problematic. In a novel where African women are 'extensions of the land they walked upon' (p.302), and African men run 'like gazelles' with 'beautiful' 'dark legs' (p.348), the mind/body dichotomy issues of Brett St Louis become more and more apparent (St Louis, 2005). Again, Jacinta's first sexual encounter with the "black man" takes place in the open, uninhibited and sensual natural world: 'The sun warmed us and time beat upon us like a climax' (p.340). Just as Helios is sexualised, John's promiscuity is illuminated as Jacinta wonders how many women have watched him 'undo' the buttons of his shirt (p.333-334), and later in John's home, Jacinta ponders on many women John might have slept with (p.377).

Despite what is a seemingly problematic representation of the black man as reduced to a sexual object, *Lady Moses* also positions the relationship with the black male as a site of equality, redemption and healing. Primarily, this is related to the simple acceptance expressed by John (previously mentioned in chapter 3). When Jacinta says that she is an African because her father is from there, John unquestioningly replies: 'Well, then, Miss Jacinta, welcome home' (p.331)

and further, he immediately accepts Lady's disability which he demonstrates by shaking her stump (p.330). (A far more positive reaction than the one given by Manny who is disgusted by his daughter's appearance).

Jacinta and John's intimate relationship is also built as a direct contrast to Jacinta and Manny's. Manny's past is closed to Jacinta, but Jacinta tells John about Lady and about Lavender Sweep and John tells her that his family are mostly dead. Manny is a selfish lover, but John is gracious – even thankful – for their intimate contact (p.350). Unlike Manny who cannot control his sexual urges: 'he didn't really want to do it – he was compelled addicted. He couldn't help himself' (p.191), John Turay's love is measured and focuses on her pleasure: 'He knew what to do without saying anything. He listened to the way I responded and took his cues from me' (p.351). Despite the fact that Jacinta is engaging in an affair, she feels 'forgiveness' (p.340) in John's touch.

 Perhaps most significantly however, through her relationship with John, Jacinta comes finally to know the "fatherland". On a very practical level, John is her guide, tracing her father's family and taking her to meet her relatives, but Jacinta also feels connected to 'the profound dark beauty of his body and his mind' (p.377) and the way he reminds her of her blackness: 'I felt the urgency of John's tongue and thought about his blackness and my own' (p.350-351).[139] Feeding further into the theme of roots and experiencing ancestry as discussed

___

[139] It may also be worth noting that this time Jacinta is not reminded of Maurice.

in chapter 3, John allows Jacinta to connect to her black African heritage. When leaving John one night after they have slept together, Jacinta recalls 'slave ships and departures the land had seen long before [they] had been born' (p.352):

> And then there was the other side. Always, that was the light to cling to. The other side of the Middle Passage, which had resulted in a hundred new cultures sprung from the old. Jazz and blues and Martin and Baldwin and Zora and basketball and a kind of vast reservoir of glory that traced its roots to here. Here, where I was tonight (p.353).

If such relationships provide access to the lost father's land they also provide access to the lost black father himself. It would perhaps be more acceptable if the women in the texts were looking for replacement father figures, yet what is more disturbing is the way that black/mixed relationships seem to uncover unconscious sexual feelings toward the missing black father that are reconciled through sexual interest in/contact with other black men.

In *Sugar and Slate*, whilst Charlotte views Stanton naked she thinks about the 'forbidden viewing' (p.146) of seeing her naked parents, and particularly her father: 'his nakedness was stored in the corner of my mind. Now I recalled the scene and all its anxiety, guilt and excitement' (p.146). Later, like Josephine in *Sister Josephine*, Charlotte breaks down her father's black male body: 'I re-examined him minutely – the browns of his skin, its lights and shading, the set of his teeth, the small pulse at his temple and the perfect line of his lips' (p.111).

In *Lady Moses*, too, Helios reminds Jacinta of her father: 'His profile looked familiar to me. And then I noticed the resemblance. My father had looked like that' (p.224). Later, John's 'African fingers' (p.339) are also a reminder to the reader of Jacinta's father Simon in the opening of the text. Additionally, Jacinta makes comparison to her situation and that of her mother's: 'my mother too had loved a man like John Turay' (p.353).

Psychoanalysts such as Nancy Chodorow have argued that the girl's desire for the father is a part of the developmental process towards female identification (Chodorow, 1989). Yet subconscious desire for the black father figure is not just confined to the mixed race female. *Trumpet* is also of interest, as in the text Colman has a fixation with seeing his father naked and stroking the trumpet, which becomes a 'phallic symbol' (Richardson, 2012, p.370). Sons too, Richardson argues have a special relationship with the black father: 'this black father-son bond is the primary interaction at the crucial stage before language and before the recognition of difference [...] the black male is connected to the father, and all subsequent relations are of the loss of that oneness' (2012, p.369).

As a concept, this idea of finding the father through a relationship with a black man is a little unnerving on a number of different levels: firstly, it is problematic because these texts try to escape stereotypes of mixed race people, but are in a sense playing into the notion of deviant sexuality. Secondly, it suggests that the reason why female protagonists establish a relationship with a black man is

based on colour and not on personality. Thirdly, it prioritises the notion of needing patriarchal entry into blackness either through the relationship with the black father or as a woman, through a black father replacement figure, not through an individual's own endeavours. From a feminist perspective, too, much has been written on the fact that the relationship between black men and black/mixed women is complex and sometimes imperfect (hooks, 1992; Collins, 1991), and black men can be equally involved in modes of patriarchal rule (although, they 'do not have the same relations to patriarchal/capitalist hierarchies as white men' (Carby, 1997, p.46)). The texts, therefore, do not consider the dynamics of relationships within the black community or the possibility of positive mixed relationships with white men. If white men are subject to criticism in these selected texts, however, then so too are white women.

4.3 Mothers and Daughters

In the United States, Patricia Collins has written that: 'The mother/daughter relationship is one fundamental relationship among Black women. Countless black mothers have empowered their daughters by passing on the everyday knowledge essential to survival as African-American women' (1991, p.102). But what about mixed daughters with white mothers? White mothers come under a lot of criticism both within the public arena and within sociological

writing. Patricia Collins, for example, remains a little scathing of white parenting as she writes how:

> …Black women remain called upon to accept and love mixed-race children born to their brothers, friends, and relatives. By being the Black mothers that these children do not have, these women are expected to help raise biracial children who at the same time often represent tangible reminders of their own rejection (1991, p.165).

This argument in truth seems a little unfair as it implies both that white parents are not responsible, or do not know how to bring up mixed race children, and that the mixed race children themselves become symbols of the fact that black men prefer white women to black ones. Further, white mothers have been criticised for having an inability to adequately tackle racism and for being self-centred in their wish for their whiteness to be recognised in their children (Spencer, 2006, p.80).[140]

Within the British context of the selected texts, the mixed race protagonist also has a fractured relationship to blackness that results from the death of the black father. As the thesis has argued, through searching for roots along with

---

[140] Reference here is for Rainier Spencer (2006) and not Stephen Spencer (2006). See Rainier Spenser's chapters entitled: "White Mothers, the *Loving* Legend", and the "Manufacturing a Biracial Baby Boom" In *Challenging Multiracial Identity* for more information (2006). (Author's Italics).

relationships with the black male, blackness can be recovered. What, though, about whiteness? In some respects, the protagonist's link with whiteness is twice broken: once through sociological influences that designate mixed race individuals as black, and then again through the failure of the relationship with the white mother. The breakdown of the mother-daughter relationship in the selected texts generally happens after the death of the black father. As earlier mentioned, in *Lady Moses* Louise's nervous breakdown results in her attacking Jacinta who is then taken into care, a process through which she discovers that she is a 'coloured child' (p.22). In *Sugar and Slate* Charlotte's mother too is deeply affected by the departure of her husband who leaves her for an English woman, rendering her unable to fulfil her maternal responsibilities: 'Ma's grief was fathomless and unending […] Slowly her strength sapped from her as if some parasite was draining her life. It was miserable. She was only alive now in memories of him' (p.82). In addition, in *Strawgirl*, Maybe is left to save Wishing Well Farm while her mother languishes in bed with her grief for her dead husband, and Millie too is bereaved in *Trumpet* and is distanced from her mixed race son. Yet opposing this, however, it can also be argued that there is an acknowledgement of the white mother's presence, influence and experiences, and that her 'herstory' forms an integral part of many of the narratives (Carby, 1997, p.50). Hence the reader sees the prominence of Charlotte's mother's story in *Sugar and Slate* (as explored in depth in chapters 2 and 3), and in *Lady Moses* Jacinta's mother's story both begins and completes the novel: 'Louise Buttercup Moses is dead. She was the beginning of my story and shaped its middle. She has left me to write the end of it on my own' (p.3).

Black British feminists such as Hazel Carby have acknowledged the link between black and white women's stories: 'The herstory of black women is interwoven with that of white women', she writes (1997, p.50). However, there has also been frustration from within the feminist movement based on 'universal humanism' (Mirza, 1997, p.9) meaning that the views of black feminists have been overlooked and/or not accorded importance. In a number of the selected texts, then, acknowledging the white woman's role as a mother and as part of a wider cultural picture whilst simultaneously "flagging up" the non-British aspect to the narrative is often present.[141]

It is interesting to note that in the same way that the black body of the father is an area of curiosity and interest, within a number of the selected texts there is also a fascination with the body of the white mother. Here, the white woman's body is both recognisable in its shape and form, yet it is de-familiarised due to its colour and its knowledge. This is summed up in Charlotte's observation in *Sugar and Slate*: 'I am curious about Ma's body. It is always strange but not a stranger to me' (p.16). This is also particularly the case in Jackie Kay's short story "Big Milk" from her collection *Why Don't You Stop Talking*.[142] Here, the

---

[141] It is interesting briefly to note here that in such texts the black father is always the black cultural informant, providing access to blackness, yet it has also been documented by Suki Ali (2003, p.175) in her interviews with white women and by Lisa Jones' account of her own upbringing that some white mothers actually actively encourage their mixed race children to identify as black (Jones, 1994, p.34).

[142] This short story has also been interestingly discussed with relation to Scottish identity – see Winning, 2007.

unnamed mixed race character in the text also has an absent parent, but

instead of the missing black father, her interest is in the absent white mother.

Firstly, the situation can be read from a psychoanalytic perspective, where the

protagonist's lesbian partner can be seen as the missing mother figure. Before

the baby, the protagonist of the story had access to her partner's breasts, but

(again, through the act of naming) in calling the breasts 'Big Milk' and 'Tiny

Milk', the baby usurps her and takes ownership (p.23). Without this access the

protagonist is reminded of the absence of her mother's milk, and this acts as the

"tragic event" required for her to begin her maternal search.

The protagonist imagines what it would have been like to have been fed by her

mother: 'I imagine myself lying across my mother's white breast, my small

brown face suffocating in the pure joy of warm, sweet milk' (p.29). Milk

becomes symbolic of a mother's love and affection. Journeying to Scotland, the

protagonist hopes to find her lost mother: 'She will know me instantly, from the

colour of my skin, that I am her lost daughter. Her abandoned daughter' (p.31).

When she arrives to meet her biological mother for the first time, she finds two

bottles of milk outside her door. She tastes the milk and it is sour. The house is

empty. This rather bleak tale is a stark reminder in the context of this thesis of

the importance of the white mother and re-emphasises how inheritable

knowledge, words and ideas can be lost in the absence of the white 'mother's

milk' (p.32).

This is not to suggest that mother's "wisdom" is always best. In *Lady Moses*, the

reader is aware that Louise attempts to instil a traditional gendered role upon her daughter which is somewhat restrictive:

> It's up to a woman to see that a home is a happy one […] If you're lucky, Manny will be a good father and a kind husband. He won't do much around the house. In spite of this woman's lib nonsense, men are much the same. They do as they please because they can. They don't bear the children or cook the meals (p.189).

Despite Jacinta's denial that this would not be her reality: 'I'm not putting up with that male rubbish' (p.189), she later discovers that she has unwittingly fallen into the trap of traditional wifehood which she describes as 'a scheme designed to ensure that there was never time to unravel yourself from the threads of obligations' (p.309).

In a final thought on the white mother it would be worth considering Laurie Shrage's article "Passing Beyond the Other: Race and Sex". Shrage begins by asking how it is possible that 'white women in our society can have children that are classified as racially different from themselves' (1997, p.184). Should, Shrage asks, the white parent of a black child be designated as white? This indeed poses an interesting question as if hypodescent is demonstrated to be fallacy, then can white mothers transcend whiteness and be termed as 'mulattas' themselves? (1997, p.188). This is a radical idea; however, in some ways a small attempt of such a shift is suggested by Charlotte's mother in *Sugar*

and Slate who proclaims herself to be a white woman with a 'black heart' (p.82).

In the selected texts, there is one exception to the white mother/mixed daughter combination found in *The Icarus Girl* where Jess has a black Nigerian mother. Unlike the portrayal of other white mothers, then, Sarah is strong-willed and determined. Sarah's struggle with motherhood in the text, however, is not triggered by the loss of the father (Daniel is present throughout), but rather by Jess' screaming tantrums and withdrawn behaviour which she "treats" with the same style of parenting deployed by her own father; namely discipline and physical punishment. As in *Sugar and Slate* (as it will shortly be suggested), where the interracial couple becomes a site of political contestation, in *The Icarus Girl*, the mixed race child becomes the site of Western/African value conflict, with the English Daniel feeling that Sarah is too strict on Jess, and Sarah believing that Daniel is 'implying' by his criticism that her father is 'some kind of savage' (p.198). Sarah in this instance warns Daniel not to pit Europe against Africa (p.198). Yet the violence in the text also indicates the decline of Jess' parents' control over her (and perhaps the increasing control of TillyTilly too) which culminates in Daniel hitting Jess after she shouts at her mother, blaming her for the death of her dead twin Fern. This scene surprisingly ends with the breakdown of the white father here, as Daniel enters into a state of depression.

4.4 The Mixed Mistress and the Mixed Wife

It was earlier suggested that the mixed race individual may have access to colonial style privilege through their transracial position. In chapter 3 this was considered in the context of representation of Africa/ns and Charlotte's African childhood in *Sugar and Slate*. Yet access to privilege is also a gendered process and as adults in both *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate* the protagonists inadvertently find themselves enrolled into the role of colonial mistresses. In both the Caribbean and in Africa throughout colonial (and post-colonial) times, it was not considered unusual for mulatta women to have relationships with white men. In *Black Skin White Masks*, Fanon writes very disparagingly of such women who desire to obtain whiteness in this way. Commenting on the work of Mayotte Capécia, for example, Fanon points out that: 'She asks nothing, demands nothing, except a bit of whiteness in her life' (1968, p.42). Yet not all unions resulted in marriage and often mixed race women could find themselves kept as mistresses, achieving perhaps a level of privilege, but equally being in a position of exploitation.

The role of the colonial mistress/ex-pat wife is one that Charlotte finds herself in when she resides in 'the country of [her] origins' (p.103). In Guyana, where Charlotte 'hopes to find a place to belong, she is once more marked as different' (Weedon, 2004, p.94). This is initially identifiable through the attitude of the "British" towards her. Being British herself does not make Charlotte immune

from the assumption that she is just her husband's 'very own little piece of the colony' (p.122), proving that in post-colonial times, women still emerge 'in […] official patriarchal, neo-imperialist discourse only as subjects for sexual and racist humiliation' (Mirza, 1997, p.7). In the context of *Sugar and Slate* this means that Charlotte is seen as a trophy, not worthy of direct conversation. Other ex-pats ignore her and speak to her husband instead, 'male to male, white person to white person' (p.122).

Charlotte recognises the problem as her blackness, or more specifically the discourse of racism which allows her skin to be a problem:

> It was as if all would have been okay or everything would have been nice and not spoiled at all if only I wasn't black. That's what racism had done to me. It had silenced something in me. It had made me compliant and accepting in the way that any victim becomes compliant (p.123).

Incidentally, it is Charlotte's whiteness however that works against her in her marriage as Malcolm leaves her for a Guyanese woman. This is very hurtful to Charlotte as she feels 'intimately betrayed' by both 'a white man' who she trusted and loved, and 'a sister': 'Together they cast me as white' (p.161).

Indeed Charlotte, reflecting both on her own marriage and that of her parents, concludes that interracial relationships are fundamentally flawed by the presence of politics and history:

That's the thing about inter-racial marriages. I think they have a

fundamental asymmetry, a political asymmetry more than anything. They

are subject to the vagaries of the political context in a way that other

marriages are not. Things in the wider environment reverberate through

them. Ma and Dad lying on the bed – two continents back to back…

(p.146-147).

Recognition of these issues can sometimes also be identified within sociological

accounts of interracial mixings. Thinking of her own relationship with a white

man for example, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown considers her feelings of betraying her

background: 'Many of us recognise how the act of loving someone who is from

the ruling race implicates you in the undermining of all that you are, your

family, your nation, your personal and political past' (2001, p.150).

Guyana changes Charlotte. For the first time she is able to embrace blackness

and to overturn her white-orientated perspective of the world, her shift evident

in the way that 'black life' becomes 'ordinary' (p.125) and the fact that the

people in her dreams change 'colour from white to black' (p.125). Her attitude

to interracial relationships is also changed, and despite being married to a white

man herself, she begins to dislike seeing the Guyanese women 'vying for the

attention of single white guys' (p.122). Yet the way that she is perceived by

others in Guyana does not change. Indeed Charlotte discovers that her decision

to marry a white man has led not only to the dislocation of herself from her

race, politics and history, but has also produced a barrier against honest communication with her Indian servant Rati. Despite Charlotte's attempts to 'find every kind of social leveller' in order to 'minimise the mistress/servant divide' (p.120), Rati remains aloof and untrusting of her, leading Charlotte to conclude that: 'there must be a certain ambivalence between black woman as mistress and a black woman as servant' because 'History was just too close' (p.118).

Once again, the text reiterates the uncomfortable truth that being "half-black" does not mean that the mixed race individual steps outside of oppressive systems, or has no access to power over others, again returning to Foucault's theory of the circular nature of power discussed in chapter 3. 'Black women can also be oppressors' too writes Linda Bellos (1995, p.63). Guilt regarding this, Bellos feels, is not so useful, however, as it is a passive process that leads to the 'maintenance' of power structures (1995, p.64) (acknowledgement and activism therefore are much more valid responses). Although Bellos is writing about black lesbians here, the same can easily be applied to mixed race women.

Jacinta in *Lady Moses* also finds that she plays the role of the "ex-pat" wife, employing Assie to help her with childcare and domestic duties. Jacinta is, however, a little more successful in getting close to Assie and they become friends. Yet this is still viewed as a colonial relationship (or at least a relationship of unequal power) by Esther Cole who remarks that Americans 'use our people to look after their spoiled babies and do their yard work' (p.273), condemning

Jacinta's behaviour. Despite her feelings, however, it is Esther who helps Jacinta

escape from the 'white house on the top of the hill' (p.288) and the colonial

post that she holds within it.

4.5 Sexuality

Whilst many of the writers in this study often consider the paradigm of race and

attempt to shift its boundaries and re-write its interface, many of the same

authors also question the boundaries of gender and sexuality in a similar way.

This part of the chapter will explore the relationship between mixed race

characters and bi/homo/heterosexuality.

Heterosexuality itself has been be viewed in essentialist terms as 'natural or

stable' (Jagose, 1996, p.16) but in reality it is a social construction, and just as

the discourse of race is entrenched in notions of domination, 'heterosexism' is

equally a 'system of power' (Collins, 1991, p.128) that both controls and

excludes. Whilst it has been argued that some of the selected texts have

challenged notions of race, it can also be suggested that certain texts question

both the discourse of heterosexuality and the construction of masculinity and

femininity within a racialised context. This perspective can be further revealed

through the adoption of Queer Theory to analyse such writing.

This has been the approach of the earlier discussed Matt Richardson who uses

Queer Theory to consider the novel *Trumpet* and its representation of black

masculinity. In his article, Richardson argues that black masculinity has been

controlled and regulated by the white society (2012, p.362). In the unequal

power dynamic between the two, white masculine identity has forcibly become

central, pushing blackness into the realm of the feminine (2012, p.362).

Richardson therefore reads the transsexual character of Joss in *Trumpet* as a

literary demonstration of the way that black masculinity has been 'socially

feminized' (2012, p.367). Yet, in Richardson's view, the destabilisation of black

masculine heterosexuality can also be seen as a progressive because if black

men keep 'chasing the genders of white society' (2012, p.376) they may miss

'an opportunity to reimagine and improvise other registers of black manhood'

(2012, p.362). Richardson's reading also provides one example of how literature

can challenge, preconceptions within heterosexual discourse.

Another mode of challenge however, can be through the portrayal and

representations of gay, lesbian and transgender characters within the selected

texts. If heterosexuality is central, then those who are homosexual remain

peripheral, and are once again deemed as "Other" by society. Writing about

Lacan's theories of the unconscious, Turner suggests that: 'Our view of

ourselves is composed from a repertoire given to us, not produced by us, and so

we are the subjects, not the authors, of cultural processes' (2003, p.21).

"Othering" then, is a form of subject position that is placed upon those

perceived as different, the effect of which, as earlier discussed, is a form of

negative self-definition (Hershal, 1997). Resuming further discussion of the

219

autobiography *Through Thick and Thin*, but from a slightly different angle,

reading the text as about being mixed and gay can offer some further insights.

This is an interesting scenario and one that is yet to receive much critical

attention.

In "New Ethnicities" Stuart Hall recognised the 'unwelcome fact' (1996, p.445)

that: 'a great deal of black politics, constructed, addressed and developed

directly in relations to questions of race and ethnicity has been predicated on

the assumption that categories of gender and sexuality would stay the same

and remain fixed and secured' (1996, p.445). This seemingly has not changed

and research on black/gay identities remains limited. Guasp and Kibirige's 2012

publication is perhaps a starting point, highlighting some of the issues faced by

those coming from two minority positions. In *Through Thick and Thin*, Gok also

reflects on the combination of these two facets of his identity. Working in

conjunction with his weight, Gok becomes a prime target for bullying: 'who

better to pick on than the fat, queer Chinese boy?' (p.49). Unlike the physical

markers of race however, Gok's homosexuality is an area of his life that can be

kept secret. Shying away from the negative connotations of the word "gay", he

is temporarily able to make what he perceives to be an active choice not to align

himself with homosexuality: 'I was concerned 'gay' was a word used to insult or

offend; it was a bad place where the freaks of nature lived, and naturally I didn't

want that, so I decided I wasn't gay' (p.63). Internalisation is part of Foucault's

theories around subjectivity where, as Nixon writes, Foucault suggests

'individuals are positioned within particular discourses' (in the case of Gok,

racial and sexual ones) which then 'effect power upon them' (1997, p.315).

Hall takes this further, elaborating that people might differ in gender, race and

sexuality, but they 'will not be able to take meaning until they have identified

with those positions which discourse constructs, subjected themselves to its

rules, and hence become the subjects of its power/knowledge' (1997, p.56). For

Foucault, this is not always an entirely negative process. If, as Foucault suggests,

identification is based on our relationship with different discourses, then it is

only through discourse that the self can be constructed, be it in a positive or

negative way. Yet, as Nixon writes, such theories give the impression that

processes are fixed and stable, and that there is little which the individual can

do to resist them (1997, p.316), when in reality resistance is an option. This can

be viewed in both *Through Thick and Thin* and *The Buddha of Suburbia* where

performance becomes a means by which to contest identity construction.

In *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Judith Butler

suggests that 'gender reality is created through sustained social performances'

(2006, p.192). This is specifically relevant when considering heterosexuality

that, as Jagose writes, is naturalised by 'the performative repetition of

normative gender identities' (1996, p.85). Although as Jagose suggests, there

has been a common misconception of the possibility of choice involved in this

process (Jagose, 1996, p.85), Butler's theories have still opened wider

discussions on the performative aspects of selective racial identities. This is

221

certainly relevant to the mixed race individual who is often portrayed as the quintessential shape shifter, adopting different identities in different situations as Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe writes, mixed race people 'often negotiate several different identities depending on 'where they are' both physically and psychologically and with whom they are interacting' (1997, p.129).[143]

In *Through Thick and Thin*, Gok discovers the flexible and chameleon like nature of his subjectivity in the theatre. Putting on a production of Cinderella at school, Gok is given the role of Dandini, Prince Charming's camp associate. For the first time Gok finds a space where he can experiment safely with his sexuality. By playing Dandini, he is able to be 'outrageous and NOT be anything like a boy' (p.71) without the audience judging him as a person. For Gok, this is 'liberating', providing him with the opportunity to play with a 'side of [his] personality' that he had 'tried so hard to keep secret' (p.71). Gok's acceptance of his homosexuality is further cemented by the presence of a 'larger than life character' (p.71) named Magda. Magda's acting is dramatic and 'fearless' (p.71); and she isn't 'ashamed or embarrassed to be looked at' (p.71). Likening her to a 'quick-witted and sharp' drag queen (p.71), Magda's gender-negotiating performance (coupled with his own role in the production) allows Gok to feel more 'comfortable with [his] gay identity' (p.72).

---

[143] Ifekwunigwe takes this further to suggest that mixed race individuals can participate in the "social chameleon phenomenon": '*Métis(se)* people with so-called 'ambiguous' phenotypes, i.e. very fair complexions; blue, green or hazel eyes; more 'pointed/sharp' facial features; light coloured straight hair, […] can 'change colour' from one social context to the next' (1997, p.137).

Gok's performance of gender and sexuality is carried out of the theatre and later combined with a performance of race as evidenced through his experiences working in a gay owned restaurant. In this instance, Gok deploys the concept of exoticness, argued earlier as an integral feature in mixed race female representation, in order to achieve personal gain (see chapter 4.1 for previous discussion on this). Combining his youth, sexuality and features to attract the attentions of older gay men, he manages to receive more tips: 'Because of my Asian looks, the old boys would often request me as their server. I would undo an extra button on my shirt, sit on their knees when taking their orders and sometimes brush my hand over their shoulders when I delivered their bill' (p.219). Gok also gains pleasure and status with his friends and colleagues in his position as the 'exotic one', and, as he describes it, the 'resident Chink' (p.79). In Mixed Race Studies there has been much debate around the notion of the mixed race individual being told that they are special, unique or different as evidenced by Maria P.P. Root when she writes: 'The theme of uniqueness is a significant part of the multiracial person's experience' (Root, 1997, p.158).

This specialness can be based, Carla Bradshaw suggests, on 'projected qualities, superficial characteristics or mere unusualness' (Bradshaw, 1992, p.83) and has led to criticism of mixed race individuals who some have considered might view themselves in some way as superior to others due to this. For Gok, however, specialness is an integral part of building some form of positive self-esteem,

both in terms of his sexuality and in terms of his race. Early on in the text, Gok

describes how he, his brother and his sister are asked to take a seat at the front

when the school holds an assembly on Chinese New Year: 'the headmaster gave

a talk on Chinese New Year, and Oilen, Kwok-Lyn and I were called out to sit at

the front. It was one of the proudest moments of my life, thinking that I had

something special that no one else had' (p.32).[144] Yet, later as an adult, Gok

becomes territorial and defensive over his "specialness", illustrated when,

working in Habitat, he is confronted with the arrival of an Asian colleague.

Feeling that this new sales assistant is an attack on his niche position, Gok

comments: 'there was no room for an invasion from Singapore!' (p.176).

Whilst exploring homosexuality in relation to mixed race offers a number of

interesting ideas, frequently adding another layer or challenge to homogenous

concepts of identity; bisexuality, it has been argued, is a position that displays

parallels with mixed subjectivity. George Kitahara Kitch defines bisexuality as

having two dimensions; the first is 'self-acceptance of the possibility of sexual or

intimate attraction to people of both sexes to equal or varying degrees', and the

second is in the physical range of choices and types of relationship that

bisexuality can encompass (1996, p.265). Bisexuality and biraciality, it can be

argued, share some common ground.[145] In "My Interesting Condition", Jan

---

[144] The concept of specialness can be observed in *Knife Edge* when Sephy describes Callie Rose –
see chapter 5.4. It is also specialness and uniqueness that helps Jackie to feel comfortable as
transracial adoptee in *Red Dust Road*.
[145] Nakashima, also writing on the similarities between sexuality and race suggests that:

Clausen suggests that her lack of preference between men and women makes her the 'Tragic Mulatto of the sexual world' (1999, p.108).[146] This comment is not considered critically within the essay, but others have attempted to make more substantial links between the bisexual position and that of the individual of mixed race. One such academic is Yasmin Prabhudas, who writes: 'To be bisexual is to be both gay and straight. It means we benefit from fulfilling relationships with people of both sexes. To be mixed-race is to be both black and white. It means that we benefit from the richness of two different cultures' (1999, p.150-151).

Prabhudas continues by suggesting that those who are either biracial or bisexual are responsible for 'bringing together the frequently very separately perceived realms of 'gay'/'straight', 'black'/'white', through our experiences of each of these realms as interwoven threads of one world' thus rendering these 'social constructs' and 'polarities' 'obsolete' (1999, p.151)(a similar argument to the one made in chapter 2 about mixed race bridging and cultural negotiation). June Jordan also considers the links between biracialism and bisexuality when she writes that in a way similar to biracial, whose parents have given 'them

---

Just as people who are transsexual, homosexual, and bisexual have upset and challenged the general understanding of gender, sexuality, and family in mainstream society, people who are multiracial and multicultural have always upset, and are just now beginning to challenge, the understanding of race, ethnicity, culture and community in the United States (1992, p.163).

[146] The link between transgender reality and passing as a concept in the tragic mulatto/a fiction has also been noted by Jackie Kay when speaking about *Trumpet* to Maya Jaggi (2008, p.53-54). See chapter 5 for further discussion on passing.

more than one racial, more than one ethnic identity and cultural heritage to

honor' allowing them to 'embody the principle of equality among races and

ethnic communities', bisexuals 'seek to embrace our increasingly global

complexity on the basis of the heart and on the basis of an honest human body'

(1995, p.432). Finally, Prabhudas too delegates the extra task for those who are

both biracial and bisexual of helping to 'establish a dialogue between different

oppressed groups' (1999, p.151).

This all seems rather idealistic, and unfortunately such principles are not

reflected in the literary representation of the bisexual Karim in *The Buddha of

Suburbia* whose approach to his racial ambiguity and his bisexuality is purely

pragmatic. Karim recognises that it is 'unusual' that he wants 'to sleep with boys

as well as girls' (p.55), yet he asserts that liking both men and women provides

the optimum chance of sex if attending a party: 'It would be heart-breaking to

choose one or the other' (p.55).[147] Karim's bisexuality, Ranashina writes, 'is

implicitly presented as a parallel process to the slipping in and out of racialized

categories' (2002, p.62). Such slippage allows him access to the powerful Pyke

(and his wife) when he is invited to their home, culminating in a sexual

encounter (p.202-204). This episode, however, can leave the reader with the

---

[147] 'Just one of the hallmarks of many trickster traditions' Brennan writes, is the shifting of the
character's identity (2002, p.24). Trickster behaviour, Brennan argues, is a response to the
'limitations imposed on mixed race subjects' and is 'an attempt to overturn or escape such
restrictions' (2002, p.23). In this sense it could be argued that Karim is able to adopt the role of
the trickster, moving in and out of personas, manipulating his identity for the purpose of self-
gain.

feeling that although Karim gains from his shape shifting nature, it also leaves him open to exploitation. Shadwell, after all, achieves his vision of Mogwli, and Pyke gets to play out his sexual fantasies, and then later steals Karim's girlfriend, leaving Karim with the impression that he has been used in more ways than one.

Whether Karim's behaviour is learnt from his father is debatable – Karim's allusion to his father's charm seems to imply some influence: 'Dad taught me to flirt with everyone I met, girls and boys alike and I came to see charm, rather than courtesy or honesty or even decency as the primary social grace' (p.7). Direct homosexuality, though, is not considered appropriate by either side of the family in the novel. When Haroon sees Karim engaging in a homosexual act, he is shocked and appalled. (Not that this bothers Karim, however, since he consequently blackmails his father into silence having viewed his father's adulterous activities with Eva on the front lawn). Yet the English side of the family are also suspicious, not of Karim incidentally, but of his little brother Amar, who as a metrosexual modern male, appears self-absorbed in his clothes and plucks his eyebrows (p.103). To Auntie Jean, for example, this is not considered appropriately masculine, and Amar is thus labelled as 'girlish' (p.103).

In the case of homosexuality, Western notions of freedom of speech and expression can sometimes allow for the portrayal of the West as liberated and lacking prejudice, whereas other more supposedly "backward" cultures are

227

viewed as oppressive. This is suggested by the black lesbian writer Linda Bellos who writes that people often consider it to be harder to "come out" in the black community: 'I believe white people must perceive themselves as better and more enlightened than us' (Bellos, 1995, p.61).[148] *The Buddha of Suburbia*, then raises questions about the behaviour of both the West and non-Western societies, and adequately portrays both as fundamentally flawed. The novel also suggests that just because a family is culturally mixed, and thus may be perceived to be more open-minded, does not necessarily equate to them being liberal and free from homophobia.

Despite this, however, familial acceptance of homosexuality is displayed in *Through Thick and Thin*. Initially, Gok fears that he will be rejected by his Chinese father, and that his sexuality may have ramifications with his extended family: 'What if Dad, with his strong sense of Chinese traditions, couldn't cope with it? What would his brothers say? How could I let my dad down and make him the black sheep of the family just because I fancied boys?' (p.191). These fears are brought to the forefront when Gok brings a boyfriend home for the first time. His mother and sister are already aware of his sexuality, and all are concerned about his father's reaction. There is silence as they eat round the table, but after the meal is over, Gok's father goes to the living room and makes up a single bed for Gok and his boyfriend: 'Dad had built Jason and me a bed to

---

[148] Interestingly, however, black lesbians have also struggled within black communities as homosexuality has been associated with white maleness (Smith, 1995, p.415). See Karen Allman for more on issues faced by black lesbians (1996).

sleep on and lit a fire to keep us warm. In his own special way, he was telling me I was still his son and he still loved me. He had accepted me as I was' (p.202).

The selected texts do not always focus on male homosexuality, however, but often also explore intimate relationships between women. This is particularly the case with Jackie Kay whose texts also focus on lesbian and transgender characters. In *Why Don't You Stop Talking* Kay provides a number of short stories which offer a useful insight into another way Kay's earlier novel *Trumpet* can be read. In Kay's short stories lesbianism is viewed as something forbidden and yet secretly desirable, illustrated by the fantasies of a number of her female characters who long for a lesbian partner or same-sex intimacy. In "Shell", Doreen, a white mother with a mixed race teenage son, ponders what it would be like to take a lesbian lover: 'It would be nice to have a woman lover, Doreen thinks. A big round soft woman like herself. With a big belly and big breasts. The two of them could roll and roll and fall right out of bed. The two of them could laugh in the dark'. (p.146).

Similarly, in "Timing", the unnamed protagonist, a voyeuristic character who "people watches" in the park, comes across two physically contrasting lovers:

> One of them had bright red copper hair and the other had dark dark curly hair; one of them was wearing a light cream coat; the other was wearing a black fleece; one of them had black skin and the other had white skin; they were both walking along hand in hand... (p.56).

When the two of them kiss a 'stunning, compelling' kiss, (p.56) her response is one of arousal: 'I was hot, sweating […] I felt light-headed as if I had gulped a whole gale' (p.57) and later she is unable to get the kiss out of her mind. The fact that the kiss is both interracial and homosexual has a destabilising effect on the voyeur's life, breaking the "natural" order of things (p.53). Suddenly she starts to try "cultural" foods, going for a kebab. She also desegregates her clothing arrangements. Whereas before the kiss, her white shirts were separated from her coloured, after the kiss she mixes 'up the colour-coding' in her wardrobe (p.58). At night, she imagines kissing the two women 'gently on the cheek' (p.57) and later she envisages the two kissing in the 'pounding rain' (p.61). Both Doreen in "Shell" and the protagonist of "Timing" never have their fantasies realised, however. In a peculiar twist Doreen, a woman isolated by her weight and her lifestyle grows a shell and becomes a tortoise (symbolising her complete retraction from society), whilst the tongue-tied protagonist of "Timing" attempts to interact with the curly-haired lover, only to be immediately rejected.

In *Trumpet*, too, there is an unrealised interracial lesbian relationship between Joss (or Josephine as he is previously known) and a school friend, May Hart, which again feeds into the secret desire between women. May thinks of the relationship as 'a schoolgirl crush' (p.247), but on further reflection it is clear that her feelings were more serious as she reminisces about the time the pair had spent together:

There's no love like the love you have as girls […] As a girl, May Hart would have died for Josie. She loved everything about her. Her hair. Her lips. How her skirt hung just above the knees. Her funny high laugh. The way she grabbed at you and touched you when she was talking to you (p.251).

Nevertheless, it is the relationship between Millie and Joss that takes centre stage.

In some ways *Trumpet* fits in very conventionally with the journey described in chapter 1. Joss is the black father, made absent through death; the white mother is lost to grief, and the mixed race child has to forge his way to an identifiable unified self. Yet Millie and Joss' relationship is a little complicated, since Joss throughout the novel is referred to as a man but is "biologically" female. The voice of society is present through the Colman and Sophie Stones interview. Bitter, Colman speaks about his horror and repulsion when he discovers the truth about his parents: 'No man wants a fucking lesbian for his father' (p.66), and similarly Sophie Stones, eager to make money, quickly categorises the situation as a lesbian story that will spark curiosity and revulsion in her readers: 'Lesbian stories are in. Everyone loves a good story about a famous dyke tennis star or actress or singer. And this one is the pick of the bunch. The best yet. Lesbians who adopted a son; one playing mummy, one playing daddy. The big butch frauds. Couldn't be better' (p.170).

In this instance, the media works to regularise sexuality, ensuring control through the defamation of Joss' image and relegating him to the margins of Scottish society. Why, though, is this necessary? Hall has suggested that categorisation is a means of social organisation, keeping things neat, understandable and controlled. This is summarised in his statement: '*Culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system. The marking of 'difference' is thus the basis of that symbolic order which we call culture*' (1997, p.236).[149]

If Joss is accepted as he is, 'societal categories then would begin to unravel' (Richardson, 2012, p.366). Equally, other sociological institutions play a role in the maintaining of gender division and in limiting the malleability of identity. This is illustrated by the way that Dr Krishnamurty "corrects" the word male, changing it to female, in a sense physically 'over-writing Joss's self-fashioned masculinity' (Hargreaves, 2003, p.7). Tying in with the previously discussed notion of "social death", it is institutions and discourses such as medicine acting as 'mechanisms of the state' (Brown, 2007, p.225) which regulate societal norms and 'license a body's visibility, or invisibility, its legibility or erasure' (Hargreaves, 2003, p.3).

Yet society's view is not Joss' reality, and throughout the narrative Joss is only

---

[149] Author's italics.

viewed as female when reference is made to his childhood or his physical body; in life when he and Millie first become intimate; and in death, when his bandages are removed. This fissure between biological sex, gender and sexuality is raised by Millie who recognises that society views her relationship as a homosexual one: 'No doubt they will call me a lesbian. They will find words to put on to me' (p.154). It has been argued that Millie has an awareness of Joss' female biological form as her own sexualisation of the trumpet 'hints at her acknowledgement of Joss's femaleness' (Hargreaves, 2003, p.8) and his phallic absence (Hargreaves, 2003; Richardson, 2012). Yet predominantly, both Millie and Joss view Joss as male and their love is nothing outside of the normative heterosexual. This leads to a questioning of gendered reality. Is Joss a man or is he a woman? For Jackie Kay, the question lies in the notion of reality itself: 'You have to question what reality is, and if reality is that he appears to be a man and he lives his life as a man and everyone relates to him as that, then that is the reality' (Kay, 2008, p.54). This, though, does not necessarily make things more straight-forward.

Similar to the effects of the interracial kiss in "Timing", Joss' transgender identity is perhaps more of an act of destabilisation as the character does not play into any set notions of essentialism in terms of sex, gender and sexuality in addition to race, choosing to remain outside of them as suggested by Lumsden, who considers Joss as a character who at points, particularly when playing the trumpet, steps outside the 'symbolic order' into a 'Kristevan subliminal space beyond language and identity' (2000, p.89). This is perhaps a dangerous move

233

as transcending racial boundaries alone will not only 'destabilize notions of racial purity, but also threaten exposure of the racialized, historicized character of gender roles' (Allman, 1996, p.279).

The danger of transcending boundaries can sometimes lead to border-crossers facing victimisation, a subject discussed by Linda Bellos. For Bellos, black lesbians (and black women) are often considered to be 'doubly or triply oppressed' (1995, p.62), (a similar argument to Allman who suggests that mixed race lesbians are 'triply marginalized' (1996, p.287)). Furthermore, even if the refusal to fit into any category, to reject any notion of oppression, and to live a post-race, post-gender life such as Joss does is both an interesting and liberating idea, it is a somewhat unrealistic one outside of fiction.[150] Certainly, 'eliminating race as a concept is', as Root writes, 'not possible at this point in history' (2003, p.17). This is due to the fact that the world is still at a point of inequality in which the legacies of slavery and colonisation, and the attitudes created by both, lurk under the surface of many societies, whilst new forms of exploitation

---

[150] The question of whether society is now post-race is highly contested and those academics such as Suki Ali who adopt the idea of 'post-race' thinking do so with a degree of caution. Ali uses the term as she believes it 'emphasises deconstructive approaches to identities, and draws on theories of performativity, passing and new ethnicities' (2003, p.9). Yet, in post-race thinking, the concept of "mixed race" cannot go uncontested:

> I believe that we should be attempting further deconstruction of 'mixed-race', *alongside*, *through and by* deconstruction of existing (binaried) racialisations, to begin to move away from talking 'race' and to interrogate the specifics of inequalities through post-race thinking (2003, p.170). (Author's Italics).

Nevertheless, Suki Ali posits the post-race societal position as one that must be aspired to rather than being a contemporary reality.

and neo-colonialism abound leaving large portions of the world's non-white populations lacking the basic requirements for life.

However, in the fictitious world of *Trumpet* Joss' position is a symbolic rather than actual and the fragmentation of Joss' sense of self really just a useful tool to destabilise the nature of identity. Being neither black nor white, man nor woman, gay nor straight, Joss deconstructs the ideological discourses that create an understanding of reality, identity and society which is fixed and static. Such comments are also reflected by Kitch when speaking of biracial-bisexuals:

> In the postmodern era, being different as a way of life recognizes that living in the cultural margin allows fundamental access to both perspectives of the insider and of the outsider. Traversing the realms of race and sex, being biracial and bisexual, brings with the marginality a wide array of experiences and knowledge (1996, p.271).

Scholarly approaches that consider the extent to which black and mixed women want to take on the position of biracial-bisexuals or lesbians vary, however. For Sue George, black women who 'already suffer from oppression for other reasons' (1999, p.103) may be reluctant to engage in bisexuality, whereas Maria P.P. Root takes the opposing view as she writes that 'the racially mixed woman

may be more open to exploring sexual orientation' (1997, p.165).[151]

Seemingly siding with Root, in *Lady Moses*, same-sex attraction is considered as a real possibility by Jacinta. This is due in part to Jacinta's hybrid position. 'Understanding the pain of the outsider status', Jacinta is 'compelled to question the rigidity of all kinds of societal boundaries – social, cultural and racial' (Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013, p.58) which in turn opens her up to considering alternative forms of relating to others. However, it is also the transient and deconstructive nature of the African space, as explored in chapter 3 which offers the possibility of bisexual and lesbian identities in *Lady Moses*. The fluid sexuality that fits into the theme of Africa as closer to nature and uninfluenced by Western rigidity, is slightly problematic as it could, once again, be seen as perpetuating the belief of black hypersexuality. John Turay, for example, has had multiple lovers; Esther Cole has been sexually involved with most of the audience in the club where she sings; and Jacinta, who has already dated the 'United Nations' (p.165) by the age of twenty one, finds herself seduced by Esther and engaging in an affair with John.

Esther is particularly interesting when considering the construction of bisexuality and lesbianism in *Lady Moses*. Like Joss in *Trumpet*, Esther unravels the lives of her audience through her music, getting under their skin: 'She knew

---

[151] Although there are definite links between being biracial and bisexual, it seems that both writers make these statements without substantial evidence.

us – black, white, mixed, it didn't matter. She knew us' (p.271). Although

Esther's voice is sweet, her tongue is sharp, and she seems to view Jacinta with

'derision' (p.272).[152] Earlier in the text Jacinta manages to recognise some

positivity in having a black identity through her association with a little girl

called Alison Bean, her friend from Jamaica. Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe has written

about "Additive Blackness", a process where the mixed race individual "comes

to terms" with their blackness: 'the person starts with her or his foundation and

builds forward, without having to sever ties with their own White English roots

(1997, p.141). This is a particularly useful theory to apply to Jacinta who has to

learn to accumulate her blackness through individuals and experiences in the

absence of her father. Alison is 'beautiful' (p.40) with her 'darker-than-dark skin'

(p.40) and when Jacinta asks her if she would prefer to be white, Alison answers

simply, saying that she would not want to look different from her siblings and so

she is happy as she is: 'if I was white, then I wouldn't be like the others, Jassie.

Me brothers 'n sisters would all look at me funny' (p.95). Chris Weedon reads

this particular conversation between Alison and Jacinta as compounding

Jacinta's 'identity crisis' (2004, p.92). Whereas as 'Alison's identity is rooted in

being black like the rest of her large family', 'Jacinta has only her white mother'

(2004, p.92). But Jacinta seems to gain comfort from Alison's answer as the pair

then go on to list all the reasons why they would prefer not to be white: 'who

---

[152] It is interesting to question whether there is a connection between the representation of Esther and the famous literary character of Shrugg Avery in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1983). It may be coincidental, but both Shrugg and Esther are cantankerous singers who offer central characters (Celie in the case of *The Color Purple*) the possibility of empowerment through a form of black female love.

wants to be freckly and pointy-nosed anyway' (p.95). Together Jacinta and

Alison also swop stories about Africa and Jamaica, and support each other when

exposed to the racist rhetoric of the woman in the park who, concerned about

their 'coloured's germs' (p.94), ushers them away from her baby.

In *Sister Josephine* too, the presence of Bernadette (who is possibly mixed

Asian) in the foster home causes Josephine to challenge her perception of

"brownness". Bernadette is like her 'Red Indian doll', 'Her skin warm coffee,

milk rich' (p.23) and Josephine is instantly in awe of her, both because they

share a similar skin colour, and because she is shocked and fascinated by

Bernadette's big bust which Josephine wrongly assumes is a consequence of

being brown. Yet Bernadette does not provide much in the way of support for

the construction of additive blackness. When Josephine asks Bernadette: 'Eh.

why is it that you're brown and I'm brown and we've both been rescued and on

telly I see pictures of starving brown babies in Africa and well… why do brown

people always need rescuing?' (p.29) she is just told that it's 'coz people don't

like brown people' (p.29). When Josephine questions Bernadette further,

Bernadette tells her to 'shut up' (p.29).

Later in *Lady Moses* Jacinta's friendship with Esther also does not provide her

with the option of accumulating blackness further. Esther is linked very strongly

to Africa and stands against Jacinta, denying her full access to her blackness.

Weekes has written that: 'the policing of Black womanhood and the

constructing of essentialized boundaries around identity have implications for

238

both reinforcing the identities of the women who are positioned within its boundaries, and negating the identities of those it places outside' (Weekes, 1997, p.120). Policing in this context then becomes a source of power for Esther. Esther is the 'the black queen' (p.278) of the chess board and therefore Jacinta can only adopt the role of the 'white' one: 'I couldn't be black because she was; I was metamorphosed into her opposite' (p.278).

Just as the bush and John Turay in some way merged, the image of Esther and Africa also become synonymous. Represented as 'Africa distilled' (p.277), Esther almost becomes the continent, and thus a transfer of unrealised homosexual desire is made from Esther onto the geographical space. Returning back to the concept of the notions of the real and the imaginary Africa from chapter 3.5 briefly, it is interesting to note that although the initial construct of Africa is patriarchal, the "real" Africa is gendered as a female with a similar personality to Esther Cole: 'Although I fell in love with Africa, she wasn't an easy lover. She was capricious and occasionally insane' (p.268). John too agrees with this personification of Africa as female. When Jacinta comments: 'I am in love with Africa', John replies: 'And she is in love with you' (p.371).

A similar feminisation of the portrayal of Africa takes place in *Red Dust Road*. Preparing to visit her ancestral village, Jackie feels as if she is 'getting ready to meet a lover' (p.220) and longs to whisper 'sweet nothings' into the lands 'listening ear' (p.213). Soon Jackie realises that 'Nigeria has started to steal a little piece of [her] heart' (p.206 -207). Africa in *Red Dust Road* also has a feel of

maternal security too. When travelling towards her ancestral village, Jackie feels 'totally at ease' (p.210) with her surroundings. Indeed it seems common amongst the selected texts for Africa to be linked with maternal, matriarchal qualities. In *Sugar and Slate*, Charlotte refers to being 'wrenched from an African womb' (p.35), and in *Lady Moses* matriarchal protection is activated in light of a patriarchal threat. This protection is initially provided directly by Esther (the embodiment of Africa) who rescues Jacinta and Lady from Manny.[153] Towards the end of the novel Esther also becomes an omnipotent presence through her association with the moon, the symbol of female power and strength. While she is being raped, Jacinta focuses on the moon: 'I found the moon. There she was. I brought her closer to me, close enough to swallow […] Esther was there with me in the moonlight. I hadn't forgotten the moon' (p.384).

Gender, race and sexuality are important discourses explored through texts featuring mixed race characters. Riddled with unequal power dynamics, the effects on the bodies and experiences of those who get caught up within these trajectories can at times be disturbing and traumatic, as evidenced by *Lady Moses*, *Trumpet, Sister Josephine* and *Sugar and Slate*. Chapter 4 has shown how the texts represent race as playing a role within intergenerational

---

[153] Manny tells Jacinta that he has nearly finished his novel, *Sophie*. When Lady spills juice over his manuscript, Jacinta discovers that Manny has in fact barely completed a few paragraphs of the text (p.284).

relationships, between black fathers, white mothers and their mixed offspring. It has also emphasised the way that race (and being mixed) can operate in conjunction with gender to position mixed individuals in the roles of victim, perpetuators of imperialism, and "exotic others".

So far, the thesis has mainly considered literature written for adults, but is the way in which mixed race characters are represented any different when it comes to children's literature? The next and final chapter of the thesis will investigate literature written for children and young adults, identifying how mixed race characters both deconstruct and destabilize, and construct, strengthen and reaffirm, new and old sets of values through a selection of picture books, issue-based novels and young adult fiction.

Chapter 5: Young People's Literature

5.1 Children's Literature

The study of children's literature is a fascinating discipline. Since the 1990s a 'steady trickle of notable books' which 'place children's literature within the context of […] modern literary and cultural theories' (Stephens cited in Lesnik-Oberstein, 2004, p.3) have been produced, leading to a broad and ever growing field of academic research. Studying children's literature is not without its controversy, however. Similar to celebrity autobiographies, questions arise about the viability of analysing such texts within academic discourse due to their association with the simplistic and domestic. Indeed as Lesnik-Oberstein suggests, the idea that it is:

> …somehow suspect to study children's literature in an academic context persists widely, both in the general media, in wider academia, and in some children's literature criticism itself. It is seen as claiming a complexity or difficulty for something that is regarded, by definition, as simple, obvious and transparent, and, moreover, as valuable precisely for being so (2004, p.1).

Yet the reality of children's literature and the study of it is far from simple, and academics working in this field are expected to have expertise in many different areas of knowledge, from style, form and historical period, to theory, new

technologies and multimedia – a feat not required for other types of literary specialisation (Reynolds, 2005, p.2). The span of what encompasses children's literature is physically wide too. From books for babies, often soft fabric accounts of the alphabet or numbers with bright pictures, right through to the thrillers and romances written for the young adult, children of many ages, all 'with their very different needs, interests and abilities' consume the products of this field (Reynolds, 2005, p.2). Children's literature has also found itself in an awkward and complex location 'between adult writers, readers, critics and practitioners, and child readers' (Hunt, 2005, p.2) who all have different expectations of the purpose of such texts and what can be achieved by them. Add to this list librarians, teachers and parents, and the complications further grow.

One fact remains, however: literature for children is often inherently caught up in adults' perceptions of what it means to be a child and what should be acquired throughout childhood in terms of accumulated knowledge and values (although Hunt offers the reminder that the concept of childhood is far from stable, and what constitutes it changes 'not only culturally, but in units as small as the family, and […] inscrutably, over time' (Hunt, 1994, p.5)). Thus, adults tend to write books for children both to entertain, and often to educate them about the world. The process by which this occurs is, in many ways, a somewhat one-sided one, and there can be no escaping the unequal 'power-relationship' between the adult author (the transmitter of knowledge) and the intended reader (and recipient of information) – the child (Hunt, 1994, p.3).

Texts also encourage the reader to perceive reality from the perspective of their authors and attempt to socialise the young mind into following the practises of the society in which they are imbedded, as articulated by Stephens: 'Writing for children is usually purposeful, its intention being to foster the child reader a positive apperception of some socio-cultural values which, it is assumed, are shared by author and audience' (1992, p.3).

Here, then, children's literature can be read as having a didactic quality as it aims to teach the young person about social norms. As Pinsent articulates:

> Since its earliest beginnings, children's literature has been used by authors to influence young readers to adopt those attitudes and that behaviour considered in any period to be desirable. Didacticism has never been confined to helping readers to accumulate factual knowledge; rather, books have commonly also been used in the attempt to inculcate acceptable morals and ethics (2005, p.192).[154]

Such thinking leads Hunt to conclude that: 'It is arguably impossible for a children's book (especially one being read by a child) not to be educational or influential in some way; it cannot help but reflect ideology and, by extension,

---

[154] It should be pointed out that texts placed under the canon of children's literature have not always necessarily been written just for children. Some may be written for adults alone, have been modified, adapted or deemed appropriate or useful for children; others may have been written for both children and adults and contain ideas, jokes or concepts that may be closed to the child reader, but will entertain the more mature one (Hunt, 1994).

didacticism' (1994, p.3). In this sense, then, the body of children's literature

becomes a useful source material for the identification of ideology and

paradigmatic shifts in social thinking. Exploring Peter Hollindale's theories in

Language and Ideology in Children's Literature, John Stephens focuses on the

interface where ideological thinking connects with the reader. Stephens

suggests that ideology can appear 'overt or explicit' (1992, p.9) in children's

books (consciously added by authors). This is to ensure that the text's

"message/s" is accurately conveyed.

Sarland suggests that there is often a fear that the young reader might 'engage

in unmediated identification with characters constructed with ideologically

undesirable formulations' (2005, p.43). In some instances this has led to texts

being banned. Such notions may be illustrated in the case of *The Rabbit's*

Wedding (1958) by Garth Williams when the sight of a black and a white rabbit

getting married in a children's book was enough to frighten the American public

(with their laws against miscegenation) into withdrawing it in case it influenced

its young readers (Hunt, 1994, p.164). It is unlikely that such a text would create

any controversy today, but what occurred in this instance was the result of a

collision between a simple pictorial anthropomorphic narrative and the

ideological views of an American society still steeped in racial turmoil. As Sollors

writes, the 'interracial theme' of the text meant that it could no longer be read

as 'harmless and joyful but positively dangerous' (1997, p.19).

This may be a rather extreme example of the force of ideological powers in

practice, yet all books contain some level of ideology whether the author is

aware of it or not. This is because authors have been moulded and socialised

through the systems of society, internalising ideologies as they grow in

understanding of the world around them. It is therefore impossible not to

transfer ideology on some level through a written text or any artistic output.

This, John Stephens explains, is known as "passive ideology" or 'unexamined

assumptions' (1992, p.10). Unconsciously created by the author, 'passive

ideology' adds a second layer of didacticism to texts, as children are

unknowingly conscripted into a specific culture. This can be viewed even in such

well-loved fiction as Blyton's *Noddy Series* (1949-1964), which unconsciously

perpetuated pre-existing sociological notions of race through its characters such

as the mischievous and naughty golliwog. He, along with 'other non-white

characters', Bradford suggests, 'function as markers or signs of the legitimacy of

a natural order where whiteness is preferred and rewarded' (Bradford, 2010,

p.49).[155]

Such characters in children's texts have sparked public debates as documented

by Gina Taylor whose article: "Golliwogs: Harmless Fun or Racist Caricatures?

Questioning a Childhood Favourite" asks whether children will construct racial

stereotypes through the presence of such a figure, or if it is not just another

form of political correctness that is 'bleaching out much of the texture and

---

[155] Bradford suggests that other characters can be read as not meeting up to the requirements of the white middle-class norm with characters such as the doll named Sally Sly becoming 'working-class trash' (2010, p.48).

richness that has flavoured our culture over the years' (2006, p.218). It is clear

from the article that Taylor feels a little nostalgic towards the golliwog of

Noddy, *e*ven if she tries to remain objective, as she ends the article with the

image of her copy of *Noddy* resting comfortably at her bed-side table (2006,

p.219). Like others, then, she inevitably falls upon the excuse that the books

were of a certain time and place and were not intended to offend. This is a

notion described by Bradford who highlights the way in which texts are often

considered to be 'works of their time, as though the authors of these texts were

no more than conduits of prevailing cultural norms' (2010, p.39). Today, texts

that have been considered racist are still present and available, but in a

transformed format. The golliwog has been replaced by a mischievous monkey

in contemporary *Noddy*; however, as Bradford warns, the simple removal of

racist images does not always mean an end to the problem: 'What tends to be

overlooked in such revisions', she writes, is that the 'colonial and racist

ideologies are commonly encoded in structural, semantic and narrative

features' (2010, p.43).

The movement towards the recognition of literature's role in racism began in

the 1960s-1970s when critics came to acknowledge that children's books were

both implicit in, and responsible for, the perpetuation of racist ideology and the

production of oppressive systems of domination (Pinsent, 2005, p.177).

Recoding and rewriting children's literature from a past and racist era has been

one mechanism for dealing with this problem; however, in contemporary Britain

many writers are choosing to create new texts that challenge racial discourse, to

provide positive images of black and ethnic minorities, and to promote the idea of community cohesion instead. This has arguably been best achieved both through novels intended for children, and by picture books, though it is not without its problems.

5.2 Picture Books

As has already been established, children's literature as a genre encompasses a wide range of different fields and theoretical approaches. Yet narrowing the topic down to the consideration of the sub-genre of picture books barely helps to reduce the complexity of discussion. Picture books come in many sizes and styles, with and without writing, and are made out of a range of different materials (Lewis, 2001, p.25). Usually designed for younger children, picture books make information more accessible as 'they literally show as well as tell' (Hunt, 1994, p.166). Where 'meaning is created through the interaction of verbal and visual media (Nikolajeva, 2006, p.106), though, images can also be problematic. 'Whilst stimulating the imagination', Hunt suggests, pictures can also be limiting, cutting off the 'possibilities of interpretation' on the part of the reader (1992, p.9). More positively, however, illustrations in books can also 'complement' or 'contradict' the written word and add new meanings that are not obvious or apparent through the written narrative alone (1992, p.9). Pictures can also create a 'secondary story', or a 'running gag', and 'incongruity, ambiguity and irony' can be found in texts, even designed for the very young (Graham, 2005, p.211).

Despite the rise of the anti-racist agenda, texts such as the *Janet and John* series

from the 1950s to 1960s still abounded within the educational system,

portraying the world to very young children learning to read as both white and

middle class (Hunt, 1994, p.10). Today, however, many picture books are

beginning to show an array of different coloured characters, from different

backgrounds. Exposure to ethnically diverse scenes and protagonists within

picture books, it has been argued, teaches children that it is not unusual or

worrying for different coloured people to interact. As Cole and Valentine write:

'A picture book is a window, and it is through this window that readers may

learn about individuals who live in environments that differ from their own'

(2000, p.308-309). Illustrations in particular are important in such texts as they

not only support children's reading, but can also provide 'new information'

about the story, the characters and the plot (Feathers & Arya, 2012, p.41). Texts

that feature images of cultural diversity, therefore, are now recognised as an

important educational tool for schools (Cole & Valentine, 2000; Evans, 2010;

Bista, 2012) as can be seen in the widespread usage in British primary schools of

books published by *The Oxford Reading Tree*.[156] In many ways, the

acknowledgement of a mixed and diverse society is presented through the

scenes of ethnic variation as viewed in these texts, but the full integration of

---

[156] The Oxford Reading Tree website can be found at:
http://www.oup.com/oxed/primary/oxfordreadingtree/.
E-books are available at: http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/Reading. Malorie Blackman, discussed in
the next part of the chapter, has also written a number of children's books that feature black
characters and their families.

those from varying backgrounds, it might be argued, can be evidenced through children's books which feature the interracial family, as individuals from different races share intimate and domestic space. Such books can carry important messages about mixed race subjectivity too and can be influential in reconsidering some of the myths of chapter 1.

Silver Shoes (2001) by Caroline Binch can be taken as one example of this. The narratological discourse (defined as 'the means by which a story and its significance are communicated' (Stephens, 1992, p.11)) of diversity promotion is not particularly present through the written text, as on the surface the plot is not obviously culturally specific.[157] The story is as follows: Molly likes dancing, especially with her grandmother, and she and her friend go to dance classes together, but Molly does not have the proper silver dance shoes which everyone else does. Molly and her mother go to a charity shop and find a pair of silver shoes, but they are for adults and do not fit her. She is told she cannot wear them to the dance class or to play outside in the park. On her birthday Molly gets a pair of silver shoes as a present; she feels like a dancer, but she still likes the adult pair, and when she dances with her grandmother she wears them.

---

[157] It should be clarified that everything is in fact culturally specific but for the purpose of this argument, the assumption of the British/Western default will be reluctantly adhered to.

This synopsis reveals a number of "messages" conveyed directly to the reader by the author: that those who wait patiently will receive a reward; that second hand objects (the charity shop shoes) are not automatically inferior to new ones; and that it is best to be happy with what is present rather than bemoan what is not. None of these messages have any connection to the race of the characters, however, and thus the text enters into the discourse of race and cultural diversity predominantly through its collaboration with the visual. In this story then, Binch, who is also the illustrator of the book, chooses to create a background of intercultural cohesion. These images, are not just of cultures co-habiting in the national space, but of neighbourhoods who are integrated and communicating, and at the heart of this, is the mixed family unit.

If this is considered in terms of Hall's notions of representation, the promotion and championing of cultural diversity, or intercultural cohesion, can be viewed as a language (Hall, 1996), and the picture book itself 'a form of representation' that can 'evoke (and teach) a complex set of intersecting sign systems' (Nodelman, 2005, p.135). The signs used are the pictures of children from different ethnic backgrounds attending Molly's party and the array of different coloured individuals in the shopping scene where Molly and her mother shop for her new shoes. This aspect of the images signifies that mixing with people from different backgrounds is normal and enjoyable. However, it is not just the outside where cultural diversity is normalised, but also within the domestic space, as Molly has a black mother, a white father and white grandparents. It is Molly and her grandmother who are drawn dancing in eight repeated images on

251

the inside and back cover of the book, and it is her white grandmother who has also introduced Molly to dancing, the main foundation of the story.

Combining the narrative and images together, the story can be viewed as making a number of statements about mixed race families. Firstly, that they can be loving and caring. Secondly, that both parents are involved with the children (Molly's father is dancing in one scene and takes the children to the park in another), going against the popular representation of the mixed race child living in a single parent household (Myth 4). Finally, that although the family may not have much money (implied through the fact that they do not buy the shoes immediately, but instead go to the charity shop), they can impart good values and codes of behaviour to their children.

It is interesting to observe that the inclusion of the mixed race family unit is not entirely recent as another text, *Wait and See*, written in 1988, also portrays a mixed race family in a similar way. In this story the protagonist is a little girl called Jo who goes shopping with her mother. She has a small amount of pocket money and is not sure what she wants to buy with it. Meanwhile at home, her father is preparing lunch. When Jo's mother gets to the final shop she finds that she does not have enough money to pay. Jo gives her pocket money to her mother to help her out. On the way back the pair revisit all the shops again and Jo's mother tells the shop owners what a good thing Jo has done. Impressed, the shop keepers give Jo presents to acknowledge her good behaviour, like apples and a fish – all the items that Jo was thinking of buying. When they get

home, they find that the dog has destroyed Jo's father's careful lunch

preparations and so they eat Jo's accumulated gifts together instead.

Like *Silver Shoes*, *Wait and See* is a moral tale carrying the message that

generosity, consideration and team work will be rewarded with happiness and

contentment. Similarly, there is very little in the written text to signify a

racialised message within the story. With the exception perhaps, of the names

of some of the characters, racial and cultural diversity are again displayed

pictorially, through the different ethnic backgrounds of the shopkeepers and

pedestrians. Such characters also act as reinforcement of "normalised race",

illustrated through the fact that all, regardless of skin colour, are friendly and

share the same values and cultural understanding – congratulating Jo on her

good behaviour. Also, as in *Silver Shoes*, the interracial family unit is not explicit

through the text, but is again constructed through the presence of a black

mother and a white father in the illustrations; Jo's cultural heritage and

"mixedness" is only hinted at through the picture of Jamaica on the living room

wall – but interestingly not through skin colour.

The assumption of intermediate colouration is not really played out in *Wait and*

See or *Silver Shoes* as the protagonists do not "look" mixed. This can be "read"

either negatively or positively. Sceptically, applying the rules of hypodescent, it

could be argued that all characters that are black or part-black have been

coloured in the same shade, providing no physical distinction. But more

progressively, it could imply that there is no fixed "mixed race look" and that

people can be dark or light, or any shade in-between, but that it does not matter: their families do not care about that – so why should the reader? What can be concluded from this is that the message for young readers is not just a moral tale about the value of good behaviour, but also a racialised message about the functionality of the mixed race family unit and consequently the mixed race individual.

Another way of exploring the relationship between pictures, words and messages can be observed through Stephens' notion of schema and script, where Stephens describes schemas as 'knowledge structures, or patterns which provide the framework for understanding' (Stephens, 2011, p.13), and scripts as 'a dynamic element, which expresses how a sequence of events and actions is expected to unfold' (Stephens, 2011, p.14). Stephens applies the theory to the analysis of children's picture books, illustrating how schemas can be altered by changing scripts (Stephens, 2011). Such ideas can also be applied to *Silver Shoes* and *W*ait *and See*, as if the schema evoked is that of the family, then a script that features an interracial couple, engaging positively with wider society and exhibiting team work, and a mixed race daughter who is courteous, polite, and well brought up, allows the reader to both draw positive conclusions about the mixed family whilst simultaneously attempting to normalise it.

While the family unit is secure and stable in *Silver Shoes* and *Wait and See*, in *My Two Grannies* (2009) its functionality is temporarily disrupted due to Alvina's parents' holiday. In her parents' absence, the young mixed protagonist Alvina is

left with two rivalling grandmothers, the English Grannie Rose and Trinidadian Grannie Vero. Unlike the aforementioned *Silver Shoes* and *Wait and See*, this narrative directly features the subject of cross-cultural contact. In this instance the mixed race protagonist takes up the position of mediator and negotiator between the two grandmothers who have different ideas of the activities that the three should engage in during their stay. To end the arguments Alvina suggests that Rose and Vero can have a day of activities each, negating the prioritisation of one cultural background over another. Thus, on the first day, they all go to the zoo, have Caribbean rice and peas and play dominos; and on the second, they go to the park to feed the ducks, eat a roast dinner and play hide and seek. Alvina shows in the text how she has valued both sides of her cultural heritage through her pleasure in hearing both Vero and Rose's stories of their respective childhoods and through her engagement in her grandmothers' outings, activities and cooking.[158] Once again, the texts portray the mixed race figure as a bridge-maker and cultural negotiator, as Alvina teaches her two grandmothers to appreciate each other's cultural backgrounds and they become friends. The script of the harmonious culturally diverse family is thus restored.

Attempts to normalise the mixed race family unit might considerably lead to the unwillingness to tackle other forms of difference. This has been a criticism of

---

[158] This is again reminiscent of chapter 2 with *Sugar and Slate* and the importance of valuing the dual-heritage position.

Mixed Race Studies which has been accused of re-inscribing ideas about the hetero-normal family unit (Elam, 2009). It has already been shown through the work of Jackie Kay and Gok Wan that this is not entirely accurate. However, hetero-normality is also challenged within children's literature by a book entitled *Dad David, Baba Chris and ME* (2010). This text is about a mixed race seven-year-old called Ben who is adopted by an interracial gay couple, and how he learns to cope with his new home. Like the other texts, intercultural cohesion appears in the illustrations with an array of different ethnic identities being presented. Once again the protagonist's "mixedness" is not explicit and can only be identified through the illustration of a photo labelled 'My Birth' (p.1) which shows a black man and a white woman, and the character's intermediate colouration. The new non-heterosexual family unit is identified through the visual representation of the two different fathers, but also in a fleeting comment on page 3 where Ben introduces the idea of having three fathers: his birth Dad Alex, Dad David, and Baba Chris who is African: 'Baba Chris comes from Africa, where fathers are called Baba, so that's what I call him' (p.3). This linguistic reference again designates Africa as a homogenous locality (a criticism of the selected texts as found in chapter 3), but the rationale in this instance is the simplification of geography and linguistic associations for the benefit of the younger target reader.

It is interesting that a mixed race child is chosen as the protagonist in this story. The book has been written for children who have been placed with same-sex couples for fostering or adoption. The reasoning may be practical if taken in the

context that mixed race children are '[d]isproportionately over-represented among children in care' (Bhattacharyya et al, 2002, p.79). However, it is likely that the mixed race family unit already illustrates "difference" and therefore provides a further layer by which to demonstrate how families that look "unusual" are in fact ordinary, or, as the book goes to great lengths to emphasise, "special". This is undertaken by showing a number of Ben's peers' families. Khaled's father is in a wheel chair, for example, and Rosa lives with her grandparents (p.10-11).[159]

It is worth noting that the mixed race family unit is problematised however, as Ben is removed from his birth parents seemingly for neglect: 'Baba Chris and Dad David adopted me when I was four years old because my birth mum Val and my birth dad Alex weren't looking after me properly and I didn't want to stay in foster care' (p.4). However, in the scheme of marginalised identities, mixed race is here surpassed by living with gay parents, and the focus of the text is on this (as opposed to issues of race) and how to manage the way that other children react to it. It is interesting here that being called "gay" by the other children continues for Ben for a long while after he has informed his teacher, and two fathers, but he is able to cope with it by adopting a different outlook from those who he perceives as ignorant: 'The name calling hasn't really stopped. It used to make me feel hurt and lonely, but now I just feel sorry

---

[159] Again there is a reference to the specialness of the mixed race protagonist as observed in *Through Thick and Thin.*

for the children who don't understand that being different is special' (p.13). It is

not clear how widely *Dad David, Baba Chris and ME* is circulated. Published by

the British Agency for Adoption and Fostering, it is a children's book that may be

designed to be read by children in a manner that may constitute 'bibliotherapy'

as described by Cole and Valentine (2000, p.308) as opposed to recreation.[160]

As has been illustrated throughout the discussion on picture books, the

championing of a culturally diverse Britain has been openly established through

a combination of pictorial representation and narrative which emphasises

shared views on social conduct, etiquette, and the good behaviour of the

characters, all resulting in happy endings where protagonists are left in a state

of tranquillity. A neat summary of this is given by Mallan when she writes:

'Cultural diversity and issues of cultural otherness are thematised through

children's literature in various ways, but predominantly as a means to affirm

positive models of cultural harmony and tolerance, thereby serving as

exemplars of human rights and social justice' (2013, p.107).

Yet, as Stephens argues, in opposition to the above, '[t]he problem for

children's literature' can also be 'that models of human rights and human

equality can be simplistic and may fail to engage with the actual politics of

---

[160] On discussing bibliotherapy, Cole and Valentine suggest that: 'Books can assist children in verbalizing their thoughts and feelings; they can serve as an excellent resource for providing insight into presenting problems. By reading about others who have experienced similar situations, children may not feel so alone or different and may, with the help of parents or a skilled practitioner, find solutions to presenting problems' (2000, p.308)

diversity' (Stephens, 2011, p.17). Stephens here refers to Bradford's coining of the term 'weak multiculturalism' (2011, p.18) which she uses to describe the exploration of cultural diversity in children's texts. Such representations encourage a 'naïve optimism' that there is no problem with a multicultural state (Stephens, 2011, p.18). This approach, it can be argued, entirely ignores racism and discrimination, but also does not address social difficulties that arise from people of different cultures sharing the same location and space.

Stephens attributes this problem to the way in which texts featuring a culturally diverse society have, in the past, been dominated by characters in the text from 'the dominant, or majority, culture' (Stephens, 2011, p.18). Although positive moves have been made, Stephens notes, the 'process of dismantling and reformation' to this system has been unable to 'stand against the negative public socio-politic rhetoric' (Stephen, 2011, p.18). Just as Stephen suggests, the selected picture books do fail to address any issues that might arise from an ethnically diverse environment in favour of simple promotion of universal values and the scripts of the dominant culture (that is, 'white, middle-class' (Bradford, 2010, p.49)).

Additionally, since '[n]arratives which incorporate characters of various ethnicities do not necessarily engage with cultural difference' (Bradford, 2010, p.49), what tends to happen instead, is simply the reinforcement of the Western world view and set of values, which is then taken on by the reader as the cultural norm. Mallan takes this argument further to assert that the key to

understanding another individual is empathy, and thus when, 'narrative

empathy is directed back to the implied Western reader who remains the

privileged subject', this only serves to transform the 'textual other […] into a

figure of sameness to the imagined (Western) Self' (2013, p.110).

If contemplating the selected picture books in more detail then, it is observable

that the characters within the public space (shop keepers, friends, etc...) and

the mixed race families themselves in the domestic one, are, in many ways,

assimilated into a recognisable Western way of life. "Real" difference,

therefore, is only reflected in physical appearance and small, and easily

negotiable, factors of cultural diversity, such as in the *Two Grannies*, where one

grandmother likes rice and peas, and the other likes roast dinner. In this sense,

such children's literature reinforces, promotes, and schools the young in the

values of British society which are based upon acceptance and inclusion of

cultural diversity. This, in turn, reflects Huddart's view that, when it comes to

writing, 'other subjectivities are only admitted to consideration in order to

bolster sameness' (2008, p.4). Within a celebratory framework of cultural

cohesion, as Parekh's early quotation implies, any suggestions of moral diversity

within communities remains unexplored and unchallenged (2011). (There are

not, as far as the thesis can identify, any British children's picture books with the

subject matter of forced marriage, or religious conflict, for example).

However, observing the situation from another angle, Kelen and Sundmark

point out that 'multicultural literatures have allowed unseen diversity to shine

within national borders, but they have also faced the contradiction that efforts to counter the "othering" of minority groups may reinforce a marginal status for them' (2013, p.7). This can indeed sometimes be the case, but does incorporating ethnic minorities into representations of main-stream culture in some ways neutralise the force of Othering them? Controversial though many of these arguments are, what such picture books can perhaps be taken as is an exercise in anti-racist practise, and, if the "normalising" of racial difference within British society is a key objective, such picture books do, the thesis believes, succeed in their purpose.

In comparison to picture books, 'Questions of race, ethnicity and colonialism are addressed most overtly in realist texts for children and adolescents' (Bradford, 2010, p.49). Such texts are often thought of as 'problem novels' (Hunt, 1994, p.150) (although, for the purpose of this chapter they will be termed issue-based novels). Typically, these novels rely heavily on an issue-led plot, featuring topics such as drugs, bullying, eating disorders, and, of course, racism and discrimination. Such texts are designed to highlight issues faced by young people, to show them the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behaviour, and provide ways to cope or exit strategies if they are already in a problematic situation. How, though, do such texts featuring the mixed race protagonist differ in terms of their portrayal of an ethnically diverse Britain from the selected picture books, and how do they portray the mixed race individuals themselves? In the next part of the chapter, *The Edge* by Alan Gibbons and *Hero* by Catherine R. Johnson will hopefully provide a few answers.

5.3 Issue-Based Novels for the Older Reader

The Edge, by Alan Gibbons, is a good example of an issued based novel which proactively engages with the complexities of an ethnically diverse Britain. The first area of note is that, unlike picture books, multiple perspectives cannot be supplied through illustrations and thus the emphasis for books for the older child reader is shifted onto the narrative. The structure of *The Edge* reflects this with the characters having their own self-contained chapters in which their opinions are shared with the reader through a third person narrator. Secondly, instead of the rather simplistic promotion of cultural cohesion as presented in the picture books, *The Edge* confronts issues such as immigration, cultural diversity and interracial mixture, presenting the sometimes polarised nature of arguments for and against the above through the use of two opposing characters within the novel: the mixed race protagonist, Danny, and his grandfather, Harry. This can demonstrated by the following extracts:

> Country's overrun. An Englishman can't even voice his opinion without being shouted down. Political correctness gone mad. Everything… everything gone mad (p.25).

<p align="center">***</p>

...he remembers his dad always said: a white man can walk down a white

street and a black man can walk down a black street. But where does a

boy like Danny walk? It's not right, not natural (p.26).

Harry's first statement illustrates a disruption to the trend of simply presenting

cultural cohesion in a positive light, as seen in the picture books. Here, the

reader learns how, for some, immigration seems to pose a threat, an invasion,

an overrunning of national space. This is emphasised further by Gibbon's use of

the us/them dichotomy. ("Them" being the ones who are over running the

country, "the foreigners", and "us" being the English). For Harry, the influx of

immigrants has led him to feel that neither he, nor his opinions count, and

further, that he has become a second class citizen in his "own" country. This is

later reflected upon by Harry when Joan forgets his cake but remembers to

bring a slice for Danny and Harry comments, 'I know where I stand' (p.40).

Harry's traditional views of England also mean that he struggles in what he

considers to be this new world order, as illustrated by his comments that

everything has 'gone mad' (p.26) which is repeated to stress his confusion.

Harry's second statement is specifically about Danny's mixedness, emphasising

how racism is passed down the generations: 'His dad always said...' (p.26). This

is further supported by Joan, who suggests that Harry's parents were bigoted

too: 'It's the way he was brought up. His mother and father were the same'

(p.22). The segregationist image of the black and white man adds emphasis to

Harry's clear cut and dichotomous views of the nature of race, reiterating the

"them" and the "us". For Harry, then, there is no hybrid space for Danny as a black/white boy, 'a half-breed' (p.19), nor should there be as he deems interracial mixing not to be 'natural' (p.26).

Gibbons counter-balances these racist arguments through the provision of Danny's response: 'What's the big deal about me being black? Back home, every other person is [...] Maybe there's a Britain I don't know, a Britain where it still matters about the colour of your skin' (p.39-40). Initially, what can be observed, is that Danny does not see himself as a figure of the in-between who does not know which road to walk down. In this instance, Danny designates himself as black and sees himself as no different from all the other Londoners.[161] From the urban metropolis, Danny is used to a mixed society and his comments reflect how surprised he is to find that cultural diversity should be such an issue at all. Although he disregards racism as 'unreal, a complete joke' (p.40), it is clear that he is still unsettled by a place that does not fit into his own notion of a culturally diverse state.

Danny goes on to provide his view of living in Britain as being a cross-cultural and hybrid experience which counteracts his grandfather's perspective of the threat of immigration and diversity. Going down to the market at the weekends, Danny and his mother buy samosas from an 'Asian guy called John' (p.40) and

---

[161] This, of course, is similar to the configuration of Karim's regionalised identity in the *Buddha of Suburbia*.

eat them with toast: 'That summed it up. Keep Britain White? England for the English? Stuff like that didn't mean anything, not when you could get samosa on toast' (p.40). Here, despite the alternative perspective on racial and cultural diversity asserted by Harry, the text, like the picture books does ultimately returns to a positive depiction of Mixed Britain. This, it may be argued, is achieved through the author's portrayal of Danny as a favourable character with whom the young reader may identify, and secondly by the presence of other positively portrayed ethnic characters within the text, in the form of his friends Abdul and Ramila who contend with Chris and try to warn Danny of his imminent arrival in Edge Cliff. The re-normalisation of intercultural interaction (again argued as a feature of the picture books) along with interracial attraction is also introduced to the young reader with Danny's initial interest in Ramila – this is unrequited though the problem is resolved amicably and they remain friends. Nevertheless, Danny's relationship with the white Nikki, although problematised by racism, does eventually mature into fruition, and by the end of the novel Danny and Nikki are a couple.

Seemingly, like the picture books, Danny normalises his position as a mixed individual for the reader, portrayed through his dismissiveness about race in general. On page 21, for example, Danny states that he 'hasn't thought about it much: race, colour' (p.21): 'What's the big deal about where people's families came from? They're here and that's that. It's too much of a fact of life to get excited about' (p.21). Yet Gibbons also illustrates that even though Danny feels as though race is no 'big deal' (p.39), he is constantly reminded by society that it

should matter: 'There have been people who've have told him it is his identity, his culture even' (p.21). Furthermore, when confronted with the viewpoints of those in his grandparents' northern home town of Edge Cliff, Danny's position of race as irrelevant receives a violent challenge as he is beaten up in a racist attack led by Steve and his gang.

If the degree of violence is a key indicator in the text that the novel is written for the older child, the language establishes the texts as suitable only for the more mature young adolescent audience. Angry with Harry, for example, Danny refers to him as a 'stupid old muppet' (p.59) and Nikki calls Steve Parker 'a bit of a scally' (p.91). Equally, the introduction of offensive insults such as 'bitch' (p.13) and 'slapper' (p.146) also mark the text out as unsuitable for a younger readership. The racial language in the text is also interesting in other ways as it seems a little out of place. Danny is constantly referred to by the bullies rather immaturely as 'chocolate drop' (p.71). Equally, Danny's father is referred to as a 'spade' (p.127) – as this is not a contemporary term, Gibbons has to provide an explanation: 'Danny hates that word, a racist insult from an earlier generation' (p.127).[162]

---

[162] By comparison, in *Hero*, a novel to be discussed shortly, the language of racism is blunt and uncompromising with the repeated use of the word 'nigger' (p.29) to define both Hero, the protagonist, and her father. Initially, this seems shocking in a children's text, but it does highlight to the reader how the derogatory term was part of colloquial usage as it is even adopted when discussing her father positively as 'one the finest niggers who ever walked' (p.29), something that the modern reader may find a little surprising.

Despite the unusual and antiquated choice of language, however, *The Edge* brings the reader relatively up to date with issues of racism through references to the 1993 death of Stephen Lawrence: 'He was vaguely aware of areas where there *was* a problem. Abbie talked about it. Ramila too. She mentioned Stephen Lawrence sometimes, and talked about whole districts where you didn't hang around, not if you knew what was good for you' (p.40).[163]

Stephen Lawrence's death serves as a reminder of the reality of white male violence, which is once more centralised within the text as the reader (as mentioned) observes it played out upon Danny's mixed body through his painful experiences with both Chris and the racist bullies in Edge Cliff. Yet the white male's potential for sexual violence, a reoccurring motif of the novels discussed in chapter 3, is also interestingly present in *The Edge* too. In this instance however, it is not against the mixed race body, but instead against the white female characters. When Chris, for example, thinks about 'ripping' Cathy's belongings to shreds, he imagines making her 'naked and vulnerable' (p.13). Further, Nikki is subjected to being labelled as 'a bit of a bike' (p.146), a comment intended to allude to her supposed sexual promiscuity which is seen as given since she is attracted to a black/mixed man (referring back to myth 2). This is further reiterated by Steve's comments: 'You know what they say about women who go out with chocolate drops […] slags, the lot of them' (p.127). This labelling then becomes justification for Steve's inappropriate advances against

---

[163] Author's italics.

Nikki when he tries to kiss her (p.153); Steve's actions also imply a white male

territorialism similar to that noted in *Lady Moses*. This is heightened by his

belief that Danny is 'making eyes' at "their" women (p.71).

In contrast to Steve and Chris, Gibbons portrays Des, Danny's father, as a black

superhero, rescuing Danny both from a racist gang, and then from Chris when

he eventually arrives in Edge Cliff. He is imagined in the text like a black version

of the character 'Angel' from the teenage television series of the same name,

and is described as having a 'powerful physique' (p.116).[164] This image is a little

problematic, however, as Des is in fact another abandoning/absent black father

who originally gets the teenage Cathy pregnant whilst in a relationship with

another woman (following the deviant hyper-sexualised black male trope).

Despite their past, however, by the end of the novel Cathy and Des' passion has

been rekindled and Des has been forgiven.

Des also becomes a figure for illustrating the nature of institutional racism to

the younger reader. When the police arrive, for example, to find Chris and Des

fighting, it is assumed that Des is the perpetrator of the attack, and the police

try to arrest him, allowing Chris time to get free. Danny is also stereotyped as

trouble, firstly by the school: 'single parent, absentee father, abusive boyfriend'

(p.133) and secondly, by his grandfather, who constantly refers to Danny as

having '[b]ad blood' (p.38) and assumes that his position has left him

---

[164] Reminiscent of the arguments surrounding the black male figure in chapter 4.

aggressive, untrustworthy and with a 'real edge' (p.47). This is also an issue that deeply upsets Colman in *Trumpet* who complains that: 'Black guys like him. People always think they are going to be wrong or they've done something wrong, or they're lying, or about to lie, or stealing or about to steal' (p.189). (Returning to consider the list of preconceptions about mixed race representation in chapter 1, where it was noted that black and mixed race men were assumed to be responsible for crime, through this issue-based novel, the young reader is encouraged to consider the accuracy of myth 6).

Thus, in a sense, *The Edge* is a text which not only challenges the straight forward presumptions of intercultural cohesion as portrayed in the picture books, but is also willing to engage with some of the more complex issues surrounding race and living in a socially diverse nation (through the employment of a number of themes found within the adult selected texts too). The text both emphasises the way in which cultures can positively intermix, but also reveals how polarised communities can be. It bravely faces discussing the points of view of those in favour of the right wing, but ultimately encourages the reader to reject these in favour of Danny's position. Still, *The Edge* is not the only text for the older child reader that engages with issues of race, racism, and cultural diversity in a thoughtful and innovative way. Another example of such a text is *Hero* by Catherine R. Johnson. Unlike *The Edge*, which deals with normalizing the cultural diversity of contemporary British society and contemplating how such a society is negotiated by the mixed race individual, *Hero* provides the opportunity for the young reader to reconsider British

history, thus normalizing intercultural cohesion through its assertion as a historically founded, as well as modern, phenomenon.[165]

Returning briefly to consider earlier analysis, the thesis argued that the presence of black characters within *Sugar and Slate* began the process of unearthing black history, and in *Trumpet* the repositioning of blackness within the Scottish imagination offered the possibility of challenging 'social death' (Richardson, 2012, p.361) (See chapter 2.2). However, in *Hero*, this is taken one step further with the full re/construction of an alternative history, a history described by black/Asian historians Sandhu (2003) and Fryer (1984), and one which fully illustrates a plethora of cultures in every level of social stratification.

This "new and alternative" London is uncovered when Hero goes in search of her captured father in the backstreets of the city where she discovers an eclectic mix of citizens. Firstly, she finds the urban poor: 'There were Negros of all shades from Africa, America, every island of the West Indies, East Indians, and Lascars who had given up waiting for a boat home' (p.94). Conversely

---

[165] In the novel, Hero da Costa is the daughter of a black slave father called John and a white mother named Lilly Juliet who meet in Barbados. Hero's mother dies in childbirth, leaving Hero to be raised by her father who runs his father-in-law Reuben's pub in the city of London. Despite the early death of the white mother, *Hero* is predominantly another "search for the absent black father" narrative as John is captured immediately after Reuben's death in a bid to return him to his master in the Caribbean.

If, as Weedon writes, the presentation of 'recent black experience form an important theme within contemporary black British writing, fictional evocations of earlier black history are also crucial to reclaiming a sense of history and tradition that allows positive identities in the present' (Weedon, 2004, p.81) then Hero becomes an important contribution towards the literary portrayal of the black presence.

however, the reader is also introduced to black characters such as the pompous William Julius and the learned Gabriel Caffay who form part of the capital's black elite. In a sense, then, like the illustrations within the picture books which demonstrated an ethnically diverse society, both in the background and foreground of the story, Johnson's descriptive prose may arguably produce a similar effect.

Yet, like *The Edge,* multi-ethnic Britain is problematised within the space of the novel and portrayed as a site riddled with inequality and racism. In *Hero* this is demonstrated, through the derogatory language, but also through the fact that her father has been captured to be returned to slavery. Furthermore, despite his capture being illegal, the law itself is heavily against supporting the rights of the black minority as pointed out by Caffay when Hero seeks legal advice from him about reclaiming their ownership of the Feather's Pub Caffay reminds her that the '[l]aw is not that simple': 'If we are up against a magistrate who believes that Negros are born to be the servant of the white man we can never win' (p.107). The seeming absurdity of this is captured further in Caffay's unfinished sentence: 'To a judge, Hero, a white man leaving all his worldly goods to a Negro, even a Negro who married his daughter…' (p.102).

Yet, aside from the inequalities of this period, what is interesting is the degree of positive collaboration between black/mixed and white characters that does not seem especially common within the other selected texts. Primarily, this can be viewed through the relationship between Hero and her cousin Daniel who

becomes Hero's accomplice in the hunt for her father. This relationship is an

unusual one as in the opening of the novel Hero strikes Daniel, who has entered

into a fight with her at his sister Rachel's request. Here, then, from the earliest

paragraph, the reader is presented with a new set of power dynamics. Hero is

positioned as a mixed race/female character, clearly in charge, physically

stronger than her white/male counterpart, and at the centre of the plot, rather

than the periphery (this is quite revolutionary if considering the historical role of

the black character in the novel as servant, slave or at best side-kick).

Furthermore, collaboration with whiteness can also be observed through the

relationship between the deceased Reuben and Hero's father. Reuben's

acceptance of John is clear as he has allowed John to marry his daughter and

left him The Feathers in his will. His respect is also captured in the painting

which he has had commissioned and which hangs on the wall in the pub.

Described by Hero on the first page, the painting features John wining a boxing

match. Underneath is the caption 'Gentleman John of Barbados felling Dutch

Sam at Blackheath' (p.1). The first point to note here is that the painting serves

as an introduction to John and thus he is quickly associated with bravery and

strength. However, where the 'half naked' (p.1) black man with his fists up

could initially be read as a perpetuation of the image of the wild and violent

black male, the counter-narrative of the caption appears, subverting this. Thus,

what is presented is not the "Negro" or a slave engaging in savage violence, but

a "gentleman" engaged in sport. Hero also notes that instead of painting a

'shaded-in white man or a thick-lipped cartoon' (p.1) the artist has attempted to

capture John's features authentically. This painting, then, is both a visual and
verbal signifier, solidifying Reuben's admiration for John, whilst also serving to
contrast with the way in which John is viewed within the public space, where he
is referred to as 'da Costa the nigger' (p.31). Such collaboration, friendship and
exchange between different race characters means that the novel does not just
present an invisible black demographic, but in fact draws attention to the
possibility of multiple interactions and alliances between persons of different
ethnicity throughout history.

However, the novel not only notes the positive interaction between black and
white citizens, but also considers the position of Jewish residence within the
city, as Reuben is also Jewish. Like black/white interaction, white-Jewish/black
interaction is both problematised and celebrated. When Hero goes to seek help
from the black William Julius, for example, he remarks that her father is to
blame for his current predicament for involving himself with Jews. This
profoundly upsets Hero: 'Hero felt the blood rising in her face; she knew she
was as much Jewish as she was black. They were her people too' (p.80). Indeed,
claiming Jewishness alongside a non-white background does not prove easy for
Hero. This is reflected in Rachel's exclusionary comments about Hero's
unfreckled skin since freckles, in Rachel's opinion, are 'kisses from God. No
niggers have them' (p.82). However, once again trans-nationality offers the
space for identification, allowing Hero to feel able to connect to her Jewish
faith. Thus Hero's Jewish side, along with the Jewish presence, is rendered
positive: 'Grandpa Reuben had told her about African Jews, from Ethiopia, in

273

the east, from Morocco and Algeria in the north. 'We've probably family there still', he rubbed his beard, 'in Fez, I think'' (p.82).

Novels for the older child reader, it has been suggested, offer a platform for a wider discussion of topics such as immigration and multiple and mixed British history/histories, contrasting the sometimes more simplistic and celebratory stance of the picture book. Bridging the gap between work for children, and the adult novels which have been explored within the context of this thesis however, are books written for adolescents, also known as Young Adult (YA) fiction. These too have a lot to offer in terms of presenting interracial interaction and mixture, but do such text share similar themes to the adult texts, and do novels for this age group display different creative strategies for exploring race and hybridity not seen in either texts for children or adults ? The next part of this chapter will hopefully provide some suggestions.

5.4 Young Adult Fiction

The period of adolescence is complex and intense: a time of discovery and often heartache, of 'both change and consolidation' (Coleman, 2011, p.58), it bridges the gap between childhood and adulthood. It is also essentially a time of learning to identify with the sociological systems that must be adhered to in everyday life, as well as a time for individuals to formulate their identities and sense of self. Compared to children's literature, fiction for adolescents is a

relatively 'recent phenomenon' (Hunt, 1994, p.15), providing adolescents with

adult themes, but in a slightly more regulated and simplified format. In *An*

Introduction to Children's Literature, Peter Hunt relates how teenage texts are

often marketed in two categories. "Quality' novels", 'distinguishable from

[novels for] adults, if at all' by their teenage-centred narratives; and

"manufactured" series novels that Hunt describes as having: 'the subject-matter

of the adult novel and the plot-shape (this is, resolved, or circular) of the

children's novel' (Hunt, 1994, p.16). Since the qualification of literature for

children and teenagers into the supposed bracket of "quality" is, of course, the

reserve of the adults (academics, critics and literary theorists in particular), such

texts are not necessarily popular with their target readers. Series fiction, like the

celebrity autobiography of chapter 2, is associated with popular fiction and

therefore regarded as low-brow and lacking in value or content. Yet it has

become increasingly popular, 'crossing every genre and every section of

publishing' (Hunt, 1994, p.127) especially with the young adult market.

It has been suggested by Victor Watson that there is something special about

series fiction. Unlike a single novel, that may be compulsory reading for

school/college, come recommended, or perhaps be selected by chance, reading

a whole series is a carefully made decision on the part of the reader (Watson,

2000, p.1). Equally, contrasting with single novels, series are often collected, re-

read, and are far more usually associated with leisure and pleasure than

academic study (Watson, 2000, p.1-2). Characters in series fiction are designed

to make reading such narratives easier, too, as the personalities, subject

positioning and relationships of the main characters are generally established

whilst reading the first novel in the series: by the second novel, the characters

are familiar and the reader does not have to invest time in getting to know who

is who, or orientating themselves in the world of the text (Watson, 2000, p.6-7).

Within a series there is also a wider opportunity for sub-plots, inter-

generational advancement and a narrative that is both continual and yet also

self-contained through the breaking of individual novels (Watson, 2000, p.7).

Series fiction, and particularly young adult series fiction, can also be a fertile

ground for the exploration of sociological positions and has provided authors,

such as Malorie Blackman, with new ways to challenge public perceptions about

race.

Blackman's *Noughts and Crosses* series consists of four novels, *Noughts and*

Crosses (2001), *Knife Edge* (2004), *Checkmate* (2005) and *Double Cross* (2009).

Aimed at a young adult readership, the series follows the unique and compelling

journey of a number of central characters over a 16 year period, as they come

to terms with a society divided by colour. Yet the series presents a unique

creative strategy for exploring issues of race and hybridity, as in the world of

Noughts and Crosses, black-skinned crosses are the dominant ethnic group, and

oppress white-skinned noughts. This will be referred to, throughout this

chapter, as Blackman's race reversal strategy.

In *New Orders in Contemporary Children's Literature: Utopian Transformations*,

Clare Bradford writes: 'Contemporary western social ideologies condition

subjects to value personal freedom, innovation, self-realisation, and self-expression, so [young] readers are quick to discern when a society is being depicted as authoritarian and repressive' (2008, p.29). Thus it is clear to the adolescent reader that there is a serious inharmonious and dystopic quality to the world inhabited by the *Noughts and Crosses* characters. The foundations for the premise of the series are quickly laid at the start of the first novel where the characters of Sephy and Callum are introduced. As children, playing together in the garden, Callum's Mother Meggie notes that there appears to be '[n]o boundaries' (p.7) between them, but from a very young age Callum is already making distinctions between himself and Sephy. When he refers to '*[u]s* noughts and *you* Crosses' (p.25), Sephy is too young to understand: 'It makes it sound like… like you're in one place and I'm in another, with a huge, great wall between us' (p.25).[166]

This 'great wall' is later played out in the physical sense as demonstrated when the two characters are at school. Blackman's world of *Noughts and Crosses* is a recognisable one, mirroring the well documented historical period of the segregation in the United States and the introduction of black students into all white colleges post the 1954 ruling which led to civil unrest and protests. When Callum attends Heathcroft High for the first time, he, like the black students of 1950s America, is met by an angry mob – yet in Blackman's version of events, it is Callum's whiteness that marks him out, hence the crowds shout: 'NO BLANKERS

---

[166] Author's Italics.

IN OUR SCHOOL' (p.54). The issue of segregation here forms part of Blackman's creative approach, as she takes a historical phenomenon in which intermixture is problematised, but conveys it through the lens of her race reversal strategy. This process, it may be suggested, allows the young reader to identify the nonsensical absurdity of the situation whilst simultaneously being reminded that an event such as this actually occurred.

Once inside the school, it is clear that the segregation continues as, when Sephy tries to sit with Callum at lunchtime, she is told to move immediately by her teacher: 'She wasn't talking about me getting back to my own table. She was talking about me getting back to my own kind' (p.74). Barthé, in his historical account of segregation, suggests this became a post-emancipation way of keeping social order (Barthé, 2012, p.87) and thus similarly segregation is inadvertently enforced within the perimeters of the canteen to ensure that social balance is maintained within the novel(s). For the white students of the 1950s, desegregation of social space was perceived as an unnatural and dangerous act, a position underpinned, of course, by the presence of racist ideology.

Earlier in the chapter, it was suggested that ideology is present within children's literature, both explicitly and passively (Stephens, 1992, p.9), and controls the messages that are provided throughout a text. What is significant, in Blackman's *Noughts and Crosses* series, is that the novels are not just vehicles for ideological transmission, but actively work to expose ideology, and how it

operates in society to their adolescent audience. Reiterating how ideology is produced and disseminated, Olumide comments: 'We live in societies that are ordered, through the ideological construction of divisions such as race, class and gender, in such a way that people tend to develop distorted beliefs about themselves and about others' (2002, p.14). This means that society can maintain order, providing privilege to some, but not to others. Ideological control in the Gramscian sense then is created and managed by ideological institutions such as the police, the law and the educational system (2002, p.14-15). Here, then, Blackman's race reversal strategy can be seen to disorientate the young reader and help him/her to challenge what he/she sees being enforced through the ideological institutions of the text. This is apparent, not only through the educational system within the *Noughts and Crosses* series however, but also through the justice system too where institutional racism permeates the police force causing cross police to beat noughts, often applying excess force when restraining them in their belief that they have 'thicker, tougher necks' (Checkmate, p.416) leaving many dead.

For the protagonists too, the impact of ideology on their thoughts and behaviour is clear as evidenced by Sephy's moments of intimacy with Callum.

This wasn't real.

None of it was real.

It couldn't be.

It was forbidden.

279

Against the law.

Against nature (p.382).

Here, it is the act of interracial attraction which is questioned by Sephy who has been socialised into a society where such interaction is deemed to be unnatural.[167] The "natural order" of the world of *Noughts and Crosses* also relies on the default position of blackness (Blackman's race reversal strategy here, once again, helps to expose the daily implications of ideological enforcement). The reader is shown this in operation when Sephy goes into the school dining hall and sees one of the noughts with a brown plaster on her head which 'stuck out on her pale white skin like a throbbing thumb' (p.74). When the girl is questioned about this she replies: 'They don't sell pink plasters. Only dark brown ones' (p.74).

Similarly, the insults that accompany racism are transformed to schematically coincide with the world of the *Noughts and Crosses* characters. 'Blanker' is the derogatory term used throughout the series: 'They're blank by name and blank by nature' […] Blank, white faces with not a hint of colour in them' (p.85); even the word nought (like the word black) is linked with inferiority: 'Nought… Even the word was negative. Nothing. Nil. Zero. Nonentities. It wasn't a name we'd chosen for ourselves. It was a name we'd be given' (p.79). As Wilkie-Stibbs

---

[167] An idea also identified in *The Edge*, as earlier discussed, when Harry finds Danny's position as a mixed race individual unnatural.

writes, such frameworks 'fix the Noughts in their marginality and ensure that

they are othered in the regimes and discourses of representation' (2006, p.243).

Just as black men and women have been negatively stereotyped, so too are the

noughts. In the first novel, Sephy begins to question the issue of their

representation: 'Suddenly all I had were questions. How come in all the early

black-and-white films, the Nought men were always ignorant drunkards or

womanisers or both? And the women were always near-brainless servants'

(p.116).

Aside from the exposing of the way that society creates myths based on race

(like the ones as suggested in chapter 1), Blackman's race reversal strategy also

exposes something of the nature of binary opposition. The notion of binary

oppositions has been explored by poststructualism and by theorists such as

Cixious who considers how binaries often have a dominant and passive element

which then becomes interlocked within the binary of masculine/feminine

(Cixious, 1989). Literature, as Eagleton suggests, is particularly useful for the

exploration of binary oppositions, allowing them to 'unravel' (1983, p.133).

Certainly, this unravelling is present in the work of Blackman as she takes binary

opposites such as black/white, rich/poor, superior/inferior and good/bad and

begins to pull them apart, repositioning blackness which has historically (like the

"feminine" of Cixious writings) been linked to negative binaries, and attaching it

to positive ones. Now, it is the black crosses who are rich, superior and good,

and the white noughts who are linked to the binaries of poor, inferior and bad;

and yet Blackman also asks the reader to think again, to ponder as to whether

this is an accurate way of perceiving marginalised groups (is Callum bad and inferior; are his actions just or right?). In this way, Blackman explores how race comes to interact with other discourses and encourages the young reader to think more widely about the society in which he/she lives.

Furthermore, Blackman also uses her race reversal strategy and the deconstruction of binaries to reconstruct the black historical experience of oppression (which, it should be noted here, is portrayed as rather Americanised) for the young reader. "Dangerous black male sexuality" is translated into Callum's dangerous nought sexuality, resulting in the automatic assumption that he has raped Sephy. In a chilling reminder of the fate of black men who were lynched for their supposed sexual misdemeanours with white women, Callum is publically hung after Sephy becomes pregnant at the end of the first novel.

Slavery as a cultural and historical phenomena of the "black experience" is also returned to within *Noughts and Crosses*, forming a part of the noughts' fictitious history as displayed when Callum's comments: 'We noughts had been their slaves for so long, and even though slavery had been formally abolished over half a century ago, I didn't see that we were much better off' (p.138). Blackman is not the only author writing for young people to make this decision, though, as the ominous presence of slavery appears additionally in *Hero*, lurking in the backgrounds just like the beggar that Hero sees in the street whose arm reveals 'a brand. Like Pa's' (p.3). Thoughts of slavery spill into Hero's unconscious and

she dreams of losing Pa on a slave ship where there are '[n]o wails no cries. Just a hundred breaths, in out, in out, like sighing' (p.14). Yet the slave trade becomes "reality" to Hero when Pa is captured and the novel's narrative takes on a directly informed position through Hero's eyes:

> Of course the English trade had been stopped – in theory at-least three years ago. But slaves were still shipped from Africa to the plantations of Brazil and America, and there were more than a few English sea captains who would turn a blind eye to carrying slaves if the price was right (p.29).

Providing alternative perspectives on history, as seen in *Hero* and *Noughts and Crosses* is useful. However, questioning the way in which history is told by the dominant, submerging the stories of others (reminiscent of chapter 2's argument) is also on Blackman's agenda. At Heathcroft High the pupils are taught cross history: 'Throughout history, from the time our ancestors in Cafrique sailed to other lands and acquired knowledge of gunpowder, writing, weapon-making, the arts and so on, we have been the dominant race on Earth. We have been explorers, the ones to move entire backward civilizations onwards' (p.136). Through this aspect of the plot Blackman alerts the reader to the way that history has been distorted and manipulated to omit the achievements of black people, and a reminder of 'how the rights of colonized people to make their own history has been subjugated by the colonizer's own stories of self-production' (Wilkie-Stibbs, 2006, p.243).

A final point to make about mapping historic experiences of blackness out for the young reader maybe found in the motif of "passing" which involves the act of a black/mixed race person attempting to be seen as white. Teresa Kay Williams has written that '[i]n a racially ordered, racially invested society, the social phenomenon of passing has often been one of the few strategies available to, and utilized by, multiracial individuals' in order to circumnavigate the barriers of race (2004, p.166). For many, however, such activities have been looked upon with derision and passing offenders have been seen as traitors, denying their blackness, viewing themselves as superior and gaining unlawful access to white privilege without challenging the inequalities presented to those who do not have such an option. "Passing" appears in other selected texts too: in *Sugar and Slate*, for example, one of Charlotte's friends tells her about a mixed race girl who is "pretending" to be white: 'but Mam told her straight – you're black you is, BLACK! I know your mam and she's black as well so don't go putting on any airs and graces round 'ere' (p.4).

Similarly, in *Red Dust Road*, Jackie is "complimented" by her aunt on being able to 'pass for Spanish' (p.159) and in *Hero*, Aunt Silver and Cousin Rachel feel that Hero should be grateful that she has been sent to live with them after her father is taken away as it will lead to her moral and social betterment. Throughout the text Hero is perceived to be 'barely civilised' by the pair (p.115). "Passing", for the Silvers, then, is seen as Hero's ticket out of "uncivilised Blackness", as Rachel Silver comments: 'I'd have thought you'd be better off without him, brought up

in a respectable household. I mean you could pass as Spanish or It' (p.86) (at this point Hero hits her).

"Passing" in *Noughts and Crosses* is exposed firstly through the character of Callum who the reader discovers has cross ancestry, the '[c]ross blood' (p.398) arising from his great grandfather, and secondly through the presence of Callum's history teacher, who is passing as a Cross. Initially, Callum wonders why the teacher treats him so badly: 'Was it just my colour he despised so much? I couldn't help being white, any more than he could help being black. I mean, he wasn't even that black anyway. He was more beige than brown, and very light beige at that, so he had nothing to gloat about' (p.134). Later, when Callum confronts the teacher, after he discovers he is 'half-nought' (p.156) Callum is further shocked by the teacher's vigorous denial of his "true identity" admonishing Callum for insisting on such a terrible 'lie' (p.157). Here, then, the mixed race individual as race traitor is presented – yet this negative representation is counteracted perhaps by the presence of the mixed race protagonist, Callie Rose, within subsequent novels in the series.

Before discussing Callie Rose, however, it might be interesting to briefly consider what kind of message Sephy and Callum's relationship might be providing to young readers as this has been the subject of a challenge by two academics, Bradford and Beauvais. Firstly, Bradford writes that: 'By mapping the power relationships of Crosses and noughts onto practices and histories which have privileged Europeans over their non-white others, the novel reinstalls

those relationships and normalizes them' (2010, p.42). To a degree, the statement is true, as although there are sociological improvements to the society over the course of the series, the relationship between Sephy and Callum has little effect on the binary nature of society itself. In this way, to an extent, they become 'exceptional figures' (2010, p.42) who simply 'accentuate the normalcy of racist practices and attitudes, and the fixity of cultural formations' (Beauvais, 2012, p.42).

Furthermore, Beauvais also asks the interesting question: 'to what extent are young readers prepared to envisage themselves as part of a process of hybridisation?'(2012, p.76). By the end of the first novel Sephy is left alone and carrying an unborn hybrid child who is already responsible for her own father's death.[168] For Beauvais, Callie's presence in the novels only make matters worse and she becomes a 'visible crack in the segregating walls of society' (2012, p.60), a position recognised by Sephy's as she thinks about her daughter shortly after her birth: 'You [Callie Rose] have to live in a world divided into Noughts and Crosses. A world where you will be biologically both and socially neither. Mixed race. Dual heritage. Labels to be attached' (*Knife Edge*, p.38).

Initially, then, it seems, Callie Rose's position as a mixed race figure within the series appears to be problematic and like other characters, she too meets with a

---

[168] Kamal offers Callum's freedom in return for Sephy's termination of the pregnancy which she refuses.

significant degree of racism and prejudice on a par with that afforded to the

mixed race protagonists in novels written for adults, leaving her at times

despairing: '"But I can't help being half-Nought. Any more than I can help being

half-Cross" said Callie. "Isn't anyone ever going to like me just for *me*"?'

(*Checkmate*, p.273).[169] Yet, Callie Rose's character can also be read in light of

the myth of mixed race children as the future (perpetuating myth 8 from

chapter 1). Callie Rose initially fits well with this public perception as Sephy

ponders:

> You're new and unique and original. You're a lighter brown than me.
>
> Much lighter. But you're not a Nought, not white like your dad. You're a
>
> trailblazer. Setting your own colour, your own look. Maybe you're the
>
> hope for the future. Something new and different and special. Something
>
> to live on whilst the rest of us die out, obsolete in our ignorance and
>
> hatred (*Knife Edge*, p.37-38).

Linked to this description is the phenomenon of 'the *rainbow baby*', a term used

to 'describe racially mixed children, particularly of black and white heritage'

(Streeter, 2003, p.303).[170] This branch of the 'Biracial Beauty Stereotype' (Sims,

2012, p.64) where mixed race individuals are associated with progressive ethnic

---

[169] Author's Italics.
[170] Author's italics. The *Rainbow Child* song is sung by Sephy three times in the text: in hospital when Callie Rose is born, at the club, and as Sephy has a nervous breakdown.

blending and in vogue multi-ethnicity (see chapter 1 myth 8) has led to a high

representation of ethnically mixed children in advertising today (Streeter, 2003,

p.303).[171] In Sephy's imaginings in *Knife Edge*, Callie Rose is a rainbow child –

neither one colour nor another, an idea reiterated through Sephy's singing of

the song, *Rainbow Child* (p.84).[172]

Blackman employs an interesting creative strategy when dealing with colour in

Knife Edge, as although the novel is divided up into chapters, it is also

subdivided by the colours of the rainbow. On these pages one colour is stated in

capitals, followed by a list of word associations, almost like a stream of

consciousness that runs vertically down the centre of the page. The first, for

example, reads: *'RED Pain Anger Rage Blood'* (p.11). Block colours then, become

threatening, oppressive and associated with negativity, and by the end of the

novel infiltrate the plot itself. Getting to '*VIOLET Death Sounds like Violence*

Sounds like Violates' (p.355), the next chapter begins with Sephy speculating

about the colours that suit Callie Rose: 'Rose, you're so lovely. Too lovely for all

this violet around you' (p.359).[173]

The reading of Callie Rose as a child of the future also feeds into Beauvais'

analysis of the character as symbolic of transformative political agitation. Sephy

---

[171] 'The ubiquity of phrases such as "rainbow babies" and "coffee-coloured" children is indicative of the tendency to infantilize the subject of mixed descent' writes Streeter (2003, p.303); a concept also discussed earlier in chapter 2.2 in relation to the right to speak.
[172] Sephy is the equivalent here of the white mother who has lost the black father and again suffers the "white mother breakdown".
[173] Author's italics.

and Callum's ability to incite change is finite and with Callum's death, the 'transgressive couple's power reach[es] its limits in the creation of a hybrid child…' (2012, p.66). However, it is this hybridity, embodied in Callie Rose, which becomes a source of strength and possibility (2012, p.68). As Beauvais articulates:

> Callie's hybridity gives her rise to a perfectible sense of identity, geared towards the modification of the world, and oscillating between different influences and representations of power. She elevates herself beyond the divided world she was born in by learning to decrypt the complexity of its social and political configuration, and thus asserts herself as a resolutely different, flexible and contestatory power within it (2012, p.72).

If Callie Rose is seen as part of the future within the novels, she is also linked to the past as Blackman utilises the character and her interracial relationship with the nought, Tobey, as a framework to emphasise the shifts in time and in social thinking as the series progresses. This, in turn, perhaps mirrors the progressive paradigmatic shifts of racial discourse within Britain from the rejection of racial otherness, and intolerance of different cultures, to a modern day society where intermixture is possible, but can still often be complicated by political discourse. In Blackman's series such shifts in society's thinking are also evidenced by the theme of interracial spaces within the novels.

In *Making Race Matter: Bodies, Space and Identity*, Claire Alexander and

Caroline Knowles consider the concept of space. In their introduction they write

that physical space can often be occupied, territorialised and inscribed with

'racialised meanings, exclusions and dangers' (2005, p.2). Following this idea

within the text is a chapter by Les Back who explores the way that teenagers in

London negotiate the urban space through metaphorical mapping.[174] As Back

writes: 'Racism is by nature a spatial and territorial form of power. It aims to

secure and claim native/white territory but it also projects associations on to

space that in turn invests racial associations and attitudes in places' (2005,

p.19). Despite this, '[e]ach individual young person' that Back worked with was

able to combine 'available forms of social knowledge to project a map and find

a way through' (2005, p.40), and even negotiated their way through

problematic and dangerous spaces. Such a negotiation of space is clearly

actioned by the teenagers of the *Noughts and Crosses* series as the young

protagonists must find sites of safety, places where they are able to stage

resistance in an otherwise uncompromising territory. Due to their limited

surveillance and potential then, these sites also become sites of de-segregation.

The first such site is the rose garden. Roses are significant flowers within the

series; the word rose itself acting as a verbal signifier of the Hadley family and

consequently of Callie's intermixture. Callie is half Callum/nought (Callie) and

---

[174] This is undertaken through the analysis of photography and video diaries kept by young people. Back identifies how teenagers experience space as racialised through territorialisation, with certain areas being "owned" by street gangs and/or by white racist youths.

half Sephy/cross (Rose).[175] The rose garden, then, is interesting as in the first

novel it is a "kept" and private space, the territory of the Hadley family who are

under the rule of the racist politician Kamal. Intermixing in this time is

conducted quietly or in secret. The rose garden is the site of the final meeting

between Sephy and Callum; the site where Callum is caught, and the location of

the lover's last conversation.[176] However, in *Checkmate*, the movement of time,

the removal of Kamal, and Sephy's experiences have changed the Hadley family

and the rose garden becomes a metaphor that embraces all of them. Once

'under glass, like in a huge greenhouse' (p.139) the rose garden is now opened

up and is free for Callie Rose and Tobey to mix and to play in.

When Callie Rose asks her grandmother Jasmine why the glass has been

removed, Jasmine replies: 'I wanted the flowers to enjoy the wind and the rain.

Flowers should know winter and summer, it makes them stronger. It doesn't do

to keep plants too cosseted. Or people for that matter' (p.139). Here, then,

flowers become a metaphor for the Hadley family. Like the flowers, the

members must go through good experiences and bad ones in order to grow,

particularly in the case of Sephy who is suppressed and controlled in her

teenage years by her parents. The rose garden is also significant to Callie Rose

because it is the site of peace and safety where she feels close to her father

[175] Once again the selected text returns to the concept of naming as discussed in chapter 2.
[176] It may be argued that there are allusions to *Romeo and Juliet*, a text often studied by the target age group. In *Noughts and Crosses* Sephy and Callum are star-crossed lovers from warring families and Callum, climbing into Sephy's bedroom, is reminiscent of the balcony scene. As illustrated through the quotation, Sephy despairingly declares: 'you're a Nought and I'm a Cross; there's nowhere for us to be' (*Noughts and Crosses*, p.417).

Callum, whose ashes are scattered there. In the public space of the park, however the juxtaposition of the rose image is clear. Here, the roses are described as overpowering, having a 'rich, heavy scent', and the colours are 'blood-orange, blood-red, blood-pink' (p.305). Again, public space remains unprotected, and in this location Callie Rose finds herself under the influence of Uncle Jude.

The second symbolic site is the beach. As in *Trumpet*, where the sea offers refuge to the grieving Millie, the beach is again a private space (it is part of the Hadley family estate and not open to the general public) where Sephy and Callum spend time together away from the rest of the world. This is then paralleled, two novels later by Callie Rose and Tobey. Interestingly whereas the rose garden was a place of finality for Sephy and Callum, the beach becomes a similar site for Callie Rose as it is a temporary stop off before the fulfilment of her bomb-detonating mission.

The last symbolic site of intermixing and generational link is Heathcroft High, the school that Sephy and Callum attend. However, unlike the private spaces of the beach and the rose garden, the school is public space, and even by the final novel *Double Cross*, interracial relationships are never fully accepted there. Paralleling Sephy, Callie Rose is harassed due to her association with noughts. On their way to school, Tobey and Callie Rose are taunted by Drew: 'Is this "lead-a-blanker-to-school day"' (p.76) and Callie Rose is later reminded that she is breaking social conventions by those who see her as a cross. This is strange to

her, as she is only seen as a cross in certain contexts and by certain people: 'I was a Cross now, was I? Funny how my status seemed to change depending on the eyes of the beholder' (p.98).

Heathcroft High is also a useful place for demonstrating a shift in social attitudes. By the time that Callie Rose is a teenager, there has been a significant shift in political climate due to a change of government (Kamal's political party is no longer in power). As Tobey narrates: 'Things had changed since my mum's day. Schools could no longer openly discriminate against us noughts and everyone had to stay in school until they were at least sixteen – nought or cross' (p.130). These changes are additionally reflected by Mrs Paxton's annual debate on equality. When Tobey loses the debate by a show of hands, Callie Rose is surprised that he is not disappointed. On the contrary, Tobey points out that he only lost by a margin, a vast improvement on the years before, and this, to Tobey's mind is proof of progression, a 'result' (p.427).

In this way, it can be argued that Callie Rose's, and to certain extent Tobey's purpose in the *Noughts and Crosses* series is to illustrate the sociological shift that has occurred within the space of the novels and to allow the reader to consider the similarities and differences that remain, despite political and social change. This is of course, a direct reflection of Western socio-political frameworks and the changes that have taken place in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

5.5 Mixed Race role models

According to Bradford, children's literature is 'a field of cultural production highly responsive to social change and to global politics, and crucially implicated in shaping the values of children and young people' (2008, p.2). If this is the case, then, selected texts, it has already been suggested, are initially perceived by many to make children from the dominant culture (white Western) more tolerant of people from other ethnic backgrounds. As Evans acknowledges: 'In general, educators support the idea that the use of multicultural literature is one vehicle through which teachers can give children the opportunity to experience the lives of others and support and encourage tolerance and understanding among children' (2010, p.95). (The alternative argument has, of course, been orchestrated by Mallan (2013) and Stephens (2011) as earlier discussed). However, do selected texts for children and young people serve a purpose for children who are themselves mixed race?

John Stephens writes that through children's literature the reader is 'encouraged to situate themselves inside the text by identifying with a principal character and its construction and experience of the world' (1992, p.4). This is in fact true of both young adult fiction and children's fiction, where young narrator(s), often around the same age as the target audience, are employed to support the young reader to engage with issues within the text. This is certainly the case in the *Noughts and Crosses* series as the story is mainly told by Sephy,

Callum and Callie Rose, all teenagers (although other characters such as Jude and Jasmine also contribute) who recount events in the first person. Equally, if 'texts create 'emotional space'' (Stephens, 1992, p.14), and a place for the reader to work out their own subject position, perhaps the selected texts, to a certain extent, serve the dual purpose of providing mixed and minority children with strategies for how it is possible to survive racism, whilst also assisting young mixed and minority individual's 'in sorting out their own unique' identities (Cole & Valentine, 2000, p.309).

This is also true of the three novels *Strawgirl*, *Hero* and *The Edge* which all, to varying degrees, show the protagonists experiencing racial bullying and confusion around their own identities, and end with a positive resolution to the character's identity crisis (a trajectory seen in most books for adults too). For the "dominant culture" child reader, then, such readings might discourage the child from engaging in racism, as they have witnessed the impact that racism has had on the characters in the novels. The text may also help children to challenge some of the myths regarding mixed race subjectivity as outlined in chapter 1. However, for the mixed race child, such characters may be able to be offered as 'positive role models' (Elkin, 2006, p.158).[177]

Yet, following the same mixed race trajectory as the adult texts makes this idea

---

[177] In the United States, multicultural children's books are seen, not only as identifying racism and dealing with issues around identity, but are also used to promote activism for social justice (See Cai, 2002; Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

a little problematic as the mixed race character only becomes "racially conscious" through a tragic event. In *Hero* for example, Hero lives a privileged and sheltered life before her father is captured. Seeing herself as 'special, different, darker-skinned obviously, but with hair curled into fashionable Greek-Style ringlets' (p.101), it is only when she comes face to face with an image of herself in the backstreets of London that she recognises how she is connected to the black people of the city and their daily 'trials and tribulations' (p.101): 'In a doorway to one of the tall, narrow buildings a girl met Hero's gaze; she was almost a mirror to Hero, same hair, same eyes, same brown, brown skin' (p.94).[178] This event allows Hero to shift from having no desire to hear her father's tales of slavery in the beginning: 'She didn't want to think about slavery or being kidnapped. Or being sold' (p.6), to actively encouraging him to inform her by the end: 'Tell me what it like was before you came to London. Pa smiled' (p.124). Like Maybe in *Strawgirl*, *Hero* thus seems to provide the message that access to a mixed identity with a positive affiliation to blackness and black history can only be obtained through a process of personal loss, adversity and eventual racial recognition.

A similar process is arguably in place for Callie Rose who also has to come to terms with the dead black (in this case, white nought) father in order to create stability and a firm sense of self. Since 'reading is an interactive process'

---

[178] This is not dissimilar from Karim's recognition in *The Buddha of Suburbia* that he has betrayed the Indians (p.212).

(McCallum, 1999, p.15) for both children and adolescents, it is likely that the adolescent reader may identify with Callie in a similar way to the younger reader with Hero or Maybe. In the case of the *Noughts and Crosses* series, however, this might be problematised if the mixed Callie Rose is read as a terrorist. (She does, after all, aim to detonate a bomb in a hotel). In these globally tempestuous times there can be no doubt that such narrative therefore treads a controversial path. Yet, Callie Rose's radicalisation is in part, somehow justified by and her parent's and her own experiences , and she eventually turns away from such activities and chooses the path of a human rights law instead (seen as a far more positive use of her emotions). Like the other children's text then, the *Noughts and Crosses* series closes on a positive note, with its protagonist's identity crisis resolved.

The arguments presented in this part of the chapter have been premised on the notion that '[a]ll stories imply subject positions' and that readers automatically see the world from the view point of the protagonist/s and identify accordingly (Nodelman, 2005, p.134). It would be worth, though, concluding on a rather crucial counter-argument and challenge: to point out that it is in fact impossible that all children and young readers do identify with characters, or, if they do, identify in the ways that the authors (and critics) would like them to do (Sarland, 2005, p.42). In fact, the reader 'can actively resist the subject positions offered by the text and take up new ways of being in the world. Thus the reader is not regulated in how he/she can be in society, but is an active member of society, co-constructing as it changes over time' (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p.3).

Botelho and Rudman's comments allude to the point that young adults and children can be savvy readers, drawing their own conclusions, or taking from texts what is useful and relevant to their lives. In this way, even when reading racist texts, young readers do not just automatically accept the text as "truth", but can often identify social injustice, or inequality. Nevertheless, this also means that the transfer of ideological/social messages and calls for identification may not always be answered or responded to by all who read texts. In this way, it cannot be guaranteed that mixed race children will identify with mixed characters or that readers will absorb positive ideas about mixed identities.

This chapter has explored the genre of children literature in great depth, finding some surprising and unexpected similarities between adult texts and those written for the older child reader and the young adult.[179] The chapter has also discussed how children's literature often promotes an image of a culturally diverse Britain in an attempt to encourage the young to accept and absorb the idea, thus becoming more tolerant citizens. Yet the chapter ends on a question: what does the reader gain from reading the literature discussed within this study, and can some of the same arguments and comments about identification with the protagonist also be relevant to the readings of literature for adults? How do the experiences of minorities and dominant culture readers differ when

---

[179] Similarities include, sexual danger within the texts, the overriding plots structure and the desire to reconstruct history.

reading novels such as *Lady Moses*, or *Trumpet*, and how do other factors such

as gender, age, and life experience interact with race to affect the reading

experience? As space and time is short, some recommendations for further

research into this will be suggested in the final part of this thesis: the

conclusion.

Conclusion

Mixed race individuals have been represented in many ways over the centuries, through science, fiction, across geographical locations and from a broad range of sociological perspectives. Yet mostly, in the past, representation has been negative and individuals have either been perceived as race traitors, taking advantage of the privileges open to the "near-white", or as confused hybrids, carrying the worst of their parents' traits or social conditions, unable to establish a place to call "home". Despite many major changes in British society's perception of race and interracial mixing, there still remain a number of received ideas, myths and stereotypes that have prevailed, and thus notions regarding the mixed race individual's intellectual capacity, sexuality and position as in-between two (or more) different cultures have been constantly repeated, recycled, and manipulated by politicians, academics and the mass media. Do the selected texts offer a potential solution to the problem of negative representation, or do they in fact continue to perpetuate preconceived notions of race and interracial mixing?

On one level, the thesis has revealed a tendency in most of the selected texts to return to some of the myths of chapter 1 when portraying the mixed race figure, the most prevalent being myth 1 where the concept of mixed race subjectivity as a site of fragmentation or fractured identity and confusion was

central to myth's construction. Myths 3 and 4 which focused on the interracial relationship and the mixed race family unit as dysfunctional have also been notably perpetuated, particularly in relation to the absent father and the often erratically unstable white mother figure in the texts. More widely, the selected texts have also preserved negative stereotypes relating to black hypersexuality and deviancy, particularly in *Lady Moses* and *Sugar and Slate*, and have retained the notion of the mixed race individual as a tragic figure through the repeated occurrence of parental death and rape/sexual violence within the plots.

Despite this, however, texts have also offered a solution to the problem of public perception by challenging preconceived notions of mixed race subjectivity, illustrating how the position can be one of exploration, global connection and inclusion. As has been clearly seen in *Sugar and Slate*, the texts have opened up "transnational spaces" (McLeod, 2002), demonstrating how alternative localities such as Africa and the United States can positively contribute to the mixed race individual's sense of self. This, it can be argued, presents the mixed position as less about straddling two separate localities, and more about a conscious reaching out to a variety of countries, ethnicities and ancestries, drawing upon all of them in meaningful and creative ways. Through transnational spaces the texts have also allowed for a rethinking of Britain and Britishness, stressing the importance of both regional identities (such as being a Londoner) as well as national identities (particularly in the case of Scotland and Wales) within the British state. Furthermore, the intermixture of the characters has exposed the state itself to be a patchwork of different peoples and histories,

challenging the notion of a homogenous "White Britain". Thus, it can be concluded, that the selected texts both perpetuate and challenge preconceived notions of race, interracial relationships and the mixed race individual.

With this in mind, then, the thesis also questioned to what extent the selected texts, and their authors, should be responsible for the portrayal of the mixed race figure (which of course, feeds into the broader debate as to whether artistic expression should be ruled by sociological authenticity). Should, for example, a writer like Charlotte Williams in *Sugar and Slate* write negatively about interracial relationships? Can or should mixed race/black characters be portrayed in a negative light? Who should be responsible for such writing: mixed race writers, black writers or white writers? For the most part writers have displayed protagonists that are not two dimensional, but have both positive and negative features, and if characters are not entirely favourable, such as the representation of Karim in *The Buddha of Suburbia,* these less desirable elements have not been directly attributed to the character's position as being mixed in the way that mixedness itself has been portrayed as a "tragic flaw" in the past. Nevertheless, as it has been argued, positive representations can be quite valuable, particularly in literature for young people when such portrayals may help mixed children and young adults to formulate a more positive sense of self.

Here, then, too, the selected texts for children may be read as a platform for showcasing a positive view of interracial mixing, but more widely as a means of

promoting the image of a diverse Britain through the use of illustrations and plots which feature characters from a range of ethnic backgrounds. This, it has been argued, is deliberately undertaken by authors (and the educational system) to teach the young that cultural diversity is "normal". The "visibility" of the mixed race protagonist within literature for the older child/young adult reader also has a normalising effect as characters are portrayed as "normal" children, and part of the human landscape of Britain, just like the reader. Yet such novels also have an anti-racist agenda, promoting racial tolerance by presenting scenarios where it is not present (especially the case in Blackman's novels and *The Edge*).

While the thesis has recognised that such an approach to the culturally diverse state of Britain and to the intermixing of different cultures in general is somewhat simplistic, re-presenting to young readers the Westernised world view (their view) as the correct one, it has also perceived the normalising of the mixed race individual in texts to be a useful tool in the reduction of the power of the myths outlined in chapter 1, and an overall challenge to preconceived notions of race. In fact, it would be progressive perhaps to see adult books alongside the selected texts with mixed characters who are presented without the constant need to either directly racialise them or to fit them into a racialised plot (a normalisation of multi-ethnicity that seems only offered to the young for the purpose of education, and not to the "grown-up" educators themselves). Television has managed to achieve this with the introduction of black, Asian and

mixed families into popular series, but British fiction it seems is a little way behind.

Perhaps the final question asked of this thesis may be about the selected text themselves: could such texts, written for both children and adults, be seen as interracial literature? Should they form their own genre or sub-category of black British literature? There are definite thematic similarities between texts that explore mixed race subjectivity and/or interracial relationships. As has been shown throughout the thesis, many of the texts convey the journey towards self-discovery and highlight a pressing need to forge links with non-British culture, regardless of if its origins (as seen with Kureishi's need for Pakistan and Kay's need for the red dust road of Nigeria, for example). Unlike other black British texts, the selected texts also consider how to "come to terms" with "white heritage" and, in a number of works, advocate for the inclusion of whiteness as an essential part of the narrative (particularly in the case of the white mother), an incredibly controversial and precarious task, as it disrupts set notions of "blackness" itself.

It is debateable as to whether calling for texts to formulate a sub-genre of their own is helpful, however, as to remove such literature entirely from the notion of a "black" canon of work, or from Black Cultural Studies itself would also do the selected texts a disservice. Such literature cannot and should not be taken in isolation from its past, or out of the context of wider political struggles, civil rights and identity politics. Equally, as illustrated throughout the thesis, black

identity, for many of the protagonists, as well as the autobiographers, is still of great importance and relevance and it would be irresponsible to disregard this.

Furthermore, it must also be noted that the project of re-envisioning British history to include black people within it is one contributed to by a number of black British texts and this (along with other themes such as racism, migration, the legacy of slavery and intergenerational conflict) is not exclusive to "interracial" works, but features heavily in British/black British texts that do not have mixed race characters in them. In Jean Rhys' transient and fluid novel, *Voyage in Dark* (1934), for example, the exploration of rootlessness, liminality and the unstable nature of race are all pressing and salient themes, and Anna, the protagonist, shares a similar hybridised space to some of the mixed race characters of the selected texts. In the urban novel *Some Kind of Black* (1997) by Diran Adebayo, shape shifting notions of ethnicity, migration and generational issues are thematised similarly to *The Buddha of Suburbia*, and, S.I. Martin's *Incomparable World* (1996), a historical novel which places black characters within a seventeenth century context, shares a similar desire to re-historicise and publish untold narratives just like *Hero* and *Sugar and Slate*.

Nevertheless, the field of black British Literature has been experiencing difficulties. The tectonic shifts in identity politics since the 1990s, coupled with Britain's experiences of devolution mean that not all contributors to this discourse of study are in agreement about the nature of "Black Britain" in the twenty-first century. Graeme Macdonald, for example, questions the legitimacy

of the term, asking '…does the 'break-up of Britain' imply the break-up of Black

Britain'? (2010, p.83), whilst Donnell points to those who have asked why black

British literature is not just British Literature, bringing into consideration the

necessity of the genre itself (Donnell, 2008, p.15). Certainly, what constitutes

black British culture has always been in a state of permanent motion and

remodelling, historically and sociologically, and, in terms of national space, is

continually being contested. Perhaps a solution to this is to challenge the way in

which texts (like people) are categorised. If, after all, Jackie Kay has been seen

as a black writer, a mixed writer, a female writer, a lesbian writer, a writer of

autobiography, fiction and poetry, a Scottish writer and a British writer, is it

unreasonable to suggest that the selected texts can be both black literature and

interracial literature, as well as fitting into a number of other genres from

children's literature to autobiography?[180]

Recommendations for further research

In the fields of Black Cultural Studies and Mixed Race Studies, there is much

scope for further research. This thesis has focused on literature as a medium by

which to address and explore the issues surrounding mixed race subjectivity;

however, a comparative exploration of literature and art, theatre, film or

---

[180] Jackie Kay herself in conversation with Richard Dyer has mentioned that the act of boxing writers in is, in itself, tiresome (Kay, 2008, p.57).

television representation would be also be extremely useful and may bolster

many of the arguments made within this research. Furthermore, consideration

of new media and the internet, and how it is shaping notions of race and

interracial interaction is also required. Lisa Nakamura has made a start with

Cyber Types: Race, Ethnicity and the Internet (2000) and is already drawing

fascinating parallels between the interconnectivity of the web and Mixed Race

Studies. Using the internet as a new mode of reading *Borderlands/La Frontera*,

for example, Nakamura writes:

> Anzaldúa has written her own search engine for racial and gender identity.
>
> She continually invokes and clicks through search terms such as *white,*
>
> *coloured, queer* and *race*, and has created her own kind of multicultural
>
> text that allows these terms to exist in webbed relation to each other, and
>
> to come together in the figure of the new mestiza (2000, p.112).[181]

Nevertheless, there is still much more investigative work to undertake and

much to be commented on as the world of social networking and international

communication speeds ever forwards.

Additionally, further comparisons can be made between geographical spaces.

Much of the research that formulates the body of current Mixed Race Studies

has been based around Britain (Song, 2001; Ifekwunigwe, 1997, 1999, 2001),

---

[181] Author's Italics.

the United States, (Root, 1992, 1995), and Commonwealth nations such as Canada (Taylor, 2008; Thompson, 2012; Mahtani, 2001) and New Zealand (Rocha, 2012; Somerville, 2002).[182] Yet, very few comparative studies or studies of non-Western representations exist, leaving behind focus on places such as Japan, China, South America and a number of the ex-British colonies today. Of this research fewer still are about literary representation, the only comparative texts the thesis has so far uncovered have been predominantly around literature from the United States (Sollors, 1997; Eve Allegra, 2004; Spickard, 2001; Leverette, 2006; Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013). This is a point expanded by Sollors who comments that: 'the most recent impulse in writing literary criticism has been to continue working within national frames that are at times corrected by an alternative focus on gender or race, more international comparisons could validate or make questionable some hypotheses of national, ethnic or gender-based idiosyncrasies in writing' (1997, p.10).

In addition to this, further research should also be undertaken to explore identities that do not involve whiteness, a request strongly made by researchers who fall within this category and who feel aggrieved that Mixed Race Studies has overlooked them (Mahtani & Moreno, 2001). As Mahtani writes: 'We cannot help but observe that non-white 'mixed race' voices are marginalised in

---

[182] Although this thesis has focused entirely on Anglophone novels, it should not be forgotten that there are mixed race representations in texts from non-English locations. See Srilata Ravi for discussion on Francophone writing, for example (2007).

current debates, and are not given equal and valuable consideration' (2001, p.71). The fact that 'popular conceptions of mixed race remain predominantly characterised in terms of a white-non-white dichotomy' (Mahtani & Moreno, 2001, p.71) is slowly being recognised by some such as Jayne O. Ifekwunigwe who looks critically at her own work and surmises that she has been perpetuating a 'persuasive and exclusive critical 'mixed race' discourse which does not transcend the current dominant Black/White 'mixed race' paradigm' (2001, p.46).

In terms of literature, this present thesis has not been able to identify any texts that explore characters that are British with non-white mixes, or have multiple heritages within contemporary British fiction. There is therefore not just a requirement for further research into such identities, but a need for additional literary representation too. Similarly, whereas some authors have focused on people of black and mixed descent in history and literature, further research should be undertaken to find hidden narratives. Interracial mixing has been a part of British society for centuries and therefore a more concerted effort could be made to identify the histories that have been forgotten and erased from the mainstream.

Finally, the thesis has focused attention on literary analysis as a methodology to expose ideology, to consider whether writers write for, or against, preconceived ideas of race, and as a mode by which to explore the implications of the selected works (i.e. on young children: see role models discussion in chapter 5).

However, reader response theory could also be applied to this topic as a measure of the "real world" consequences of the selected writing. Research of this nature has been carried out mainly with children's literature, but also in 2010 the methodology was used in the Devolving Diaspora's Project which enlisted the support of reading groups both in Scotland, and across the globe, to respond to a list of set texts of black British literature.[183] Such a technique could be applied to further studies to see how mixed race individuals and those of a non-mixed background respond to the texts and how age, gender, mix and "life experiences" (i.e. exposure to racism, for example) might influence readers' reactions.

Are mixed race people the people of the future? Does interracial mixing signal entry into a post-race era or the end of the racism (Dariotis, 2012, p.138)? Certainly this idea is problematic as the selected texts have shown that both race and racism are still a fundamental part of our society. Some theorists in the celebratory era of the 1990s were optimistic (Ifekwunigwe, 2004). Gloria Anzaldúa, for example, writes that the future 'belongs' to the mestiza as she bridges cultures and question traditional paradigms. For Anzaldúa, the mestiza opens the door to 'a new mythos – that is, a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave – *la mestiza* creates

---

[183] See www.devolvingdiaspora.com.

a new consciousness' (2004, p.141).[184] Yet, as Root states, 'eliminating race as a concept is not possible at this point in history' (2003, p.17).

What can be learnt from where society is now? Some clues may be provided in by the position of those who "trespass" over racial and cultural boundaries:

> Those to who the term 'mixed race' […] is applied are well placed to show the negation of race. They are, indeed, neither one thing nor the other but both, either or neither – they represent a melting away of racial signifiers, be these cultural, physical or political. They provide a reminder that race is not a 'thing' but an ideology that can be actively disputed (Olumide, 2002, p.179).

From the tragic mulatta to the modern one, fictional representations of the mixed race individual are both fascinatingly controversial, providing the opportunity, in the words of Jonathon Brennan, 'to gain new perspectives and thus renew ourselves' (Brennan, 2002, p.50).

---

[184] Author's italics.

Bibliography

Ackah, W. (2002) 'Pan-African Consciousness and Identity: Reflections on the Twentieth Century,' in Christian, M. (ed.) *Black Identity in the 20th Century: Expression of the US and UK African Diaspora*. London: Hansib, pp.4-31.

Adamson, D. (1999) 'The Intellectual and the National Movement in Wales', in Fevre, R. and Thompson, A. (eds.) *Nation, Identity and Social Theory*: *Perspectives from Wales.* Cardiff: University of Wales Press, pp.48-68.

Adebayo, D. (1997) *Some Kind of Black*. London: Abacus.

Ahmed, S. (1997) "It's a Sun-Tan, isn't it'? Auto-biography as an Identificatory Practice', in Mirza, H.S. (ed.) *Black British Feminism.* London: Routledge, pp.153-167.

Ahmed, S. (1998) *Differences that Matter: Feminist Theory and Postmodernism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ahn, J. (2014) 'Re-articulating Black Mixed-Race in an Era of Globalization', *Cultural Studies,* 28(3), pp.391-417 Taylor and Francis [Online]. Available

at: http://0-

www.tandfonline.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/095

02386.2013.840665 (Accessed: 8 June 2014).

Ali, S. (2003) *Mixed-Race, Post-Race: Gender, Ethnicities and Cultural Practices*.

Oxford: Berg.

Ali, S. (2005) 'Uses of the Exotic: Body, Narrative, Mixedness', in Alexander, C.

and Knowles, C. (eds.) *Making Race Matter: Bodies, Space and Identity*.

Basingstoke: Palgrave and Macmillan, pp.153-171.

Ali, S. (2007) 'Gendering Mixed-Race, Deconstructing Mixedness', in Sims, J.M.

(ed.) *Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice*, pp.7-9 [Online].

Available at:

http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspective

s-MixedHeritageFinal.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Alibhai-Brown, Y. (2001) *Mixed Feelings: The Complex Lives of Mixed-Race*

Britons. London: Women's Press Ltd.

Alibhai-Brown, Y. and Montague, A. (1992) *The Colour of Love: Mixed Race*

Relationships. London: Virago Press.

Alexander, C. and Knowles, C. (eds.) (2005) 'Introduction', in *Making Race Matter: Bodies, Space and Identity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave and Macmillan, pp.1-16.

All About Me. (2002-2004) Directed by Richard Boden and Nick Wood. Written by Steven Knight and Jasper Carrott. First broadcast 2002. London: BBC1.

Allman, K.M. (1996) '(Un) Natural Boundaries: Mixed Race, Gender and Sexuality', in Root, M.P.P. (ed.) *The Multiracial Experience: Racial Borders as the New Frontier*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp.277-290.

Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined Communities, Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, ACLS [Online]. Available at: http://0-hdl.handle.net.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/2027/heb.01609.0001.001 (Accessed: 11 July 2013).

Anderson, L. (2001) *Autobiography*. 2nd edn. E.B.L [Online]. Available at: http://reader.eblib.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Anzaldúa, G. (2004) '*La Conciencia de La Mestiza*: Towards a New Consciousness', in Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (ed.) *'Mixed Race' Studies: A Reader.* London: Routledge, pp.139-142.

Arana, R .V. (2004) 'Sea Change: Historicizing the Scholarly Study of Black British

Writing', in Arana, R.V. and Ramey, L. (eds.) *Black British Writing*, pp.19-

46 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.palgraveconnect.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Arana, R .V. and Ramey, L. (eds.) (2004) 'Introduction', in *Black British Writing,*

pp.1-18 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.palgraveconnect.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Aspinall, P. (2004) 'The Conceptualisation and Categorization of Mixed

Race/Ethnicity in Britain and North America: Identity Options and the

Role of the State', in Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (ed.) *'Mixed Race' Studies: A*

Reader. London: Routledge, pp.255-258.

Aspinall, J.P. and Song, M. (2013) *Mixed Race Identities*. Palgrave Connect

[Online]. Available at: http://0-www.palgraveconnect.com. (Accessed: 8

June 2014).

Aull Davies, C. (1999) 'Nationalism, Feminism and Welsh Women. Conflicts and

Accommodations', in Fevre, R. and Thompson, A. (eds.) *Nation, Identity*

and Social *Theory*: *Perspectives from Wales.* Cardiff: University of Wales

Press, pp.90-108.

Austen, J. (1817) 'Sandition', in *Lady Susan, the Watsons, Sandition*. Reprint. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974, pp. 155-222.

Back, L. (2005) ''Home From Home': Youth, Belonging and Place', in Alexander, C. and Knowles, C. (eds.) *Making Race Matter: Bodies, Space and Identity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave and Macmillan, pp.19-42.

Ballis Lal, B. (2001) 'Learning to do Ethnic Identity: the Transracial/Transethnic Adoptive Family as Site and Context', in Song, M. and Parker, D. (eds.) *Rethinking 'Mixed Race'.* London: Pluto, pp.154-172.

Barat, E. (2000) 'The Discourse of Selfhood: Oral Autobiographies as Narrative Sites for Construction of Identity', in Donnell, A. and Polkey, P. (eds.) *Representing Lives: Women and Auto/biography*, pp.165-173 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/doifinder/10.1057/9780230287440 (Accessed: 2 September 2014).

Barthé, D.G. (2012) 'Racial Revisionism, Caste Revisited: Whiteness, Blackness and Barack Obama', in Jolivette, A.J. (ed.) *Obama and the Biracial Factor: The Battle for a New American Majority*, pp.81-96 E.B.L [Online]. Available at: http://reader.eblib.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Bartky, S. L. (1998) 'Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal

    Power', in Diamond, I. and Quinby, L. (eds.) *Feminism and Foucault:*

    Reflections and Resistance. Boston: Northeastern University Press,

    pp.61-86.

BBC News Scotland. (2014) *Scottish Vote 'No' to Independence* [Online].

    Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-29270441

    (Accessed: 20 September 2014).

Beauvais, C. (2012) 'Romance, Dystopia and the Hybrid Child', in Hilton, E.M.

    and Nikolajeva, M. (eds.) *Contemporary Adolescent Literature and*

    Culture: The Emergent Adult. Fareham: Ashgate, pp.61-76.

Bellos, L. (1995) 'A Vision Back and Forth,' in Mason-John, V. (ed.) *Talking Black:*

    Lesbians of Asians and Black Descent Speak Out. London: Cassell, pp.52-

    71.

Benjamin, F. (2009) *My Two Grannies.* London: Francis Lincoln Children's Books.

Berkeley, R. (2007) 'Forward (citing Trevor Phillips' quotation)', in Sims, J.M.

    (ed.) *Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice*, pp.II-IV [Online].

    Available at:

    http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspective

    s-MixedHeritageFinal.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Bhattacharyya, G., Gabriel, J. and Small, S. (2002) *Race and Power: Global Racism in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Routledge.

Billig, M. (1995) *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage.

Binch, C. (2001) *Silver Shoes*. London: Dorling Kindersley.

Bista, K. (2012) 'Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults', *Educational Forum,* 76(3), pp.317-325 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.tandfonline.com (Accessed: 22 January 2013).

Blackman, M. (2001) *Noughts and Crosses.* London: Corgi.

Blackman, M. (2004) *Knife Edge*. London: Corgi.

Blackman, M. (2005) *Checkmate*. London: Corgi.

Blackman, M. (2009) *Double Cross*. London: Corgi.

Bland, L. (2005) 'White Women and Men of Colour: Miscegenation Fears in Britain after the Great War', *Gender & History*, 17(1), pp.29-61 Wiley [Online]. Available at:

http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.0953-

5233.2005.00371.x/abstract (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Bland, L. (2007) 'British Eugenics and 'Race Crossing': A study of an Interwar

Investigation', *New Formations,* 60, pp.66-78 Lwbooks [Online].

Available at:

http://www.newformations.co.uk/subscribers/nf60/nf60Bland.pdf

(Accessed: 5 July 2013).

Blyton, E. (1949-1964) *The Noddy Series*. London: Sampson Low.

Botelho, M.J. and Rudman, M.K. (2009) *Critical Multicultural Analysis of

Children's Literature: Mirrors, Windows, and Doors.* New York:

Routledge.

Bottero, W. (2009) 'Class in the 21st Century', in Páll, S.K. (ed.) *Who Cares About

the Working Class?,* pp.7-14 [Online]. Available at:

http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/WhoCaresA

boutTheWhiteWorkingClass-2009.pdf (Accessed: 3 July 2013).

Bradford, C. (2010) 'Race, Ethnicity and Colonialism', in Rudd, D. (ed.) *The

Routledge Companion to Children's Literature*, pp.39-50 E.B.L [Online].

Available at: http://reader.eblib.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Bradford, C. *et al.* (2008) *New World Orders in Contemporary Children's Literature: Utopian Transformations.* Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.palgraveconnect.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Bradford, J. and Sartwell, C. (1997) 'Voiced Bodies/Embodied Voices', in Zack, N. (ed.) *Race/sex: Their Sameness, Difference and Interplay.* New York: Routledge, pp.191-203.

Bradman, T. and Browne, E. (1988) *Wait and See*. London: Methuen Children's Books.

Bradshaw, C. (1992) 'Beauty and the Beast: on Racial Ambiguity', in Root, M.P.P. (ed.) *Racially Mixed People in America*. California: Sage, pp.77-88.

Brennan, J. (ed.) (2002) 'Introduction', in *Mixed Race Literature*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp.1-52.

Brown, M. (2007) 'In/Outside: Race and Citizenship in the Work of Jackie Kay', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature*, pp.219-226 Dawson [Online]. Available at: https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9780748630288 (Accessed: 12 October 2014).

Brown, N.G. and Douglass, R.E. (2003) 'Evolution of Multiracial Organizations: Where We Have Been and Where we are Going,' in Winters, L. and Debose, H.L. (eds.) *New Faces in a Changing America: Multiracial Identity in the 21st Century.* Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp.111-124.

Bryce, J. (2008) '"Half and Half Children": Third-Generation Women Writers and the New Nigerian Novel', *Research in African Literatures*, 39(2), pp.49-67 JSTOR [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.jstor.org.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/stable/pdfplus/20109578.pdf ?acceptTC=true&jpdConfirm=true (Accessed: 24 November 2014).

Butler, J. (2006) *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* Classics edn. London: Routledge.

Caballero, C. (2007) "Mixed' Families: Assumptions and New Approaches,' in Sims, J.M. (ed.) *Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice*, pp.22-24 [Online]. Available at: http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspectives-MixedHeritageFinal.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Caballero, C. and Edwards, R. (2010) *Lone Mothers of Mixed Racial and Ethnic Children: Then and Now* [Online]. Available at: http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/LoneMothers-2010.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Cai, M. (2002) *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults: Reflections on Critical Issues.* Westport: Greenwood Press.

Cameron, D. (2011) *PM's Speech at Munich Security Conference.* 5th February 2011 [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference (Accessed: 28 July 2014).

Camper, C. (2004) 'Into the Mix,' in Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (ed.) *'Mixed Race' Studies: A Reader*. London: Routledge, pp.176-182.

Cantle, T. (2001) *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team* [Online]. Available at: http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/DownloadDocumentsFile.aspx?recordId=96&file=PDFversion (Accessed: 28 July 2014).

Carby, H.V. (1997) 'White Woman Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood', in Mirza, H.S. (ed.) *Black British Feminism*. London: Routledge, pp.45-53.

Cashmore, E.E. (1989) *United Kingdom? Class, Race and Gender Since the War.* London: Unwin Hyman.

Chesnutt, C. (1900) *The House Behind the Cedars*. Reprint. London: Collier-

Macmillan, 1969.

Chodorow, N. (1989) *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory.* London: Yale

University.

Choudhry, S. (2010) *Multifaceted Identity of Interethnic Young People:*

Chameleon Identities. Farnham: Ashgate.

Christian, M. (2000) *Multiracial Identity: An International Perspective*.

Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Cixious, H. (1989) 'Sorties: Out and Out: Attacks/Ways Out/Forays', in Belsey, C.

and Moore, J. (eds.) *The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the*

Politics of Literary Criticism. London: Macmillan, pp.101-116.

Clausen, J. (1999) 'My Interesting Condition', in Storr, M. (ed.) *Bisexuality: a*

Critical Reader. London: Routledge, pp.107-111.

Cole, E.M. and Valentine, D.P. (2000) 'Multiethnic Children Portrayed in

Children's Picture Books', *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*,

17(4), pp.305-317 EBSCO [Online]. Available at:

http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 22 January 2013).

Coleman, J.C. (2011) *The Nature of Adolescence*. 4th edn. E.B.L [Online]. Available at: http://warw.eblib.com (Accessed: 7 July 2013).

Collins, P. (1991) *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.

Dagbovie-Mullins, S.A. (2013) *Crossing B(l)ack: Mixed Race Identity in Modern American and Culture.* EBL [Online]. Available at: http://reader.eblib.com (Accessed: 5 July 2013).

Dariotis, W.M. (2012) 'Mixed Race Kin-aesthetics in the Age of Obama,' in Jolivette, A.J. (ed.) *Obama and the Biracial Factor: The Battle for a New American Majority,* pp.129-139 E.B.L [Online]. Available at: http://reader.eblib.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Dariotis, W.M. and Yoo, G.J. (2012) 'Obama's Mamas and Mixed Race: Hoping for "a More Perfect Union"', in Jolivette, A.J. (ed.) *Obama and the Biracial Factor: The Battle for a New American Majority,* pp.99-112 E.B.L [Online]. Available at: http://reader.eblib.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Davis, J.F. (2001) *Who is Black?: One Nation's Definition.* 10th edn. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University.

Dawes, K. (1999) 'Negotiating the Ship on the Head: Black British Fiction', *Wasafiri,* 14(29), pp.18-24 Taylor and Francis [Online.] Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02690059908589622 (Accessed: 8 November 2014).

Devolving Diaspora Project. (2007-2010) [Online]. Available at: www.devolvingdiaspora.com (Accessed: 28 December 2014).

Donald, P. and, Gosling, S. (1995) '"No Problem Here" Action Research Against Racism in a Mainly White Area', *British Educational Research Journal*, 21(3), pp.263-275 EBSCO [Online]. Available at: http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 9 April 2013).

Donnell, A. (2000) 'When Writing the Other is Being True to the Self: Jamaica Kincaid's *The Autobiography of My Mother'*, Polkey, P. (ed.) *Women's Lives into Print: Theory Practice and the Writing of Feminist Auto/biography*, pp. 123-136 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/doifinder/10.1057/9780230374577 (Accessed: 28 December 2014).

Donnell, A. (2007) 'Welsh and West Indian, "Like Nothing … Seen Before":

Unfolding Diasporic Lives in Charlotte Williams' *Sugar and Slate'*,

Anthurium, 6(2) pp.1-26 [Online]. Available at:

http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1161

&context=anthurium (Accessed: 12 October 2014).

Donnell, A. (2008) 'Nation and Contestation: Black British Writing', *Wasafiri*,

17(36), pp.11-17 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.tandfonline.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/026

90050208589781 (Accessed: 9 November 2014).

Doughty, S. (2011) 'Two Million of Mixed Race Living in Britain... and they may

be the Nation's Biggest Ethnic Minority', *Daily Mail*, 17 October [Online].

Available at: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2046197/British-

population-Are-mixed-race-people-Britains-biggest-ethnic-minority.html

(Accessed: 13 December 2012).

During, S. (2005) *Cultural Studies: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge.

Dyer, R. (1997) *White*. London: Routledge.

Eagleton, T. (1983) *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Oxford, Blackwell.

Elam, M. (2009) 'The Mis-Education of Mixed Race', in Mcdonald, A.A. and

Sanchez-Casal, S. (eds.) *Identity in Education,* pp.131-150 Palgrave

Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.palgraveconnect.com

(Accessed: 7 July 2013).

Elkin, J. (2006) 'Children as readers', in Butler, C. (ed.) *Teaching Children's*

Fiction, pp.152-171 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/doifinder/10.

1057/9780230379404 (Accessed: 20 May 2014).

Equiano, O. (1791) *Equiano's Travels: The Interesting Narrative of the Life of*

Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa the African. Reprint. Edited and

abridged by Paul Edwards. Oxford: Heinemann, 1996.

Evans, S. (2010) 'The Role of Multicultural Literature Interactive Read-Alouds on

Student Perspectives Toward Diversity', *Journal of Research in*

Innovative Teaching, 3(1), pp.92-104 EBSCO [Online]. Available at:

http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 20

January 2013).

Evaristo, B. (1997) *Lara*. Tunbridge Wells: Angela Royal.

Fanon, F. (1968) *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann.

London: Macgibbon and Kee.

Feathers, K.M. and Araya, P. (2012) 'The Role of Illustrations During Children's

   Reading', *Journal of Children's Literature,* 38(1), pp.36-43 EBSCO

   [Online]. Available at: http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-

   web/ehost/ (Accessed: 20 January 2013).

Fella, S. and Bozzinni, E. (2012) 'Fighting Racism in the United Kingdom: a

   Multicultural Legacy and a Multi-Faceted Movement', in Fella, S. and

   Ruzza, C. (eds.) *Anti-Racist Movements in the EU: Between*

   Europeanization and National Trajectories, pp.53-81 Palgrave Connect

   [Online]. Available at: http://0-

   www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/doifinder/10.

   1057/9781137284662 (Accessed: July 2014).

Fletcher, M.E. (1930) 'The Colour Problem in Liverpool', *Liverpool Review*,

   pp.421-424.

Foucault, M. (1986) 'Truth and Power'. Interviewed by Alessandro Fontana and

   Pasquale Pasquino, in Rabinow, P. (ed.) *The Foucault Reader: An*

   Introduction to Foucault's Thoughts. London: Penguin Books, 1991, pp.

   51-76.

Frankenberg, R. (1993) *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Fryer, P. (1984) *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain.* London: Pluto.

Füredi, F. (1998) *The Silent War: Imperialism and the Changing Perceptions of Race*. London: Pluto Press.

Füredi, F. (2001) 'How Sociology Imagined 'Mixed Race', in Song, M. and Parker, D. (eds.) *Rethinking 'Mixed Race'*. London: Pluto, pp.23-41.

Gardiner, M. (2005) *Modern Scottish Culture*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Gardiner, M. (2011) 'Introduction', in Gardiner, M., Macdonald, G. and O'Gallagher, N. (eds.) *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp.1-12.

Gardiner, M. and Westall, C. (eds.) (2013) 'Introduction', in *Literature of an Independent England: Revisions of England, Englishness and English Literature*, pp.1-12 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/literature201 3 (Accessed: 2 September 2014).

Gibbons, A. (2002) *The Edge*. London: Orion's Children's Books.

Gilroy, P. (1987) *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: the Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. London: Hutchinson.

George, S. (1999) 'Women and Bi-sexuality', in Storr, M. (ed.) *Bi-sexuality: a Critical Reader*. London: Routledge, pp.100-106.

Goodyer, A. and Okitikpi, T. (2007) '"…But…But I am Brown." The Ascribed Categories of Identity: Children and Young People of Mixed Parentage', *Child Care in Practice*, 13(2), pp.83-94 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13575270701201169#.V KAQzMDpA4 (Accessed: 20 January 2013).

Graham, J. (2005) 'Reading Contemporary Picture Books', in Reynolds, K. (ed.) *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduct*ion. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, p.209-226.

Gramich, K. (2007) *Twentieth-Century Women's Writing in Wales: Land, Gender, Belonging*. Cardiff: University of Wales.

Griffin, N. (2009) 'Interview with Jon Snow'. *Channel 4 News*. [Online]. Available

at:

http://www.channel4.com/news/articles/politics/domestic_politics/griff

in%2Baposit%2Bis%2Bnot%2Babout%2Bcolourapos/3227657.html

(Accessed: 11 November 2014).

Guasp, A. and Kibirige, H. (2012) 'One Minority at a Time. Being Black and Gay'

[Online]. Available at:

http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/OneMinorit

yAtATime-2012.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Hall, S. (1996) 'New Ethnicities', in Morley, D. and Chen, K.H. (eds.) *Stuart Hall:*

Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies. London: Routledge.

Hall, S. (1997) *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*.

London: Sage.

Halter, M. (2000) *Shopping for Identity: The Marketing of Ethnicity*. New York:

Schocken Books.

Hargreaves, T. (2003) 'The Power of the Ordinary Subversive in Jackie Kay's

"Trumpet"', *Feminist Review,* 74, pp.2-16 JSTOR [Online]. Available at:

http://www.jstor.org/stable/1395948 (Accessed: 23 March 2013).

Harry Enfield and Chums. (1994-1997) Directed by Dominic Brigstocke, Geoff

    Posner and John Stroud. Written by Harry Enfield, Dave Cummings, Gary

    Howe, et al. London: BBC1.

Hershel, H.J. (1997) 'The Influence of Gender and Race Status on Self-esteem

    During Childhood and Adolescence', in Zack, N. (ed.) *Race/Sex: Their*

    Sameness, Difference and Interplay. New York: Routledge, pp.109-115.

Hickman, M. (2000) 'A New England through Irish Eyes', in Chen, S. and Wright,

    T. (eds.) *The English Question*. London: Fabian, pp.96-110.

hooks, b. (1992) *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Boston: South End Press.

hooks, b. (1995) *Killing Rage, Ending Racism*. London: Penguin.

Huddart, D. (2008) *Postcolonial Theory and Autobiography: Routledge Research*

    in Postcolonial Literatures. London: Routledge.

Hunt, P. (1994) *An Introduction to Children's Literature*. Oxford: Oxford

    University Press.

Hunt, P. (ed.) (2005) 'Introduction: The Expanding World of Children's Literature

    Studies', in *Understanding Children's Literature: Key Essays from the*

Second Edition of the International Companion Encyclopaedia of Children's Literature. 2nd edn. London: Routledge, pp.1-14.

Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (1997) 'Diaspora's Daughters, African Orphans?: On Lineage, Authenticity and 'Mixed Race' Identity', in Mirza, H.S. (ed.) *Black British Feminism*. London: Routledge, pp.127-152.

Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (1999) *Scattered Belongings: Cultural Paradoxes of "Race", Nation and Gender*. London: Routledge.

Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (2001) 'Re-Membering 'Race': On Gender, 'Mixed Race' and the Family in the English-African Diaspora', in Song, M. and Parker, D. (eds.) *Rethinking 'Mixed Race'.* London: Pluto, pp.42-64.

Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (ed.) (2004) 'Introduction', in *'Mixed Race' Studies: A Reader*. London: Routledge, pp.1-29, and pp.137.

Intermix. (2012) Home Page [Online]. Available at: http://www.intermix.org.uk/homepages/homepage_default.asp (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Jacobs, J.H. (1992) 'Identity Development in Biracial Children', in Root, M.P.P. (ed.) *Racially Mixed People in America*. California: Sage, pp.190-206.

Jagose, A.M. (1996) *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. New York: New York

University Press.

Johnson, C.R. (2001) *Hero*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jones, L. (1994) *Bullet Proof Diva: Tales of Race, Sex and Hair*. London: Penguin.

Jordan, J. (1995) 'A New Politics of Sexuality', in Andersen, M.L. and Collins, P.

(eds.) *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology.* 2nd edn. Belmont:

Wadsworth, pp.429-433.

Kamali, L. (2009) 'The Sweet Part and the Sad Part: Black Power and the

Memory of African America and Black British Literature', *Atlantic*

Studies, 6(2), pp.207-221 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.tandfonline.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/147

88810902981084#.VGJVDWdyaUk (Accessed: 11 November 2014).

Kaniuk, R. (2010) 'Racially Diverse Celebrities are Most Attractive', *Star*, 15 April

[Online]. Available at:

http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/view/130924/Racially-diverse-

celebrities-are-most-attractive/ (Accessed: 07 July 2013).

Katz, I. (1996) *The Construction of Racial Identity in Children of Mixed*

Parentage: Mixed Metaphors. London: J. Kingsley Publishers.

Kay, J. (1998) *Trumpet*. London: Picador.

Kay, J. (1999) 'Jackie Kay in Conversation with Richard Dyer about her New

Collection of Poetry*, Off Colour*', *Wasafiri*, 14(29), pp.57-61 Taylor

Francis [Online]. Available at:

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02690059908589637#.V

KFCKsDpA4 (Accessed: 13 July 2013).

Kay, J. (1999) 'Jackie Kay in Conversation with Maya Jaggi about her First Novel,

Trumpet', *Wasafiri*, 14(29), pp.53-56 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at:

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02690059908589637#.V

KFCKsDpA4 (Accessed: 23 March 2013).

Kay, J. (2002) *Strawgirl*. London: Macmillan.

Kay, J. (2002) 'Big Milk', in *Why Don't You Stop Talking* London: Picador, pp.21-

36.

Kay, J. (2002) 'Shell', in *Why Don't You Stop Talking.* London: Picador, pp.135-

156.

Kay, J. (2002) 'Timing', in *Why Don't You Stop Talking*. London: Picador, pp.51-

64.

Kay, J. (2010) *Red Dust Road*. London: Picador.

Kay, J. (2010) 'Stories and Survival: an Interview with Jackie Kay'. Interviewed by

Maggie Gee. *Wasafiri*, 25(4), pp.19-22. Taylor Francis [Online]. Available

at:

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02690055.2010.510366#.

VGJXCmdyaUk (Accessed: 11 November 2014).

Kelen, C.K. and Sundmark, B. (eds.) (2013) *The Nation in Children's Literature:*

Nations of Childhood. Dawson Era [Online]. Available at:

https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9780203104279 (Accessed: 20

September 2014).

King, O. (2010) 'At last! It's Cool to be Mixed Race (Which is Handy Because I'm

African, American, Jewish, Geordie, Irish, Scottish and Hungarian)', *Daily*

Mail, 25 April [Online]. Available at:

2012<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-1268580/At-Its-cool-

mixed-race-handy-Im-African-American-Jewish-Geordie-Irish-Scottish-

Hungarian.html (Accessed: 13 December 2012).

King-O'Riain, R.C. (2012) 'Is No One as Irish as Barack O'bama?', in Jolivette, A.J.

(ed.) *Obama and the Biracial Factor: The Battle for a New American*

Majority, pp.113-127 E.B.L [Online]. Available at:

http://reader.eblib.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Kitch, G.K. (1996) 'In the Margins of Sex and Race: Difference, Marginality and

Flexibility', in Root, M.P.P. (ed.) *The Multiracial Experience: Racial*

Borders as the New Frontier. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp.263-276.

Kokopeli, B. and Lakey, G. (1995) 'More Power Than We Want: Masculine

Sexuality and Violence', in Andersen, M.L. and Collins, P. (eds.) *Race,*

Class and Gender: An Anthology. 2nd edn. Belmont: Wadsworth, pp.450-

456.

Knowles, C. (2005) 'Making Whiteness: British Lifestyle Migrants in Hong Kong',

in Alexander, C. and Knowles, C. (eds.) *Making Race Matter: Bodies,*

Space and Identity. Basingstoke: Palgrave and Macmillan, pp.90-110.

Krishnan, M. (2014) *Contemporary African Literature in English: Global*

Locations, Postcolonial Identifications Palgrave Connect [Online].

Available at: http://0-

www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/doifinder/10.

1057/9781137378330 (Accessed: 10 January 2015).

Kureishi, H. (1986) *My Beautiful Laundrette and the Rainbow Sign*. London:

Faber and Faber.

Kureishi, H. (1990) *The Buddha of Suburbia*. London: Faber and Faber. Picture

Larsen, N. (1928 & 1929) *Quicksand and Passing*. Reprint. New Brunswick:

Rutgers University Press, 1986.

Lee Nelson's Well Good Show. (2010-2011) Directed by Peter Orton. Written by

Simon Brodkin. First broadcast 2010. London: BBC3.

Lesnik-Oberstein, K. (ed.) (2004) 'Introduction', in *Children's Literature: New*

Approaches. pp. 1-24 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/doifinder/10.

1057/9780230523777 (Accessed: 20 May 2014).

Leverette, T. (2006) 'Traveling Identities. Mixed Race Quests and Fran Ross's

Oreo', *African American Review,* 40(1), pp.79-91 EBSCO [Online].

Available at: http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/

(Accessed: 15 January 2013).

Lewis, D. (2001) *Reading Contemporary Picture Books: Picturing Texts*. London:

Routledge.

Lewis, M.B. (2010) 'Why are Mixed-Race People Perceived as More Attractive?'

Perception, 39(1), pp.136-138 EBSCO [Online]. Available at:

http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 12 January 2013).

Little Britain. (2003-2006) Directed by Steve Bendelack, Matt Lipsey, Declan Lawney and Geoff Posner. Written by Matt Lucas and David Walliams. First broadcast 2003. London: BBC3 & BBC1.

Lima, M.H. (2004) 'The politics of Teaching Black *and* British', in *Black British Writing,* pp.47-62 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.palgraveconnect.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Lorde, A. (1995) 'Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference', in Andersen, M.L. and Collins, P. (eds.) *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology.* 2nd edn. Belmont: Wadsworth, pp.532- 540.

Lumsden, A. (2000) 'Jackie Kay's Poetry and Prose Constructing Identity', in Christianson, A. and Lumsden, A. (eds.) *Contemporary Scottish Writers*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University.

Lynch, R. (2001) 'Appendix C: 'An Analysis of the Concept of Community Cohesion', in Cantle, T. *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team* [Online]. Available at: http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Docu

ment/DownloadDocumentsFile.aspx?recordId=96&file=PDFversion

(Accessed: 28 July 2014).

Macdonald, G. (2010) 'Race and Racism in Devolutionary Fiction', *Orbis*

Litterarum, 65(2), pp.79-101 EBSCO [Online]. Available at:

http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 9

April 2013).

Mafe, D.A. (2012) 'Ghostly Girls in the 'Eerie Bush'. Helen Oyeyemi's *The Icarus*

Girl as Postcolonial Female Gothic', *Research in African Literatures*,

43(3), pp.21-35 ProQuest [Online]. Available at: http://0-

literature.proquest.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/searchFulltext.do?id

=R04721114&divLevel=0&queryId=2833688678382&trailId=14948021E8

A&area=mla&forward=critref_ft (Accessed: 24 November 2014).

Mahtani, M. (2001) 'I'm a Blonde-haired Blue-eyed, Black Girl': Mapping Mobile

Paradoxical Space among Multiethnic Women in Toronto, Canada', in

Song, M. and Parker, D. (eds.) *Rethinking 'Mixed Race'*. London: Pluto,

pp.173-191.

Mahtani, M. and Moreno, A. (2001) 'Same Difference: Towards a More Unified

Discourse, in 'Mixed Race' Theory', in Song, M. and Parker, D. (eds.)

Rethinking 'Mixed Race'. London: Pluto, pp.65-75.

Malik, S. (2002) *Representing Black Britain: Black and Asian Images on Television.* London: Sage.

Mallan, K. (2013) 'Empathy, Narrative Empathy and Children's Literature', in Wu, Y., Mallan, K. and McGillis, R. (eds.) *(Re)imagining the World: Children's Literature's Response to Changing Times,* pp.105-114 Springer Link [Online]. Available at: http://0-link.springer.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/book/10.1007%2F978-3-642-36760-1 (Accessed: 20 May 2014).

Marcus, L. (1994) *Auto/biographical Discourses: Theory, Criticism, Practise*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Martin, S.I. (1996) *Incomparable World*. London: Quartet.

McCallum, R. (1999) *Ideologies of Identity in Adolescent Fiction*: *The Dialogic Construction of Subjectivity.* New York: Garland Pub.

McClain DaCosta, K. (2007) *Making Multiracials: State, Family and Market in the Redrawing of the Color Line.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Mckenzie, L. (2013) 'Narratives from a Nottingham Council Estate: a Story of White Working-class Mothers with Mixed-Race Children', *Ethnic and Race Studies*, 36(8), pp.1342-1358 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at:

http://0-

www.tandfonline.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/014

19870.2013.776698 (Accessed: 8 June 2014).

McLeod, J. (2000) *Beginning Postcolonialism*. Manchester: Manchester

University Press.

McLeod, J. (2002) 'Some Problems with "British"; in a Black British Canon',

Wasafiri, 17(36), pp.56-59 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.tandfonline.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/026

90050208589791 (Accessed: 6 October 2014).

McLeod, J. (2012) 'Taking Shortcuts: Literary Perspectives of the Black Atlantic ',

in Ledent, B. and Cuder-Domínguez, P. (eds.) *New Perspectives on the*

Black Atlantic: Definitions, Readings, Practices, Dialogues. Bern: Peter

Lang, pp.135-153.

Merchant, E. (2010) *Dad David, Baba Chris and Me*. London: BAAF.

Messner, M. (1995) 'Masculinities and Athletic Careers', in Andersen, M. and

Collins, P. (eds.) *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology*. 2nd edn. Belmont:

Wadsworth, pp.165-181.

Miletsky, Z.V. (2012) 'Mutt Like Me. Barack Obama and the Mixed Race

    Experience in Historical Perspective', in Jolivette, A.J. (ed.) *Obama and*

    the Biracial Factor: The Battle for a New American Majority, pp.141-166

    E.B.L [Online]. Available at: http://reader.eblib.com (Accessed: 12 July

    2013).

Mirza, H.S. (ed.) (1997) 'Introduction: Mapping a Genealogy of Black British

    Feminism', in *Black British Feminism.* London: Routledge, pp.1-28.

Mullard, C. (1973) *Black Britain.* London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Mycock, A. (2012) 'SNP, Identity and Citizenship: Reimagining State and Nation',

    National Identities, 14(1), pp.53-69 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at:

    http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cnid20 (Accessed: 12 October 2014).

Mycock, A. (2013) 'Understanding the Post-British English Nation State', in

    Westall, C. and Gardiner, M. (eds.) *Literature of an Independent England:*

    Revisions of England, Englishness and English Literature, pp.15-30

    Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at:

    www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/literature201

    3 (Accessed: 2 September 2014).

Nairn, T. (1981) *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism*. 2nd edn.

    London: NLB.

Nakamura, L. (2002) *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet*.
New York: Routledge.

Nakashima, C. (1992) 'An Invisible Monster: The Creation and Denial of Mixed-
Race People in America', in Root, M.P.P. (ed.) *Racially Mixed People in
America*, California: Sage, pp.162-178.

Nakashima, C. (2004) 'Servants of Culture: The Symbolic Role of Mixed Race
Asians in American Discourse', in Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (ed.) *'Mixed Race'
Studies: A Reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 271-275.

Nikolajeva, M. (2006) 'Word and Picture' in Butler, C. (ed.) *Teaching Children's
Fictio*n, pp. 106-151 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-
www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/doifinder/10.
1057/9780230379404 (Accessed: 20 May 2014).

Nixon, S. (1997) 'Exhibiting Masculinity', in Hall, S. (ed.) *Representation: Cultural
Representations and Signifying Practices.* London: Open University Press,
pp.291-330.

Nodelman, P. (2005) 'Decoding the Image: How Picture Books Work', in Hunt, P.
(ed.) *Understanding Children's Literature: Key Essays from the Second*

Edition of the International Companion Encyclopaedia of Children's

Literature. 2ⁿᵈ edn. London: Routledge, pp.128-139.

Office for National Statistics. (2012) *Ethnicity and National Identity in England*

and Wales 2011 [Online]. Available at:

http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-

local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt-ethnicity.html (Accessed: 12

June 2013).

Olumide, J. (2002*) Raiding the Gene Pool: The Social Construction of Mixed Race*.

London: Pluto.

Olumide, J. (2007) 'People in Harmony', in Sims, J.M. (ed.) *Mixed Heritage –*

Identity, Policy and Practice, pp.27-29 [Online]. Available at:

http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspective

s-MixedHeritageFinal.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Osuwu-Bempah, K. (2005) 'Mulatto, Marginal Man, Half-Caste, Mixed Race: the

One Drop Rule in Professional Practice', in Okitikpi, T. (ed.) *Working with*

Children of Mixed Parentage. Derby: Russell House, pp.27-44.

Ouma, C. (2014) 'Reading the Diasporic *Abiku* in Helen Oyeyemi's *The Icarus*

Girl', *Research in African Literatures,* 45(3), pp.188-205 Muse [Online].

Available at: http://0-

muse.jhu.edu.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/journals/research_in_african_l

iteratures/v045/45.3.ouma.pdf (Accessed: 24 November 2014).

Owen, C. (2001) ''Mixed Race' in Official Statistics', in Song, M. and Parker, D.

(eds.) *Rethinking 'Mixed Race'*. London: Pluto, pp.134-153.

Owen, C. (2007) 'Statistics: the Mixed Category in Census 2001', in Sims, J.M.

(ed.) *Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice,* pp.1-4 [Online].

Available at:

http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspective

s-MixedHeritageFinal.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Oxford Reading Tree. (2013) [Online]. Available at:

http://www.oup.com/oxed/primary/oxfordreadingtree/ (Accessed: 12

June 2013).

Oyeyemi, H. (2005) *The Icarus Girl*. London. Bloomsbury.

Parekh, B. (2011) 'Multiculturalism and Cultural Pluralism', in *Talking Politics:*

Bhikhu Parekh in Conversation with Ramin Jahanbegloo, pp.1-19 Oxford

Scholarship [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.oxfordscholarship.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/10.1093/a

cprof:oso/9780198071549.001.0001/acprof-9780198071549 (Accessed: 28 July 2014).

Patel, T.G. (2009) *Mixed-Up Kids? Race, Identity and Social Order.* Dorset: Russell House Publishing.

People in Harmony (2013) [Online]. Available at: http://www.pih.org.uk/ (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

People Just Do Nothing. (2014) Directed by Jack Clough. Written by Steve Stamp. First broadcast 2014. London: BBC3.

Phillips, M. and Phillips, T. (1998) *Windrush: the Irresistible rise of Multi-racial Britain.* London: HarperCollins.

Pilgrim, A.N. (1995) 'A Literary Movement', in Mason-John, V. (ed.) *Talking Black. Lesbians of African and Asian Descent Speak Out.* London: Cassell, pp.151-185.

Pinsent, P. (2005) 'Postmodernism, New Historicism and Migration: New Historical Novels', in Reynolds, K. (ed.) *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction,* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, p.173-190.

Pinsent, P. (2005) 'Language, Genre and Issues: the Socially Committed Novel',

in Reynolds, K. (ed.) *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction,*

Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, p.191-208.

Pinto, S. (2010) 'The World and the "Jar"': Jackie Kay and the Feminist Futures

of the Black Diaspora", *Atlantic Studies*, 7(3), pp.263-284 Taylor Francis

[Online]. Available at:

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14788810.2010.495196#

.VKFC2cDpA4 (Accessed: 23 March 2013).

Prabhudas, Y. (1999) 'Bisexuals and People of Mixed-Race: Arbiters of Change',

in Storr, M. (ed.) *Bisexuality: a Critical Reader.* London: Routledge,

pp.150-151.

Price, D.L.P. (2003) 'Masculine Multiracial Comedians', in Winters, L. and

Debose, H.L. (eds.) *New Faces in a Changing America: Multiracial*

Identity in the 21st Century. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp.323-332.

Raimon, E.A. (2004) *The "Tragic Mulatta" Revisited: Race and Nationalism in*

Nineteenth-Century Antislavery Fiction. New Brunswick: Rutgers

University Press.

Ranasinha, R. (2002) *Hanif Kureishi*. Hordon: Northcote Publishers.

Ravi, S. (2007) 'Métisse Stories and the Ambivalent Nature of Cultural
Belonging', *Intercultural Studies,* 28(1), pp.15-26 Taylor Francis [Online].
Available at:
http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07256860601082905#.V
KFDCsDpA4 (Accessed: 20 January 2013).

Reynolds, K. (ed.) (2005) 'Introduction', in *Modern Children's Literature: An
Introduct*ion. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.1-7.

Richardson, M. (2012) '"My Father didn't have a dick". Social Death in Jackie
Kay's *Trumpet'*, *A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 18(2-3), pp.361-
379 EBSCO [Online]. Available at:
http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 9
April 2013).

Rhodes, J. (2013) 'Remaking Whiteness in a Postracial UK', in Kapoor, N., Kalra,
V.S. and Rhodes, J. (eds.) *The State of Race*, pp.49-71 Palgrave Connect
[Online]. Available at: http://0-
www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac
rHYS.uk/pc/doifinder/10.1057/9781137313089 (Accessed: 28 July 2014).

Rhys, J. (1934) *Voyage in the Dark*. Reprint. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969.

Rocha, Z.L. (2012) 'Identity, Dislocation and Belonging: Chinese/European Narratives of Mixedness in Aotearoa/New Zealand', *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 19(6), pp.673-690 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.tandfonline.com (Accessed: 20 January 2013).

Root, M.P.P. (ed.) (1992) 'Within, Between, and Beyond Race', in *Racially Mixed People of America.* California: Sage, pp.3-11.

Root, M.P.P. (ed.) (1996) 'A Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People', in *The Multiracial Experience: Racial Borders as the New Frontier*. Thousand Oak: Sage, pp.3-14.

Root, M.P.P. (1997) 'Mixed-Race Women', in Zack, N. (ed.) *Race/sex: Their Sameness, Difference and Interplay*. New York: Routledge, pp.157-172.

Root, M.P.P. (2003) 'Five Mixed-Race Identities: From Relic to Revolution', in Winters, L. and Debose, H.L. (eds.) *New Faces in a Changing America: Multiracial Identity in the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp.3-20.

Rosen, H. (1998) *Speaking from Memory: A Guide to Autobiographical Acts and Practises*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Roy, L. (1998) *Lady Moses.* London: Virago Press.

Ruebeck, C.S., Averett, S.L. and Bodenhorn, H.N. (2009) 'Acting White or Acting

    Black: Mixed-Race Adolescents', Identity and Behavior', *Journal of*

    Economic Analysis and Policy, 9(1), pp.1-42 EBSCO [Online]. Available at:

    http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 20

    January 2013).

Salih, S. (2010) *Representing Mixed Race in Jamaica and England: From the*

    Abolition Era to the Present Day. MyiLibrary [Online]. Available at:

    http://lib.myilibrary.com (Accessed: 7 July 2013).

Sandhu, S. (2003) *London Calling: How Black and Asian Writers Imagined a City*.

    London: HarperCollins.

Sarland, C. (2005) 'Critical Theory and Ideology', in Hunt, P. (ed.) *Understanding*

    Children's Literature: Key Essays from the Second Edition of the

    International Companion Encyclopaedia of Children's Literature. 2nd edn.

    London: Routledge, pp.30-49.

Scafe, S. (2009) 'The Embracing 'I': Mothers and Daughters in Contemporary

    Black Women's Autobiography', *Women: A Cultural Review*, 20(3),

    pp.287-298 EBSCO [Online]. Available at:

http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 9 April 2013).

Scafe, S. (2010): "Let Me Tell You How it Really Was': Authority, Legitimacy and Fictive Structures of Reality in Contemporary Black Women's Autobiography', *Changing English: Studies in Culture and Education*, 17(2), pp.129-139 EBSCO [Online]. Available at: http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 9 April 2013).

Schaffer, G. (2008) *Racial Science and British Society, 1930-62.* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Seacole, M. (1857) *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands*. Reprint. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Selvon, S. (1956) *The Lonely Londoners*. Reprint. London: Longman, 1985.

Sengstock, M.C, et al. (2009) *Voices of Diversity: Multi-Culturalism in America*. New York: Springer.

Senna, D. (2004) 'The Mulatto Millennium', in Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (ed.) *'Mixed Race' Studies: A Reader*. London: Routledge, pp.205-208.

Sesay, K.G. (2004) 'Transformations Within the Black British Novel', in Arana,

R.V. and Ramey, L. (eds.) *Black British Writing*, pp.99-108 Palgrave

Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.palgraveconnect.com

(Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Shakespeare, W. (1593) *Titus Andronicus*. Reprint. Edited by Jonathan Bate, J.

London: Arden, 1995.

Shakespeare, W. (1603) *Othello*. Edited by E.A.J. Honigmann. London: Arden,

1997.

Shakespeare, W. (1606) *Anthony and Cleopatra.* Edited by John Wilders.

London: Arden, 1995.

Shrage, L. (1997) 'Passing Beyond the Other Race and Sex', in Zack, N. (ed.)

Race/sex: Their Sameness, Difference and Interplay. New York:

Routledge, pp.183-190.

Sims, J.M. (ed.) (2007) 'Thai-British families: Towards a Deeper Understanding

of 'Mixedness'', in *Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice*, pp.10-

13 [Online]. Available at:

http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspective

s-MixedHeritageFinal.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Sims, J.P. (2012) 'Beautiful Stereotypes: the Relationship between Physical

Attractiveness and Mixed Race identity', *Global Studies in Culture and

Power,* 19(1), pp.61-80 Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at:

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1070289X.2012.672838#

.VKFDTsDpA4 (Accessed: 12 January 2013).

Simmonds, F.N. (1997) 'My Body, Myself: How Does a Black Woman do

Sociology?', in Mirza, H.S. (ed.) *Black British Feminism*. London:

Routledge, pp.226-239.

Small, S. (2002) 'Black People of Mixed Origins and the Politics of Identity', in

Christian, M. (ed.) *Black Identity in the Twentieth Century*. London:

Hansib, pp.168-194.

Smith, B. (1995) 'Homophobia, Why Bring it up?', in Andersen, L. and Collins, P.

(eds.) *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology*. 2nd edn. Belmont:

Wadsworth, pp.413-416.

Sollors, W. (1997) *Neither Black nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of

Interracial Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Somerville, A.T. (2002) 'Waharoa: Māori-Pākehā Writing in Aotearoa/New

Zealand', in Brennan, J. (ed.) *Mixed Race Literature.* Stanford: Stanford

University Press, pp.200-219.

Song, M. (2003) *Choosing Ethnic Identity.* Cambridge: Polity.

Song, M. (2007) 'The Diversity of 'the' Mixed Race Population in Britain', in
Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice, pp.5-7 [Online]. Available
at:
http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspective
s-MixedHeritageFinal.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Song, M. (2010a) "Does 'Race' Matter? A Study of 'Mixed Race' Siblings'
Identifications", *The Sociological Review*, 58(2), pp.265-285 EBSCO
[Online]. Available at: http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-
web/ehost/ (Accessed: 12 January 2013).

Song, M. (2010b) 'Is there 'a' Mixed Race Group in Britain? The Diversity of
Multiracial Identification and Experience', *Critical Social Policy*, 30(3),
pp.337-358 SAGE [Online]. Available at: http://0-
csp.sagepub.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/content/30/3/337.full.pdf+
html (Accessed: 12 January 2013).

Song, M. (2012) 'Making Sense of 'Mixture': States and the Classification of
'Mixed People"*, Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 35(4), pp.565-573 EBSCO
[Online]. Available at: http://0-
ejournals.ebsco.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/Direct.asp?AccessToken

=9IQJ5IX8X45MKPMMKIDI9II9DE4I8JM55&Show=Object (Accessed: 7 April 2013).

Song, M. and Hashem, F. (2010) 'What Does "White" Mean? Interpreting the Choice of "Race" by Mixed Race Young People in Britain', *Sociological Perspectives*, 53(2), pp.287-292 JSTOR [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.jstor.org.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/stable/pdfplus/10.1525/sop.2010.53.2.287.pdf?acceptTC=true&jpdConfirm=true (Accessed: 12 January 2013).

Song, M. and Parker, D. (eds.) (2001) *Rethinking 'Mixed Race'.* London: Pluto.

Spencer, R. (2004) 'Thinking about Transcending Race', in Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (ed.) '*Mixed Race' Studies: A Reader*. London: Routledge, pp.219-224.

Spencer, R. (2006) *Challenging Multiracial Identity.* Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers INC.

Spencer, S. (2006) *Race and Ethnicity: Culture, Identity and Representation.* London: Routledge.

Spickard, P.R. (1992) 'The Illogic of American Racial Categories', in Root, M.P.P. (ed.) *Racially Mixed People of America*. California: Sage, pp.12-23.

Spickard, P. (2001) 'The Subject is Mixed Race: The Boom in Biracial Biography',

in Song, M. and Parker, D. (eds.) *Rethinking 'Mixed Race'.* London: Pluto,

pp.76-98.

Spivak, G.C. (1988) 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in Nelson, C. and Grossberg, L.

(eds.) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Hownslow: Macmillan

Education, pp.271-313.

Stanley, l. (2000) 'Is There Life in the Contact Zone? Auto/biographical Practices

in the Field of Representation in Writing Past Lives', in Donnell, A. and

Polkey, P. (eds.) *Representing Lives: Women and Auto/biography*, pp.3-

30 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at:

www.palgraveconnect.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/pc/doifinder/10.

1057/9780230287440 (Accessed: 2 September 2014).

Stephens, J. (1992) *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction*. London:

Longman.

Stephens, J. (2011) 'Schemas and Scripts: Cognitive Instruments and the

Representation of Cultural Diversity in Children's Literature', in Mallan,

K. and Bradford, C. (eds.) *Contemporary Literature and Film: Engaging*

with Theory. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.12-35.

St Louis, B. (2005) 'Brilliant Bodies, Fragile Minds: Race, Sport and the Mind/Body Split', in Alexander, C. and Knowles, C. (eds.) *Making Race Matter: Bodies, Space and Identity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave and MacMillan, pp.113-131.

Stonequist, E.V. (1937) *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Culture Conflict*. Reprint. New York: Russell and Russell, 1961.

Streeter, C.A. (1996) 'Ambiguous Bodies: Locating Black/White Women in Cultural Representations', in Root, M.P.P. (ed.) *The Multiracial Experience: Racial Borders as the New Frontier*. Thousand Oak: Sage, pp.305-320.

Streeter, C.A. (2003) 'The Hazards of Invisibility: "Biracial" Women, Media Images, and Narratives of Identity', in Winters, L. and Debose, H.L. (eds.) *New Faces in a Changing America: Multiracial Identity in the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp.301-322.

Stuart, O. (2005) 'Fear and Loathing in Front of the Mirror', in Alexander, C. and Knowles, C. (eds.) Making *Race Matter: Bodies, Space and Identity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave and Macmillan, pp.172-181.

Swann, M. (1985) *Education for All. Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups* [Online]. Available at:

http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/swann/swann1985.ht
ml#05 (Accessed: 28 July 2014).

Taylor, G. (2006) 'Golliwogs: Harmless Fun or Racist Caricatures? Questioning a
Children's Favourite', *Feliciter*, 52(5), pp.218-219 EBSCO [Online].
Available at: http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/
(Accessed: 13 July 2013).

Taylor, L. (2008) 'Looking North: Exploring Multiracial Experiences in a Canadian
Context', *New Directions for Student Services*, 123, pp.83-91 EBSCO
[Online]. Available at: http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-
web/ehost/ (Accessed: 20 January 2013).

Ten Per Cent of UK Children 'Now Part of a Mixed Race Family'. (2009) *Daily
Mail*, 18th January [Online]. Available at:
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1120963/Ten-cent-UK-
children-mixed-race-family.html (Accessed: 13 December 2013).

Thackeray, W. (1847-1848) *Vanity Fair.* Reprint. London: Dent, 1979.

The Runnymede Trust Fact sheet. (2010) [Online]. Available at:
http://www.runnymedetrust.org/projects-and-
publications/parliament/platform/david-lammy-on-fatherhood/fact-
sheet.html. 2010 (Accessed: 13 July 2013).

Thompson, A. and Day, G. (1999) 'Situating Welshness. 'Local' Experience and National Identity', in Fevre, R. and Thomas, A. (eds.) *Nation, Identity and Social Theory: Perspectives from Wales.* Cardiff: University of Wales Press, pp.27-47.

Thompson, D. (2012) 'Making (Mixed-) Race: Census Politics and the Emergence of Multiracial Multiculturalism in the United States, Great Britain and Canada', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 35(8), pp.1409-1426 EBSCO [Online]. Available at: http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 12 January 2013).

Thornton, M.C. (1992) 'Is Multiracial Status Unique? The Personal and the Social Experience', in Root, M.P.P. (ed.) *Racially Mixed People of America*. California: Sage, pp.321-325.

Tikly, L. (2007) 'Meeting the Educational Needs of Mixed Heritage Pupils: Challenges for Policy and Practice', in Sims, J.M. (ed.) *Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice,* pp.13-16 [Online]. Available at: http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspective sMixedHeritageFinal.pdf>.<http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Perspectives-MixedHeritageFinal.pdf (Accessed: 10 June 2013).

Till Death Do Us Part. (1965-1975) Directed by Douglas Argent. Written by

Johnny Speight. First broadcast 1965. London: BBC1.

Tizzard, B. and Phoenix, A. (2002) *Black, White or Mixed Race: Race and Racism*

in the Lives of Young People of Mixed Parentage. Revised edn. London:

Routledge.

Touray-Theodotou, P. (2014) 'Some Connection with the Place: Exploring

Displacement and Belonging with Jackie Kay', *Wasafiri*, (29)1, pp.15-20

Taylor Francis [Online]. Available at: http://0-

www.tandfonline.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/026

90055.2014.861254 (Accessed: 29 December 2014).

Traynor, J. (1997) *Sister Josephine.* London: Bloomsbury.

Tunca, D. (2012) 'Away From a Definition of African Literature(s)', in Ledent, B.

and Cuder-Domínguez, P. (eds.) *New Perspectives on the Black Atlantic.*

Definitions, Readings, Practices, Dialogues Bern: Peter Lang, pp.105-122.

Turner, G. (2003) *British Cultural Studies*. 3rd edn. London: Routledge.

Turner, L. (2007) 'I Love My Mixed Race Daughter – But Why Does She Feel is so

Alien?', *Daily Mail,* 13 July [Online]. Available at:

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-467787/I-love-mixed-race-baby--does-feel-alien.html#ixzz2DRSehWHq (Accessed: 7 July 2013).

Ussher, J.M. (1997) *Fantasies of Femininity: Reframing the Boundaries of Sex*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Van Krieken, R. (2012) *Celebrity Society.* London: Routledge.

Walker, A. (1983) *The Color Purple.* London: Women's Press.

Walters, T. (2004) 'A Black Briton's View of Black Literature and Scholarship', in Arana, R.V. and Ramey, L. (eds.) *Black British Writing*, pp.73-98 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.palgraveconnect.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Wan, G. (2010) *Through Thick and Thin: an Autobiography.* Croydon: Ebury.

Watson, V. (2000) *Reading Series Fiction: From Arthur Ransome to Gene Kemp.* London: Routledge.

Weedon, C. (2004) 'Identity and Belonging in Contemporary Black British Writing', in Arana, R.V. and Ramey, L. (eds.) *Black British Writing*, pp.73-98 Palgrave Connect [Online]. Available at: http://0-www.palgraveconnect.com (Accessed: 12 July 2013).

Weekes, D. (1997) 'Shades of Blackness. Young Black Female Constructions of

Beauty', in Mirza, H.S. (ed.) *Black British Feminism*. London: Routledge,

pp.113-126.

Wilkie-Stibbs, C. (2006) 'The "Other" Country: Memory, Voices and Experiences

of Colonized Childhoods', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*,

31(3), pp.237-259 EBSCO [Online]. Available at:

http://encore.lib.warwick.ac.uk:50080/ebsco-web/ehost/ (Accessed: 22

March 2013).

Williams, C. (1999) 'Passports to Wales? Race, Nation and Identity', in Fevre, R.

and Thomas, A. (ed.) *Nation, Identity and Social Theory: Perspectives*

from Wales. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, pp.69-89.

Williams, C. (2002) *Sugar and Slate*. Aberystwyth: Planet.

Williams, C. and Johnson, M.R.D. (2010) *Race and Ethnicity in a Welfare Society*.

Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Williams, K.M. (2003) 'From Civil Rights to the Multiracial Movement', in

Winters, L. and Debose, H.L. (eds.) *New Faces in a Changing America:*

Multiracial Identity in the 21st Century. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp.85-98.

Williams, T.K. (2004) 'Race-ing and being Raced: The Critical Interrogation of 'Passing'', in Ifekwunigwe, J.O. (ed.) *'Mixed Race' Studies: A Reader*. London: Routledge, pp.166-169.

Wilson, A. (1987) *Mixed Race Children: A Study of Identity*. London: Routledge, 1979.

Wilson, H.E. (1859) 'Our Nig*', in Three Classic African-American Novels*. Reprint. Edited by William L. Andrews. New York: Penguin, 1990, pp. 285-366.

Winning, J. (2007) 'Crossing the Borderline: Post-Devolution Scottish Lesbian and Gay Writing', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature*, pp.283-291 Dawson [Online]. Available at: https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9780748630288 (Accessed: 12 October 2014).

Wright, T. (2000) 'Introduction: England whose England?', in Chen, S. and Wright, T. (eds.) *The English Question*. London: Fabian, p.7-17.

Young, R. J.C. (1995) *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race.* London: Routledge.

Younge, G. (2000) 'Race and Englishness', in Chen, S. and Wright, T. (eds.) *The English Question.* London: Fabian, pp.111-116.

Zack, N. (1993) *Race and Mixed Race*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press*.*

Zack, N. (2010) 'The Fluid Symbol of Mixed Race', *Hypatia*, 25(4), pp.875-890

Wiley [Online]. Available at: http://0-

onlinelibrary.wiley.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/doi/10.1111/j.1527-

2001.2010.01121.x/pdf (Accessed: 12 April 2013).